

Growing Great Leaders

The importance of place, culture, and community for student leadership



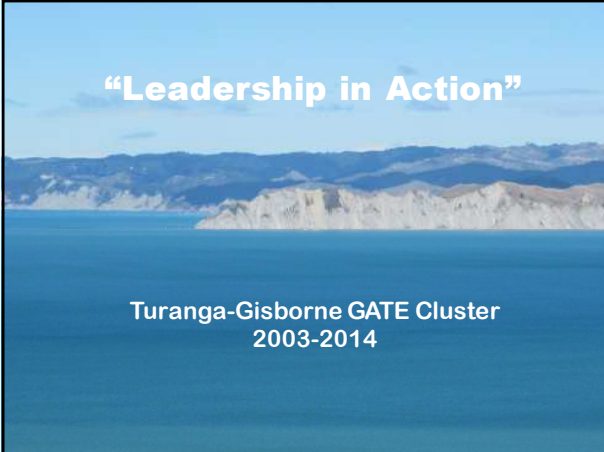
First to see the light of the new dawn – Out East!

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Karen Bush (Sunny)
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“Leadership in Action”



Turanga-Gisborne GATE Cluster
2003-2014



**Turanga-Gisborne
GATE cluster.
Growing great
leaders on great
lands.**

OVERVIEW

- Exploring leadership as a domain of giftedness
- Theory and literature around the concept of leadership within the Aotearoa-NZ context
- Methodology: A small qualitative case study of the leadership programme
- The Turanga-Gisborne GATE Cluster – how our leadership journey has evolved
- The “Leadership in Action” programme with a bi-cultural Māori worldview approach
- Importance of Identity & Community: Project focus in 2014 for the *Working Together* Symposium - Ambassadors of the Gisborne region
- Show case of our citizenship brand of leadership at the District Council
- Review of our GATE leadership model – reflections from multiple perspectives linking into community.
- Group discussion: “How to develop a differentiated leadership programme in your school and “grow great leaders,” who reflect your community’s values and identity?”
- Leadership in Action: Our “informed citizens of the future’ on their quest to light up the world!

Historical Perspective to Leadership

- With the centennial commemoration of WW1 and 2015 marking the 100 year anniversary of Gallipoli, it is timely and appropriate to explore the significance of ‘growing great leaders’ within the group of young G & T students.
- Military definition premised on the nature of aggression and war. The masculine paradigm epitomised this era of world conflict and human annihilation.
- The “Great Man” theory (Thomas Carlyle; Galton, 1869) embodied the coercive and authoritarian style of the general, or great commander and chief – “Do what I tell you, and follow me, lads!”
- The nobility of service and patriotism, serving one’s own country for the greater good and glory for all!
- Or as the the empire-building military strategist, Napoleon Bonaparte once said: “A leader is a dealer in hope.”

Literature Review

- An initial scan of the literature reveals that leadership is multi-faceted concept dependant on context.
- Interestingly, there are not many synonyms that apply to leadership – it is an all-encompassing term in its own right.
- In today’s world, leadership seems a growth industry in so many areas of working life & community development, especially for adults in the education or corporate sectors.
- There appears to be an overwhelming abundance of guides written to coach a style of self-help leadership.
- Paradoxically, there seems to be very little written on workable models for young G&T students & even less in the NZ context.
- The TKI website had very little relevant material, and the APEX journal revealed nothing specific. Any information found was not solely focused on student leadership; rather it was integrated into other gifted domains, or curriculum areas.
- This assimilated approach was certainly the case with the MoE’s 2012 handbook, although there was a comprehensive category listing social leadership characteristics.
- However, one good base article was sourced from Bean & Kames (2005) in their textbook, *Methods and Materials for Teaching the Gifted*.
- These American researchers extol the undeniable benefits of cultivating bright, young leaders through an experience-centred approach which turns potential into actual leadership performance.
- Conclusion: There is a paucity of material outlining differentiation in leadership programmes for primary school G&T children.
- Thus, a gap in the literature base is identified, suggesting there is possibly a need for further targeted research.
- Limitations of this Literature Review:
- This was only a preliminary scoping investigation
- The researcher had no access to NZ university libraries, or international websites requiring paid membership

What does the theory tell us about the link between leadership and giftedness?

