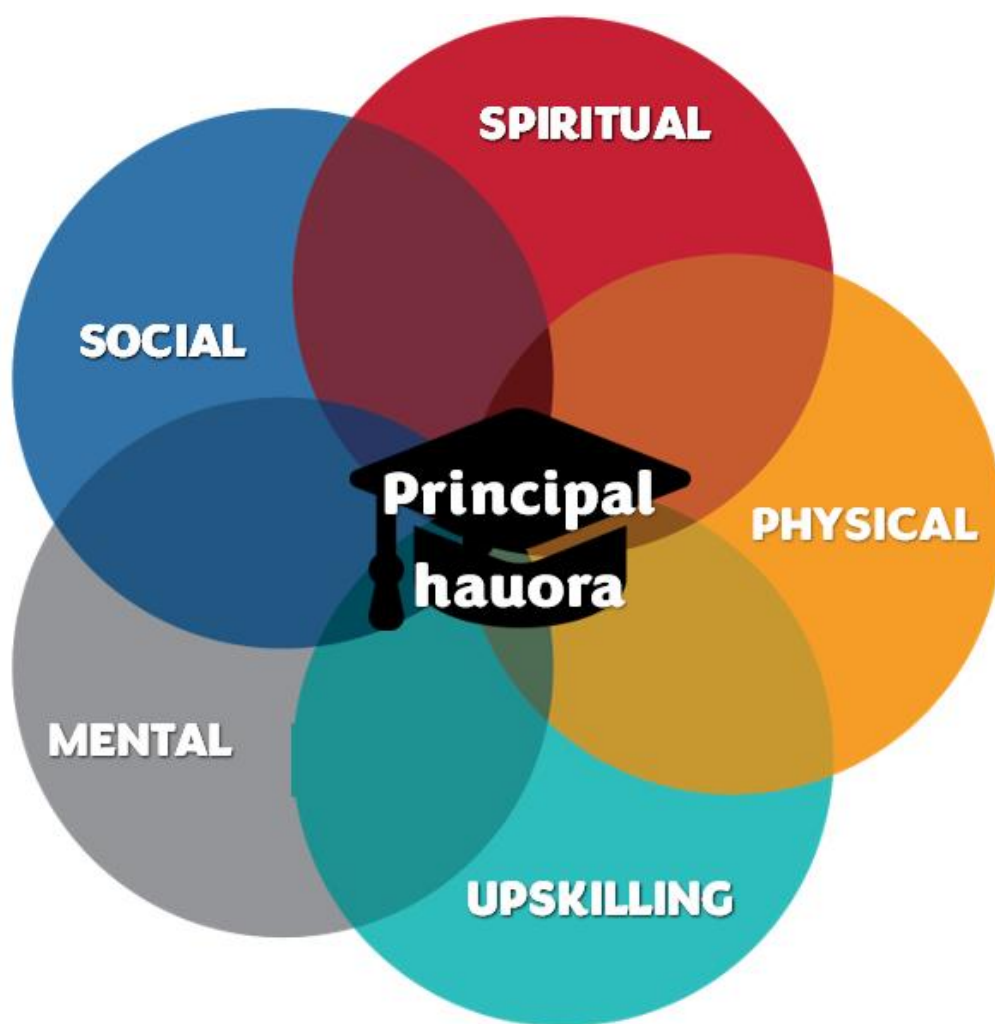


Principal's Professional Coaching and Wellbeing Support Fund

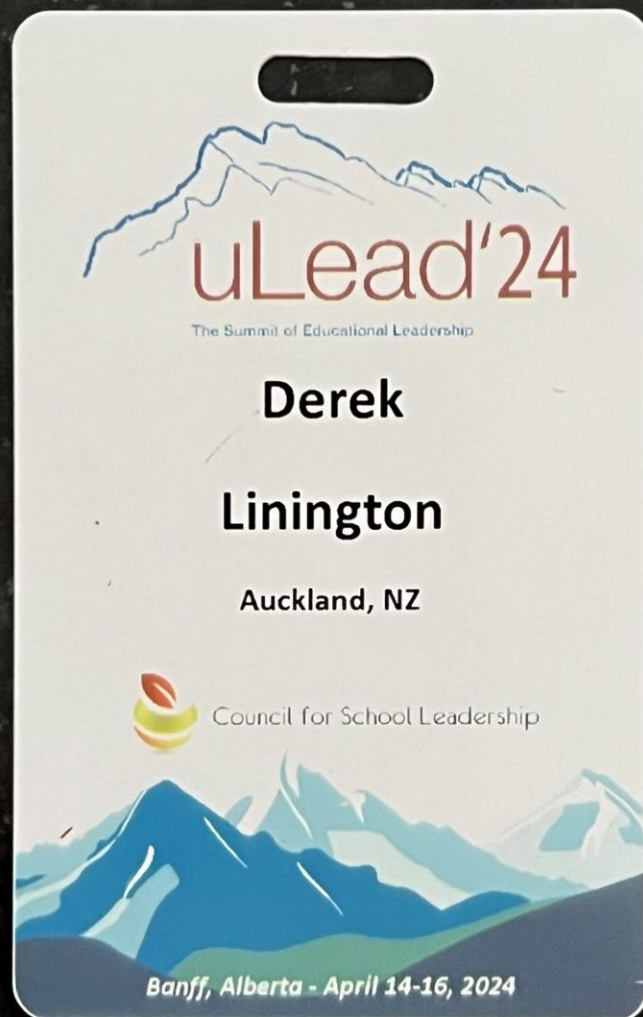


uLead 2024 Conference Report

Background

This fund came about as a result of the collective bargaining with the Ministry of Education who agreed to grant primary principals access to funding of up to \$6,000 per annum in 2023 and 2024 for professional coaching and support for their leadership role.

I used the 2023 fund to access learning at the uLead Conference led by The Alberta Teachers' Association in association with the Council for School Leadership. I share my report with the Principals within the Papakura Principals Association.



My conference lanyard.

SCHOOL VISITS AND CONFERENCE REPORT

School Tours Thursday 11th April 2024

The New Zealand Principals' Association (prior to the conference) asked the Calgary Schools Board if it were possible to visit schools. The Calgary Schools Board declined. Instead, the Calgary Catholic Schools Board agreed to host a limited number of principals. I was fortunate to be one of the thirty.

The agenda for the day is:

- **8:00 to 9:30am:** Welcome all at St. Paul Centre **124 24 Ave NE, Calgary, AB T2E 1W6**,
 - Light breakfast snacks, coffee etc.
 - (8:30am) Overview of the education system in Alberta & CCSD with some highlights regarding the new curriculum & literacy/numeracy intervention (which I am lead of)
 - (9:00am) Choice: St. Isidore Online School or Learning Services Consultant Visits
 - (9:30am) Instructions / assignment of school visits.
- Travel in groups of 3-5 to first school location.
- **10:00am to 11:30am:** School #1 Visit
- Lunch
- **1:00am to 2:30pm:** School #2 Visit
- ***5:30-8:00pm:** LeadMeet @ Earl Grey Golf Club located at [6540 20 St SW](#)

**Please arrive between 5:30 pm and 6:00 pm as the program will start precisely at 6:00 pm (the bar will be closed during presentation times).*

5:30-6:00pm - Open Cash Bar + Complimentary Appetizers
6:00-6:15pm - Welcome & Land Acknowledgement
6:15-6:45pm - 3 presentations, leader speaks for 10 minutes
6:45-7:15pm - Networking – Open Cash Bar + Complimentary Appetizers
7:15-7:45pm - 3 presentations, leader speaks for 10 minutes
7:45-8:00pm - Closing

We look forward to welcoming you to LeadMeet and uLead 2024!

Unfortunately, I missed the overview of their education system and the highlights of their curriculum as three of us were asked to be guest on their live school television.

- Mauren Allan principal at Waitaha School,
- Vivienne Goldsmith principal at Tauhoa School, and
- myself.

This entailed being interviewed by children who attend the online about life in New Zealand. This was an eye opener. An office in the Catholic Schools' Board building had been converted into a mini television studio. The equipment was not very elaborate. They used YouTube's live streaming facility and children from throughout the greater Calgary area and some from other areas within the state of Alberta sign in. All those learners who engage in education through this medium are allocated to a "class" and assigned a teacher. There were three teachers each taking a composite class. The day begins at 8:00am with the prayer and thanksgiving followed by the "Land Acknowledgement" (more about this later). We were interviewed for about 20 minutes. After that we were taken on a quick tour of where the three teachers worked.

The basic television studio



Background to this online school:

- Catholic Schools Board used this format of schooling during the COVID lockdowns throughout their schools in Calgary.
- Upon return post-COVID they noticed that there was a drop in the number of children returning to school and attendance had dropped significantly. (Sound familiar?)
- The Catholic Schools Board decided to restart the online school in an attempt to give children an alternative to onsite schooling. They noticed that many parents of neurodiverse children signed up. Some children with social anxiety and others who were not re-engaging also signed up. The Board also made available to parents who had asked to take their children for long-term visits overseas to sign up until they returned. Many of these had to access the recorded version if they are in different time zone.

My understanding:

Historically several treaties were signed with the indigenous people.

These treaties were all numbered and signed with individual sub-tribes or hapu of two “Iwi” the Métis and Inuit.

