1. Your details

Contact details for group

Name of group, team, or partnership:  Upper Hutt Education Network

Name of school / kura, early learning / childhood education service, management body, or Kāhui Ako:

18 schools including Birchville School, Fergusson Intermediate School, Fraser Crescent School, Heretaunga College, Maidstone Intermediate School, Mangaroa School, Māoribank School, Oxford Crescent School, Pinehaven School, Plateau School, Silverstream School, St Brendan’s School, St Joseph’s (Upper Hutt) School, Tawhai School, Totara Park School, Trentham School, Upper Hutt College and Upper Hutt Primary School.

Type of learning medium:  English

Physical & Mailing address:

C/- Simon Kenny, Upper Hutt Principal Association Chair
Fergusson Intermediate
Hikurangi Street
Upper Hutt

Postcode:  5018

Contact details of lead person – provide one main point of contact

Full name of contact / lead person:  Simon Kenny

Title / position:  Upper Hutt Principals’ Association Chairperson

School / Service / Organisation:  Fergusson Intermediate

Phone (work):  04 5287023

Phone (mobile):  027 5566116

Email address:  skenny@fergusson.school.nz

2. Award categories you are entering

Tell us which category or categories your group is entering.

Excellence in Engaging – Atahāpara Award
This award celebrates working together as a community to transform relationships and achievement, leading to improved and sustained outcomes for all children and young people.

Yes
Upper Hutt Education Network

Excellence in Leading – Atakura Award
This award celebrates leadership and influence that have strengthened professional capability and created a change in conditions, leading to improved and sustained outcomes for all children and young people.

3. Introduce your case study

We are a network of schools in a geographical area with the desire to network more strategically on a common purpose. Learner engagement was identified as a common challenge for all schools, in varying forms. We have undertaken professional learning for all teachers in our schools to build teacher and leader capability, improve engagement in learning and ensure smoother transitions as students move through school in the Upper Hutt area. We identified learner agency as a key aspect of engagement, where students with agency were likely to be deeply engaged in learning, as opposed to simply be engaged in schooling. The project has involved teachers learning together to develop their understanding of learner agency and a development of a cluster-wide vision and strategic plan.

Upper Hutt City has a population of just over 40,000 and the schools in this area serve 5,470 Year 1-10 students (59.3% NZ European, 22.7% Māori, 5.9% Pasifika, 7% Asian & 5.1% other ethnic groups). The project involves 18 schools, each with a Principal and Lead Teacher who facilitate the project together as a lead group. The table below outlines the roles and numbers of people involved in the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Lead Teacher</th>
<th>No. of teachers involved</th>
<th>No. of students involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birchville</td>
<td>Robyn Brown</td>
<td>Ashton Stuart</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>178</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fergusson Intermediate</td>
<td>Simon Kenny</td>
<td>Adrienne Lyall</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraser Crescent</td>
<td>John Channer</td>
<td>Ellen Stirling</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heretaunga College</td>
<td>Bruce Hart</td>
<td>Venkat Reddy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>385 Y9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Lead Teacher</td>
<td>No. of teachers involved</td>
<td>No. of students involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone Intermediate</td>
<td>Mary O'Regan</td>
<td>Chris Robinson</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mangaroa</td>
<td>Lisa Malones</td>
<td>Sam Harrison</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Māoribank</td>
<td>Karen Wellington</td>
<td>Karen Wellington</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Crescent</td>
<td>Nathan Russell</td>
<td>Merilyn McKenzie</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vanessa Murphy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinehaven</td>
<td>Kaylene Macnee</td>
<td>Michelle Tate</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>Nigel Frater</td>
<td>Pauline Roberts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silverstream</td>
<td>Lisa Cavanagh</td>
<td>Bryan Trevean</td>
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<td>466</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Brendan’s</td>
<td>Veronica Sawers</td>
<td>Nicole Banks</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>248</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jo Hunter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s</td>
<td>Chris Steffensen</td>
<td>Chris Steffensen</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>389</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Acting)</td>
<td>Selina Peauafi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tawhai</td>
<td>Karen Poole</td>
<td>Ginny Treadwell</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totara Park</td>
<td>Joel Webby</td>
<td>Dave Chalmers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>284</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trentham</td>
<td>Suzanne Su’a</td>
<td>Bernie Olliver</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>413</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Hutt College</td>
<td>Judith Taylor</td>
<td>Karla Lister</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>388 Y9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Hutt Primary</td>
<td>Jo Grant</td>
<td>Zoe Eggleton</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This group is supported by a Cluster Project Lead Team who ensure the project remains on track. The members of this Cluster Project Lead Team changes from time to time as required due to availability and workload of individuals. Current members are Suzanne Su’a, Kaylene Macnee, Lisa Cavanagh, Robyn Brown, Nathan Russell, John Channer, Simon Kenny.
Upper Hutt Education Network

In addition to the schools above:
- 7 Remutaka RTLB team members are involved (Kate Endri is the Lead Teacher)
- 4 Whanau Manaaki Kindergarten staff are involved
- 5 Play.Sport team members are involved (external professional development provider in H/PE)

Of the schools listed above:
- 12 are contributing schools catering for Years 0-6 students
- 2 are state integrated Catholic schools catering for Years 0-8 students
- 2 are intermediate schools catering for Years 7 and 8 students
- 2 are secondary schools catering for Years 9-13 students – this project includes a small number of teachers who work with Year 9 & 10 students

Within our group, 8 principals have changed since the project began, as have some of the Lead Teachers. 3 of the new principals are beginning principals (as well as one currently acting). The pace of the project has not been impacted by these changes, which we believe is a significant strength in our network. The ongoing success and sustainability of our project is not reliant on a small group of key leaders.

