Secondary Student Achievement PLD

National Newsletter: Secondary Literacy

Information and resources for middle leaders in secondary schools | Term 2 2016

Greetings to you all, Kia ora, Kia orana, Faka'alofa lahi atu, Mālō e lelei, Tālofa lava, Taloha ni.

In this edition we share photos and reflections from the SSA national workshops, look at two recent ERO reports, and provide some resources to support information literacy. All the best for term two.
Denise, Irene and Mal.

2016 national workshops: Literacy learning for NCEA level 1

Many thanks to the participants in our recent series of literacy national workshops. By the time you read this, most of the workshops will have taken place. It was fantastic to see your enthusiastic participation in the discussion and activities. Your feedback to us suggests that you found the workshop content useful in your work. Here are some photos and reflections from around the country:

'So much information has been shared today. It's very valuable and allowed me to think critically about how best to support the diverse learners I work with in secondary settings.'

'A well designed programme, with carefully chosen activities, and opportunities to talk and share ideas with other teachers from other schools.'

'Great course - lots that I'm still digesting at this point. Thank you for the neatly packaged PD sessions for my role as literacy leader too.'

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, Engari taku toa i te toa takitini

My success is not mine alone as it was not the work of one but the contribution of the collective

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Navigating Literaseas
Waitangi - Bay of Islands - 2016

http://www.nzla.org.nz/

25-28 September 2016
Waitangi, Bay of Islands

Two recent ERO reports

Educationally Powerful Connections with Parents and Whānau

In this 2015 report ERO evaluated how well 256 schools worked with parents and whānau to respond to students at risk of underachievement, looking for examples where schools had worked to accelerate progress and improve achievement. ERO found that powerful connections are formed when relationships reflect the concept of mahi tahi – working together towards specific goals. It is a relationship where parents, teachers and students all understand their rights and responsibilities, commitments and obligations – whanaungatanga – to help the students succeed.

ERO found that the most important factors for success with educationally powerful relationships were:

- Providing extended learning across home and school.
- A whole school focus on involving parents and whānau.
- The focus and complexity of the collaboration changed as students got older.
- Teachers and leaders involving parents and whānau in designing and implementing a solution to underachievement.

There are many useful examples of practice in this report, including an example of a programme to **accelerate literacy learning** (specifically reading) for a group of year 10 students. The example highlights how ongoing reflection and evaluation meant that the teachers, students and whānau collaborated to achieve improved outcomes.

Raising Student Achievement through Targeted Actions

In this 2015 report, ERO evaluated how well schools set targets for raising student achievement, and took actions that made a difference for learners who were at risk of underachieving. The report summarises the national picture for targeted actions in our schools, and provides examples from the schools that were doing best in setting targets and taking actions that raised student achievement. ERO found that two thirds of schools set effective targets, and about half took effective actions to raise achievement. ERO found that the most important factors for school success were:

- Schools clearly identifying the target students who needed to make the desired lift.
- Schools resourcing the required actions to lift achievement.
- Staff translating goals and targets into focused actions.
- Teachers and leaders collaborating, and involving parents and whānau, in designing and implementing a solution to underachievement.

In the best instances, schools provided targeted support for the students not achieving well and, at the same time, built teacher capability to avoid such underachievement in the future. Both students and teachers in these schools were energised by their visible success.

We see this most effectively in **Secondary Literacy** where Literacy Leaders are working collaboratively alongside another teacher or within a department to not only raise student achievement for target students, but also to provide ongoing professional learning for teachers.

EDUCATIONALLY POWERFUL CONNECTIONS WITH PARENTS AND WHĀNAU
NOVEMBER 2015
www.ero.govt.nz

For the full report or a 2-page summary report, follow this link:

Educationally Powerful Connections with Parents and Whanau

RAISING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH TARGETED ACTIONS
DECEMBER 2015
www.ero.govt.nz

For the full report or a 2-page summary report, follow this link:

Raising Student Achievement through Targeted Actions

Summary: How high-school students find and evaluate scientific information: A basis for information literacy
Julien, H. & Barker, S. (2009). *Library & Information Science Research.*

Many teachers across learning areas work to develop students' information literacy skills. This article provides some insight into how students engage with information literacy. Julien and Barker explore how students in senior Science classes used information literacy skills. In their words:

> "Science lends itself very well to discussions about the construction of knowledge and validity of information students may find…"

Information literacy: set of skills required to identify information sources, access information, evaluate it, and use it effectively, efficiently and ethically.

The study
Research questions:
- How do high school students in grades 11 and 12 Biology locate and critically analyse scientific information relevant to their learning?
- What criteria do students use to evaluate scientific information in textbooks and popular media?
- What aspects of scientific information are deemed trustworthy by students?
- What characterizes scientific information that students evaluate to be relevant?
- How do students come to understand the ways in which they have come to develop their evaluative criteria?

The study design involved students engaging with a search task. This was followed up with interviews of 24 students.

Findings
Students:
- 59% of information sources were internet-based
- Many students believed Google is the internet
- Some students skimmed information to determine relevance
- Students mostly determined relevance in terms of whether the material answered the question
- Students prefer to use the internet to going to a library because of time
- Students are confident in their information-seeking skills because of experience with previous school projects
- Most common search method is using key words (which is limiting)

Teachers:
- Teachers may lack information literacy skills themselves, especially searching and evaluation skills
- Teachers perceive that they lack time to teach information skills

Conclusions
- Students gave less emphasis to the process of finding information than to the end product of the search
- English language learners should be encouraged to search for information in their first language
- Presenting the task as a question to answer is a good way to start but teachers could also elicit students' prior knowledge and information seeking processes.

Links to resources to support Information Literacy

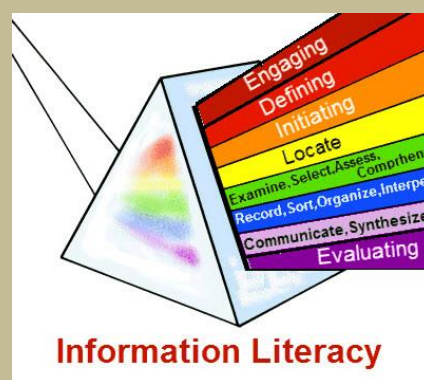**Choosing a search engine that matches your need**
Noodle Tools

Tools to support students evaluating online resources
Eduscapes

Edutopia

Information Literacy - A collection of articles and links
Literacy OnLine TKI   Information Literacy

Information Literacy

http://www.searchfindknow.com/info-literacy.html

Link to SET article
(2005, No. 2)
Information Literacy and Student Research

This is the second of three articles on research as a student learning activity. Rosemary Hipkins explores the idea of "information literacy" and argues that different school subjects provide differences of context that students need to experience and learn to critique.

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Archived newsletters
Previous SSA national newsletters can be accessed from:

Secondary Middle Leaders Newsletters 2016