

DEVELOPING THE SCHOOL CULTURE

AIM

The aim is to have to develop a strong coordinated culture where there is alignment between the intangible, foundational elements and the tangible, outward expressions, and symbols. We are seeking an organisational culture that results in the desired individual and organisational behaviours.

The actual practices and visible displays of the culture should align with the purpose, vision, and values of the school/kura. For example, we may state that our values are excellence and respect, but we accept staff behaviour that does not role model excellence and our student management policies and practices are punitive and not enabling.

HOW TO USE THE FRAMEWORK

The following are suggested steps that may be utilised to identify your current situation and a plan to move towards your desired organisational culture.

- Ensure the conceptual framework you utilise reflects the correct cultural elements of your school/kura. Adapt it to reflect your unique situation with cultural elements that are central to your organisational culture.
- Confirm that the purpose, vision, and values do not need reviewing and they are easy to articulate and provide the guidance required for the school/kura and its community.
- Examine each of the tangible expressions and symbolism elements to identify whether they align with the purpose, vision, and values. Do not forget that these elements are dynamic and work together and can not be considered in isolation.
- It is recommended that when you undertake this step, include staff, school/kura whānau as often as leaders we have a certain perspective, where a collective perspective may be more accurate.
- Develop a plan to align the elements as required. For example, you may make changes to your staff practices to ensure they reflect professionalism if that is important, which may include accepted dress patterns and behaviours.
- Please note that aligning the cultural elements is not a short-term fix and will take time and require continual adjustment as there may be unforeseen detrimental impacts that may need to be considered.
- Make culture a regular agenda item for staff meetings so that it becomes a collective commitment and allows staff input into required adjustments.

1. Marsh and Beardsmore, 1985, 69

2. Beare, H., Coldwell, B. J., & Millikan, R. H. (1989). *Creating an excellent school, some new management techniques*. London: Routledge

