

School Charter
Strategic and Annual Plan for
Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery
2014 - 2016

Director's Endorsement:

Board of Trustees' Endorsement:

Submitted to the Ministry of Education : 3 March 2014

Strategic Intentions - Introduction

Mission:	<p>To provide our students with personalised learning opportunities. We promote a community where learning is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fun and creates and fosters engagement;• Exciting for our students, parents and staff;• Based on inquiry, curiosity and discovery;• Student directed;• Supported by positive relationships; and,• Involves the entire community
Vision:	<p>To personalise learning for students and to be a leading, innovative learning community.</p>
Values:	<p>Respect, Trust, Caring, Community, Responsibility, Collaboration and Innovation</p>
Te Ao Māori:	<p>We acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and that it is central to, and symbolic of, our national heritage, identity, and future.- a document that protects Māori learners' rights to attain true tangata whenuatanga (citizenship) through growing a range of vital skills and knowledge, as well as valuing te reo Māori as a taonga. <p>We strive to provide a high quality education that is accessible, equitable and responsive to the diverse aspirations of our learners. In order to achieve that we endeavour to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- grow our knowledge and our understanding of Te Ao Māori in order to develop and maintain a school culture where tikanga Māori and te reo Māori is woven through in all we do.- support all our learners to participate competently and confidently in both the Māori world and the Pakeha world and are able to move comfortably from one world to the other.- engage and consult with our Māori whānau and the wider community to develop and strengthen our understanding of a kaupapa Māori world view.- ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to provide instruction in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori.- the school will extend its work in the He Kakano project for one more year.

Special Character:

Below is our Special Character, as gazetted by the Ministry of Education. We intend to reshape this into a more suitable form (a list of tenets for example) during the year.

The following aims, purposes and objectives constitute the designated character of the school:

The Aims

The aim of the school is:

- To provide a different style of education for children, founded upon the philosophy of discovery learning, as a designated character school under section 156 of the Education Act 1989.
- To create a new State school which has as its fundamental tenet that the child is central in directing his or her own learning so that the enthusiasm and love of learning is retained.
- To provide the opportunities for children to go beyond the usual learning boundaries into an infinite array of learning experiences.
- To use the entire community as the learning environment.
- To provide a holistic approach to learning, and to cater to all intelligence traits and learning styles.
- To create a learning community without failure where all children identify a talent, skill or intelligence through which they can achieve their aims.

Purpose

- The purpose is to provide an educational environment in which children can achieve their potential, develop self-esteem, and explore a huge array of learning options.

Objectives

- To meet the requirements of the National Education Guidelines in an innovative and stimulating manner best suited to the learning desires of the children and families who choose this style of learning.
 - To enable students to pursue areas of interest and personal relevance rather than to follow paths predetermined by others. The requirements of the national curriculum will be met through the student's chosen path, rather than through a prescribed route.
 - To enable students and their families to see learning as a total process that is multi-faceted and life long.
 - A holistic approach will be taken which ensures parents are a vital part of the learning agreement.
 - The objective is to involve parents, families and communities in the learning process.
 - To ask students first about what they need in order to learn.
 - To ensure that this choice is affordable to those who choose it.
 - To ensure that this style of education is accessible to those who choose it.
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Strategic Intentions - School Context

Students' Learning:

At Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery we strive to grow a learning community where students are at the centre, with staff, whānau and community experts collaboratively supporting their learning. Whānau involvement is critical to our holistic, individualised approach to learning and can take many forms such as support with:

- Learning experiences across curriculum areas.
- Project based learning.
- Inquiries; helping to locate resources, experts and mentors.
- Organising trips and transport and accompanying children on trips.
- Comfort, questions and discussion.
- Organising community events, promotion, and fundraising.
- Becoming a school trustee.

The local community also supports us also by helping with fundraising, supplying resources, providing learning environments, helping with experts and mentors and in various other ways

Student Engagement:

Students, learning advisors and whānau collaboratively plan and design students' learning around their strengths, passions, interests and needs.