- Leadership is considered one of the six commonly held domains of giftedness & included as multi-categorical definitions from the USA, in both the Marland Report (1972) & Javits Report (1988).
- In the MoE G&T Handbook (2012), leadership is absorbed into the category of behaviours or "characteristics" (McAlpine & Reid, 1996) coming under "social leadership."
- In this broad classification, students are noted with attributes such as taking the initiative in social situations; popular with peers; a good communicator; socially adaptable & mature; a flexible thinker; self-confident; willing to take responsibility; able to inspire and motivate others to achieve goals; good organisational skills; & actively seeks leadership opportunities.
- These interpersonal communication skills are essential to all human endeavours and are the glue to connect multiple aspects of home, school, work, and social living.
- Renzulli (2003) postulated that leadership is the integral ingredient for the creation of "social capital." Those who use their gifts in socially constructive ways, enhance community life for their fellow citizens.
- Renzulli also made the indelible connection that the actions of individuals contribute to the creation of social capital. He reports that research makes this link because "leadership is a necessary condition for the creation of social capital" (2003, p. 77).

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Leadership is determined by context and perspective

- Leadership is a construct of giftedness, sensitive to time, place, & culture (Riley, 2007).
- "One size doesn't fit all" suggests that leadership is context-driven with a plurality of meanings & a multitude of perspectives.
- Leadership is "different things to different people ... there is no single correct definition [but] it involves the leader, the followers & the situation ... is one of the most observed & least understood phenomenon on earth" (Karnes & Bean, 2005, pp. 440-441). As such, leadership remains a neglected and poorly served area of giftedness.
- These multiple interpretations mean that leadership is a complex social concept, which can be culturally determined. Obviously, this has real implications for Aotearoa-New Zealand as a bi-cultural country with a growing range of diverse ethnicities.
- Leadership as a construct is multi-dimensional; thus, there should be more than one measure to judge children's leadership attributes (Karnes & Bean, 2005).
- Most importantly, "Leadership skills can make the difference between talents being fully utilised or unfulfilled" (Karnes & Bean, 2005, p. 440).

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Methodology

- This was qualitative research premised on a small empirical case study of the phenomenological "lived experience."
- Personal learning is recounted through the perceptions of the leaders themselves, in conjunction with the supporting perspectives of principals, teachers, parents, and community leaders.
- There was also a degree of self-reflexion because the GATE director is in a compromised position as an insider researcher with a vested interest in the programme.
- The worth of this leadership initiative was authenticated through a diverse sample of community voices gathered through methods consisting of interviews, a focus group, evaluations, and written feedback comments.

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"The Richie McCaw Conundrum"



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Your Views on the Split Personality of Giftedness?

- The All Black colossus, Captain Richie McCaw is a great athlete, but he is equally an inspiring leader of men.
- McCaw is also clearly very bright intellectually - he was Runner-up Dux at Otago Boys' High.
- So in terms of giftedness, there is a conundrum. We need to ask:
- Should we revere McCaw because he is a gifted rugby player, a high academic achiever, or should we hold him up as the ultimate ideal of New Zealand leadership?
- His multi-edged brilliance raises the question of what qualities we, as New Zealanders, most value in our cultural heroes.
- Is it McCaw's physical prowess, his intelligence, or his unique ability to lead his team to victory time and again?
- It is a common belief amongst rugby commentators that McCaw adds 15 points to a test, just by his mere presence on the field. However, this begs the question:
- Was rugby the platform & catalyst for McCaw's superior leadership skills to come to the fore, or would he have been an eminent leader in another capacity?
- Do both domains of giftedness fit together as talent development to grow future captains of industry & influence?

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Our GATE Leadership Journey over the past decade

- Community Hui to create a Gisborne definition for giftedness with community leaders – pool of experts to show how leadership looks in bi-cultural Gisborne
- First programmes lacked real depth – no social purpose
- In the early days (2004), there was a far greater emphasis on the Physical Education base to leadership - more concerned with how to fit into a team than shaping the role of the leader within the unit
- From 2006 onwards, the project of organising & hosting the GATE Finale was handed over to the leaders – they ran the whole show, including acting as MCs
- Finale was culturally responsive with the presence of a GATE Kaumatua, & included a mihi, karakia, kapa haka, waiata
- Social Action projects introduced in 2007 & continue today
- Leadership spin-offs resulting in the creation of parallel programmes i.e.
- The GATE Boys' Mentoring Model at Central School led into Poutama Tamatane – Alternative Education for disengaged Māori boys with wānanga to learn knowledge & skills in:
- Whakapapa & Tikanga