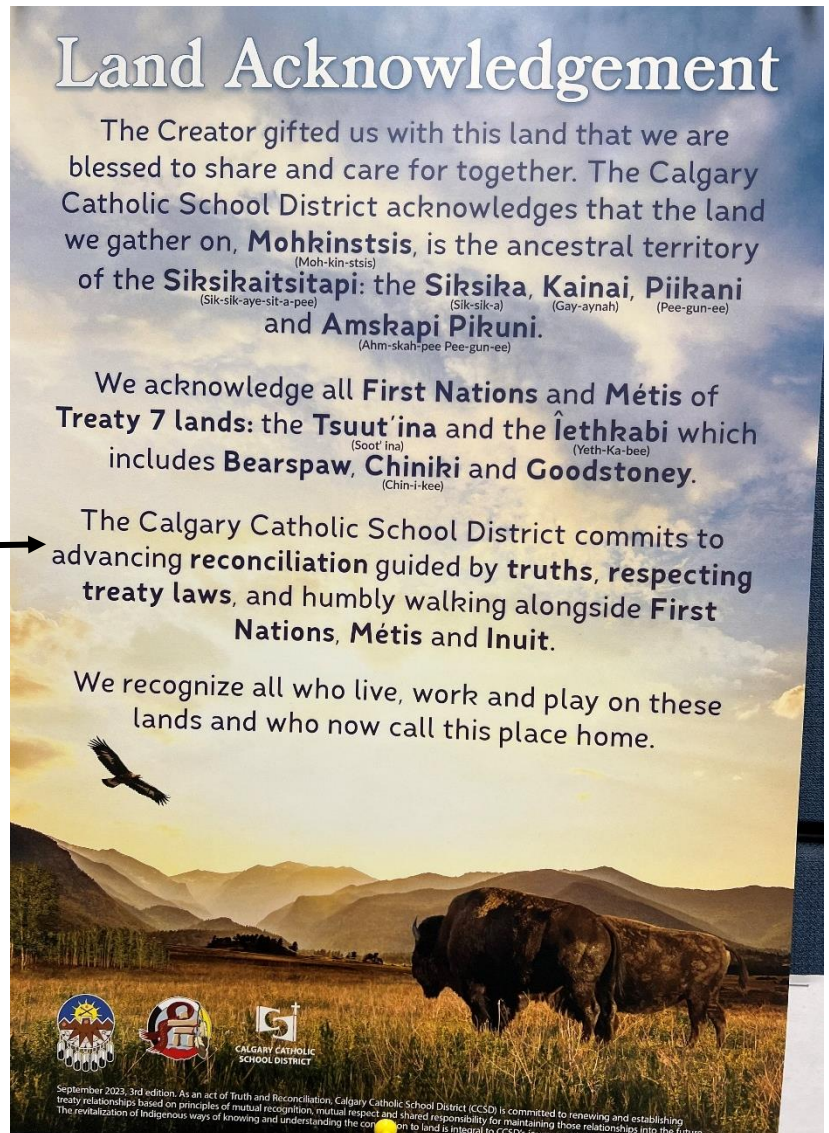
Essentially the Land Acknowledgement serves to remind all modern-day Canadians that the land is the ancestral territory of those ‘hapu’ in the area.

This is important

So, if I had to draw a comparison to Aotearoa /New Zealand this would equate to us starting our day reciting and acknowledging Te Tiriti of Waitangi.

For consideration:

An interesting concept that I think we should explore.

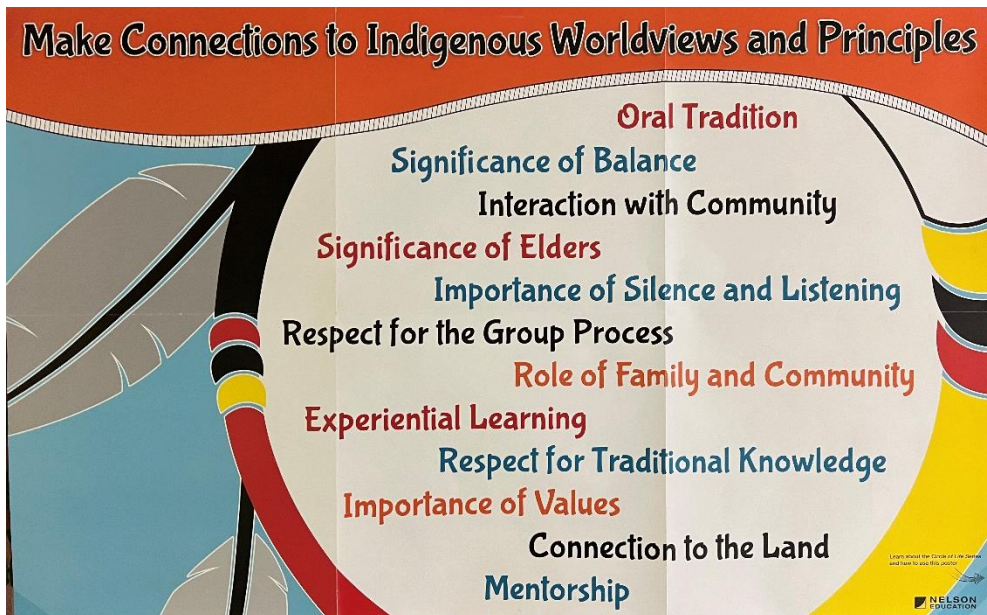


Alberta Teachers' Association Land Acknowledgement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDdWpKrXK1k>

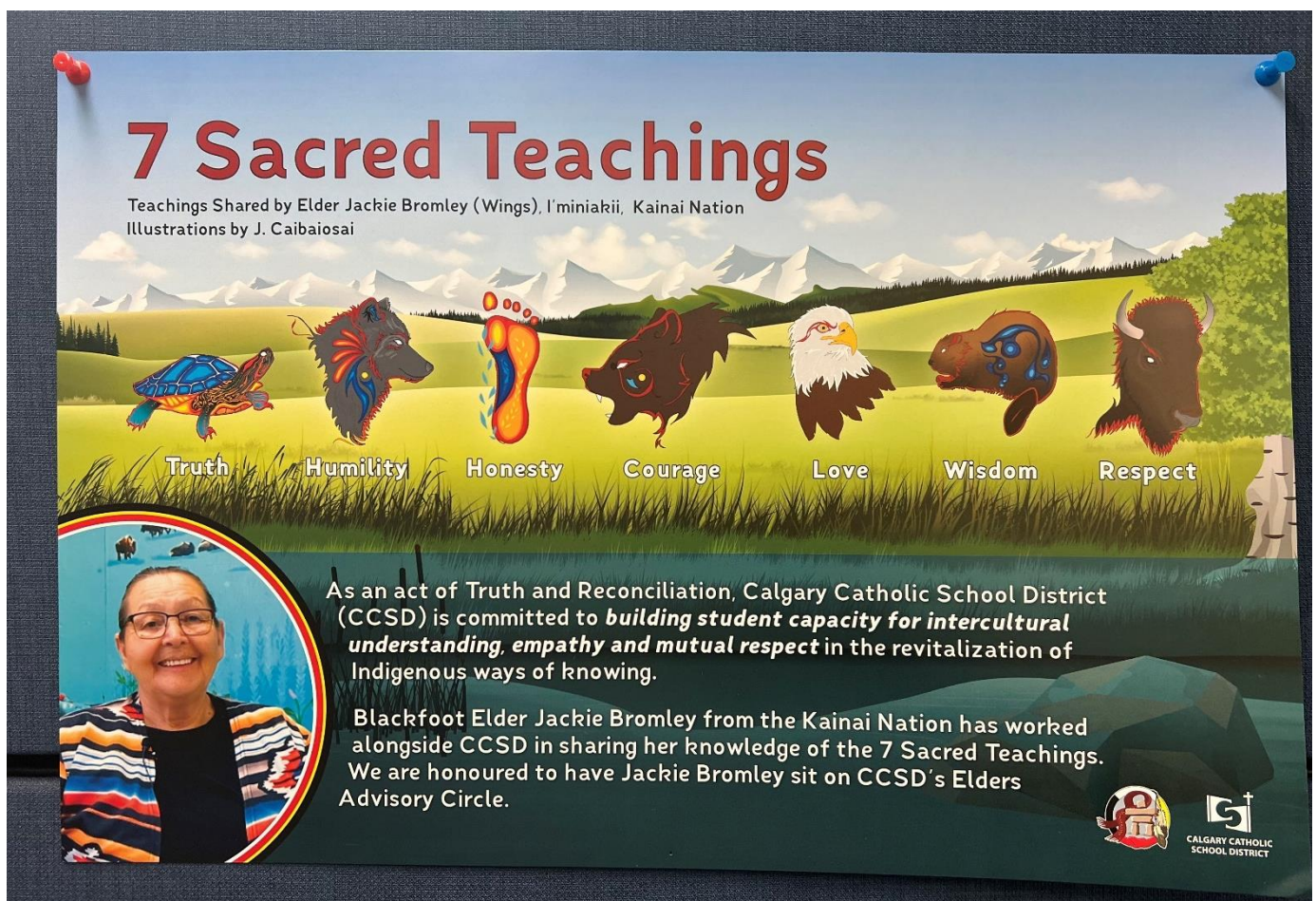
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDdWpKrXK1k>

This video version of the Land Acknowledgement is played at the start of every official educational event. It can be likened to beginning meetings with a Karakia Timatanga.



This poster, on display in the Calgary Catholic Schools’ Board offices, resonated with me because it calls on people to make deliberate connections with the indigenous people of Canada. There are clear similarities with te ao Māori.

This next poster also resonated deeply for me. At Papakura Normal School I began leading the school in 2017 towards the establishment of the **Waka Way** and our **Brand Story** by making deliberate connections between te ao Māori and life in modern day Aotearoa / New Zealand.



Each of the indigenous values are unpacked into specifics. I tried to capture the full set which meant it is difficult to see the line-by-line item.



School Tours Thursday 11th April 2024

The 30 NZ principals were divided into groups. I was grouped with Louise Broad principal of Waikowhai Intermediate and Kim Sloan (principal) and her husband Graham (teacher) from Kamo Intermediate in Whangarei. We were assigned two schools to visit:

- St James School in the morning <https://stjames.cssd.ab.ca/>
- St Stephen's School in the afternoon <https://ststephen.cssd.ab.ca/>

Both schools were K-9. Rooms seemed to be mostly arranged in a traditional style with rows of desks. Corridors were large and the schools, while not new, were designed to be well connected, as children spend much time inside for long periods, due to the harsh winters in Calgary.

A Principal usually signs a 5-year contract, however, often Principals move before reaching the 5 years for many reasons. As in NZ salaries are linked to school sizes however the system allows for Principals to retire and access 70% to 80% of their current salary once they have reached a magic number of 85. This number is generated by adding their age plus their length of service. So, using that formula I would have a score of 39 years of teaching plus 60 years of age equals 99 – I am 14 years past retirement, LOL.

In summary, after great discussions with both Principals it is clear that school systems, in Canada and in New Zealand, share similar challenges. The education system in Canada is used by politicians every election year as a political football. The face of education has changed since COVID-19. The Canadian principals as well as the Icelandic principals that I spoke with at conference all report to the increasing number of neurodiversity entering the schooling system. Recent migration to Canada has meant an unexpected bulge in primary school aged children. The state of Alberta is therefore entering into a teacher shortage landscape.

The recent article below could almost mirror New Zealand!

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/education-educator-shortages-1.7156002>

St James School



At this school I explained the Kiwi “rain bell” and asked if they had something similar for when it snowed.

Answer: No, only in a real blizzard and only when it reaches minus 2 degrees Celsius are the children told to come indoors. Teachers do playground duty in this weather. There are “Polar Clubs” – this is when parents give permission for their children to play outside in sub-minus 2 degrees C.