Regular individual education meetings (IEMs) between students, whānau and learning advisors, provide collaborative opportunities to reflect on past learning and plan for future learning, to evaluate and report on learning progress, identify support from whānau and discuss ways to extend learning.

Students co-construct goals that support learning new knowledge and skills, stretch their thinking, encourage creativity and innovation and pursue personal passions, interests and needs.

School Organisation and Structures:

The school is was established on 27 January 2014 under section 156(a) of the Education Act as a state school with special character designation, as a result of the merger of Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti.

The school is currently located on two sites. 160 Year 1-8 students are located at our McMahan campus in Halswell, while 330 Year 9-13 students are located at our Dovedale campus at the University of Canterbury. The school will eventually move onto a shared site (currently planned for September 2016).

A vital part of the school's special character is its connection to the central city. With both campuses currently located outside of the central city, there is a desire to develop opportunities to use the central city whenever possible.

Review of Charter and Consultation

The three strategic aims below were developed during a strategic planning process led by the Board of Trustees from November 2013 to February 2014. Specifically, consultation took place with:

- Staff - through two facilitated sessions (in December 2013 and February 2014)
- Parents and caregivers - through several facilitated sessions (in November 2013 and throughout February 2014)
- Students - through two facilitated sessions (in February 2014)
- Senior Leadership - during senior leadership meetings in February 2014
- Survey - conducted in February 2014 through surveymonkey.com

From this process, three core strategic aims were developed.

- **To grow a community of learners**
- **To develop a student centred learning culture**
- **To recognise and facilitate individual student success**

Strategic Section - Learning Aims

Aim	2014	2015	2016
<p>1. To recognise and facilitate individual student success</p>	<p>Strategies to promote individual student success, including the importance of achievement setting personalised learning outcomes and achievement (this may be NCEA or it may be another more appropriate outcome for the student).</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will be provided for staff around managing and appropriately recognising individual learning programmes.</p> <p>A process for the development of a school wide (Y0-15) approach to individual learning plans, and school wide celebration of individual student learning, will be developed and implemented.</p> <p>Consultation with Māori and Pasifika communities will be held to understand the context and needs of these groups with regard to promoting personal (academic or other personal) success.</p> <p>Through consultation with the community, we will develop a shared understanding of what achievement entails at the various stages of a student's pathway.</p>	<p>Strategies that promote student success developed in 2014 will be reviewed, and revisions made to practice where necessary.</p> <p>Progress in personal student achievement for 2014 will be reviewed and documented.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff.</p> <p>The process established in 2014 for individual learning plans, will be reviewed, and revisions made to practice where necessary.</p> <p>A review will be carried out to determine key factors that lead to personal student success.</p>	<p>Progress during 2014 and 2015 in the promotion of student success will be reviewed and documented.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided.</p>

Aim	2014	2015	2016
<p>2. To develop a student centred learning culture</p>	<p>All learning advisors and support staff will work together to identify ways in which student-centered learning can be delivered. A list of key methods will be developed, explored, trialled and implemented.</p> <p>All students, parents / caregivers will identify ways in which they believe student-centered learning can be delivered. A list of key methods will be developed, explored, trialled and implemented.</p> <p>A comprehensive consultation process will be carried out to review the school's special character. This process will focus on developing an agreed set of tenets for the merged school.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will be provided for learning advisors to support student centred learning. Induction programmes/PLD for parents/ caregivers created and trialled.</p> <p>Community Leaders will trial an agreed way to support student centred learning outside of classes / classrooms.</p>	<p>A review will be carried out of the trials of 2014 and a plan put in place for the long-term delivery of student-centered learning.</p> <p>Further trials aimed at the delivery of student-centered learning will take place.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff.</p> <p>A plan of what the special character looks like across a learners journey from Year 1-13.</p>	<p>Based on the experiences of 2014 and 2015, the provision of student-centered learning and the impact of this on student achievement will be reviewed and documented by the senior leadership group.</p> <p>Research from an external provider will be encouraged to analyse student centred learning at our school.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff and parents.</p>

