

Creating a student wellbeing framework

FACILITATION GUIDE & EXAMPLE

Creating a student wellbeing framework

Students are the centre of a school. Engaging them and helping them to shape the direction of the school leads to better outcomes.

The aim

Build a framework that translates student voice into meaningful engagement.

The purpose

This facilitation guide outlines a process that we have found works. This process helps student to create an overall wellbeing framework that outlines what they need from school to live a healthy and successful life. The framework is divided into:

- ▶ What students think they need from school
- ▶ How they think school can help them
- ▶ What they want to leave school with

This framework can be used to help:

- ▶ New teachers understand what students view of their school is
- ▶ Teachers to plan for their classes
- ▶ Parents to understand what their children are wanting to get out of school
- ▶ Schools to reflect on what they provide at school
- ▶ Students to reflect on how well their school is helping them to get what they want out of school



FACILITATING A STUDENT WORKSHOP

Create the student wellbeing framework

Supplies

- ▶ Post-it notes
- ▶ pens
- ▶ large sheets of paper
- ▶ blue tack

Suggested Process

1. Welcome the students to the group and make sure they all know who each other is.

2. Outline the workshop

- a. We want to help students share their views on how school can help them prepare for the future and live amazing successful lives.
- b. There are no stupid ideas – say it anyway.
- c. We will summarise all of what we discuss onto one page and meet again to check that it is accurate.

Optional extra to validate the framework with other students: You can train students to run an activity where they check that their ideas are aligned with what other students think. A suggested process for this is below.

3. Getting warmed up to share ideas and remembering that people can believe different things

- a. Ask everyone to line up on one side of the room.
 - i. Outline that young people receive different messages from many different people, and that making sense of it all can be challenging. This activity will highlight that. Ask for a volunteer who will play a typical young person in New Zealand.
 - ii. Ask for volunteers from the group to represent different roles/ messages given to that young person. As a volunteer for each of the following roles is identified and walks to the front of the group, ask the group to identify two common messages that this 'role' gives to young people. The roles are as follows: young person's parent; young person's teacher; young person's friends; the media (this can be direct and indirect messages); their nucleus accumbens (pleasure and reward); and their prefrontal cortex (consequential thinking and self-regulation).

- iii. Explain that each volunteer is representing the messages these different roles or areas give to young people. They believe that if this young person hears their messages and agrees with them, their life would be amazing. You might like to add that this can sometimes be what we feel as professionals working with young people.
- iv. Explain that when you say "go" each volunteer will walk around the young person, repeating their messages. Everyone will do this at the same time. Ask them not to touch the young person, but they can whisper in their ear, dance in front of them, or wave their hands – anything to get that young person's attention. The young person will stand there and listen to these messages.
- v. Say go, and let this happen for a short while.
- vi. Ask the volunteers to pause, and explain that something has changed in the young person's life. They have decided to leave school. Ask the teacher to stand to the side.
- vii. Invite the rest of the volunteers to have another round of getting their messages through to the young person.
- viii. Ask the volunteers to pause again, and explain that one more change has happened. Sitting at home doing nothing has put strain on their family, and they decide to move out of home. Ask the parents to stand to the side.
- ix. Explain that this is the last round, and invite the rest of the volunteers to give it their best shot at convincing the young person to believe their messages.
- x. Ask the volunteers to stop what they are doing, and everyone apart from the young person in the centre can sit down.
- xi. Ask the young person how they found that situation.
- xii. Ask the young person what they noticed when the teachers and parents stood to the side.
- xiii. Thank the young person, and let them take their seat. You might like to remind the group and the volunteers that they are no longer these roles, they are themselves again.
- xiv. Summarise the activity. All of these views and messages can be right even though they are different from each other. We want all young people to be able to make sense of the messages and figure out which is right for them. In this session, remember that even though there can be different views, they are all important.

4. Either in a subgroup or together | What do students need from school to live healthy and successful lives?

- a. Group into pairs or all in one group, one idea per post-it note. Key question: What do students need from school to live healthy and successful lives?
- b. Share and group into themes.

5. Either in a subgroup or together | What do students want to leave school with?

- a. Group into pairs, one idea per post-it note. Key question: What do students want to leave school with?
- b. Share and group into themes.

6. Either in a subgroup or together | What could this school do that can help students to leave school with those things?

- a. Group into pairs, one idea per post-it note. Key question: What do students want to leave school with?
- b. Share and group into themes.

7. As a whole group | Check that it makes sense.

- a. Explain that you will check that what we have identified makes sense. Read out the summarised themes in this order:
 - i. What students need from school to live healthy and successful lives.
 - ii. This school can do these actions to help students to leave school with those things.
 - iii. So that, students leave school with these things.
- b. Ask students if it makes sense to them, and if there are any other things that are missing.

8. Close the group.

9. Summarise the themes into a one-page table. An example is at the end of this document.



FACILITATING A STUDENT WORKSHOP

Train students to validate their ideas with other students

Supplies

- ▶ Draft student wellbeing framework
- ▶ pens
- ▶ A4 sheets of paper

We want every student to live a healthy and successful life. We came up with ideas about how school can help this to happen and now we need to check what other students think.

Follow the steps below in a workshop with other students to get their thoughts on what we came up with.

Suggested Process

1. Welcome them to the group and introduce yourself.

2. Explain what we are doing by saying:

- a. We want every student to live a healthy and successful life. We have ideas on how school can help, and we want to get their thoughts on what we came up with.
 - b. We will start with a warm up activity to get our brains thinking.
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3. Facilitate the warm up activity – Challenging ourselves to dream bigger.