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- Art;
- Mau Rakau;
- Music & creation of a special Haka;
- Chess
- Debating – The Great Gisborne GATE Debate!
- Writing & producing a “Free Family Fun in Gisborne” brochure for refugees or visitors
- Through the Pūmanawa Cluster, Marae-based wananga on the East Coast to help Māori elders with tending & growing herb gardens to use in their marae cooking
- “Leadership in Action” project for 2014 – the *Working Together* Symposium
- Young leaders’ presentation at the Gisborne District Council – this culmination in the year’s learning taken place several times over the decade
- The flow on or ripple out effects of the leadership programme resulted in many instances of Renzulli’s gifted education, Rising Tides philosophy

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Finding a leadership focus to fit the community identity

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give”
(Churchill, 1908)

Our GATE ethos is founded on the ideal of leaders “giving back” to their communities.

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“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

— John Quincy Adams

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The koru – unfurling of new ideas and opportunities, leading us forward

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Reflecting the uniqueness of Tairāwhiti

- The demographics for the two main cultures in Tairāwhiti are, unlike most other parts of NZ, running at 50% for European & 50% for Māori.
- The two worldviews & cultures sit side by side. Thus, educators are constantly mindful that all GATE programmes should reflect this racial mix.
- Leadership is no exception, & the one finding from the focus group is that we no longer have to engineer this ethnic balance.
- We now tend to have a natural process in place, wherein the leaders are around the 50/50 mix of Māori & Non-Māori.
- The principal reason is probably due to our refined, but inclusive identification process embedded in all the GATE schools after 12 years practice! This is a multi-talented framework. This is now accepted as the ‘new norm’ to gifted leadership.

Dr Melinda Webber (2012) sees this multi-ability identification as positive because many high achieving Māori students adopt multiple identities to represent themselves at school and in their communities.

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Multi-Talented Māori Leadership

- "Tuakana Teina" is a model of leadership often found in our kura, whereby the older students look after & mentor the younger tamariki;
- Critical to the Māori worldview is the acknowledgement in New Zealand education that cultural value is placed on a different style of leadership to that revered in European military history;
- Rather than the up-front, "follow me" leader of the Great Man theory (Galton, 1869), Māori tend to also prize the quieter, behind-the-scenes approach;
- Bevan-Brown, in her seminal work, describes this as the recognition of "service to others" (2004, p. 180). The ability to enhance the mana of others and offer manaakitanga is celebrated. This "service component is an integral part of a Māori concept of giftedness" (Bevan-Brown, 2012, p. 13);
- Care, humility & aroha are prized;
- Manaakitanga is a lynchpin to our GATE leadership with hospitality & a special lunch provided at all workshops; and
- The GATE learning intensives begin & end with a karakia. Schools send two students so that Maori children do not feel isolated or whakama.

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Differentiation of Leadership

- Visibly demonstrating strong in-school leadership skills;
 - Show good personal judgement in problem solving; and
 - Have empathy & the ability to interact readily with their classmates.
- Many of these leaders have already undergone some formalised leadership development:
- School Councillors;
 - Attending the Halogen National Young Leaders' conferences, which are held annually; and
 - Acting as Peer Mediators in the playground through the "Cool Schools" programme (Peace Foundation).
- The teaching focus is on moving students up through a process of sequential leadership experiences. The aim is to lift performance with the incentive of an end goal involving a presentation or product.
- The GATE programme differentiates in a number of important ways: Firstly, by bringing together students into a cluster situation with other children they have never met – they are stepped up & out of their social comfort zones;

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- The workshops are "learning intensives," which as the term suggests, involves a packed, compacted content & a very fast pace of delivery for accelerated learning;
- There is high level problem solving with a focus on understanding metacognition
- There are high expectations of students. They must concentrate for longer than normal school periods to complete a vast array of set tasks competently & quickly;
- Students are required to show excellent time management skills & self-discipline – they have to complete a good deal of independent homework & send to the specialist facilitator;
- With no exceptions, all children should be very competent communicators as they are expected to present their learning to a civic audience such as the District Council; and
- These leaders are role models & the "face of GATE" in the community, so they are high calibre ambassadors for the success & sustainability of the actual programme.