Aim	2014	2015	2016
3. To grow a community of learners	<p>Establish regular meetings with parents at both sites to discuss ways we can build community.</p> <p>Professional learning and development around establishing and maintaining community will be provided for staff. This could be widened to include parents and students.</p> <p>Trial community of learners across the two sites (Y7-10).</p> <p>Connections to businesses, schools and organisations in the CBD will be made to help facilitate our return to the city.</p> <p>Find ways to work with other educational providers to grow our learning community beyond the physical confines of our campuses.</p> <p>Continued our involvement in the He Kakano project for 2014. This will further promote the needs of Māori learners and grow the leadership's focus on building Māori achievement into our community.</p>	<p>A review will be carried out of the trials of 2014 and a plan put in place for the long-term development of community.</p> <p>Further trials communities will be developed. These may have a range of focuses depending on the 2014 trial community.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff.</p>	<p>Progress during 2014 and 2015 in the promotion of student success will be reviewed and documented.</p> <p>Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided.</p>

Strategic Section - 2014 Resource Aims

Aim	Aim	Aim
<p>1. School Finance and Property Staff and students will be encouraged to plan opportunities to naturally use the resources of each site.</p> <p>To ensure that both campuses are fit for purpose for the needs of the students, staff and community.</p> <p>To establish new site to accommodate and further develop community at the Dovedale site.</p> <p>Finances - to ensure that the school is in a strong financial position, a budget for 2014 has been set that provides funding for: the staffing resources discussed above considerable professional development for staff to support strategic aims , as well as the annual aims support for Information Technology (IT) provision capital expenditure for subject areas and for IT provision.</p>	<p>2. Health and safety To conduct a health and safety review across both sites.</p> <p>To establish a health and safety team at the school.</p> <p>To bring both sites up to the code to ensure that the facilities are safe for students and staff and the wider community.</p>	<p>3. Personnel Look at ways to support and develop curriculum within the bounds of our special character (holistic).</p> <p>To develop professional learning and development plans that promote student directed learning.</p>

Strategic Section

2014 Annual Plan and Goals

1. **To achieve aspirational and realistic literacy and numeracy goals for our students**
2. **To set aspirational and realistic targets for all students undertaking a programme incorporating NCEA**
3. **To ensure that Māori and Pasifika students are supported in achieving educational success**
4. **To develop and trial processes to support independent learning**
5. **To commit to professional learning as an integral aspect of our community**
6. **To develop a strong connection and relationship with the central city**
7. **To attract whānau, staff and other organisations to our community**
8. **To induct new members of the school into our culture and philosophy**

Annual Aim 1

To achieve aspirational and realistic literacy and numeracy goals for our students.

Baseline data

24.4% of Y1-8 students at below or well below the national standard for reading. 53.8% of our Y1-3 students are below or well below the national standard for reading. Our school wide data suggests that as a school we are able to remedy this, with over 50% of our Y7-8 students achieving above the standard.

19.6 of Y1-8 students are below or well below the standard for mathematics. 28.2% of our Y1-3 students are below or well below the national standard for mathematics.

Year 13 data shows improvement across all NCEA levels, but a drop in UE achievement. The drop in UE may be indicative of misunderstanding the rules around approved subjects. There has also been difficulty in ensuring the UE Literacy and Numeracy standard has been met by all students. Placing a focus on UE Literacy and Numeracy could help the school to identify students at risk of not achieving their Literacy or Numeracy so that they can be placed in appropriate level courses. These need not be English or Math classes, as Literacy and Numeracy can be gained from a range of subjects.

Currently there are no alternative data sets to show student achievement in the school. We intend to develop a school wide curriculum review that focuses on achievement against learning outcomes, as well as introducing a system to track personal student goals (at all year levels).

