

Gisborne Girls High School – Tairawhiti Services Academy

Response to clarification process is referred to under section 7.2 of part 3 of the RFA document.

“Please confirm what you believe to be the value you are going to add to the existing school network”

In support of the application presented by Gisborne Girls’ High for the development of **Tairawhiti Services Academy** as a partnership school:

We believe the model already in operation has provided considerable value to the existing school network in the Tairawhiti district and will continue to do so if we are offered the opportunity to expand this model within the partnership schools programme.

Through the development of an operation focused on educational success that is underpinned by a strategic vehicle of ‘Military Ethos and Values’ with specific and targeted career pathways, we have seen considerable success for students who had been previously disengaged or only partially successful within the standard state system and their originating schools. We have also offered a balance in terms of the fact that we are not just providing a way of “fixing” students who have not made it in mainstream or who may be labelled as “at risk”, but also provided a real pathway for those students who are achieving well, but who are specifically targeting a ‘high end’ career in the service. This has resulted in significant student success beyond NCEA Level 3, direct entry to the Army, Air Force and Navy, entry to the workforce and significant success of our predominantly Maori student client base. This is evidenced within our presented achievement statistics.

The success already achieved, as we have developed this fledgling operation over the past three years has proven its worth as a ‘value added’ educational programme within our community. Sadly we are limited in further development of this highly successful model by current national funding structures and MOE regulations that limit the size and scope of what we can achieve in terms of budget allocation, property and appropriately qualified staff. Currently the interest for enrolment on our programme well outweighs the places we can offer.

Our long term vision is to establish a circular programme model that not only educates youth to achieve the foundation success and preparation to enter the armed services but provides specialist training for those leaving the armed services in youth education. We see this as a highly sustainable option that not only builds student capacity but builds community capacity and sustainability of our proposal.

Through the development of a Partnership School structure around the already trialled and successful Tairawhiti Services Academy Model we believe we can continue to expand this operation to cater for the growing need of student and whanau ‘choice’ for education that is support by and structured through Military Ethos and Values. Currently we have over 60 year 11,12,13 and 14 students enrolled in our programmes with a further 40 placements for year 10. Unfortunately we are turning away up to 5 requests for entry a week as standard education fails to deliver the required levels of success for the career desires and needs of our regions students. We view what we have created as a step beyond educational success that provides a clear pathway to career success and future career capacity.

We note that other Services Academies have not fostered the same levels of student success, nor do their tertiary counterparts as they are not underpinned by a shared campus where educational success is the expectation for all students across a full curriculum, they are not exposed to quality tertiary support programming that enhances educational and employment opportunity and they are not mentored through intensive programmes of Military preparation and life coaching by experienced ex military personal. Other organisations who have attempted to set up regional programmes have fallen short of the necessary academic rigor that creates the key point of difference for our students. We believe this has allowed our students disproportionately positive success on entry to the Armed Forces and wider career options.

Our model has been developed to take the best of what state education can offer and the best of what quality armed service and educational experience can offer through an already refined partnership model at both the secondary and tertiary level to create career pathway success well beyond qualifications. We believe this model not only has a place within our region but may hold a potential key for career success for those intending to pursue military careers nationally.