



**TE URU AMOKURA
SPRINGBOARD TRUST**

Strong strategic school leaders | thriving tamariki mokopuna

**Fostering strategic school leadership to tackle systemic challenges in
Aotearoa New Zealand**

Dale Bailey

NZAI 2026



Learning intentions

Strong strategic leadership leads to thriving tamariki mokopuna

- using evaluation to focus on the right school challenges;
- how to tell a compelling story of the difference they make; and
- ways to utilise their evaluation data for ongoing improvement.



Introducing Te Uru Amokura | Springboard Trust

- Charitable trust funded by philanthropic and business partners
- Volunteers at the heart of our model
- Strong investment in evaluation
- Over 850 principals have done our programme in 19 years
- Major new partnership with Westpac
- Need to make shifts in the leadership to drive better outcomes for children and young people





**What are the big
strategic challenges in
education in Aotearoa?**

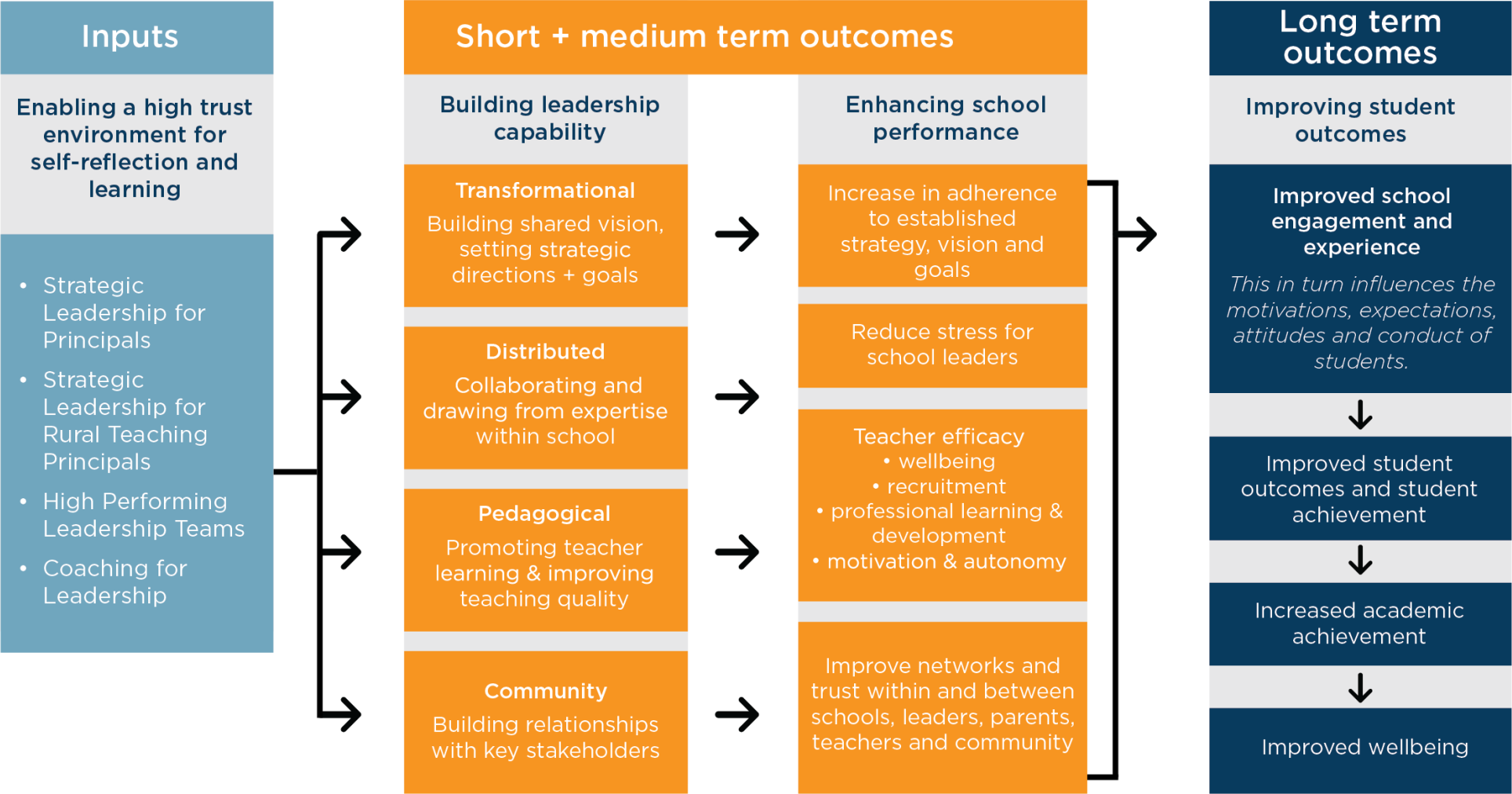


Key systemic challenges in New Zealand education

- Low socio economic
- Indigenous students
- Migrant communities
- Rural and remote communities
- Neurodiverse learners (and staff)
- Attendance following pandemic
- Leading the change that is needed



Springboard Trust intervention logic for student outcomes



Our Strategic Leadership for Principals programme planning pyramid

Vision

What does success mean for your school over the next three years?