We believe we have a sustainable model of collaboration, with shared, distributed leadership that enables us to maximise the strengths of people in our cluster. Our model of collaboration has the students at the centre, surrounded by teachers who have the power to directly influence the learning the students encounter. The teachers are supported by Lead Teachers, who are supported by the Principals and Boards of Trustees. There is no one key leader, we have a shared leadership approach to our work.

4. What did your group set out to achieve, and why?

We set out to develop the capacity of teachers and leaders across our network to ensure all students in Upper Hutt are experiencing high quality programmes in every school, focused on the needs of our community. Historically, as a cluster of principals we have worked closely together, including primary, intermediate and secondary. We had pockets of collaboration such as Principals, AP/DP, SENCOS, ECE/Year 0 teachers, BOT Chairs, however every group worked in isolation with no common purpose. We worked on topics of common interest, but never got into any real depth of collaborative learning with sustainable
outcomes. Our Principal group has worked across sectors for some time, however our teachers across sectors have not been networking or sharing practice. In 2015 we realised we needed to work with greater purpose and rigour. We met as principals to share our strengths and areas of development for each school, then we identified common trends and needs. We spent 2 days as a Principal group, sharing strengths, challenges and strategic aims for each of our schools. This information made us realise we needed to improve engagement in learning across our city, with a focus on giving students agency, having positive well-being and teachers and students working collaboratively across our network and within schools. We agreed that this would enable us to focus on individual school needs while working together to learn. We wanted to ensure our students across Upper Hutt were more engaged in learning for a longer period of time, with higher achievement across the curriculum, and experiencing smooth transitions as they moved through schools. We looked for themes that could be worked across sectors so that engagement was relevant to all levels and all schools. Both international and national research shows that continued engagement in school and how engagement drops over time as students move through schooling. (Fullan, 2012; Cox & Kennedy, 2008). This made us want to examine the situation here in Upper Hutt and ensure that we were not continually having this pattern of engagement in our city.

In our schools and community, we are proud of our achievements. The percentage of secondary students with NCEA Level 2 or equivalent is higher than the National profile (Ministry of Education PAI data). School level achievement data has been analysed within schools, however we all identified that for many students, what would make the difference in curriculum achievement, was the engagement in learning as an initial start point. Across our cluster, we had no baseline data with regards to engagement in learning, apart from individual school attendance data. We had anecdotal information that suggested behaviour issues could be resolved through increased engagement in learning. Our communities value progress and achievement, but most importantly, students reaching their potential. For many years, we have discussed the well-being of our students and the impact of positive well-being on educational outcomes and reaching potential, and this view is supported by ERO (2016). While many of our students come from families where they are well supported, there are a number of students across the city, whose families need support in ensuring the students have a high sense of well-being and are ready for learning when they walk in the school gate. Many of our students complete primary, intermediate and secondary education within the pathways provided in our group of schools, however we had never really shared practice and examined what transitioning from one school to another was like for a student in Upper Hutt. We wanted to find out more about how we could provide smooth transitions for
Upper Hutt Education Network

students in our city as they moved from school to school to ensure students continue to progress and remain engaged in learning.

5. What practice did you need to change to make this happen?

**Engaging:**
In order to achieve greater engagement as a learning community that focused on smoother transitions and improved educational outcomes for students across our city, we needed to:

- strengthen our learning community and find common goals (across schools and sectors);
- strengthen relationships across schools with regards to teachers – teachers knowing each other, trusting information and practice, sharing practice (successes and challenges);
- ensure teachers knew what learning environments their students were coming from and moving to, in order to obtain smooth transitions between schools;
- provide opportunities for teachers to come together to learn from and with each other – we needed to get 250 teachers in the same room talking to each other about our common purpose!
- educate our families about the benefits of collaboration and learner agency.

**Leading:**
In order to improve the practice of leaders and teachers that focused on smoother transitions and improved educational outcomes for students across our city, we needed to:

- develop greater understanding of what learner agency looks like, why it is important and how it can be achieved;
- identify strengths in our own schools, grow these and share them with others;
- engage in professional learning together across schools to learn about possibilities;
- learn about the changing role of the teacher in schools and how to lead the development of this across our cluster;
- see what was happening in other schools in our cluster;
- grow leaders to get buy in from teachers;
- provide opportunities for networking and professional learning – time for teachers to come together, get to know each other, share practice and learn together;
- pool resources (funding) in so that we had a commitment to make time for collaboration and ensure resources had a direct impact on improved outcomes for students;
Upper Hutt Education Network

- make a commitment to our work by developing a cluster vision and strategic plan that aligned to individual school charters and strategic plans;
- understand as leaders what true collaboration was and how to achieve this with rigour;
- find a relevant focus that resonated with all teachers across our cluster and communities;
- identify the strength and gems, and where that was in our cluster;
- ensure teachers understood we didn’t want to clone and have everyone the same, but that we had a clear purpose for working together (and ensure this was understood and revisited);
- develop a shared leadership model within a structure that worked for our people where distributed leadership could flourish.