St Stephen’s School



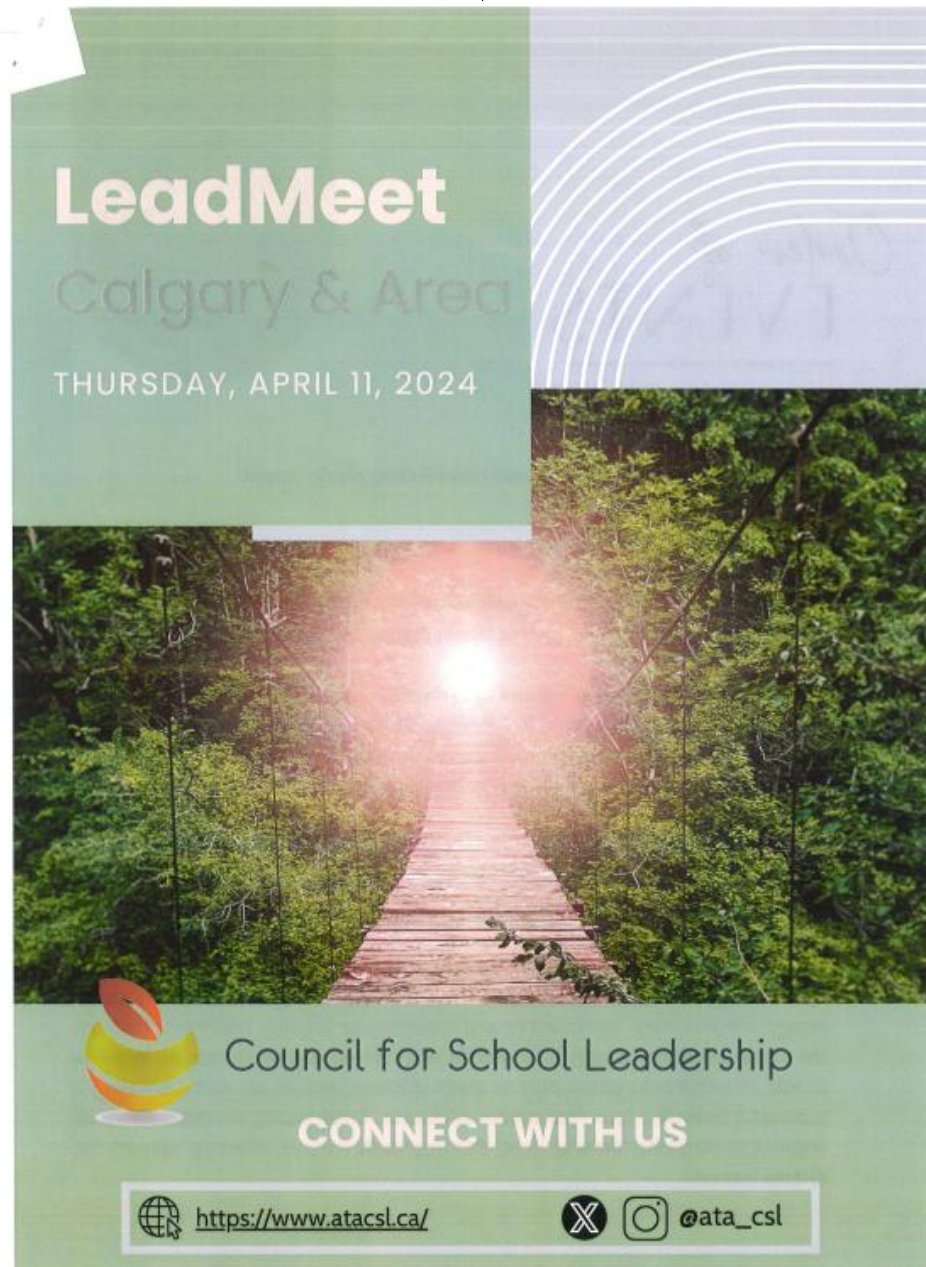
Class numbers lower than ours in NZ.

Louise teaching Canadians how to say Kia Ora.

“LeadMeet Calgary and Area” by the Council for School Leadership


Thursday 11th April 2024




I was the last of 6 speakers at this evening function attended by 60 principals.



The poster features a green background with a white graphic of curved lines on the right side. The main text is in white and pink. At the bottom, there is a photograph of a wooden boardwalk leading through a lush green forest towards a bright sunburst. The Council for School Leadership logo is in the bottom left corner, and contact information is in the bottom right corner.

LeadMeet
Calgary & Area
THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024

 Council for School Leadership
CONNECT WITH US

 <https://www.atacsl.ca/>   @ata_csl

Order of EVENTS



6:00 - 6:15 pm

Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Land Acknowledgement

6:15 - 6:25 pm

Angela Houle & Wanda First Rider

Assistant Principal, Dr. Gordon Higgins School (Gr. 7-9), Calgary Board of Education
Former Elder in Residence, Calgary Catholic School District

How Indigenous Ways of Being and Knowing Can Inspire School Leadership

This session will explore how Indigenous values can inform school leadership. Learning about and incorporating these values into your leadership practice will create a more inclusive and culturally revitalizing educational environment for all.

6:25 - 6:35 pm

Maureen Allan

Principal at Waitaha School, New Zealand

Empowering Inclusion: A Specialist Education School's Vision

This session will explore our school's focus on equipping students for smooth integration into their communities and fostering community readiness. Through the implementation of early intervention and communication strategies, Waitaha School provides tailored support to meet students' individual needs, enabling a successful transition into mainstream education. Emphasizing the importance of ongoing professional development, this approach ensures effective support for diverse learners.

6:35 - 6:45 pm

Chris Gonsalvez

Executive Staff Officer, Alberta Teachers' Association

Shifting to a 100% Mindset: Supporting Teachers and Students in Alberta Schools

"I need more adults in my classroom to support my kiddos"... this was the number one type of response we would receive when we would ask our teachers "How can we help"! Unfortunately, such a request was rarely feasible due to lack of funds or lack of physical bodies! No teacher subs, no EA subs, and increasing classroom complexities make our teachers' jobs almost untenable... How do we support teachers? If we can't get more people, we need to deploy our current people more efficiently... 100% for 100%... We need to shift to a belief system and practice that emphasizes that 100% of our staff are hired to support and take care of 100% of our staff and 100% of our students. In 10 minutes Chris aims to provide examples of the why and how to shift to a 100% mindset in an Alberta school.

6:45 - 7:15 PM - NETWORKING - Food & Bar Service

7:15 - 7:25 pm

Dr. Lynn Leslie, Camille Lezubski, and Jessie Zanutig

Learning Services Supervisor, Calgary Catholic

English Language Arts & Literature Elementary Consultant, Calgary Catholic

Elementary Math Consultant, Calgary Catholic

Advancing Impact: Literacy/Numeracy Intervention Insights

During this presentation, Lynn, Camille, and Jessie share their journey in developing and implementing a literacy/numeracy intervention initiative across 96 elementary schools. With their unique areas of expertise, these three system leaders delve into the project's scope while emphasizing pivotal design and professional development strategies aimed at enhancing teacher effectiveness and student achievement in some small, but meaningful ways.

7:25 - 7:35 pm

Vivienne Goldsmith

Principal at Tauhoa School, New Zealand

Nurturing Connections, Inspiring Growth

In this session, I'll share my experiences as a principal in a rural school community, highlighting the challenges I've encountered and how I've navigated them. Despite the hurdles, I believe I'm doing alright, and I'll explain why I feel confident in my approach to addressing the unique needs of our school and community.

7:35 - 7:45 pm

Derek Linington

Principal at Papakura Normal School, New Zealand

President of the Papakura Principals' Association

"Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua"

This Māori whakataukī or 'proverb' translated into English reads "I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past." It speaks to Māori perspectives of time, where the past, the present and the future are viewed as interconnected, and life as a ceaseless cosmic process. In this presentation you will hear about the transformation of Papakura Normal School through a brand story that weaves the past into the present while striving towards a vision for the school.

7:45 - 7:50 pm

Special Presentation, New Zealand Delegates

Waiata Tautoko

7:50 - 8:00 pm

Closing Remarks & Upcoming Events

My presentation is attached as an appendix.



Thank you for joining us!



Council for School Leadership



<https://atacsl.ca>

<https://ulead.ca>



@ata_csl



As we were leaving an indigenous Canadian lady gave me this traditional weaved Canadian sweet grass to thank me. She was very interested in the similarities between Te Ao Māori and their culture. Sweet grass is one of the ingredients smouldered during Smudge Ceremonies.



New Zealand principals singing a waiata to the Canadian principals at the end of the evening.

The Conference Venue:



The pre-conference day was limited to 200 delegates, and I was fortunate to be one of them, it was an honour to listen to Dr M Fullan and even to get to shake his hand.

The day's focus was "The Role of School Leadership in Building the Local System." The content of the day was more applicable to the Canadian context as their schools are not self-governing like ours. They are governed by district boards and through superintendents. So, he spoke to how school leaders need to rebuild the system from the bottom upwards and attract the attention of the Boards or in our case the Ministry of Education.

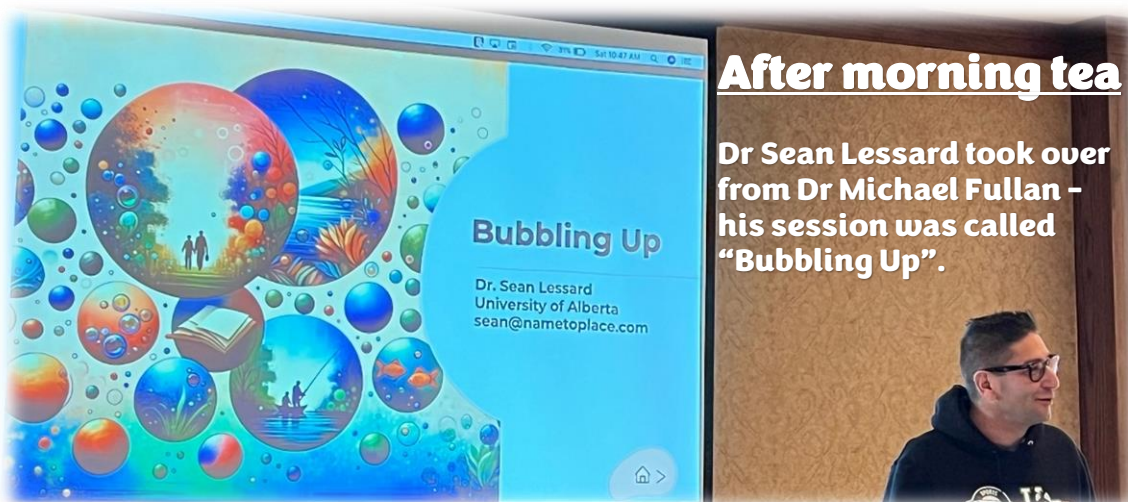
The following quotation from Dr Fullan is going to sound remarkably similar to us in Aotearoa/New Zealand – "Canadian achievement has declined since 2000." He referred to the decade from 2010 to 2020 as the 'deadly decade' which was exacerbated by COVID. COVID has left us with an underlying fear of when is something bad going to happen and this has caused us to become fatigued.