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Differentiation to enhance leadership skills & authenticate learning

We agreed that the best way to differentiate our leadership provision for 2014 was to choose a special concept that would challenge, lift, and hone the talents of our leaders.

Our chosen project was not run of the mill – it was extraordinary!
Together with our GATE leaders, we would organise a gifted education symposium for the region, including invited guests from around New Zealand!

We "dared greatly" and volunteered to host the giftEDnz AGM incorporating a professional development seminar, while showcasing the unique 'Gisborne way' of nurturing our talented tamariki.

The Management Committee of principals particularly wanted to feature our leaders in a real-life situation. It was decided that they would be the "Ambassadors of Gisborne," who would warmly welcome and offer hospitable manaakitanga to our guests and local community.

And so the challenge and fun began...!

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Differentiation of Process Our Programme

- Exploring the concept of leadership
- Turanga-Gisborne GATE Leadership model
- Ambassadors for our region
- Place-based region
- Manaakitanga
- Team building and co-operative skills
- Civic mindedness
- Metacognition
- Theory into action
- Solid foundation for developing leaders

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OUR LEADERSHIP MODEL



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The Working Together Symposium

The title for our symposium was very apt, because it signified on several levels the integral leadership concept of collaboration and working together as a team.

At the upper national level, the coalition developed between giftEDnz & the Turanga-Gisborne GATE Cluster.

At the ground organisational level, the partnership evolved between giftEDnz & Tairāwhiti REAP as the co-ordination facilitator.

At the grassroots community level, two local trusts donated grants to enable the event to go ahead.

At the wider regional level, the supporters banded together as parents, whānau, Tairāwhiti community leaders.

And at the centre, right at the heart of the symposium, were the 30 great GATE leaders in action! These were our proud ambassadors of Gisborne.

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A prized piece of wisdom from Dr Amber Dunn, our Keynote Speaker for the Symposium

Amber's address was a stunning speech, which resonated powerfully with the audience and the whānau of our leaders. She introduced her theme of encouraging our youngsters to be bold. They need to be equipped with the self-confidence to step up into the arena of life, full of both triumphs and tribulations. Amber posed the critical question: How do we grow children so they will "dare greatly?" (Roosevelt, 1910) Her advice was to establish a strong moral compass. "Who we are comes from our values. We need to know them. We can let them be the metrics by which we will measure our lives." This ethical perspective is also taken up by researcher, Paul Jewell. "Gifted persons have a moral duty to be morally developed, to refine their leadership skills and to make an especial contribution to society and the solution of social problems" (2001, p. 1)

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Working Together Symposium at Bushmere Arms April 2014
Our young leaders with Tracy Riley - Chair of giftEDnz

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The spirit of warmth and welcoming manaakitanga was commented on by Dr. Tapper, giftEDnz Board member:

"But I have to say that for me, the stars of the day were the students who contributed in so many different ways. From the presentation of gifts to us as honoured guests, their thank yous to speakers and the examples of their work as young leaders, to the demonstration by a group of young chess players who just blew me away with their quick thinking and strategic brilliance, it helped to remind me of why it is so important to continue to advocate for the needs of these very special learners."

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GATE. Where Leadership Begins



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We are anchored in our community



A Parent's Comment ...

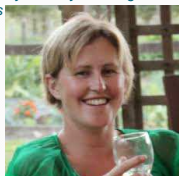
Thank you for all your input and dedication to making Saturday a big 'WOW' day for Emma and Tina, they had a ball. We had some really interesting conversations on the drive home discussing leadership and friendship. The girls' comments showed that your messages really did get through to them. The saying "A boss says Go and a leader says Lets Go" has already been used several times this week, especially when Emma has been trying to order a pesky little brother around! Being the only intermediate age children at their school can make them feel isolated at times so we really appreciate the opportunity these gate workshops have given Emma and Tina to learn and socialise with a mix of other children. From me personally, a big thank you too, the joy of seeing my child shine, and listening to Dr Amber Dunn will keep me smiling for a while.