6. How did you make the changes happen?

In order to make the changes happen, we employed a range of strategies. These are outlined below.

- Developed these strategic aims for our cluster: As the guardians (kaitiaki) and guides (kaiārahi) of teaching and learning in Upper Hutt we will ensure …
  - Engaged and empowered learners: Teaching and learning in Upper Hutt is holistic and engaging. Our learners see the value of learning and understand their role in it. Across our valley our learners are engaged, resilient and empowered in their learning.
  - Cultural responsiveness: Students have a strong sense of identity and belonging. Our programmes are culturally responsive, relevant and reflective of an ever-changing world.
  - Parent and whanau partnerships: Learning programmes and pedagogies are developed collaboratively within schools, across schools and with students, whanau and community.
  - Teaching Inquiry: Teachers are reflective and committed to best practice. They are open to change and professional growth.
- Developed a strategic plan for the cluster which has been continually reviewed. This includes vision, values, ways of working, goals and actions. This was developed in draft by principals and then shared with teachers and Boards of Trustees to seek feedback prior to confirming the approach. It has recently been reviewed and 2018 actions assigned to key people or groups within the cluster. Appendix 1 (end of this section).
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- Worked on building partnerships so that our school networking is strong, with high trust to pass information on as students transition.
- Pooled $250 per teacher from school professional learning budgets to provide a fund that enabled us to provide professional learning and networking opportunities for all teachers.
- Planned purposeful opportunities for teachers to collaborate and learn from and with each other (across school professional learning groups, cluster wide teacher only days and after school workshops). To ensure teaching as inquiry was a key aspect of the professional learning, we referred to ERO’s learner-focused processes to follow for effective evaluation for improvement in putting together our plan for the year (Education Review Office, 2016). This included a 2017 plan outlined in Appendix 2.
- Teachers visited other schools (same level and at other transition points) so they could see where students were coming from and going to, and learn from each other.
- Developed a cluster facebook page – used social media to connect teachers to network and share.
- Identified a lead teacher in every school to work alongside principals and drive the project. These people were provided with time to meet and engage in professional learning.
- Regularly reviewed our project and the progress we were making – teacher voice, student voice. We were responsive to feedback from teachers with regards to what was working and what needed to change.
- Collected baseline data by completing the *Me and My School Survey* Years 4-10 and analysed this data within schools and across the cluster with our strategic goals in mind to identify strengths, trends and areas for improvement. This has provided a baseline set of data to enable us to measure progress over time. We paid NZCER to provide a facilitator to support us to unpack this cluster data and what it meant of our practice and future plans. We identified key themes we needed to understand more about, which were students’ confidence and willingness to talk to their teachers, ensuring students aren’t bored at school, and making sure we provided students with agency in the classroom.
- Provided professional learning to build teacher capability by bringing outside speakers to our teachers (e.g. Stonefields School, Mark Osborne, Derek Wenmoth, CORE education, Rebecca Sweeney), with a focus on collaboration and learner agency.
- Principals and DPs contacted clusters working collaboratively and visited to find out about and learn from other collaborative models.
- All schools visited other Upper Hutt Schools across Year levels and some schools sent staff beyond Upper Hutt to learn about best practice in agency, collaboration and engagement and bring ideas back.
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- Schools allowed teachers to explore learner agency and working collaboratively in order to trial the change in practice in a non-threatening manner.
- Individual schools identified the appropriate pace for change for their own teachers.
- Upper Hutt principals made the commitment to begin their termly meeting with visits of Upper Hutt schools as they identified that they had not visited each other’s schools.
- For 2017, 4 themes of focus emerged based on teacher and school needs. These were Play Based Learning, Collaborative Practice, Learner Pathways & Learning Behaviours – these themes were informed by our professional reading and developing understandings of what is important for learner agency to flourish. Themes were unpacked with and by teachers through professional learning, workshops and sharing teaching as inquiry.
- For 2018, new themes of focus have emerged based on teacher and school needs. These are Collaboration, Agency Beyond Voice & Choice, Well-Being/Hauora, Cultural Competencies/Community Partnerships. Teachers have opted into unpacking, learning about and sharing practice in the theme that best suits their needs.
- Teachers were organised into professional learning groups (PLGs) with teachers from other schools. Each group met termly and shared their Teacher as Inquiry (see cluster Professional Learning). We based the PLG conversations around Jan Robertson’s model of peer coaching conversations one of our principals learnt through the National Aspiring Principals’ programme (NAPP reference in the reference list).
- Developed (and use) a cluster karakia that supports our project purpose. Appendix 3
- A number of schools have transformed physical spaces in order to facilitate agentic learning and the implementation of collaborative learning and teaching models.
- A number of schools have researched and implemented models of play based Learning based on professional learning and reading around the importance of play (Longworth Education; Wagner, T.; De Vries, L).
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Appendix 1 – Strategic Plan – reviewed February 2018

Upper Hutt Cluster Strategic Plan

Our Mission:
Grow capability, through collaboration and innovation, to enable success for all learners in our community.

