

# Editorial

Nau mai, haere mai, welcome to *Set: Research Information for Teachers* in 2019.

New Zealand is in a time of grief and growth as we reflect upon the devastating attack against the Muslim community in Christchurch on March 15. The heinous act raised questions about how schools support students to cope with tragedy. A sense of collective shock has drawn forth renewed commitment to principles of inclusion, cultural diversity, and community engagement, all of which underpin *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). Issue 1 addresses vital concerns for New Zealand society, our education system, and our young people. The issue offers insight into how schools can promote wellbeing, address bullying, recognise giftedness across diverse domains, and build cultural understandings. It also considers broad-ranging literacy skills that students may need for their futures.

Readers will first meet with an article about pōwhiri. Te Hurinui Karaka-Clarke guides schools to authentically engage with their Māori hāpori, whānau, hapū, and iwi. He draws on PŌWHIRI as an acronym for a framework that can inform interactions and help to build reciprocal relationships. Te Hurinui details steps for setting up hui while also reminding schools to be attentive to their local context, ideally drawing on the wisdom of cultural advisors.

The initial Teaching and Learning articles consider literacy practices in secondary and upper primary schooling. Marie Stribling, deputy principal of Hagley Community College, introduces a practitioner inquiry funded by the Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund. The aim was to articulate and embed discipline-specific literacy practices in anticipation of students' transition to tertiary learning environments. For each senior subject the team identified "a set of capabilities that students will need to operate as 'insiders' within that discipline" (p. 9). Next, Rebecca Jesson and Aaron Wilson support teachers to navigate a choice between asking students to read deeply (across fewer texts) or to read widely (often skimming the surface). Their T-shaped literacy model resolves the "wide/deep tension" because students "read, talk about and engage with a fairly narrow set of important ideas across a wide range of texts" (p. 18). For example, ideas related to

inclusion could be explored through a poetry collection, magazine, novel, song, and text book.

The second two Teaching and Learning articles challenge readers to broaden their view of giftedness beyond familiar territory. Annalies Judson's study suggests that teachers readily spot and support giftedness in areas that they themselves have the greatest expertise. She and her supervisors conclude that a collaborative approach may ensure that giftedness across all domains of learning can be fairly identified. Next, Martha Aseta, Catherine Rawlinson, and Rae Si'ilata discuss the need to recognise and nurture cultural giftedness. A key point from the research is that "schools had a tendency to overlook cultural, spiritual and emotional giftedness" (p. 33). *Set's* readers can learn from the insights shared by Samoan teachers about Samoan cultural forms of giftedness and talent. The authors also call on schools to improve their giftedness policies and seek professional development.

The focus section of Issue 1 attends to wellbeing for students and teachers. Schools may be dealing with ongoing signs of trauma and anxiety after March 15. Schools may also be paying more focused attention to issues related to the tragedy, such as racism and discrimination. This focus may occur through such areas as targeted learning tasks, and inclusive environments. I hope that this collection will provide useful information and strategies to all.

Katie Fitzpatrick and Rachel Riedel share their research behind a new resource book for teachers: *Mental Health Education and Hauora: Teaching About Interpersonal skills, Resilience, and Wellbeing*. They explain how learning about mental health can encompass a range of subject matter, including resilience, diversity, gender identity, interpersonal skills, and mana. They discuss some of the tensions present in the health curriculum and consider how trends that stem from positive psychology, such as mindfulness and a growth mindset, might be meaningfully included in the curriculum. We're reminded that a critical focus on social and historical relationships is also necessary to ensure wellbeing is truly understood and fostered. Lesson plans can be found in their book.

For Q&A I interviewed the co-directors of the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience. Lucy Hone

and Denise Quinlan discuss how schools can promote and protect hauora/wellbeing among young people. All secondary schools across Greater Christchurch take part their Wellbeing Community of Practice, plus there's a new 2019 professional development programme open to all educators in the region from early childhood education onwards. Q&A ends with tips to help teachers mitigate stress and view their work (and their students) through a strengths-based frame.

Assessment News broadens schools' assessment focus to encapsulate student wellbeing. Sally Boyd explains the Wellbeing@School toolkit, which can give schools a picture of their students' social wellbeing and views of school. International research and the national Wellbeing@School data suggest that bullying is a concern in our country. Sally argues that whole-school approaches are necessary to improve social climates. The Wellbeing@School toolkit can help schools to identify strengths, gaps, and action plans to build healthy relationships.

It is heartening to see the Bullying-Free New Zealand movement gaining momentum across the country. To the many who dressed for Pink Shirt Day in May, *kia kaha*. It was fabulous to have so many schools taking part in this "global day that celebrates diversity and creates environments where all people can feel safe, valued

and respected" (Mental Health Foundation, 2019). Annual calls to action hold the potential to invigorate *The New Zealand Curriculum's* (Ministry of Education, 2007) principles of community engagement, cultural diversity, and inclusion. They can provide an entry point for teachers wishing to deepen curriculum links and strengthen partnerships. I began this editorial during Samoan Language Week, *Vaiaso o le Gagana Samoa*. *Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori*, Māori Language Week, is coming up in September.

*Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.*  
*Josie Roberts, Editor*

### Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Sally Boyd for her support and expertise related to the wellbeing theme in this issue.

### References

- Mental Health Foundation. (2019). Pink Shirt Day. Retrieved from <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/22/pink-shirt-day>
- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum*. Retrieved from <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/1108/11989/file/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum.pdf>