

Ora Trust

QUESTION 1

Is the applicant confident that with advertising and marketing for students starting on 1 December 2013 and the prospectus being issued on 15 December (p.79) enrolment targets will be met by 17 January 2014?

On reflection the prospectus does need to be developed earlier and would be made available once the Principal/Director is employed in October. However, prior to this, the Kura Kete Ora Board would have engaged with the media and will be promoting the kura's unique approach to education. The Board will also be developing a Kura Kete Ora website, explaining the operation of the kura and provision will made for registrations of interest.

QUESTION 2

Existing buildings-p.82-Are these premises currently empty?

One building is currently not empty but will be vacated on 15th July 2013.

QUESTION 3

How will your teaching and learning programme support priority learners (please provide evidence)?

Ora Trust Board, Kura Kete Ora Board and Advisory Board have complete confidence that Te Kura Kete Ora (KKO) educational plan will very effectively address and meet the social and educational needs of priority learners (see p.19 & 21 of the Application), namely:

- Māori, Pasifika, Pakeha and other ethnic minorities who are not achieving in education
- Maori males who are leaving school prematurely with no qualification
- Students with general and/or specific learning and behavioral needs
- Learners from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Students who face the challenges of: social/cultural isolation, prior negative learning experiences, trauma and abuse, lack of parental/whanau recognition and involvement, environmental and sensory deprivation, health difficulties and/or disability.

The confidence that KKO will make a significant positive difference, improving both social and educational outcomes for the above identified target group, is informed by the knowledge that the KKO curriculum and organizational operation will very intentionally employ, integrate and provide:

1. Kaupapa Maori and Te Reo Maori engagement so as to develop identity, language and culture, which is based on the premise that when educational institutions are imbued with these principles and practices, positive results occur for Maori students. (Tau Mai Te Reo Report, 2011, Ministry of Education).

2. Student achievement is related to student engagement. A high number of Maori male students leave school without gaining NCEA Level 1 and the 2011 ERO Report for Tauranga Boys College stated: "The school recognises that retaining Māori students to Years 12 and 13 is an issue, and its significance related to Māori student engagement and achievement." Key to student engagement is making the learning meaningful and learners achieving success. The Gateway programmes throughout New Zealand provide evidence of student engagement increasing when numeracy and literacy is placed in the context of meaningful, purposeful work related activities. KKO teachers will be supported to ensure

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students succeed by being able to engage them in the innovative opportunities to learn provided by the activity based module of the KKO curriculum. It is anticipated that quality engagement by students in their learning, which is both practical and meaningful, will translate into the students' succeeding and gaining NZC competencies and achievement standards. Kura Kete Ora will focus on students achieving

NCEA Level 2 qualifications, and this focus is translated into key results areas in teaching staff's performance appraisals.

3. Parental and Whanau involvement and participation

Young people are more likely to choose positive life pathways if there is parental/whanau engagement and involvement in their lives (Lambie & Simmonds, 2010). KKO will foster parental/whanau involvement in the activities of the school, alongside the students' module learning and in whole kura activities. Whanau will also have opportunity to participate in adult education after school classes as well. In effect, KKO will be a village learning environment relative to the community, although primarily focusing on the students.

4. **Hands-on skills development learning opportunities** will suit students who have learning (executive functioning) difficulties, such as those with ADHD, dyspraxia, dyslexia, aspergers syndrome, and those with behavioural difficulties, such as anger/violence, substance dependence and concentration difficulties. KKO's EIGHT authentic learning domains (farming, mechanical/engineering and building, kai whenua and horticultural, kaitiakitanga, visual and performing arts, manaakitanga, sport and hauroa, and horsemanship) will provide opportunities for these learners, who are often naturally kinesthetic, to develop skills, experience success, and develop a sense of mastery in areas of interest and talent. For one student this may be in horsemanship, another in performing arts, or in building construction or farming, or food preparation and cooking, or horticulture and so forth.

5. **A UNIQUE curriculum.** Six modules have already been conceptualized that illustrate how the KKO curriculum will combine KKO's 8 activity based learning domains with the NZC key competencies and achievement standards within the subject areas of English, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Languages, Mathematics and Statistics, Science, Social Science and Technology (see p. 31-48 of Application). Support to the KKO Principal/Director responsible for further developing the operation of the KKO unique curriculum will be offered by the KKO Board, and by the Advisory Board, in particular:

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6. **Teacher to student quality relationships.** Expert and qualified teaching staff will work with students in small groups, with often two teachers/specialist tutors working together with a group of 15-17 students or one teacher/specialist tutor to 5-7 students. KKO will foster whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, as safe relationships enable students to face challenges with security and confidence, from a strong place of belonging. In this respect, research has demonstrated that the quality of the student – teacher relationship is pivotal to student success:

The relationship between teacher and student provides the context for teaching and learning of a range of cognitive, social, personal, moral and behavioural learning goals, and not just the learning of interpersonal and relational skills by the students, when modelled or taught explicitly by the teacher. And more importantly the teacher – student relationship influences the outcomes of learning, including academic learning. (Bell, 2011, p. 12) 16 May 2013 Page.3

The staff - student ratio of 1 – 7 in the first two years, developing to 1 – 10 thereafter will enable KKO to be an environment where students feel cared for and understood and closely supported in all aspects of their development. In addition, the the daily/weekly timetable includes a light breakfast and lunch and the relational kaupapa principles will be evident as teachers and students share kai together.

7. **Vocational, career planning and development pathways** developed within the KKO curriculum, including work experience practicums with local industry providers (see p.48-55 of Application). This aspect of KKO, the vocational pathway (see Whare of Integrated Learning diagram on p. 64 of

Application), relates to a successful forest based youth education centre in Scotland, where students develop practical and academic skills relative to local industry.