Our Values:
Respect
Empathy
Diversity
Collaboration
Resilience

Our Vision:
Shaping our future with students at the heart.

Our Working Norms:
We:
- Come with a positive mindset.
- Are prepared and open to adjust our position and fully support agreed decisions and processes.
- Commit to the group’s agreed purpose, participate and take action.
- Listen actively.
- Constructively critique and problem-solve.
- Are prepared to ask for help and offer help generously.

Whakatauki:
It takes many feathers for a bird to soar!

Strategic Aims:
As the guardians (kaitiaki) and guides (kaiārahi) of teaching and learning in Upper Hutt we will ensure …

- Engaged and empowered learners: Teaching and learning in Upper Hutt is holistic and engaging. Our learners see the value of learning and understand their role in it. Across our valley our learners are engaged, resilient and empowered in their learning.
- Cultural responsiveness: Students have a strong sense of identity and belonging. Our programmes are culturally responsive, relevant and reflective of an ever-changing world.
- Parent and whanau partnerships: Learning programmes and pedagogies are developed collaboratively within schools, across schools and with students, whanau and community.
- Teaching Inquiry: Teachers are reflective and committed to best practice. They are open to change and professional growth.
Upper Hutt Education Network

The following table outlines the key goals, actions and outcomes in our strategic plan – we have also noted who is responsible for each action and when it is to be done by (some of which are already completed).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals 2017 - 2019:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitions:</strong></td>
<td>Group to meet with Kindergarten association to share our work and invite them to comment and be involved in our project.</td>
<td>Links made with Kindergarten Association and they have had an opportunity to become involved in our project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop learning centred relationships with the ECE to create a seamless transition pathway from ECE through to College.</td>
<td>Meet with UPLC teachers to share project and involve them in our work.</td>
<td>There is ECE voice and ongoing involvement in the Cluster future actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draft a set of aspirational markers of progress for learner cohorts at key transition points across the cluster. Improve information sharing when students move between schools. Common information/criteria to be shared when students move.</td>
<td>Students settle into new year groups and new schools quickly. Students, whanau, schools and community across the cluster are aware of and aim to achieve the aspirations for learner cohorts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investigate MOE Smart Tool for cluster progressions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involvement of teachers from all transition points, ECE, primary, intermediate, secondary teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Education and Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Shared information to go out to parents via Leader, school newsletters. Shared/Cluster website? Leader (local newspaper) articles informed by teacher and student voice. Meet with local Council to inform them of our strategic plan and cluster</td>
<td>Parents know that their school is involved in a wider UH cluster project. Local organisations understand the purpose of our work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Community Education and Engagement

To strengthen relationships with Orongomai Marae across the cluster.

- Korero with marae regarding our project and how they may support us.
- Collaboratively develop a UHC Karakia that is shared across the cluster and used to open/close cluster events.
- Use cluster Karakia in all schools.
- Marae invited to TODs and Lead Teacher meetings.
- Development of Kaitiati network and regular meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals 2017 - 2019:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Education and Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To strengthen relationships with Orongomai Marae across the cluster.</td>
<td>Korero with marae regarding our project and how they may support us.</td>
<td>Links made with Orongomai Marae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboratively develop a UHC Karakia that is shared across the cluster and used to open/close cluster events.</td>
<td>All UHC events will be opened and closed with a shared Karakia that reflects our place in the world and our purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use cluster Karakia in all schools.</td>
<td>Support and sharing of effective practice across schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marae invited to TODs and Lead Teacher meetings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of Kaitiati network and regular meetings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Education and Engagement</td>
<td>Group to attend BOT Cluster meeting to share strategic plan.</td>
<td>Boards can articulate the purpose and progress of our cluster work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ensure all school boards are aware of the focus of our purpose and expected outcomes of our project.</td>
<td>Ongoing sharing of progress at BOT cluster meetings and individual school BOT meetings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sharing Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals 2017 - 2019:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To continue to share practice between teachers of their Teaching as Inquiry including how the voice of students impacts on their practice. | Structured PLG Year level conversations across schools using a set of reflective questions.  
PLG conversations for principals, DPs.  
Opportunities for experienced expert teachers to develop their knowledge.  
Utilise the strength within the cluster - cluster facilitators rather than external | Teachers have participated in robust conversations with colleagues across the cluster about their teaching as inquiry.  
Principals have engaged in sharing practice and learning from each other about engagement in our schools. |
| To share strengths across Upper Hutt schools. | Develop cluster database of strengths for schools to go to for expertise.  
Continue to build professional trust across colleagues.  
Ensure new teachers into the cluster receive support to commit to the Cluster vision and strategic direction. | Teachers will have an increased awareness of where to go for support in areas of project work. |
| To further develop our understanding of what agentic and collaborative practice looks like. | Lead Teachers to create a matrix that outlines progressions to help us determine how well we are developing agentic practice, within our schools and within our cluster, with the support of an expert facilitator. | Shared cluster understanding of agency and collaboration.  
Students across the cluster will have greater control of their learning. |
| To develop and maintain student engagement in their education as they progress through their schooling years. | Teacher professional learning around successful engagement / understanding the learner.  
Sharing of best practice at significant transition points to ensure student engagement is maintained. | Students will be actively engaged in learning across the cluster at all year levels.  
Teachers regularly reflect and share strategies that successfully engage learners. |
### Goals 2017 - 2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing Practice</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To build relationships involved in pastoral care and learning support across the cluster and share information, knowledge and resources.</td>
<td>All schools committed to, and regularly involved in the Upper Valley Wellbeing Network.&lt;br&gt;Sharing of policies, processes, systems, resources and practices that are successful within our schools.</td>
<td>Collaborative support systems and processes are developed across schools to manage and respond to issues of shared concern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing Practice</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To grow our student leaders across the cluster.</td>
<td>Develop a student leadership conference for primary, intermediate and secondary school leaders.</td>
<td>Student leadership strengthened across the cluster.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Tools &amp; Voice</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be well placed to measure the impact of our work over time.</td>
<td>Use the <em>Me and My School</em> data (Year 4-10) to collect and analyse baseline data across the cluster and investigate and plan actions around engagement for leaders, teachers, schools and cluster.&lt;br&gt;Determine a set of protocols for administering the <em>Me and My School Survey</em>.&lt;br&gt;Investigate Wainui Int and Upper Hutt College re modified version of survey.</td>
<td>Patterns evident across the cluster about student engagement.&lt;br&gt;Plan in place to further increase student engagement across the cluster.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Tools &amp; Voice</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All leaders and teachers to understand and articulate the purpose of our work.</td>
<td>Continue to ensure our teachers understand the purpose of our project by regular discussion of the ‘why’.&lt;br&gt;Vision, values, ways of working, etc, on display in all schools.</td>
<td>Teachers can talk about the purpose of our project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visual design of Cluster vision and values.