1. Ask everyone to line up on one side of the room.
2. Read the story below:

A person put some fleas in a glass jar to see what would happen. They quickly jumped out. The person put the fleas back into the jar, and covered it with a glass lid. The fleas tried to jump out again, but hit their heads on the glass. Soon, they learnt to jump to just below the glass so that they wouldn't hit it. Even though they could see the sky, they couldn't jump to their full potential.

The person took the glass lid off to see what would happen. Even though the lid was removed, the fleas didn't jump higher than they had before. They had learnt to limit themselves to the height of the lid, even if it wasn't there anymore.

Soon, one flea tried to jump higher, and realised that it could. Another one followed, and over time, the rest of the fleas learnt that they could jump higher than they had thought possible.

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3. Explain that we all have 'glass lids' and we already have overcome some of them.
- i. **Two years old**
Ask everyone to **take a step forward**. Ask them to think back to when they were two years old, and **identify some tasks** that might have seemed impossible at the time but that they learnt how to do (e.g. talking, running). You can ask a couple of people to share.
 - ii. **Five years old**
Ask everyone to take another step forward. Repeat the same activity, but now they are five years old. Some of these tasks they found hard could be settling in at school, reading, or writing.
 - iii. **Ten years old**
Ask everyone to **take another step forward. Repeat the same activity**, but now they are ten years old. Some of the tasks they found hard could be changing schools, joining a new sports team, or learning how to play guitar.
 - iv. **Your current age**
Ask everyone to **take another step forward**. This is them now at their current age. Ask them to **think of a task that they currently find hard**. Remind them that similar to the other skills they have learnt, if they keep practicing they should be able to master this skill too.
 - v. **Your successful future**
Now ask them to **look to the other side of the room and picture themselves far in the future living an amazing and successful life**. They might need some time to think about what that looks like.
 - vi. **People are proud of you**
Ask them to picture that **someone they respect says to their future self that they are proud of them** and that they have accomplished more than they had dreamed. **How has their picture of their future changed** with that comment?
4. Explain that they can have great futures, and this school is working hard to challenge them to dream bigger for their futures and keep striving to better themselves so they can smash through that glass lid.

4. Faciliate the activity – Checking our ideas.

1. **Put 5 sheets of paper on the floor in a line**, each with a number from 1 to 5. This is a continuum with 5 being, "I strongly agree" and 1 being "I strongly disagree".
2. **Explain** that you are going to read out the ideas we came up with for what students need, and after each one you would like them to stand next to the paper that represents whether they agree or not.
3. **Read each point** in the "Students need" column and **write down the number** that most of the students stand next to.
4. **Do the same for the last column**, "So that students leave school with"
5. **Ask if they have other ideas** for how this school can help students to live amazing and successful lives. Write these down to share with our Student Leader group.

5. Thank everyone for their involvement. Their views will help us provide them the best education and support so that they can have amazing and successful lives.

EXAMPLE

How our school can help students live healthy and successful lives

This is an example student wellbeing framework. It outlines common areas that students identified in the different schools we have done this process in.

STUDENTS NEED	→ THESE ACTIVITIES CAN HELP	→ SO THAT STUDENTS LEAVE SCHOOL WITH
<i>Use this column to reflect on how well we are currently meeting these student needs</i>	<i>Use this column to reflect on what opportunities are provided to students</i>	<i>Use this column to reflect on whether plans, processes, and policies enable students to gain these things.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ To feel excited and driven to explore their future (not necessarily knowing exactly what it will look like, but feeling like they are on a good path).▶ Life skills to know how to live on a day to day basis with great personal values, confidence, and the ability to face any challenge.▶ To feel like school is a place where they belong and can be proud of.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Leadership opportunities▶ School spirit▶ Positive activities and support between students▶ A positive network of people who are interested and care about them (teachers, family, friends).▶ To have support and know how to access it.▶ To feel safe, warm, dry, and comfortable at school.▶ Reassurance and encouragement that they are on the right track.▶ To feel challenged to learn new skills, but not pressured in a particular direction (e.g. not feeling that a pathway directly into work, a course, or university has already been predetermined for them).▶ Life skills to know how to live on a day to day basis with great personal values, confidence, and the ability to face any challenge.▶ Physical, academic, and social activities that all students can be involved in and enjoy, not just those who already have the skills to excel.▶ To clearly see how the subject choices could help their future and career development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Showing a wide variety of what positive futures could look like that challenge all students to dream bigger for themselves.▶ Physical, academic, and activities that all students can be involved in and enjoy. Both in year level groups and across year levels.▶ Encouraging everyone in the school community to look out for each other, encourage each other, and let people know when you care about them.▶ Having teachers and other supportive adults to talk to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Who can listen and give helpful advice▶ Who care and can have individual conversations when needed▶ Having a physical space where students can socialise together and be warm, dry, and comfortable before school and in between classes.▶ Opportunities to learn academic, practical, social, and life skills.▶ Opportunities to get inspired to connect to whakapapa and understand the connection between school, the whenua, mana whenua, and local history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Positive memories of schooling years and feeling proud to say they attended this school.▶ Experiences of being involved in activities that everyone could be part of.▶ Feeling like teachers had a good relationship with them and:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Listened to them▶ Understood them▶ Supported them all the way through school▶ An opportunity to celebrate completing school or the level they achieved to.▶ Practical and academic skills▶ The skills they need to live:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Good personal values for relationships and work▶ Positive outlook▶ Leadership skills▶ Feeling strong and confident▶ Good communication and assertiveness skills▶ Money-management skills▶ Healthy lifestyle (cooking, physical activity)▶ Being adaptable and flexible with a growth mindset▶ Ability to interpret different messages and make their own decisions