

Ngā Huatau Taiohi - Waiwhetu Marae

Enjoying and achieving education success as Māori is:



can, and they support me every step of the way. I know that everyone is supporting me, I know everyone's behind me. It's a really good feeling to know I can succeed and people are always looking out for you. That's pretty cool.



- **Knowing that you can access explicit and timely direction**

Our teachers - they're like our pou (*support pole*) at school. They relate to us. Like, if we're being haututu (*mischievous*) they'll be haututu back. Their teaching skills are fun. They make it like not so boring - they don't teach down to you. They just expect you to do well, help you when you're down, teach us to get back up.

Normally I'm like REALLY bad when it comes to English and writing. I don't usually give an end result, but this year she's been pushing me and I've actually been getting Excellences in English, which I've never done before.

She's helped me become a prefect, actually pushing me, saying, "The Māori students are always underestimated, I believe in you". Her belief in me really helped me this year.



- **Knowing, accepting and acknowledging the strength of working together**

Being proud to be Māori, using your culture to drive yourself, to try and benefit yourself and others.

Inspiring other students to become role models, getting others to step up and having others help you step up.

Having a Māori group in your school is great because you get to know one another, and know more about yourself. They're like a supportive group for everyone in there. They don't laugh at you. Like, they laugh with you. You're being educated about yourself, about your pepeha, your ancestors. You're able to take that back to your family - spread that knowledge out to friends as well as the wider community.

- **Being able to resist the negative stereotypes about being Māori**

I've noticed that when people are asked if they're Māori or not, not many people admit it. But for me, I'm actually proud to be Māori, and I think everyone should be.

People saying stuff like: "Māori can't do this, can't do that" - it's just heart-breaking, because we do have a lot of Māori achievers within New Zealand. It's really good knowing when you have done something and you've done your culture proud.

People in our community say, "Oh, that person's dumb because they're Māori". Being a school leader next year, I will work against this stereotype that Māori are underachievers. It's a privilege, and I hope that other Māori students and our community can realise that. Just because you're Māori, it doesn't mean that you're dumb. And it doesn't mean that you can't achieve.

When I was receiving my awards at the assembly, there was a Māori boy who said to me: "How did you get those awards? You're a Māori boy. I don't know how you got them and why you got them. You must be paying them".

Some people see Māori as a barrier. I do believe that our people need to look straight past that, because it's not true.

Learning is fun. If I could do it for a living... well, that's me.

- **Being strong in your Māori cultural identity**

Māori are such outgoing, proud and confident people, and that reflects in us - in our sporting and academic and our other achievements, knowing that we have the mana and the reo of a Māori person.

Succeeding as Māori just looks like being Māori - you're not afraid to be proud to be Māori. Walking down the

corridors at our school, I'll strut my stuff as Māori. I'll have the mean wiri (*trembling hands*) going down the corridors and inspire other Māori students to succeed and push to their limits - making them see themselves as more than what they think they should be.

Just be proud of who you are, and you don't need to hide that.

Succeeding as Māori is having and using Māori values and beliefs because they make up who we are - that's being Māori. You don't have to physically look Māori or do things that people say are Māori, like kapa haka or te reo, because you are Māori. It's what's inside you. I find all of those beliefs help you succeed as Māori. They can also help others. Success is a lot about what you do for other people.

- **Being able to contribute to the success of others**

It's not just academic success. You can succeed in sports or be a role model to the younger generation coming up.

We've been mentoring some Year 10 boys. I went to a leadership day where they were running an activity. They led it, and it was just so cool to see how they had grown over the year. Given the opportunity, they can succeed. People believed in them and they were told: "You're a leader", and it helped them a lot.

- **Experiencing the power of whanaungatanga**

Matua is one of my biggest helpers for my academic side of things. He's pushed me to go harder and to do Māori, and to put te reo Māori into my everyday life - instead of just using it in class.

My parents - they always push me, my brother and my sister to do what we can do and to always do our best.

My parents, they didn't get the chance to go to uni and all that stuff, so they want me to succeed as much as I