The pertinent points that I gleaned from the morning session with Dr Fullan:

- School leaders need to develop a culture of accountability.
- Professional learning and development in schools means nothing if it is not linked to the culture of accountability and what matters most, raising achievement.
- Schools are struggling with reconnecting children because they have struggled to socialise since the lockdowns.
- We all like specificity within to operate, however if district boards (in our case the MoE) “... want to kill a good idea, then mandate it!”.
- Every attempt (in Canada) at developing equity has failed.
- We need to change the way we change. “It is easier to improve wellbeing than it is to improve learning.”
- When I get the time, I should delve into the 6Cs for deep learning.
- Dr Fullan cited research that Australian achievement has gone backwards because of mandated foci on how to teach reading, writing and maths. *[Yet NZ’s Ministry of Education is still fixated on doing just that.]*
- Deficit thinking and theorising has become the norm.
- Dr Fullan then spoke about Prof. Russell Bishop’s work and showed the data of trying to get teachers working within the North-East. He said that Canadians need to learn from Bishop if they wanted to raise achievement for the country’s indigenous.
- Quoting Dr Fullan: “Teachers learn better from teachers.” and “Teaching effectively is a hard thing to do.”
- Canada is focusing on the wellbeing of children, the wellbeing of teachers, the wellbeing of leaders and according to Dr Fullan it is a big mistake to focus solely on that while neglecting to focus on deep teacher learning so that they adapt their practice.
- Other reading that I could do “Nuance” by Dr M Fullan

Morning teatime networking:

Chatted with a group of principals from Iceland. They are experiencing similar issues that we are facing in NZ, especially alluding to the massive increase in neurodiversity among those children beginning school in the past three years. When I spoke about a lack of resiliency with children becoming easily angered and aggressive with each other – children finding it difficult to be tolerant and socialise effectively. They said that they were finding the same thing at their schools in Iceland.



Dr Sean Lessard is a Canadian of dual heritage (Indigenous and European). He began his session by reading a poem that he wrote in his earlier years called “Bubbling Up”.

The poem was essentially about having been adopted by European caregivers and growing up 'Canadian European' while beginning to embrace his growing awareness and interest in his indigenous roots, these were bubbling up!

His message:

- Many Canadian children are struggling to re-engage with schooling after COVID.
- The country is battling the effects of the growing use of crystal meth, and now people are experimenting with mixing of crystal meth and ketamine.
- Indigenous languages are almost extinct in Canada.
- Belongingness is vital.
- All parents want their children to belong, irrespective of ethnic origin.
- Do not make the assumption that all ethnic children come from the same "place".
- Recognise the importance of indigenous Canadian names and their meanings, pronounce them correctly.
- Ensure that your school's local curriculum meets the indigenous people of your area.

Lunch break networking:

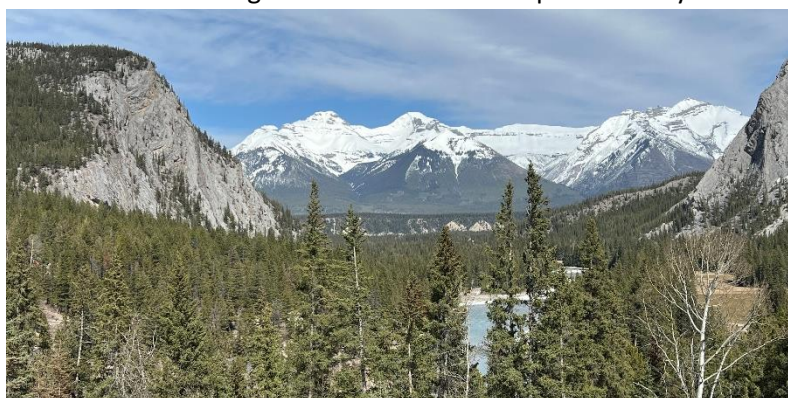
I met a principal from a school in Edmonton. Her school originally started out a tiny private school focusing on going back to the basics. (She was not the principal at the start.) The focus was on teaching children the way those growing up in the 1970s and 1980s were taught. Her example to me was no fancy mathematical strategies, just pure and simple rote learning of basic facts and algorithmic teaching approach to addition, subtraction, multiplication and good old long division. They do lot of oral work and have returned to the old days or choral verse where groups of children and entire classes recite nursery rhymes or poetry (older grades). This entails a lot of rote learning to memorise these. They do not submit to devices; screen time is limited. Lots of handwriting practice. Children are taught to seek information from hardcopy texts as well as the internet. Good old fashioned grammar lessons. Parental interest in the school has grown. The school is now a 'charter-type' school and has a roll of about 500. She explained that the students from her school do very well in state testing.

Dr Michael Fullan's Leadership for Local System Change – Part B

After lunch Dr Fullan began with the topic of Artificial Intelligence saying is it a friend or is it a foe. Essentially his message was, and I quote, "if something is going to get you eventually, rather move towards it early." He spoke about how some of the original creators of A.I. are now expressing their concern about the dangers / negatives of it.

- He broached the concept of "**contextual literacy**", to be a learner we have to learn about our new context/s.
- **Connected autonomy** is only attained through cooperative action.
- Legacy Leadership – is not only about what you want to accomplish at the school, but it is also about how many future leaders you grow and develop.
- '*Systemness*' – the understanding that people must have the ability to interact with others and work together to attain goals.
- If you want to be left alone in your leadership, then you should not be leading a school.
- Teachers **MUST** be non-defensive and **MUST** be willing to be learners and adopters as they expect their students to be!

**The view from the post pre-conference social gathering.
The Fairmont Hotel, Banff Springs**



THE CONFERENCE

There were 1001 attendees from across the globe. New Zealand was well represented with 180 principals attending along with a large number of Icelandic delegates. There were many Australians as well. A truly international school leadership conference.

DAY ONE Sunday 14th April 2024

Opening Message

Jason Shilling who opened the uLead conference as president of the Alberta Teachers Association. In talking about the challenges facing the education sector, Jason cited Fitzhugh Jasper who wrote an article entitled “Where have all the teachers gone?”. I have provided an extract from that article.

Dedicated teachers are exiting the province and exiting the profession because of how untenable working conditions have become. With an influx of new students into classrooms in recent years, teachers are facing a workload that feels overwhelming, impossible, and unrelenting. Not only are class sizes large, but the unmet needs of the students are tremendous.

The government routinely shares that Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world, and we do. However, while the government takes the credit, teachers and school leaders are doing the work of propping up a system on edge. That work is becoming more and more complex and challenging.

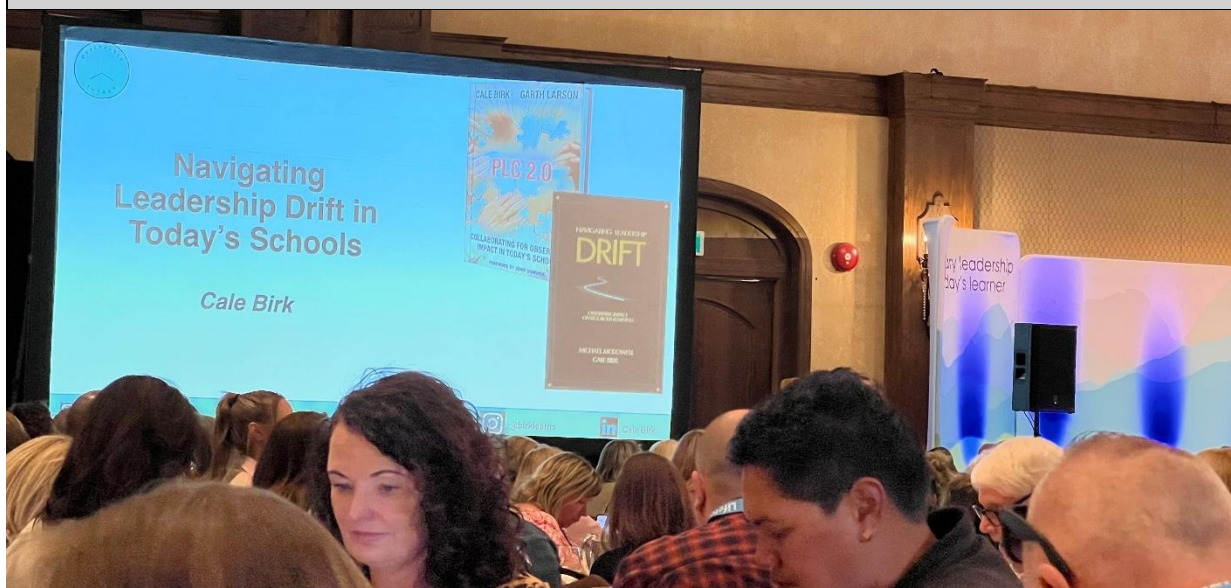
Work intensification and the moral distress of seeing students struggle without getting access to the supports they require are wreaking havoc on the teaching profession.

Fitzhugh Jasper, December 2023

The New Zealand education sector is facing a similar situation!

He continued saying that the pace of change over the last 5 years will be the lowest we will experience moving on. He highlighted the need for value and identified the loneliness of leadership, ensuring the need for us find support from colleagues.

Keynote #1 Cale Birk - “Navigating the Leadership Drift”



Cale Birk is a former teacher, high school principal and author of “*Navigating Leadership Drift*” and “*Changing Change Using Learner Centered Design.*” Cale’s focus was ‘the leadership drift’, how to spot

when we are 'drifting' and how to lead from the middle by creating the conditions to make the impact of their leadership observable.

Cale started his keynote by saying he was a "recovering" Principal. Cale discussed the loss of leadership in Education not only Principals, but anyone in the school system who is trying to make changes that have a positive and observable impact where it matters the most—in classrooms with students.

He emphasized: "We are losing leaders in education. There, let's just name it."