Cluster goals in individual school Strategic Plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals 2017 - 2019:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Measurement Tools & Voice**  
To seek student and whanau voice on how to address the needs identified in the *Me and My School* survey to inform school and cluster engagement. | Consider if there is a need to further investigate any student voice at a cluster level (e.g. drill in deeper in a certain area by using tools such as KC survey or J Annan’s agency survey). 
Survey whanau on engagement of their children at school. 
Wellbeing@school survey - free for 2018 - possible Cluster survey. | Students able to articulate what engages them in learning and how they are learning in their classes / schools. |
### Appendix 2 – Upper Hutt Cluster Project Plan 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1 Twilight Sessions</th>
<th>Lead Teacher Meeting</th>
<th>Teacher Only Day</th>
<th>Term 3 Twilight Sessions</th>
<th>October Callback Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers to opt into one of four focus areas:</td>
<td>Protocols for administering the ‘Me and My School’ Survey</td>
<td>‘Experts’ to present on the four areas:</td>
<td>PLG Time:</td>
<td>Examples of effective practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative teaching</td>
<td>Identification of school strengths - teachers willing to have observations/visitors to their classrooms</td>
<td>• Collaborative teaching</td>
<td>• What have you done so far?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play-based learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Play-based learning</td>
<td>• What resources have you found useful?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Student ownership</td>
<td>• What impact has your action had?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and learning pathways</td>
<td></td>
<td>and learning pathways</td>
<td>• What is the most important action you need to take next and why?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learning behaviours</td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning behaviours</td>
<td>• What kind of support do you need to draw on or put in place?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning Groups for the year established</td>
<td>Planning for Teacher Only Day ‘experts’ to book</td>
<td></td>
<td>How will the PLG connect between now and the Term 3 Twilight sessions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Appendix 3 - Upper Hutt Cluster Karakia

| Tiro atu ki te pae maungā o Remutaka | We lift our gaze to the Mountain range of Remutaka, |
| Rere ana te wai o Te Awakairangi | Where the waters start to flow down into our river Te Awa Kairangi, |
| Ka tau ki te whare o Orongomai | and rest at the ancestral house of Orongomai, |
| Nei rā te mihi... | We acknowledge this land. |

| Ānei mātou e noho tahi, | Here we have come together under the one kaupapa, |
| I raro i te whakairo kotahi, | As guardians of our children, |
| mō ngā rangatira mō āpōpō | for they are our chiefs of tomorrow. |

**Tihet Mauriora**

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This karakia was written for the Upper Hutt Cluster on March 14th 2017 by Cherie Toatoa and Carol Elers- Nuku. It can be used to open and close hui hosted by and for the Upper Hutt Cluster.
7. What difference did the changes make?

Our project is far from finished as we grow stronger as a cluster. We intend to repeat the *Me and My School* survey in 2019 and at that point, will be able to note impact we are having in engagement survey data.

We do have a range of other identifiable outcomes that are having an impact on engagement and transitions in our cluster, which are outlined below.