Our GATE Leaders were magnificent, superbly demonstrating to our giftEDnz peers, the community spirit and manaakitanga that Gisborne is known for! I was very proud of them and am sure you all felt the same!

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Rebecca Trafford – Specialist Facilitator

After a series of three workshops this year, I have been extremely impressed with the development of our GizzyGATE young leaders. In such a short time, learners have developed significantly in knowledge, confidence, skills and the ability to transfer all of this exceptionally well into the real context of the GATE Symposium in April. I think what worked extremely well was having the workshops relatively close together and having an end purpose that the students could relate to. The students selected were of a high calibre and able to understand the tasks set with relatively little support. Having a mix of theory through action was also key – the students could identify the key learning in the activities even the making of lunch (pizza, kebabs and fudge) which was a lot of fun! The students who were able to attend and present at the Symposium were exceptional and the feedback from a wide range of sources certainly supported the worth of the programme.



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Turanga-Gisborne GATE cluster -
we are standing tall & confident for our future.

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‘Working Together’

The importance of “working together” to bring about cultural inclusiveness was articulated by Leighton Evans. He is a well-known community leader, & the CEO of Eastland Community Trust, one of our funders for the symposium:

“We need children to have confidence in their future and a population that respects each other. All these needs must be achieved in partnership with our unique cultural heritage and the indelible connection between Māori and Pakeha” (2014).

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Hon. Meng Foon, Mayor of Gisborne & Tairāwhiti



Josh Wharehinga, who is a new Councillor & the father of Amoe (a GATE leader), noted that our leaders were going to be important "agents of social change" for the community.

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Cultivating Civic Mindedness in Turanga-Gisborne & Tairāwhiti

Meredith Akuhata-Brown, a young Gisborne District Councillor, gave the GATE leaders a standing ovation.

These young people embody the type of citizenship that Meredith extols in her recent Gisborne Herald newspaper article.

"Understanding and appreciating civil society not only increases a community's social capital but promotes a stronger, more connected community, where everyone is valued and can contribute. With greater social capital, we create a cleaner environment with less crime, fewer addictions, and we will see less poverty" (2014).

This participatory and democratic brand of leadership sows the seeds of a social conscience, which is respectful of all cultures and peoples.

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Statements and feedback from the focus group with the GATE Principals

- "We're leaders not followers!"
- We make sure we set decent funding aside to roll out this programme over the year.
- Have a goal for the leaders to work to.
- "The GATE leaders are chosen for their alacrity to think & learn. So they don't need as much practice as other kids – they pick it up the first time!"
- These leaders epitomised their personal motto: "To be the best they can be, in as many learning areas as possible!"
- Many of the leaders were constantly on the winners' podium for a variety of curriculum areas.
- Conclusion: The more active & visible GATE is as a community, the stronger the leadership culture, & the bigger the improvement of in-school outcomes for Gifted and Talented students.
- There appears to be a causal link between the strength of GATE, & the success of its young citizen leaders.

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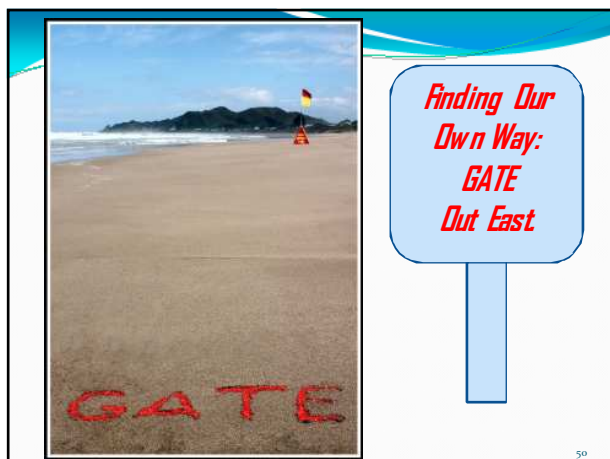
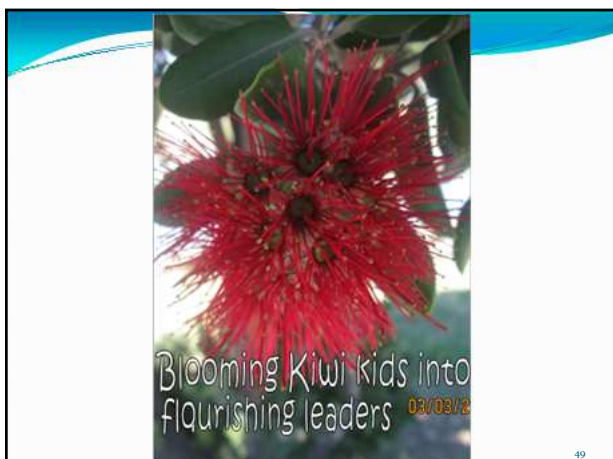