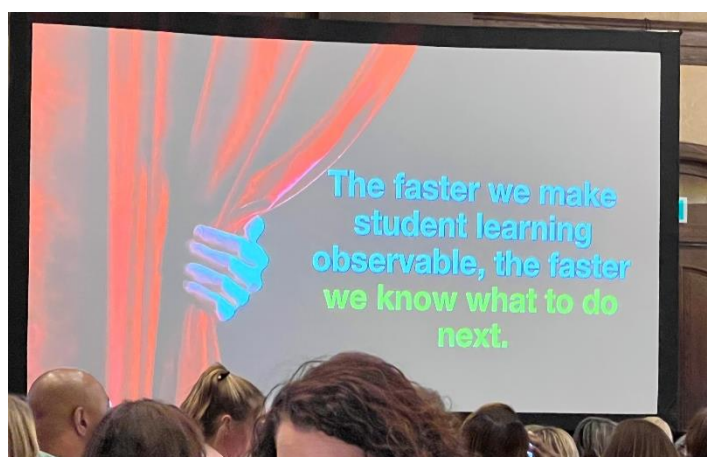
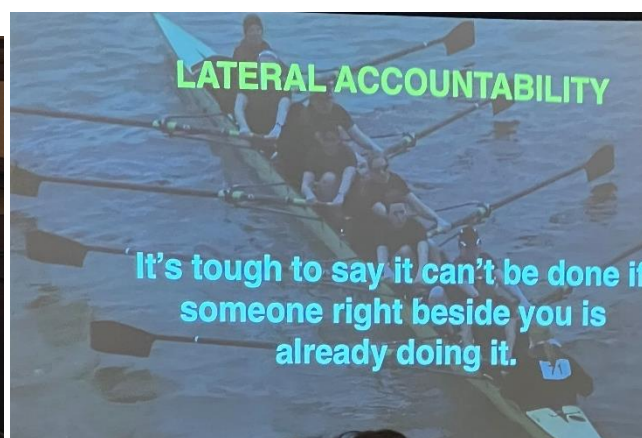
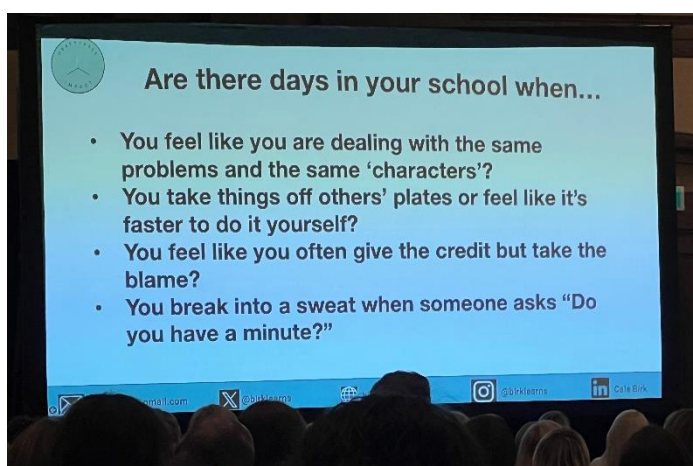
Department heads, team leaders, instructional coaches and even volunteers. Despite the unending will from educators to meet the needs of the children in classrooms, the already sky-high demands placed on the school system (pushed even higher in the post-pandemic era) have transformed leadership into **survival at all levels.**

Cale presented a sentence starter "I signed up to be leader, but I feel like a" – he paused and then principals began calling out responses across the room, firefighter, psychologist, accountant, mediator, private investigator, diplomat. The role of Principal has gone from a basic army knife to an exceptionally complex Swiss army knife.

As a result, as leaders often find themselves 'drifting', moving from crisis to crisis, struggling to know whether we are making a difference, and wondering "Is all of this worth it?".

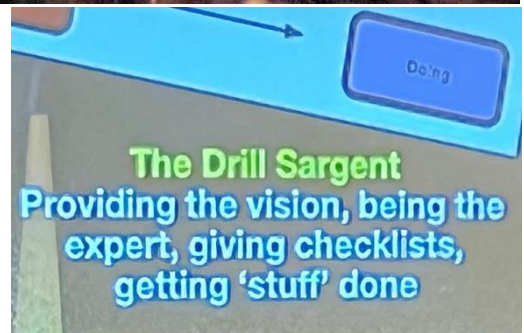
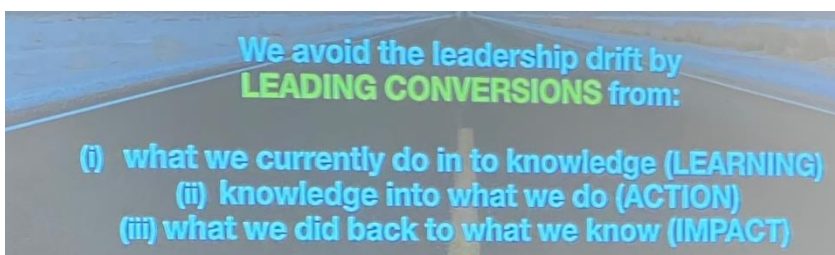
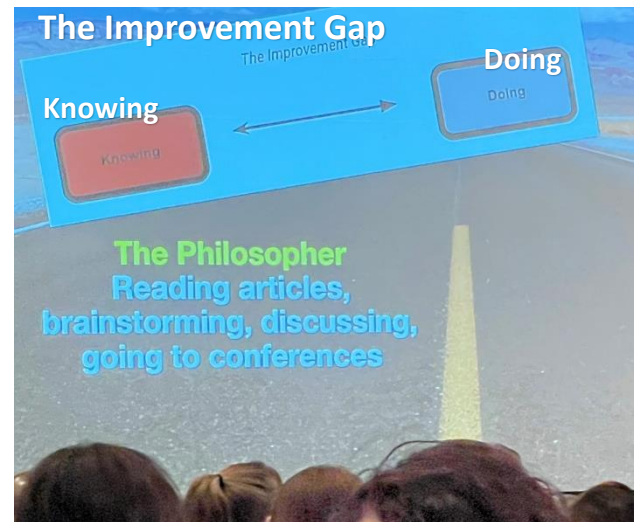
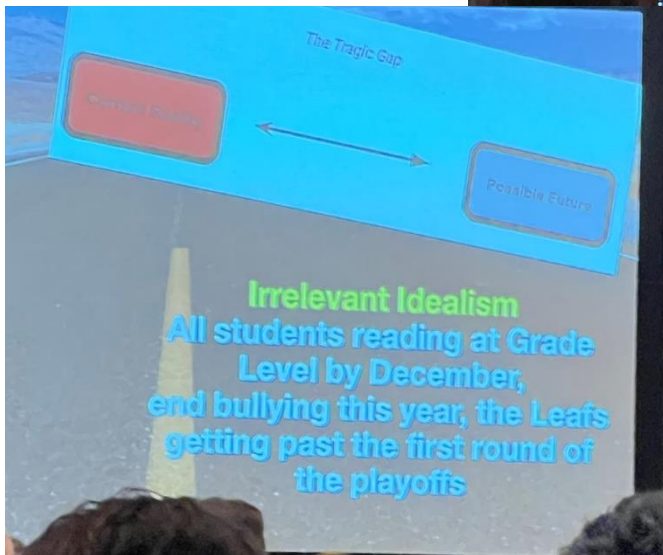
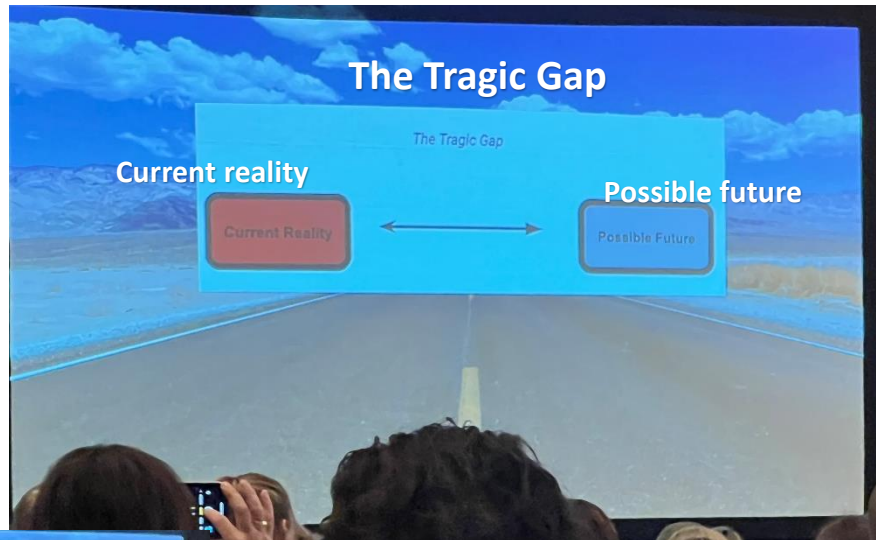
Cale provided the good news that leaders DO make a difference. A big one. At all levels. As leaders we just need to make it easier for ourselves to SEE that we make a difference. To make the impact of our leadership observable while concurrently building the collective efficacy of those who lead, teach and learn in our schools.

Photos of slides that resonated with me:



Analogy

He compared driving on an open road to principalship. As leaders we may drift into another lane on the open road.



Breakout Session - Thriving not Surviving - Building sustainable habits for personal and professional wellness.

Full title: Thriving not Surviving – Building sustainable habits for personal and professional wellness.

The company's name: "Well by Design"

Watched the video "Be a Mr Jensen" YouTube

To do: show this to the staff back at school.

Canadian statistics: Approximately \$1 billion is lost because of teachers being away from school.

Principals have to be *“agile, nibble and responsive”* every minute of the working day so as to deal with diversity of situations and people. ‘The principal chokes the whole school suffocates.’

Nobody believes that stress, burnout, etc will happen to them until it actually does. HEALTH IS FRAGILE! When you are well you have a thousand wishes. When you are unwell you only have one.

Principals must:

- Build a supportive network within education!
- Learn what grounds you and go to ground when you need it. Sadly, when under pressure we cancel that one thing that might ground us to address the issue. This then contributes to our fatigue, we become dysregulated, and we fight / flight or freeze.

Canadian statistics shared: 35% of their workforce is burnt out.

The presenter shared the 12 stages of burnout.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1) Compulsive Ambition: | “I must prove myself” |
| 2) Working Harder: | “I must do more” |
| 3) Neglecting Needs: | “I don’t have time for that” |
| 4) Avoiding Conflict: | “Nothing is wrong” |
| 5) Revising Values: | “This (work) is more important” |
| 6) Denying Problems: | “The problem is others” |
| 7) Withdrawal: | “I need time alone” |
| 8) Concerning Others: | “I’m fine, stop worrying” |
| 9) Depersonalisation | “I just need to make it through today” |
| 10) Sense of Emptiness: | “I don’t feel much anymore” |
| 11) Depression: | “Nothing really matters” |
| 12) Final Stage of Burnout: | “I can’t go on” |

Activity:

We were divided into smaller groups of 4 and numbered ourselves. We blew up a balloon each and wrote “Home” “Work” “Health” Personal” on the balloons.