Student Targets:

- 1. To raise the number of Y13 students achieving University Entrance from 19 (2013) to 30 (of 74 Y13-14 students) by focusing on UE literacy and numeracy requirements***
- 2. Year 1-2 students identified as “below” or “well below” the national standard for reading in 2013 (Year 2 and 3 in 2014), will have made more than one year’s progress to be “at” or “above” the national standard for reading or equivalent.***
- 3. Year 3 students identified as “below” or “well below” the national standard for mathematics in 2013 (Year 4 in 2014), will have made more than one year’s progress to be “at” or “above” the national standard for mathematics or equivalent.***
- 4. To develop a system to collect and track students’ personal achievement goals.***

Actions to achieve targets	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Analyse December 2013 achievement data to inform progress and planning for 2014	Senior Leadership Team		January 2014

Monitoring meetings every 4 weeks to discuss progress of target group	Community Leader Y1-3 / Deputy Director (McMahon)		On-going throughout year
Interview Y1-3 students and parents to identify reading genre preferences	Community Leader Y1-3		Term 1
Review start of year e-asTTle (2012) achievement data to identify target groups and their priorities	Nat Standards Coord / Deputy Director (McMahon)		Term 1
Trial peer reading initiatives in Y1-3	Community Leader Y1-3		Term 2 onwards
Celebrate mathematics in school newsletters	Director		On-going throughout year
Analyse December 2014 achievement data to inform progress and planning for 2015	SLT		December 2014
Community forums with parents and families about reading - at school and at home	Director / Deputy Director (McMahon) / Community Leader Y1-3	\$50	Term 2
Purchase of reading resources for Y1-8 students	Deputy Director (McMahon)	\$500	Term 1
Students at risk of not achieving UE Literacy or Numeracy discussed at monthly meetings	Curriculum Leader / PN		On-going throughout year
NCEA Level staff meet to discuss literacy and numeracy credits that are available in each course.	LAiC / Curriculum Leader		Term 2 onwards

Literacy and numeracy standards are publicised in the descriptors	PN / Systems Leader		On-going throughout year
Y12-13 students are asked at each 1:1 meeting about Literacy and numeracy goals and these are tracked throughout the year.	HB Learning Advisors		Term 2 onwards
Process for school wide curriculum review is established and implemented	Curriculum Leader / Director		Term 1-2
System for personalised and qualification goals is created.	SLT / PN / Nat Stand Co		By Term 2

Annual Aim 2

To set aspirational and realistic targets for all students undertaking a programme incorporating NCEA

Baseline data

Students attempting enough credits to achieve a NCEA certificate are currently achieving well, with 75% of Y11 achieving Level 1, 85% of Y12 achieving Level 2 and 78% of Y13 achieving Level 3. This compares favourable to national participation based achievement rates. These participation statistics are important at Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery as our school encourages students to work at the most appropriate level rather than their age level. With that said our roll based statistics for 2013 are very low, with 33 of 86 Y11s achieving NCEA Level 1, 39 of 85 Y12s achieving Level 2 and 24 of 71 Y13s achieving Level 3. We do not currently have a reliable system to record personalised qualification goals. This would provide the school with a better gauge of how successful our students were in achieving their goals. For example if a Y11 sets a Level 3 qualification or a Y13 sets a Level 1 qualification goal, we would like to be able to report on these in addition to the NZQA statistic sets, as this is the information that actually matters to our students and their families.

