

# Ngā Huatau Taiohi - Whitiara Marae

## Enjoying and achieving education success as Māori is:

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

You're not going to look at a Pākehā person and be like: "Oh, he can do this. I bet a Māori can't."

You really want to make something of yourself and make your family and iwi proud - and you want to beat the stats. You want to just be you and succeed.

It's about trying to change the stereotype that they've put on all of us as Māori. We can all actually achieve - sometimes even better than others.

Everyone knows we have this stereotype - that we're not as high achievers as anyone else in our world today. Yesterday, this actually happened to me. Someone came into work and when I was serving them they pretty much told me that Māori can't achieve, that they're not successful people. And it really hurt me. I want to prove that stereotype wrong.

I just want to show the world that we as Māori can achieve, and we can achieve anything we want to if we put our mind to it.

Regardless of your culture, your ethnicity, anyone can achieve anything. I mean, look at our Governor-General.

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

For me it's being able to walk in both worlds - te ao Pākehā me te ao Māori (*the Pākehā world and the Māori world*); being able to balance them both; being able to implement them into your life; being able to recall the wisdom and tikanga (*cultural customs and practices*) of our tupuna (*ancestors*) who we should never forget. They made us. They are us, and we are them.

You have a key to both huarahi (*pathways*). You just have an advantage, like a specialty. You just embrace your culture in both worlds, and you can do everything that any other person can do. It's awesome!

Accepting the people around you, being able to welcome both worlds. It's very important, especially in a mainstream school.

Being able to walk in te ao Māori me te ao Pākehā. In essence, being able to be successful in the modern world but hold steadfast to our culture, our traditions, our tikanga. I can be successful in the modern world but also pupuri ki aku tikanga (*hold on to our cultural customs and practices*), and be humble. Above all, hold on to te reo Māori. It's what makes us unique. It's what's makes us Māori.

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

I'm a part of the tuakana-teina (*older-younger sibling*) system, where you aspire to be a good role model for our younger students, and for all cultures. There are no barriers.

As a leader for next year, one of my main goals is to bring a lot more Māori students along the journey to success with me. I like to encourage it - to tautoko (*support*) it any way I can.

We have a tuakana-teina set up. When I was little I was set up with a tuakana, and they would guide me and help me and advise me, and it was so cool. Tuakana help you through school with everything, like sports or education. They just help you. Now that I'm older, I'm a tuakana and I've got a teina, and helping them and giving them that support, it's such a cool way to promote success and whanaungatanga. It's... it's just so awesome.

When I have got my degree at the end of university, I will be generous, and care for my family and community.



I must always hold on to the values and practices that have been planted in me by my parents and my elders on the marae - to always be humble; to remain on the same level as my friends; never to think I am above them; remain as one in the group. That's when I believe I will be successful.

I think the same. "Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takitini. My strength doesn't come from me alone - it comes from the many". Relationships among our friends, that is the main thing - it is about establishing relationships and remaining humble in all things you do.

- **Developing and maintaining emotional and spiritual strength**

Success isn't about ethnicity or the colour of your skin; it's about having the motivation and determination to achieve what you want to.

are, and having the kind of people that really encourage us, we've begun to feel special again - and in our own Māori way as well. I really like that.

There was this one time where I got a Not Achieved and my mum said: "Go back to that teacher go and ask her for a re-assessment". I was like, "Oh no Mum, nah." And she was like, "If you don't, I'll go see that teacher."

She is the type of person who really pushes you to achieve excellence.

The most influence I've had would be from my kapa haka (*Māori cultural performance*) tutors. They work hard every day of their lives and they lead great lives. They showed me that I can achieve anything I want to achieve.

The teachers made me realise that I should stay at school and not drop out. Giving me belief in myself



So success as Māori for me is knowing who you are and where you come from - and being proud of who you are. Having the confidence within yourself to know that you can succeed and enjoy the journey our own Māori way as well. I really like that.

- **Experiencing the power of whanaungatanga**

Coming from a kura kaupapa into the Bilingual school or the English school, you feel like you don't know anything because you haven't been taught in that way. You kind of put yourself down, and you're insecure about your education. But being in the school that we

means that I stayed and I succeeded.

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

Something that helped me is the whanaungatanga (*relationship-building*) with teachers, and also friends.

They really pushed me to succeed. That's something that I think supported me, throughout my years at this school. It's hard not to do well with the support of the teachers and the people around you. They motivate you, and the motivation inspires you to do your best.