- We have raised the expectations for teaching practice across our network.
- We have much more open channels of communication and trust among teachers and school leaders, where professional discussions have deepened and become more learning focused and rigorous. This has resulted in more effective transitions for students. One secondary school teacher identified that “the use of consistent language, learning expectations and similar routines between intermediate and college meant that students did not have the transition period that usually comes with changing schools – this increased learning engagement from day one”.
- Teachers are sharing practice and have developed networks to further their understanding of agency. This affects children by ensuring the teachers reflect on how to better meet student needs. Since our project began, 228 visits have been made by teachers to view practice in other schools across our cluster. Many visits have been organised by teachers with others in their PLG and have taken place during CRT. They are also emailing and sharing resources. This is also beginning to result in greater consistency among schools about how we teach, ensuring smoother transitions.
- 16 schools report that students are more articulate about their learning. Evidence includes 3 way learning conversations with parents, development and use of ‘kidspeak’ progressions and rubrics, increased understanding of where they are at and next learning steps. This allows for students to take greater ownership of their learning. One student described having greater understanding of “what I need to learn and how to get there” when talking about the teacher sharing test results with her.
- Children have a greater understanding of how they learn best and are able to choose where they work, who they work with and how they complete tasks. 16 schools noted that students know themselves better as learners, this includes a focus across the cluster on learning behaviours and students having greater understanding of the learning behaviours that help them, or get in the way of making academic progress. One principal reported that “classrooms have become much more responsive in the ways they include learners in decision making about how and where they work”. Another stated “walking
through the school it is immediately evident that students are making more choices about how, where and who they work with”. A secondary teacher describe choice by saying “students are also able to defer learning to spend more time focusing on underlying skills until they are comfortable enough to move to the next level. This has seen accelerated progress as students are not being rushed from one learning task to the next”. 

- 16 schools note a definite change in the amount of choice given to students with regards to the way in which they learn. For most, this includes choice in activities, where they work and with whom. Many primary schools now have ‘learner licences’ that allow students who demonstrate effective learning dispositions to work in areas across the school. Choice in what they learn is also starting to develop. A group of secondary students have worked with their teacher to come up with their own suggestions for learning and decided to read lyrics to songs instead of books at they couldn’t find books that interested them. Other students talked about being involved in the process of planning class projects with their teacher which resulted in them being more engaged.

- Teachers are now working more collaboratively to engage learners and promote agency within schools. 16 schools report an increase in the collaborative approaches of teachers and the positive impact this is having on learning. Examples of successful strategies include utilising teacher strengths, matching teaching styles to students, allowing students choice in which teacher(s) they learn from, shared problem solving around ‘difficult to shift students’ and uninterrupted programmes when relievers are in the school.

- Parents across the cluster are getting similar messages with regards to best practice.

- Opportunities for growth of middle and senior leaders have increased.

- Our different groups in the cluster who used to work in isolation are now working on a common purpose (e.g. Principals, DP/APs, BOT Cluster, etc) and numbers of people attending these have increased.

- We have seen the establishment of 2 new network groups within our cluster:
  - a newly formed Kaitiaki Group meet termly - teachers with responsibility for leadership of Te Reo & Tikanga Māori in schools;
  - a Well-Being Network group has been established, where senior leaders from schools meet termly with outside agencies, the Ministry of Education and Upper Hutt City Council, to look at how we can support the well-being of students, teachers and whānau in our community.

- Support and collegiality across the cluster has grown and in 2018, we have plans to get students across schools working together. This also has been evident in students and teachers reaching out to other schools in times of need.

- 4 schools reported improvement in attendance since the cluster project began, that they believe is directly linked to the work around engagement.
Upper Hutt Education Network

- Colleges report students coming into Years 9-11 as being more settled and engaged with a better sense of values, engagement and positive behaviour for learning strategies.

- Our colleges have had improved outcomes from 2015-2017 in relation to NCEA Level 1 (Upper Hutt College 2015 = 76% / 2016 = 82% / 2017 = 83% and Heretaunga College 2015 = 70% / 2016 = 80% / 2017 = 83%). Heretaunga College has also seen an improvement in NCEA Level 2 over that period with an increase from 70% in 2015 to 78.3% in 2017.

- For one College, there has been rapid progress due to the implementation of curriculum reforms that have more contextualised programmes and greater student agency.

- Some schools believe increases in their writing data have a direct link to the work on understanding student interests and using these to guide contexts for writing, as well as provision of free writing time. One primary school has data linked to boys writing with improvements from 2015 85.8% achieving National Standards (64.6% at and 21.2% above) to 2017 89.5% (59.7% at and 29.8% above). Like many in our cluster, this school planned deliberate actions around giving students more choice about contexts for writing and when they write, which has had a direct impact on achievement, particularly that of boys who talk about having higher levels of enjoyment during writing lessons.

- There have been significant shifts in teacher and student understanding about *growth mindset* (Dweck. 2012) and the *learning pit* (Nottingham). A number of schools have explicitly taught their students about these notions and this has made a difference to the outlook students have about learning. Many students talk about being “in the pit” and how they understand that making mistakes are part of learning and that learning should be challenging, not easy.

- A number of schools have set up across school moderation processes.

- When asked what areas we have had an impact, principals/lead teachers summed it up with the following statements:
  - “teachers knowing their learners, their interests and their passions have resulted in powerful learning focused relationships”
  - “I think one of the most positive things about our collaboration as a cluster is that there is an expectation on teachers that we are ALL focussing on what is best for our tamariki in Upper Hutt”
  - “sharing our practice with others has clarified, consolidated and challenged our own thinking, and has drawn the team together in growing their own confidence in themselves as effective practitioners”
  - “we have noticed increased community engagement that we put down to their appreciation of a team effort Upper Hutt wide – they are getting the picture that as a cluster we are working together”
“teachers are more willing to share the things that they are trying and not necessarily succeeding in, rather than just sharing success”

“target student strategies are more linked to ‘underlying causes’ that move beyond skills in reading, writing or maths and look at learning behaviours”

The following photos show evidence of outcomes in action. Each photo is annotated to assist with understanding the evidence we are presenting.