Student Targets:

- 2.1 At least 85% of students with a NCEA Level 1 Certificate qualification goal, will achieve their NCEA Level 1 certificate
 2.2 At least 85% of students with a NCEA Level 2 Certificate qualification goal, will achieve their NCEA Level 2 certificate
 2.3 At least 85% of students with a NCEA Level 3 Certificate qualification goal, will achieve their NCEA Level 3 certificate

Actions to achieve targets	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Set NCEA qualification goal prior to the end of Term 1 for all Y11-13 students	Principal's Nominee		Term 1 2014
Monitor Y11-13 student progress through monthly meetings with curriculum learning advisors	Principal's Nominee		On-going throughout year
More emphasis on attainment of certificates given at student and parent NCEA meetings.	Principal's Nominee		Term 1
Develop and document a process to alert parents to students at risk of not achieving	Principal's Nominee		Term 1

All staff to continue developing a professional subject network to ensure standards are being appropriately delivered and accurately assessed	Director		On-going throughout year
Promote NCEA in newsletters and information evenings to parents.	Director / Principal's Nominee		Term 2 onwards
LAs to identify students at risk of not achieving and discuss them at monthly meetings. Identified students are discussed individually and plans made in 1:1s to mentor and set goals for achievement.	Director / Principal's Nominee		On-going throughout year
Emphasis on accurately recording student standards and accurately entering student standards to NZQA	Principal's Nominee		December 2014

Annual Aim 3

To ensure that Māori and Pasifika students are supported in achieving educational success

Baseline data

In Y-8 Māori had low performance in maths and reading national standards. 31.6% (6 students) of Māori were below or well below the standard for reading, with 26.3% (5 students) of Māori below the standard for mathematics. 50% of Pasifika students (1 student) were below the standard for mathematics.

50% of Y11 Māori achieved NCEA Level 1. Y12 and Y13 Māori students achieved at a much higher level (80% and 100% respectively). In 2014 we would like to see that every Māori student is identified and a goal is set. We would expect that at a school with weekly mentoring and an increased level of parental and whānau involvement, that all of our identified Māori students should achieve their NCEA goal.

Student Targets:

3.1 All Māori and Pasifika students with an NCEA qualification goal will achieve their set goal.

3.2 5 Māori students below the national standard for mathematics will make one years accelerated progress to be “at” or “above” the national standard or equivalent.

Actions to achieve targets	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
All Māori and Pasifika on roll identified with learning advisor becoming mentor and advocate	Deputy Directors		Term 1
Personal achievement goals monitored in each 1:1 or conference and IEP	HB LAs		Throughout year
Māori and Pasifika reported on to BoT on regular basis	Director		Throughout year
Continue He Kakano PLD (1 year extension)	SLT / Middle leaders	\$1000	From Term 2

Annual Aim 4

To develop and trial processes to support independent learning

Context

Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti both have a firm philosophical belief that student's are central to their learning. Students are encouraged to develop their own projects, inquiries and learning programmes through intentional planning with parents and learning advisors. Y9-13 students at the Merged School are largely unsupported in their Project Based Learning time (PBL). This is partly due to the pressure to staff 1:1 meetings, conferences, classes and meet contractual requirements. Currently 1 support staff member is employed to support with monitoring PBL in the Y9-13 school, and one learning advisor is employed part time to support science and technology projects for Term 1 at the Y0-8 school. Personal projects while philosophically vital to our special character often suffer to a lack of obvious rewards that course based learning naturally provides (NCEA, timely and relevant feedback on learning).

Actions to achieve aim	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Hire staff to support PBL	Director	\$55000 and 0.1 FTTE	Before start of 2014 school year
Create a database of parental expertise to support PBL	Deputy Director (Dovedale)		Term 1
Develop a range of generic NCEA activities available at Level 1, 2 and 3	Director, Deputy Director (Dovedale), PN		In place for 2015
Review staffing in Y7-13 to see if it can be better used to support PBL	SLT		By start of Term 3
Interview / survey students about value of PBL and classes	SLT		By end of Term 2
Trial a Y7-10 community of learners with a focus on independent and shared projects.	SLT with Community Leaders		By end of Term 2

Annual Aim 5

To commit to professional learning as an integral aspect of our community

Context

The Discovery Learning Trust founded the schools with innovation as a guiding ideal. To further develop our practice as learning advisors, leaders and educators, it is essential that all staff are constantly questioning and testing their practice, while gaining support from each other in a professional learning community.

