Tēnā koutou e ngā ihorei ō ngā Kōhanga Reo puta noa, kahore te aroha e ngaro, ki te hunga kua riro atu ki te pō, engari he puna whakamanawa ake, ia tātou kua mahue nei.

Nō reira e ngā whānau, e ngā kaiarahi, e ngā mokopuna o te kaupapa, tūwhitia te hopo, mairangatia te angitū.

“Ko te reo he taonga, ko te mokopuna te tino taonga.”

“The reo is our purpose, the mokopuna are our priority.”

The Ministry of Education have recently released a consultation document called “He taonga te tamaiti Every child a taonga Strategic plan for early learning 2019-29”. This document is part of the consultation process that the Minister of Education Hon Chris Hipkins launched during the year “Me Kōrero tātou” let’s talk education. It is part of a bigger process to overhaul the way that education is delivered, how it is provided and how kaiako can be supported to provide a better quality service to mokopuna.

Te Kōhanga National Trust Board formed the Claim Ohu at the beginning of the year to negotiate with the Crown for settlement of the Kōhanga Reo Trusts claim Wai2336 “Matua Rautia”. The Ohu is led by Matua Hook, who is also the Chair of the Board, the ohu’s sole purpose is focused on settling the findings and recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal.

The Kōhanga Reo claim was initiated by a taskforce report “An Agenda for Amazing Children – Final Report of the ECE Taskforce” released on 1st July 2011 which was critical of Kōhanga Reo but had not consulted with Kōhanga reo on any of its recommendations. In response to that report on the 25 July 2011 thousands of Kōhanga Reo whanau from around the motu, led by Kiingi Tuheiti, marched onto Parliament with a tribunal claim against the Crown. In October 2012 the Waitangi Tribunal released its findings and found in favor of The Kōhanga Reo National Trust, that there essentially had been a breach of the Crown’s obligation to support Te Kōhanga Reo movement.

Today with a new government and new direction for education, Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, are feeling positive about discussions with Crown negotiators towards a resolution of the Trusts Wai2236.
The “He taonga te tamaiti Every Child a Taonga Strategic plan for early learning 2019-29” consultation document does highlight some of the areas that the Trust is focusing on with the Crown such as the development a funding model that’s works for Kōhanga reo, to support language acquisition, and strengthen retention of Māori language within a cultural framework.

The Kōhanga reo Trust simply seeks equality and pay parity across its operations. This is also through the validation of Te Tohu Tino Rangatiratanga Whakapakari o Te Kōhanga Reo as a recognised teaching qualification that would support teachers who work in Kōhanga Reo. The consultation document discusses 100% qualified staffed, the majority of staff in Kōhanga Reo currently are on recognised Kōhanga Reo course or hold some type of Kōhanga Reo approved course.

The Kōhanga Reo National Trust welcomes the consultation document which may herald a turning of the tide, for the provision and proper resourcing of Kōhanga Reo. The Kōhanga Reo has maintain its stance through its 36 years “ko te reo te mauri o te mana māori”, tamaiti whāngaihia ki te Kōhanga reo, tu rangataira ana.”

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