Two secondary students decided for themselves to use water to work out how to convert between millilitres and litres.

Secondary students use Tuakana/Teina to support each other with their learning.

Year 5 and 6 students working collaboratively on a task.

Students starting the day with Hub Hui.

Y3 working collaboratively on a rich maths task.

Y3 working collaboratively on a rich maths task.
### Choosing to work outdoors.

- Students as teachers.

### Learning through play.

- Principals working on strategic planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our work developing Learning Through Play gives children the opportunity to make links between their passions and their learning (mine craft and mathematics!)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Stations programme allows our tamariki to independently select learning tasks that are interested in.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Stations allows opportunities for them to develop their sharing, co-operative and collaborative skills.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provocations for play based learning.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Our work on agency and learning dispositions means we have reimagined classroom spaces to provide children opportunities to learn in different ways.
8. What did you learn?

Firstly, it is really important to note that this is not a finished project! We have learnt a lot and are still learning as our collaboration together grows and strengthens our work. The points below outline our learning to date.

- We know that a strength based approach is effective, where people feel valued for what they can offer and are able to grow from their place of strength. There is a lot of strength in the cluster, both in terms of leadership and teaching. While individual schools have known where this strength is, we haven’t had a cluster wide picture of where this sits. We have learnt to value the expertise in our backyard, finding ways to identify and share.
- While we don’t have quantitative data as yet related to engagement of students in learning, we have a lot of anecdotal evidence that suggest the strategies we are putting in place seem to be improving engagement and learning. This includes the willingness
and ability of children to ‘step up’ to drive aspects of their own learning when given the opportunity.

- It is important to regularly revisit our purpose - we learnt this in the first year of our project where there was often confusion among groups about what the purpose was. The way we have overcome this is to ensure lead teachers and principals meet regularly to ensure consistent messages are taken back to schools.

- We have learnt that if something is not working, we need to be responsive and change our approach. A significant challenge for us has been finding ways to ensure the PLG structure met the needs of the cluster, as well as those of individual teachers. We have overcome this by surveying our teachers after each cluster session and making tweaks to the structure along the way if needed.

- It’s a challenge to get 250 teachers on the same path! This is something we suspected right from the beginning, but have found that strategies such as consistent communication and expectations at school level, clarity of purpose and allowing for teacher agency within the project have all been successful in getting people moving in the same direction.

- We know collaboration is fluid and works best when everyone participates. Our ‘ways of working’ are a basis for ensuring we all carry out agreed actions in our own schools.

- We know that distributive leadership is highly effective. We have deliberately avoided having a project that relies solely on a small group of people. While some have taken on greater roles of leadership than others, the support and willingness to step up, take the lead and ‘do my part’ is wide across our principals and lead teachers. We are now at a point where principals are not leading the workshops and cluster events, but supporting lead teachers in doing this. We have managed to keep momentum when leaders leave the cluster and this has been no accident - this sustainable model of collaboration across schools has been well planned and executed. We believe that it takes a team to drive a project like this successfully. *Whiria te tangata – weave the people together.*

- Our anecdotal evidence has shown us that most students are more engaged when they help to drive their learning. This is supported by the Best Evidence Synthesis which states “sustained higher achievement is possible when teachers use pedagogical approaches that enable students to take charge of their own learning”. (Alton-Lee, 2003:79). It is also supported by one of our Keynote Speakers, Derek Wenmoth who says “when learners move from being passive recipients to being much more active in the learning process, actively involved in the decisions about the learning, then they have greater agency” (Wenmoth, 2014).

- As leaders, we have learnt to model perseverance, resilience and other values we hold dear as we work together as a team to achieve challenging outcomes for our students.
We have increased the level of robust, challenging conversations we have about learning and know that this has strengthened us as leaders.

- After trying a ‘one size fits all’ model of professional learning, we have learnt that the timetabling and needs of the primary and secondary sectors can be quite different - we have identified ways to work more effectively between sectors moving into 2018 and beyond to ensure the needs of all are met.

- We have learnt a lot about the links between well-being and engagement - in order to be engaged in learning, students and teachers need to have a sense of positive well-being. This is supported by The Education Review Office in their publication around wellbeing at school, where they clearly state that learning is strongly linked to positive well-being (Education Review Office, 2016).

- We understand that we need to pay as much attention to the ‘how’ of teaching, as we do the ‘what’, to the point of how we teach being more important for student engagement and the ‘what’ we teach matching their needs and interests.

- We have learned that models of collaborative teaching can really enhance student engagement through:
  - students being able to work with a range of teachers, sometime picking the teacher they attend a learning workshop with;
  - programmes continuing when relief teachers are in class as they aren’t reliant on one teacher;
  - teachers learning from one another’s strengths as they work alongside each other on a daily basis;
  - greater shared teacher efficacy for learners – this is known to have one of the highest effect sizes (Hattie, 2017).