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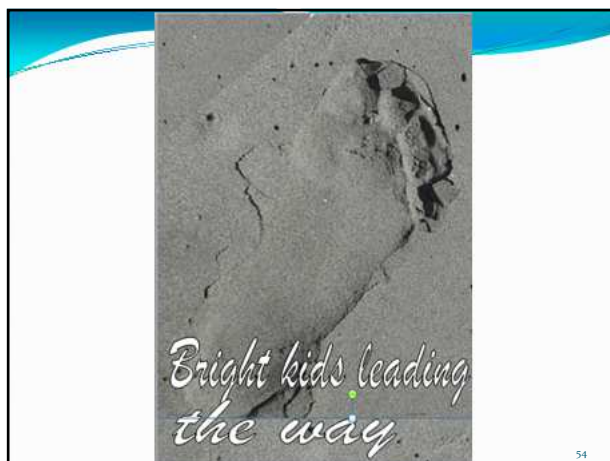
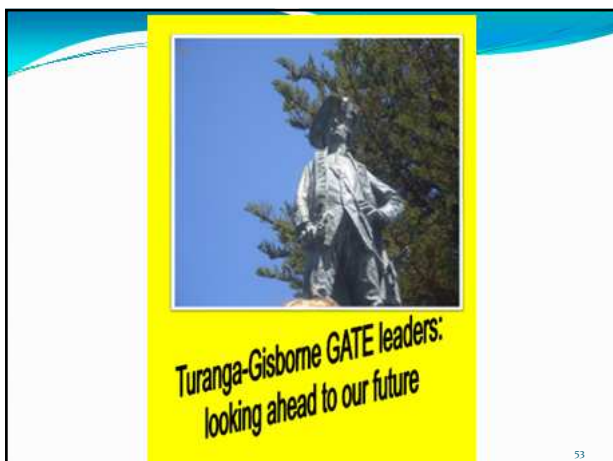
"How to develop a differentiated leadership programme in your school and "grow great leaders," who reflect your community's values and identity?"


1. Make sure you can resource your leadership programme & have some extra money to offer the out-of-school experiences.
2. Don't have one-off workshops! Our learning from the past decade shows that the kids hate only going to a session once, because they feel cheated & don't get the chance to make new friends!
3. It is most important that you 'own' your programme. You need to put your school culture & community stamp on it. This becomes your point of difference and something that your leaders will recognise & have a loyalty to. They will have a sense of belonging to this identity - they feel proud of themselves & their school!
4. Give it a go! Find some good theory & research to back your new-look leadership & then put into action. Review & tweak regularly. We have learnt not to over-think or over-talk our plan – trial or pilot & then analyse!

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- Leadership is so important that each programme strand will be underpinned to some degree by a form of social mindedness
- "Te Ha" Sestercentennial Celebrations in 2019: For such a significant event, our GATE leaders will play an active part in the lead up to the commemoration.
- Create a special waiata for our GATE leaders to use where culturally appropriate
- Succession planning: It will be a celebration to have the current leaders 'pass on' their experience & knowledge to the new recruits for 2015.
- The 2015 leaders will choose a Social Action Project to "give back" to their community.
- The Management Committee is looking into making contact with Gisborne Hospital to see if our gifted students/leaders can be part of their scheme with Otago Medical School. We would like to use these young Med students as role models.
- We believe GATE & Gisborne go well together – it's a natural fit.
- There is a strong sense of community in Gisborne, just as the GATE cluster has a strong sense of collegiality."





**'The sun setting on our great GATE Leaders'
Out East**

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Conclusion

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has" (Mead, 1928).

"You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give."

"What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we are gone? ... We are going on swinging bravely forward along the grand high road and already behind the distant mountains is the promise of the sun" (Churchill, 1908)

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