One person in the group had to juggle all four balloons. This is compared to life. Obviously, it was really difficult. He then called out Number 2s jump in pick up the fallen balloons and help juggle. Then after a short while he called out Numbers 3 & 4 jump in and pick up and help juggle. It became easier.

Message: Let people in to help you!

As principals we need to give ourselves the time to talk about other stuff and not school and we should be providing our staff with the same opportunity. Organise staff events that are not about school.

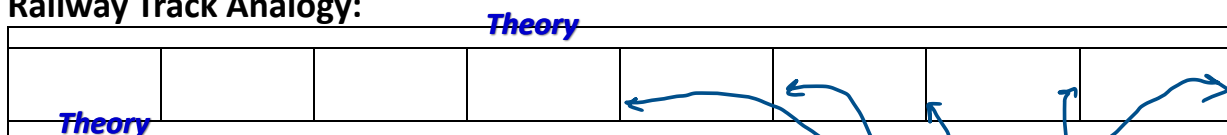
Finally, “forget work-life balance and focus on coherence instead” and said that would be another whole day’s workshop. **To do:** Look up “ACHIEVE Centre for Leadership”

Breakout Session - Amplifying student agency through critical multiculturalism a framework for promoting educational equity.

PRESENTERS: A workshop presented by Gregory Samuels and Amy Samuels – both from totally different ethnic backgrounds with the USA.

Introduced us to an App – **Nearpod** A great App that students can use during lessons to ask questions without using their real name. This encourages all those shy students to engage.

Railway Track Analogy:



The metal tracks = the theory

The Sleepers = teaching practice

If one of the two are missing the track will not work. Teaching practice without being based in theory / research will not work and the theory will not work if it is not put into practice with fidelity.

Key messages from this workshop:

- Politicians worldwide are extending their hands into education. Using education as a vote generator.
- In the USA the move is to influence gender, sexuality, diversity and inclusion. This is being accomplished by politicians restricting the novels, picture books, etc that teachers can have in their class libraries and that schools can have in the library.
- Books are being banned in some states in the USA and this is extending into others. Especially books that on how racism has affected societal and economic development. Books about sexuality inclusivity are being banned.
- Alabama and Pennsylvania: “To Kill a Mockingbird” BANNED “Of Mice and Men” BANNED. Schools and teachers found to have these books in their libraries at school are fined.
- Alabama and Pennsylvania: Teachers are not allowed to teach or deliver content that causes any child to feel uncomfortable. History: Slavery – removed and cannot be talked about or taught.
- The Governor of Alabama, Kay Ivey, has passed legislation that is against diversity, equity and inclusion at state schools and tertiary institutions. Toilets can only be allocated and used according to your biological sex.
- Presenters recommend: “Curriculum Violence: America’s New Civil Rights Issue” by Erhabor Ighodaro published 2009
- INTENT and IMPACT: The curriculum will have intent, and yet the impact ... (did not finish writing and can’t recall the message). For example:
 - reading and studying literature in which the protagonists are non-whites,
 - starting USA history with the arrival of the colonists.
- The presenters listed all the names of prominent USA pedagogical developers, researchers and philosophers upon which their system is built. They are all Caucasian males!
- Discussion about how state and USA standardised testing is a divisive policy.
- Once law is passed it is exceptionally difficult to change. The advice is read the legislation, know it, find out what it does not say as well as what it does say.
- Education in the USA and Canada is now a political football and kicked about at election time.

Breakout Session -

Do you understand your impact? Leading for Organisational Wellbeing.

PRESENTERS: Dr Sherri Humphrys and Dr Kate Syson They spoke about their doctoral study.

Essential messages:

- 47 principals participated in their study. 3 surveys were conducted on each principal. Principals rated themselves. 150 teachers rated the 47 principals. Principals rated their leadership higher than what the teachers did.
- Key messages from the surveys:
 - a) Build and maintain trusting relationships.
 - b) Be present and engaged alongside the teachers.
 - c) Gather and respond to feedback from the teachers.
- The school’s culture affects teacher well-being.
- “Teacher – principal relationship is the most important relationship at work.” (Gallop, 2019)
- There is a difference between personal and professional wellbeing.
- Principals cannot change a teacher’s personal wellbeing.

- Six dimensions of wellness:

1. Intellectual	2. Environmental	3. Spiritual
4. Physical	5. Social	6. Emotional
- Ask yourself what can I do to positively affect my wellness? (Be realistic with your answers.)
- While a principal cannot fix the personal wellbeing of staff, school is a place where teachers must feel well as a professional. Principal behaviours and responses directly impact the ability of teachers to positively cope with the complexities of their roles.
- Finally, principals really matter. Indeed, it is difficult to envision schools without them.

DAY TWO Monday 15th April 2024

The day began with the Alberta Teachers' Association's Land Acknowledgement.

Keynote #2 Baruti Kafele - "Is my school a better place because I lead it?"

Principal Baruti Kafele, a highly regarded and very charismatic urban educator in New Jersey for more than 20 years, who returned to his own district where achievement was low, and he wanted success for his students badly. He was a powerful orator in volume, expressions, expression of emotion and integration of physical movements. He had a handheld mirror that he used a prop on several occasions.

As a middle and high school principal, Principal Kafele led the turnaround of four New Jersey urban schools 10 years ago, including "The Mighty" Newark Tech—which went from a low-performing school in need of improvement to national recognition, and which was recognized three times by U.S. News and World Report as one of America's best high schools.

He had his website on his title slide. <https://principalkafele.com/>

"Everything that happens in the school is a reflection of school leadership."

Bullet pointing his keynote:

- Defy stereotype, achieve the impossible.
- Principals are born in the classroom; they want to take their ability in the classroom and extend it to more students. To do this, they have to work through the teachers the lead in their schools.
- He held up the hand mirror examined himself and loudly projected "principals engage in daily self-reflection, self-assessment, self-adjustment, and self-improvement as a 'game film' review!"
- He spoke of how coaches use video recordings of the last game played by their teams, replaying sections very slowly, pausing and dissecting what they saw, analysing it and then working out what the player need to do better next time. [I thought about how we use IRIS CONNECT at PNS.]
- Baruti held up his mirror again and projected the question "Principals in this room, when last did you breakdown and analyse your leadership?" very loudly.
- The following are important for all leaders in the education system:

1) Self-reflection	2) Self-Assessment
3) Self-adjustment	4) Self-improvement
5) Self-preservation (self-care)	



- Worry about the attitude gap that exists among your teachers and not the achievement gap in your students.

- If the principal projects an attitude of “I want to be better”, then the teachers will project it, and then the students will do better.
- Can your teachers say that they are growing under your principalship?
- **Question:** Does instruction thrive at my school?
- **Statement:** Instruction is teaching plus learning.
- **Question:** Is your school a better school BECAUSE you lead it?
- There must be a correlation between the principal’s leadership and school’s culture.
- **Principal non-negotiables:**
 - 1) You are the instructional leader and coach – you must make your teachers better.
 - 2) Student engager! Talk to your ākongā. Go around and eat lunch with them. Treat them like family – create a family environment at your schools. *[Where have we heard this before? Prof Russell Bishop!]*



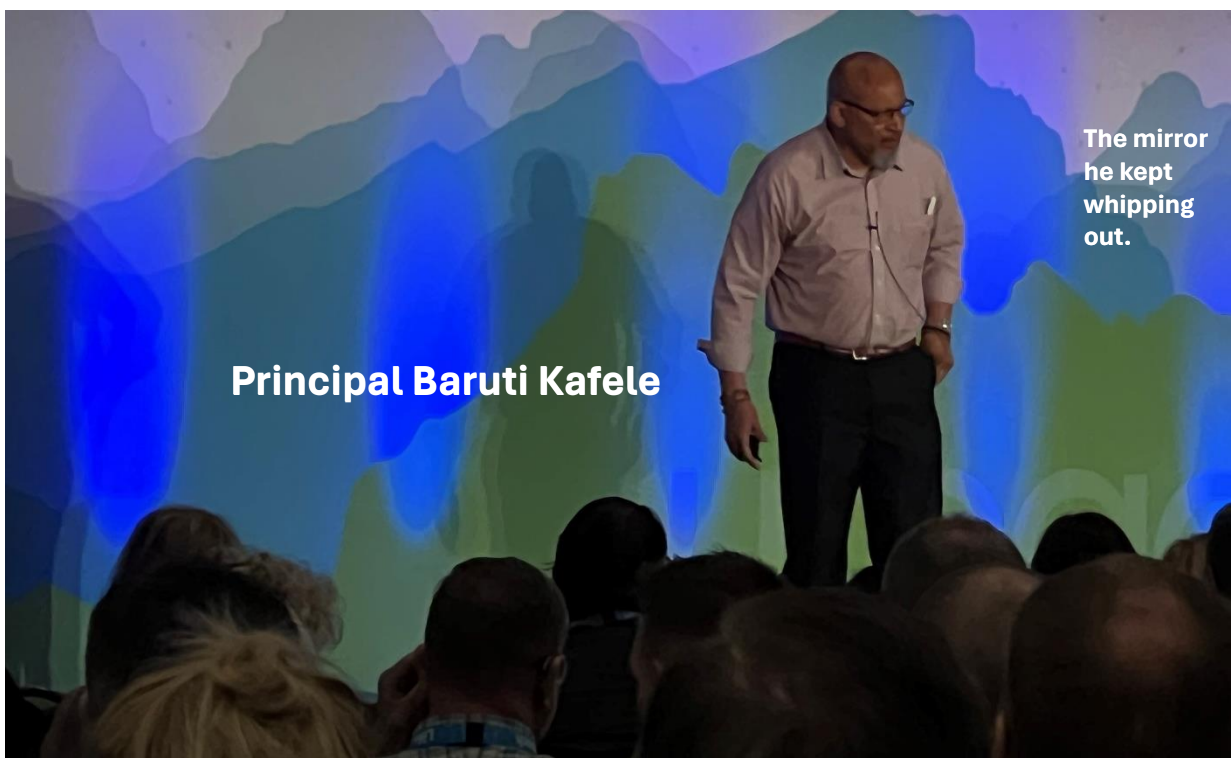
- **Seven elements of a leader:**

1) Leadership identity	2) Leadership presence	3) Leadership impact
4) Leadership mission	5)	6)
7)	<i>I wasn't quick enough to copy them all.</i>	

Closing summary:

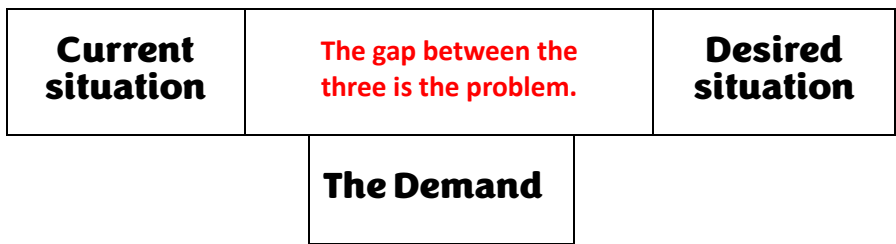
Principal Kafele challenged school leaders to examine their own leadership identity, presence, impact, mission, purpose, vision and value as the leaders of their schools. The entire presentation was highly engaging, high-energy and albeit slightly evangelical. He challenged school leaders to think deeply and critically about their roles as leaders of their schools and whether or not their schools are better schools because they are the leaders of them.