- We have learned that across our cluster, there are aspects of engagement that we need to learn more about. When we analysed the cluster wide data from the Me and My School engagement survey, we identified the following areas as ones we need to find out more about from our students and investigate in more depth what teachers can do to ensure students are reporting more positive perceptions about:
  - Talking to the teacher
  - Agentic learners
  - Boredom factors
9. How will you keep improving?

We have identified a number of strategic goals and actions in our cluster plan and this is attached at the end of this section. The actions on the plan are relevant to both categories we have entered. Having said that, we have pulled out the key actions below in each category.

**Engaging**

- Further engagement with whanau and wider community is needed to grow our strength as a cluster. This year we have started consistent key messaging in all school newsletters, as well as looking at how we are going to work more closely with parents, the local council, marae and businesses to support our shared purpose.
- We have had some changes in BOT chairs and the people coordinating our BOT cluster group, so there is a need to revisit our project with them as a group and continue to strengthen connections between board members across schools again.
- We plan to further strengthen our links with ECE providers. We started last year with Whānau Manaaki (our regional kindergarten association) and would like to look at how we engage with the large number of private providers in our city.

**Leading**

- We are looking at ways we can further develop the strength of the network between primary/intermediate and secondary teachers. There are strong links at the principal level and between senior leaders. There are perceptions that each sector has about one another that need to be clarified so that we can learn from each other in greater depth. An example of what this might look like in 2018 is having a different offering of professional learning from each other where teachers run professional development sessions for teachers from other sectors based on need (e.g. a college would like some primary/intermediate teachers to come and facilitate staff meetings in the area of inquiry learning). We are currently exploring what an alternative model might look like. Another strategy includes school leaders talking about the strengths of colleagues in different sectors, growing our strength based approach to learning.
- We have identified new focus areas for 2018 with continued PLGs and professional learning. Appendix 4. This includes Principal PLGs around cultural competencies and leading the development of learning pathways and graduate profiles.
- We will continue to review the actions taken related to our strategy and ensure that new actions are planned and implemented as needed. This review will also include the voice
of teachers after each cluster workshop or professional learning session to ensure we are meeting their needs in their work to provide engaging programmes for our students.

- We plan to repeat the *Me and My School Survey* early in 2019 (18 months after initial survey) to examine what impact we are making as a cluster in relation to the student perceptions of their engagement in learning.

- Some schools will be completing the *Well Being Survey* this year and the cluster will pay for the support of NZCER to analyse this at a school and cluster level.

- With a cluster our size, there is always change in personnel. We will continue to ensure Lead Teachers and Principals are well supported to induct new people into our project.

- We continue to work on the depth of student talk about their own learning – this is an ongoing process for us to be working on.

- Across the cluster, we have some staff that we need to continue to develop and get them more involved in our project – this is quite a change in pedagogy for some teachers and this can take time to learn how to change practice.

### Upper Hutt Cluster Project Plan 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Teacher Meeting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of leadership for the UH Cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of current directions - what are schools already working on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of possible internal cluster expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of possible external expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of purpose and protocols for 2018 Professional Learning Groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1 Twilight Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers to opt into one of four focus areas:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community Partnerships and Cultural Competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Hauora/Wellbeing</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Agency Beyond Voice and Choice</td>
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<tr>
<th>Term 2 Twilight Session</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers to bring practice around their theme to share</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLG Time:**
- What piece of practice are you currently investigating?
- What led you to explore this practice/frustrating?
- What are you noticing about the impact so far?

Teachers within PLGs to listen to practice being shared and consider what impact it may have on their practice.

**July Callback Day**
- ‘Experts’ to present on the four areas:
  - Collaboration
  - Community Partnerships and Cultural Competencies
  - Hauora/Wellbeing
  - Agency Beyond Voice and Choice

What have you learnt? How will it impact on your practice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 3 Twilight Sessions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers to explore a provocation or reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLG Time:**
- What provocation or reading have you found and brought along to explore?
- What are the key messages or ideas?
- What is the most important action you need to take in response to this information and why?
- What kind of support do you need to draw on or put in place?

Actions implemented back in schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October Teacher Only Day</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identified ‘experts’ to further inform practice in the identified focus areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLG Time:**
- What action have you taken this year?
- What resources have you found useful?
- What impact has your action had?
- What evidence do you have to show this impact?
- What next?

PLGs to record what they have done this year and the impact it has had on learners.
References:


9. Longworth Education (range of articles and publications) [https://www.longwortheducation.co.nz/research-publications](https://www.longwortheducation.co.nz/research-publications)


### 10. Confirm the contents of your entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1: Are your contact details complete and accurate?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 2: Have you clearly noted the Award categories you are entering?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections 3–9: Have you completed sections 3–9 of your case study?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length: Is your entry within the 30 page limit, including all evidence and optional reference list/bibliography?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video file: Are you submitting a video file with your entry? <em>(Submitting a video file is optional)</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, is your video file 5 minutes or less in duration and 400MB or less in file size?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Confirmation Statements:**

- I confirm that this entry meets the [Awards eligibility criteria](#).
- I confirm that this entry is a true and accurate record.

**Type your full name:** Simon Michael Kenny  
**Position held:** Upper Hutt Principals’ Association Chairperson & Principal at Fergusson Intermediate  
**Date:** 19 March 2018