

Title: *Te Arahou o Aotearoa: Leading education from a Māori Worldview*

Full abstract:

This presentation from Te Arahou o Aotearoa explores how Māori leadership values and indigenous worldviews are transforming school leadership across Aotearoa New Zealand. Grounded in te ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Te Arahou empowers school principals to lead with cultural courage—embedding tikanga, te reo Māori, and Māori ways of knowing into strategic planning, curriculum design, and everyday practice.

We will share the journey of Te Arahou, a culturally anchored professional leadership model that reframes leadership through the lens of *Te Whare Tapu o te Ngākau Māori*. Delegates will hear powerful stories of school transformation—where learners thrive, families feel a sense of belonging, and school leaders grow into agents of bicultural change. The session includes examples of indigenous-led practice and evidence of impact on student wellbeing, identity, and achievement.

Aligned with the conference's key themes, this presentation highlights:

- The distinctiveness of Aotearoa's educational identity through the infusion of te ao Māori into school leadership;
- Innovative tools such as AI-powered planning bots designed around local curriculum and mātauranga Māori;
- Equity-driven outcomes achieved by culturally sustaining leadership;
- Practical frameworks that support creativity, belonging, and learning success for all.

As international educators seek meaningful ways to engage with indigenous knowledge and leadership, MAC offers a proven model of system-level change rooted in cultural integrity. This session will inspire delegates to reflect on their own contexts, consider indigenous perspectives, and explore what it means to lead education with a culturally sustainable heart.