He concluded by saying that we have to make sure that at the end of the day the principal is the number one determinant of the success or failure in their school. He encourages principals to know in our heart and mind that we matter so that you have the confidence and energy to do your role.



Breakout Session - Dr Jacqui Patuawa (A NZ'der)
Conversations that positively impact student Learning

She is from Papamoa and is a protégé to Vivien Robinson. She began with the question “What is a problem?”



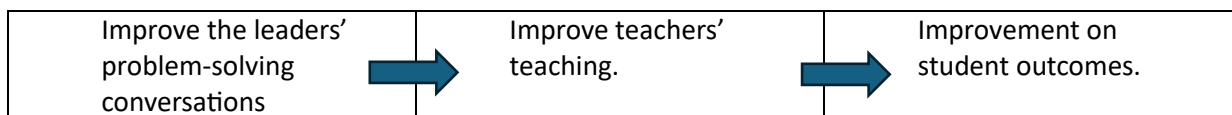
A problem is the gap between the current, the desired situation and the demand.

During this entire phase, conversation, is the most important leadership tool.

Are there things that you should discuss but don't?

“The problem in schools is that even though schools exist for ākonga, we prioritise adult relationships, and their needs and wants.”

How do we improve conversations for the positive impact on ākonga outcomes?



How much time do we spend trying to solve the wrong problems?

Our problem-solving strategies become habitual.

Viviane Robinson on solving complex problems of practice:

https://youtu.be/Ak-MP_OUVew?feature=shared

Schools must understand the leadership ability and capability throughout the school. Schools must conduct an audit of the school's collective leadership. What are the weaknesses? What are the strengths?

Begin the audit with one question: “What do you lead?”

(Go back to handwritten notes for the model answer.)

Dr Jacqui Patuawa is an accredited PLD provider and works in schools predominantly with Team Leaders.

j.patuawa@evaluate.co.nz

“Leading by Learning” Showed us a video from Tauranga Intermediate School where her work has had a positive effect on the outcomes the school achieves.

To do: This is something to explore for Papakura Normal School!

After the video she began broaching the topic of her presentation. She introduced the 4 disciplines.

She asked us to get into groups of four preferably with people from another table. This is when a very large proportion of people walked out. This left the New Zealanders and Icelanders in the tables near I was sitting. Awkward. We were slightly dumbfounded.

Discipline 1 Focus on the wildly important goal. Narrow that focus. Determine the most important objective that won't be achieved without a focused effort.

Discipline 2 Act on the lead measures.
LAG – success (Do not fixate on this.)
LEAD – critical Activities that lead and predict the lag measures

Discipline 3 Keep the scoreboard – teachers must see the progress as they go along!

Discipline 4 Create a cadence of accountability. Weekly meetings - 20 minutes maximum team members to hold each other accountable.

Nothing drives improvement better than success.

DAY THREE Tuesday 16th April 2024 - Only a half day

The day began with the Alberta Teachers' Association's Land Acknowledgement.

Keynote #4 Dr Jennifer McMullen
"Stop the burnout: enhancing support practices for principals"

Her first slide:

"Principals really matter. Indeed, it is difficult to envision an investment with a higher ceiling on its potential return than a successful effort to improve principal leadership."

(Grissom, et al., 2021)

Statistical Message:

- Rapidly declining number of Canadian teachers want to become principals. She should a slide listing all the things that principals are required to do and made a comparison with that of a prominent Canadian CEO. (Guess who is overworked.)
- The Canadian education system is in crisis (as is ours) politicians leave education alone.
- Canada is calling for a centralised support structure for principals. (NZPF is calling for the same.)
- Principals pour time, emotional support, counselling support and growth coaching into the vessels of their staff, students, and even parents. Who pours into the principals' vessel? That's correct no one.
- This is why there is a growing shortage of principals internationally.
- Principals are often the first resistors to new ideas.

YouTube Video to watch: "Work Intensification: How the Role of School Leaders is Changing"

<https://youtu.be/V1VIO4GilmU?feature=shared>



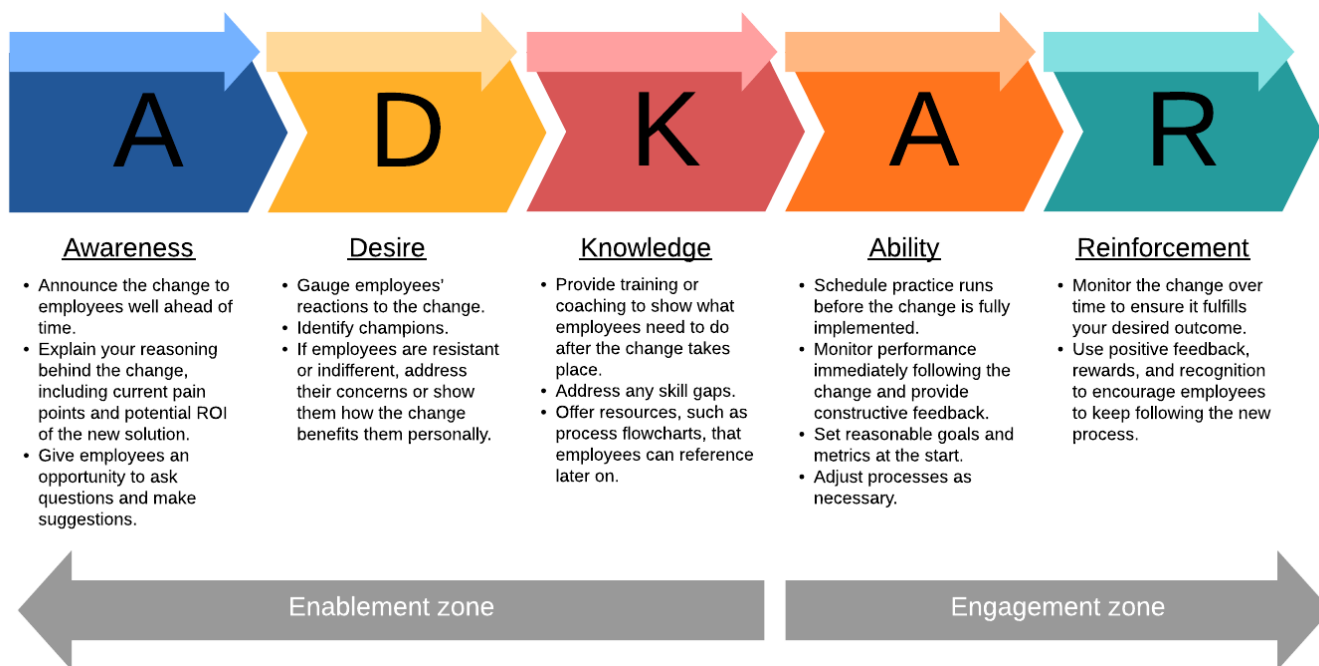
Work intensification has been exacerbated by the onsite of email, texting and video calls. These “technological forces” are having a negative effect on employees from across the workforce.

The Ontario Education Board has now passed legislation – “Disconnecting from work” policy. No work from 6pm to 7am and no working on weekends.

Principals need to set personal boundaries as well as boundaries for staff around technological demands.

Principals must avoid saying to their staff: “Reach out if you need anything/support.” unless they are prepared to be out and about the school and easily accessible to the staff.

Instead, principals need to plan the change management process. Dr McMullen recommended using the ADKAR Framework for change management.



Other messages:

- **Nova Scotia** in Canada has begun to change its schooling governance and administration structure. District School Boards are being dissolved. The new structure is decentralising, almost like ours here in NZ, but without the local government Board structure.
- **Canada-wide:**
 - Growing insistence for support for new principals to receive longer-term and structured support.
 - There is a call for a national centralised website where principals can access support documentation and where they can upload that which other principals may find helpful.
 - A national principal wellbeing model that is resourced to support principals to maintain a healthy wellbeing.

Finally, she asked the principals present the following question:

Have you ever told someone that they would be an amazing team leader, deputy principal or principal (depending on their next step)?

[My answer – Yes, I have]

Breakout Session - Leading through Crisis

This session delivered by four of the senior leadership team for Strathcona High School was a powerful and reflective session on leading through crisis.

When a false instagram account hit social media, the Strathcona High School senior leadership were not prepared for the harsh response from both inside and outside the school, the issues related to institutional racism and their impact on school culture or for the deep personal impact that this experience would carve into their professional practice. There were two polarised movements in the school, those who wanted to destroy and those who wanted to work together. Staff were on both sides

The Senior Leadership team shared their journey of exploration and discovery toward becoming a community that supports diversity and antiracist education; they involved the entire school community in the movement, their approach, what worked well and what inflamed or fell flat, and how they continue to move their team of 100+ staff and 1700+ students forward in this work. The presenters used the lyrics from Bob Dylan's song Times are a Changing to encourage all to be ready to swim any way you can.

Key messages

- We are all challenged to lead through crisis.
- We are leading in difficult times!
- What if the crisis is a societal shift and the school is seen as the problem?
- All of society's problems come to our schools. How do we deal with this?
- We are tasked to deal with a crisis but are frequently not equipped to do so.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/white-student-alliance-racism-edmonton-strathcona-high-school-1.5915872>



Outside the IGA, Banff



These huge Canadian-style chairs are located at points of interest. This one faced the Rockies.

Eggs are sold out of refrigerators.



It snowed on the last day in Banff, I just had to leave some prints.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This was my very first international school leadership conference. It was interesting to learn that the education sector in New Zealand faces the same challenges as in Canada and beyond.

I thank the, then Minister of Education and her Ministry of Education for realising the importance of investing in the principals of Aotearoa / New Zealand and thus making this Principal's Professional Coaching and Wellbeing Support Fund available for 2023 and 2024. After all,...

