

Abstract for ICP

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The 'Afa Framework: Enacting School Leadership for Pacific Bilingual Success

*E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea.
I shall never be lost, I am a seed sown from Rangiātea.
Te Motu, Te Moana, Te Ao: The Island, The Ocean, The World.
Evoking our relational past, Enacting our reciprocal present,
Envisioning our transformational futures.*

These whakataukī recognise the enduring connections of Māori and Aotearoa Pacific peoples to their Pacific Island origins. The revitalisation of Māori and Pacific languages, cultures, and identities is enabled when schools decolonise curriculum and enact transformational system change. This system change supports Indigenous tamariki of the Pacific to be successful – as who they are. 'Success as Pacific' can only be fully achieved through Pacific Bilingual and Immersion Education (PBIE). Pacific tamariki are purapura (seeds) in intergenerational whānau (families) where their linguistic and cultural ways of being are central to success in all the worlds they walk in. As purapura replicate kōrari (flax strands), so Pacific tamariki replicate whānau when they experience schooling and success as Pacific, and as carriers of whakapapa (lineage). PBIE research highlights the power of school leadership in providing the system supports that enable Pacific success (Si'ilata, 2014; Si'ilata et al., 2023a, 2023b). Pacific specific leadership capabilities draw on the metaphor of 'afa – the three stranded sennit, weaving together the strands of leadership, curriculum teaching and learning, and parents, whānau, and community. A strong education system for Pacific bilingual learners requires leadership that champions PBIE provision, builds relational trust, and develops active collaboration and reciprocal partnership with the school's Pacific community. This session provides specific leadership dimensions for Pacific learners, elucidated by examples of practice, including leadership voices and experiences.

Hutia te rito o te harakeke
Kei hea te kōmako e kō?
If you pull out the heart of the flax bush
Where will the bellbird sing?