Takapuna Grammar School, through its Principal, Simon Lamb, supported by Senior Leaders, would like to present a short paper.

The presentation would be focused on a digital story showing the transformation of teaching and learning, both pedagogy and practice, in a traditional New Zealand secondary school to enable life long learners. These learners will need curious minds, thinking dispositions, and a continual desire to explore the unknown.

The material covered will show the underlying vision, the pedagogy itself and the process, the journey to date.

Links will also be established to the substantive changes proposed in the New Zealand National Curriculum which Takapuna Grammar School has anticipated.

Attached is a statement prepared by the school for the New Zealand Ministry of Education in summary.

**The Journey**

*“When by simply sailing in a new direction you could change the world”*

In 2003 – 2004 Takapuna Grammar School saw the need to respond to a number of imperatives in its thinking about teaching and learning. Those imperatives included:

- A substantive change in the profile of the student body, largely as a result of the immigration patterns in the North Shore area
- The involvement of the school in the ICT Lead School project and the resultant focus on pedagogy in relation to the new technologies emerging
- A realization that assessment changes particularly around NCEA had taken the focus away from the learning process and from what constituted powerful learning: that curriculum was being driven by assessment outcomes not by learning outcomes
- Senior Management visits to the Navigator Schools in Australia and attendance at the “Breakthroughs” International Thinking Conference in Auckland

Above all there were new understandings reached about the nature of the learner that Takapuna Grammar School should seek to create and the Brave New World that these learners would be part of. The school’s Teaching and Learning handbook talks of this as follows.

“Schools that were once predominantly about knowledge – they were designed to select those students who were the “wisest” so that they could be further educated and become the leaders of society. Those who were not “wise” left the education
system and became workers on the land or in industry as this was predominantly an industrial age. The “wise” were selected by a system (usually written examinations that only 50% of any cohort was allowed to pass) that asked them to show that they had absorbed the knowledge of their teachers. In this education system teachers knew the facts and taught them to their students who tried to absorb them and recall them later. Things were learned just in case you needed them sometime. The longer you were at school, the more knowledge you were supposed to learn.

But we are now well into the technological age. Information technology, particularly the internet but also texting and pixting, means that knowledge can no longer be held by just a few. Students do not need to learn lots of facts because they can find them easily just in time to use them. This is called “just-in-time” rather than “just in case” learning. For this to be effective information needs to be available anywhere, and anytime. But with so much information now available, students need skills of determining things such as whether the information is accurate, whether the information is important, and what further questions the information raises. Teachers need to be facilitators in a classroom, assisting students to evaluate and apply knowledge and how to work together to solve problems and create solutions.

This technology is changing rapidly and continuously. We are now preparing students for a future world they do not yet know. The Wall Street Journal talks about today’s students eventually “having jobs that don’t yet exist, using technologies that haven’t yet been invented.” To cope with this, students must learn not just to master the technology, but also to be adaptable and capable of learning new skills, processes and applications. They need to be flexible and creative in their thinking. They need to use what they have already learned to construct new understandings and then relate those understandings to future situations.”

In refocusing on Teaching and Learning, initially staff looked at best practice and best research such as “The New Basics” and “Productive Pedagogies” of Queensland, and concepts such as Multiple Intelligences, Habits of the Mind, and Thinking Hats. They then determined to find a solution that was Takapuna Grammar Schools, a solution for our students and our community. They committed to creating Teacher Professional Learning Circles to:

- Share ideas about effective teaching
- Develop a shared approach and a common language
- Promote and support professional reading
- Work inter-departmentally
- and to involve all students positively in their learning through creating a deeper understanding and knowledge, a learning experience relevant to their world, an engagement of all cultures in the classroom and an approach that was cooperative and above all a classroom where self motivation was paramount
With the agreement of the BOT and parents, Professional Development was timed for Wednesday mornings for 1 hour with a late start. Most of this occurred in learning circles using the expertise of Takapuna Grammar School staff.

The philosophical base was the desire to create a lifelong learner with qualities such as resilience, determination, persistence and integrity. These learners would need to be independent, to be capable of making their own choices and to understand how they learn. They would need to realise that if they had the capacity to continue to learn throughout life they can met any change and any challenge that might eventuate.

It was important that the language to be used was our won. So the axiom of the Teaching and Learning that emerged is “Aspiring to Personal Excellence through Knowing, Connecting, Relating and Supporting” (KCSR). The four learning behaviours of KCSR can be summarised as:

**KNOWING:** Understanding how learning happens (metacognition).

**CONNECTING:** Building understanding on what has already been learned from other people, contexts and experiences.

**RELATING:** Applying prior learning to make and create links in other contexts and to solve problems creatively.

**SUPPORTING:** Being an active participant in a positive and collaborative learning environment that supports diversity, and others’ viewpoints.

For teachers, the comparable pedagogical behaviours are:

**KNOWING:** Understanding how students learn. Deeply knowing the content, skills and values of their own learning area.

**CONNECTING:** Constructing learning around what students have already learned from other people, contexts and experiences.

**RELATING:** Creating links into other contexts from which students can apply their prior learning to solve problems creatively.

**SUPPORTING:** Being an active participant in a positive and collaborative learning environment that supports diversity, and others’ viewpoints.

Professional development in learning circles seeks to promote strategies for teachers that will model and promote the KCRS learning behaviours. These strategies will be applied to the delivery of the requisite content, values and skills of each learning opportunity.

To embed the philosophy in the culture of the school, Takapuna Grammar School has
- Identified the indicators in a classroom and in the wider life of the school that show the pedagogy in action. These indicators are fundamental to our self review and coaching and mentoring processes
- Used students as teachers, promoting KCRS to other students and languaging it for themselves
- Structured leadership portfolios around the 4 behaviours
- Made the teaching and learning central to the school branding

In reframing its teaching and learning, Takapuna Grammar has followed its own processes and has determinedly sought its own answers. It has developed a shared and consistent vision. In doing so it is confident in its capacity to be responsive to the developments proposed in the New Zealand Curriculum.

Our advice in determining your own journey

- Develop a shared vision that includes teachers accepting responsibility for students’ learning
- Create a teaching and learning model that is appropriate to your learning community and which has a shared language
- Work within a cooperative and cross curricular professional learning community
- Involve students in the process both as teachers and as learners
- Create a school culture of shared and distributed leadership at all levels
- Strongly promote the expertise and experience within your own school
- Ensure that the school’s strategic planning has as its focus the provision of high quality reaching and learning

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