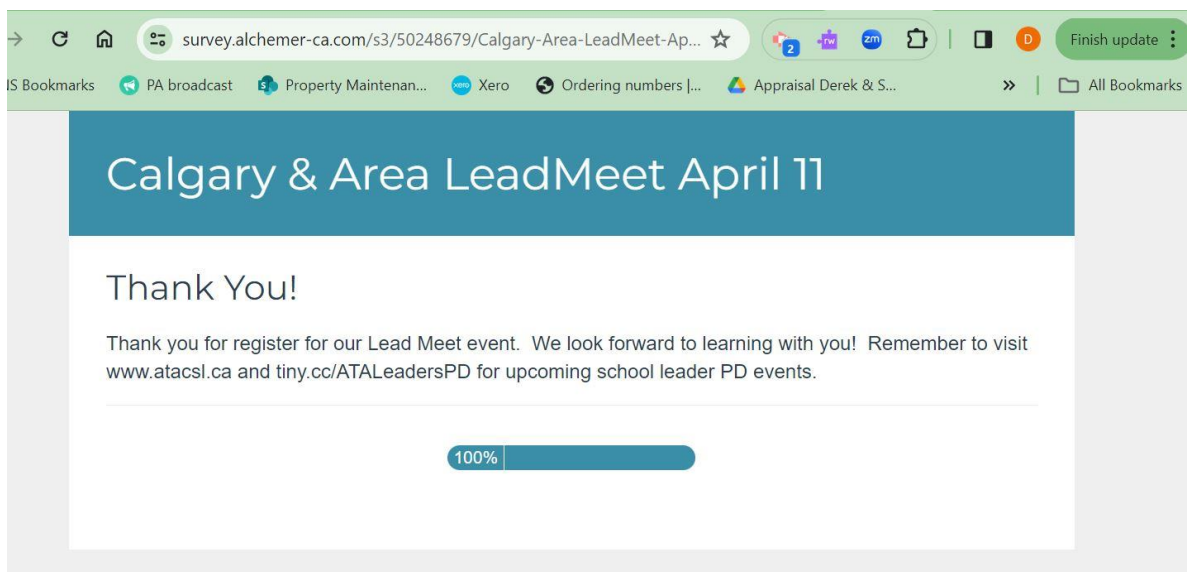
“Principals really matter. Indeed, it is difficult to envision an investment with a higher ceiling on its potential return than a successful effort to improve principal leadership.”

(Grissom, et al., 2021)

I thank the Board of Papakura Normal School for its understanding of what my attendance and learning at the uLead Conference would bring for me. The Board approved this international conference and travel late in 2023, approximately six months prior to the event. The date of the Conference coincided with the New Zealand April school holidays allowing me to stay on in North America (at my own cost).

Thank you to the three Deputy Principals for holding onto the *hoe whakaterere* in my absence.

Thank you to the **Council for School Leadership** for accepting my presentation topic and for allowing me to share my leadership journey with Canadian principals. A professional learning experience in itself.



Copy of the PowerPoint that I used while presenting.



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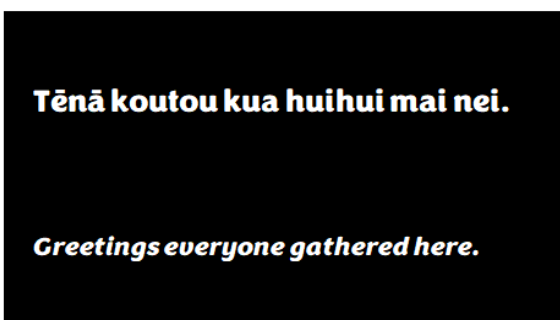
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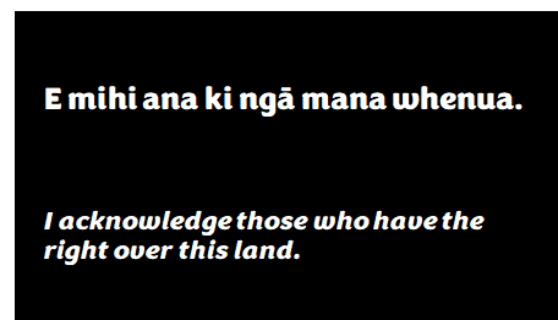
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Ko Derek Linington tōku ingoa.

My name is Derek Linington.

9

**Nō Onehunga, Tamaki Makaurau,
Aotearoa ahau.**

*I am from (the suburb of) Onehunga, in
Auckland, New Zealand.*

10

**E mahi ana au hei tumuaki ki
Papakura Normal School.**

*I am the principal of Papakura Normal
School.*

11

**Ko ahau hoki te Perehitini o te
Rōpū Tumuaki o Papakura.**

*I am also the president of the
Papakura Principals Association.
(30 schools)*

12

**Kei te koa ahau ki te korero ki a
koe i tenei po.**

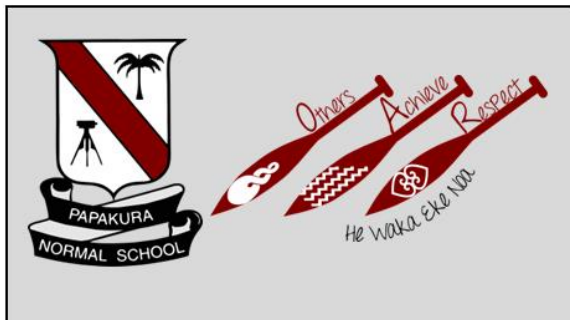
*I am pleased to be able to share with
you tonight.*

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Nō reira, tēnā koutou katoa.

So, greetings to you all.

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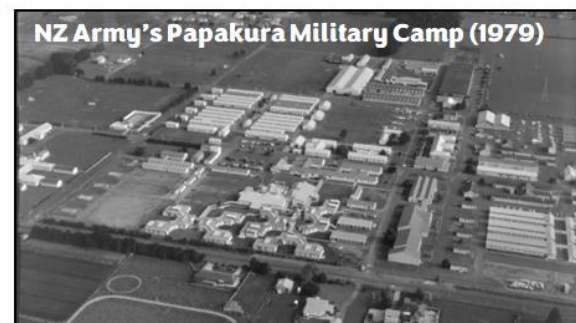
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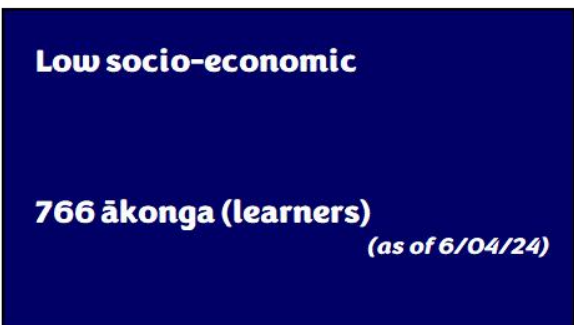
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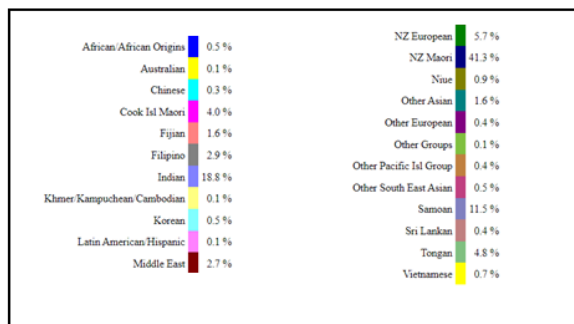
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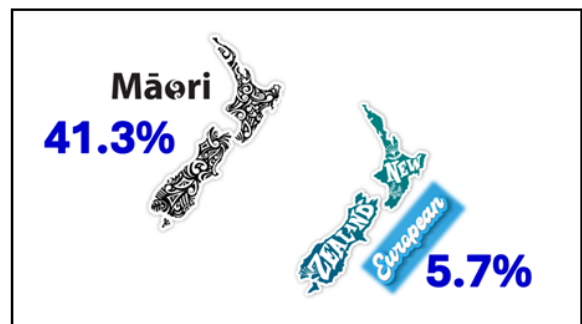
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AGE	♂	♀	Total	or	%
5 Years	47 Males	42 Females	89	or	11.6%
6 Years	46 Males	61 Females	107	or	14.0%
7 Years	52 Males	57 Females	109	or	14.2%
8 Years	51 Males	49 Females	100	or	13.1%
9 Years	41 Males	41 Females	82	or	10.7%
10 Years	46 Males	45 Females	91	or	11.9%
11 Years	51 Males	56 Females	107	or	14.0%
12 Years	44 Males	34 Females	78	or	10.2%
13 Years	2 Males	1 Females	3	or	0.4%

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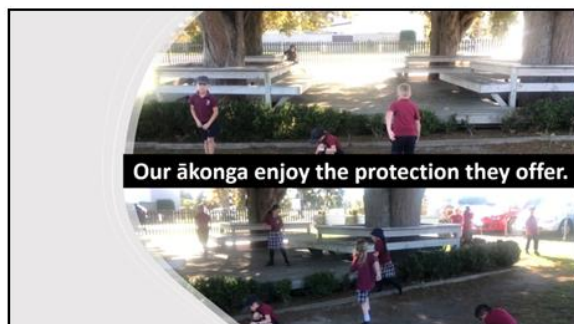
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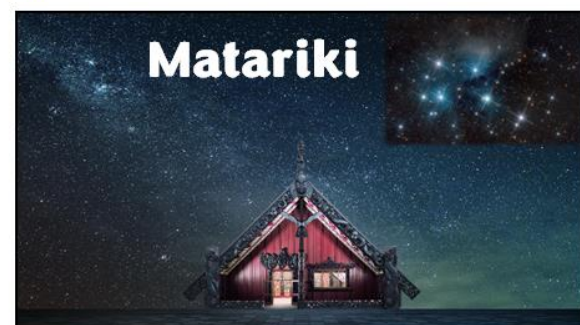
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Matariki

Matariki is the mātāmua of the stars and is associated with hauora, our health and wellbeing.

<p>Hiwa-i-te-rangi</p> <p>This star is associated with our aspirations and wishes. He tapu rawa.</p>	<p>Pōhutakawa</p> <p>This star is associated with the recently deceased. Honouring ngā mate.</p>
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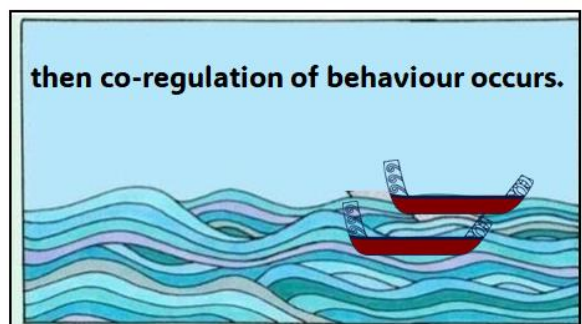
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When their storm meets our calm...

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