(http://www.foresteducation.org/woodland_learning/rural_skills_vocational_training/)

8. Place Based Education (PBE). Within the Kaitiakitanga and Manaakitanga domains of the KKO model, students will be given opportunities to learn their whakapapa, relate local iwi, hapu, whanau stories to their own experiences and current issues facing Aotearoa / New Zealand. We expect this PBE emphasis to be an integral part of KKO and the principles of PBE are demonstrated in the Tuna/Eel case study module (p. 39-40 of Application), and the Kaimoana module (p.44-45 of Application). KKO's approach to PBE has been informed by Awapuni School's (Gisborne) successful implementation of PBE, in which the school demographic of approximately 460 students, includes 292 children who are on a special needs register with the school receiving additional funding so they can provide an adapted curriculum for those on the register. Awapuni School Principal, David Langford, says the school has "twenty children diagnosed with aspergers syndrome, many children with a diagnosis of foetal alcohol syndrome, others with ADHD and conduct disorders, and many from complex family backgrounds where emotional, physical, sexual trauma in early years impacts on learning and behaviour... and in response we have engaged in learning conversations mainly around "inclusive" education issues that are seriously problematic and through this leadership process we have created strong connections with community. We have created a "Place-Based Curriculum" which centres around Pacific voyaging – whaka hourua. The narratives, that provide the contexts for learning, originate from local iwi and the complexities of first meetings of people from different cultures. The authenticity of the stories and the manner in which they are told or experienced by our students are not European versions of history but are the living stories from within our community". At a KKO all day Hui on the 7th January 2013, David shared how PBE had made a significant difference in the lives of many of their students: "they became more positive about school, communicated better, engaged in their studies more, and functioned better within groups." We anticipate KKO's education approach will yield similar results in regard to the PBE component of the KKO curriculum.

9. Outdoor and adventure based education experiences will be part of the KKO experience, especially within the kaitiakitanga and sport/Hauora domains (see page 32 & 34 of Application). In New Zealand 2012, seventeen schools undertook to *provide The Journey* for disadvantaged, vulnerable and/or challenging students. The programme was first developed by counsellors at Selwyn College, Auckland, in the late 1990s, Auckland and is now offered by *Adventure Specialities*, Henderson. *The Journey* has achieved excellent results with 'priority learners'. For example, Mercury Bay Area School report that after participating in *The Journey*, students consistently increase in "confidence, communication, self-esteem, team-work, self-responsibility, class attendance, willingness to work, and face challenges more positively" (MBAS School Counsellor, 2013). Another example of a programme that involves activity based learning is "Positive Pathways", a programme for males between 12-14 years of age exhibiting violent behavior and many were excluded from schools, which was run by Relationships Aotearoa Tauranga in conjunction with the Impact Tauranga's (alternative education provider) Positive Pathways programme. The programme involved a marae/camp stay and outdoor adventure activities alongside whakapapa storying, goal setting and anger management (which relates to the kaitiakitanga and Sport/Hauora domains of the KKO model, pages 32 & 34). Of 6 groups undertaken, each group having between 5 – 7 participants, the results were extremely positive, between: 86-100% discontinued aggressive behavior, 43-60% re-engaged with school after exclusion, 100% had a significant reduction in drug use, and between 29-40% engaged in employment after completing the programme. The emphasis on teaching social skills in the Pathways Programme will be replicated at KKO; case in point, the behavior management programme (see appendix 6 in the Application) has been written by the original developers of the Positive Pathways programme. Another outdoor education centre that facilitates very positive outcomes for young people, is the Perry Outdoor Education Trust (POET), in Hamilton, which KKO has liaised with and envisages having an on-going consultancy relationship with.

10. **Horsemanship as a means for helping at-risk youth**, modeled primarily on local horse-riding school's (Trinity Valley Farm) work with young people, but also informed by international horse therapy programmes (Roberts, 2002, 2008), such as *Horses for Hope*, Victoria, Australia, in which health professionals refer children and young people with learning and behavioural problems for equine therapy. *Trinity Valley Farms* and *Horses for Hope* both report many positive outcomes from the work they do bringing young people with difficulties and horses together. Both *Trinity Valley Farms* and *Horses for Hope* have many narrative stories of transformed young people's lives. However, due to space restrictions here is just one story demonstrating how equine therapy can facilitate success for a priority learner:

██████ is a young man ████████ was sent to us ████████ who were trying to find a work placement for him. He had previously been diagnosed with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome and had left school ████████ He had found it very difficult to interact with other students and teachers at school and said "I would creep to the back of the room to sit alone, where either the teacher did not notice me or did not care". When ████████ came to our farm, he could not look anyone in the eye, he would always have his head down and when speaking he would mumble and was very difficult to understand. He found it very difficult to speak to females or hold conversations with strangers. Since his time with us ████████ has been learning how to train horses. Through learning how to train and communicate with the horses, ████████ has become aware, for the first time in his life, of his intelligence and innate abilities. ████████ He has become an integral part of a team and has learnt how to interact with people his age, as well as those younger and older, and how to relate appropriately to those in leadership. Through working with the horses he has grown significantly in confidence and has experienced a place of belonging. ████████ has now been offered a number of jobs in the equine field, from grooming to training and breaking in horses. He has aspirations of competing at national and international shows, with the view to one day representing New Zealand. This would not have entered his mind as a possibility twelve months ago, but now it could become a reality for ████████ (████████████████████ personal communication, 2013) "Courage, wisdom born of insight and humility, empathy born of compassion and love, all can be bequeathed by a horse to his rider" (Charles De Kunffy)

References

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