Actions to achieve aim	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Staff wide whole year PLD programme established	Director	\$5000	End term 1
Purchase of Visible Learning for Teachers for all Full Time LAs	Director	\$1600	Feb 2014
Senior Leadership to visit Auckland schools with innovative practice	MoE Curriculum Advisor	\$2000	March 2014
Senior Leadership to work with external facilitator to improve practice	Director with MoE Curriculum Advisor	\$3000	Throughout year
Staff to negotiate individual PLD with appraiser or SLT up to \$500	SLT / Appraisers	\$17500	Term 1
Staff to attend any best practice workshops for curriculum delivery or NCEA	Curriculum Leader	Relief costs	Throughout year
All staff to present at a PLD staff meeting during year	Director		Week 3 Term 1
Establishment of PLG around common areas of staff PLD	Curriculum Leader with SLT		End Term 1

Annual Aim 6

To develop a strong connection and relationship with the central city

Context

Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Were displaced from their central city locations immediately following the February 2011 earthquake. The schools are currently based in Halswell and Ilam while the Ministry of Education works on building a new school in the central city. This has been marked for Sept 2016. Until then the school needs to remain part of the central city. Building links with other schools, businesses and making regular excursions to the city, will help us remember our central city roots. By 2017 most of our students from pre February 2011 will have left. It's important that our current students see the central city as part of their learning environment.

Actions to achieve aim	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Be a active member of the Central City Learning Cluster	Director	Relief	Throughout year
Make connections with central city businesses	Director		Throughout year
Students from each site encouraged to go to central city each term	Deputy Directors		Termly
Property matters are followed up with Ministry of Education prior to each BoT meeting	Director / Board Chair		Monthly
Community is informed of our central city expeditions in newsletters	Director / Director's PA		Termly

Annual Aim 7

To attract whānau, staff and other organisations to our community

Context

Our school roll is currently sitting close to 500. This is roughly the figure we would like to maintain until we return to the centre of the city. Our roll is however very imbalanced, with 150 of our students in Y12-13, and only 10 Y4 students enrolled. To ensure that we are able to sustain our roll, we need to examine how we market our school to Christchurch and beyond. Coupled with this is the fact that we are school in its first year following a merger. We need to ensure that people know who we are and what we can offer students, parents, whānau, teachers and the community.

Actions to achieve aim	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Examine the school roll at March 1, and develop a strategy to maintain our roll	Director		Term 1
Develop an enrolment scheme for the merged school	Director / BoT		Term 1
Develop a prospectus for the merged school	Director / Director's PA	\$1500	Start Term 3
Promote school wide and individual successes locally	Director		Throughout the year
Develop an electronic application system for new enrolments	Director / System's Leader		Start Term 3
Develop an electronic application system for learning advisor applications	Director / System's Leader		Start Term 3
Establish a clear exit interview process for all leavers including whānau	Director / Director's PA		End Term 4

Establish a marketing committee

Director

Start Term 2

Annual Aim 8

To induct new members of the school into our culture and philosophy

Context

Feedback taken throughout the charter consultation process suggests that induction of new students, whānau and staff needs to improve. As a special character school it is crucial that new members of the community are able to be supported into our vision and values.

Actions to achieve aim	Led by	Budget	Timeframe
Develop a new student handbook	SLT		Term 3
Develop a new parent handbook	SLT		Term 3
Develop a new staff handbook	SLT		Term 3
Create middle leadership roles in the school to support induction - Community Leaders	Director		Term 1
Community Leaders to support SLT with orientation processes for 2015	SLT / Community Leaders		Term 3
Conduct survey with existing community to find details of each members induction - eg strengths, weaknesses	Director	\$300	Term 2
SLT to examine exit interview feedback	SLT / Community Leaders		Term 3