Change

How much change is needed?

Strategic Goals and Initiatives

What strategic goals and initiatives will achieve that change?

Measurement

How will you know you have achieved success?

Annual Plan

What are your practical priorities in year one of implementation?
What are your big gaps in capacity and capability and how will you fill them?



Leading Change

How will you prepare to lead change in your school?

Stakeholders

Who is critical to the success of your strategic plan?

Take a strategic challenge you want to impact

- Why is it a challenge? How do you know?
- What needs to change?
- What does success look like?
- What might you do to achieve that success?



**How might you
measure your progress
toward success?**



Our key learnings from 900 New Zealand school principals

- Stakeholder consultation, needs to be broader than most
- Distributed leadership is the key
- Reduce the number of strategies and initiatives to what matters
- Measurement is challenging , measurement hesitancy
- Using strategic leadership to create focus and momentum is very significant
- Bringing ideas from outside education is very useful



Strategic Leadership for Principals Programme (SLPP) evaluation

10 key areas of impact:

- Enhanced Strategic Thinking and Planning
- Improved Stakeholder Engagement
- Increased Confidence and Empowerment
- Behavioral Changes in Leadership
- Cohort-Based Learning and Networking
- Capacity Partner Support
- Focus on Measurement and Accountability
- Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion
- Facilitator Effectiveness
- Long-Term Impact and Real-World Application



SLPP 2025 evaluation

- Net promoter score 91
- Developing strategic goals and measuring goals highly valued
- a profound effect on leadership behaviours, fostering strategic clarity,
- effective communication, and empowerment. Principals reported feeling more confident in their roles, exemplified by comments like "I feel empowered," reflecting a transformed leadership approach

DATA



SORTED



ARRANGED



PRESENTED
VISUALLY



EXPLAINED
WITH A STORY



Social return on investment

- ImpactLab 2025 assessment
- Theory of change as the basis of the investment
- Proving the longer term impact is the goal
- For every \$1 of invested \$5.70 social return





PATRICIA AVENUE SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2028

'LEARNING FOR LIVING'

Our Values

- Partnerships
- Belonging
- Thriving

Strategic Goals

Ako Tahi (Teaching & Learning)

Relevant, holistic learning pathways grow every learner

Tipu Tahi (Growing Capability)

Our resilient, capable and responsive staff are supported and valued

Mahi Tahi (Partnerships)

Strong connections and reciprocal partnerships exist between whaanau, community and school

Strategic Initiatives

- Implement and embed schoolwide mathematics and literacy approaches
- Establish and embed comprehensive and accessible school-wide data and assessment practices
- Equip staff to deliver specialist approaches and programmes

- Implement strategies that support a culture of wellbeing
- Improve retention of all staff having clear professional pathways and growth opportunities
- Develop and implement refreshed recruitment strategy

- Expand opportunities for engagement and connections with whaanau
- Grow partnerships with mana whenua
- Strengthen partnerships with host schools

Success

Our learners have pathways and programmes that ensure their success

Our school is a place of choice for staff to flourish and thrive

Our school is a vital part of the community



Takapuna Primary

Our Vision:

Proud to be Different
Proud to make a Difference

Our Whakatauki:

Ma te pa ka taea te whakatipu te tamaiti
It takes a village to raise a child

Our Values:

- Haepapa (Responsibility)
- Ngakau pono (Integrity)
- Auahatanga (Innovation)
- Manaaki Whakaute (Care and Respect)
- Hiranga (Excellence)

Goal 1: Thriving Learners

1. Create a Learning Support framework

2. Develop a school-wide approach for building Resilience strategies

3. Enhance our Indoor and outdoor physical spaces

All ākonga are resilient learners who have achieved their potential



Goal 2: Empowered Teachers

1. Develop a 'TPS Teacher's Toolkit: Best practice strategies

2. Embed 'Instructional Coaching' In Teacher Professional Growth Cycle

3. Ensure equitable access to purposeful learning resources.

Every teacher maximises their skills to champion student outcomes



Goal 3: Engaged Whānau

1. Develop a strategic School Marketing & Engagement Plan

2. Maximise Hero's potential for family engagement & communication

3. Strengthen whānau engagement pathways

Learning is enriched, with whānau actively connected and valued



**Greenacres
School**

OUR VALUES

**MANAAKITANGA
MĀTAURANGA
RANGATIRATANGA
HAUORA**

WHAKATAUKI

**Ehara taku toa i te
toa takitahi, engari
he toa takitini.**

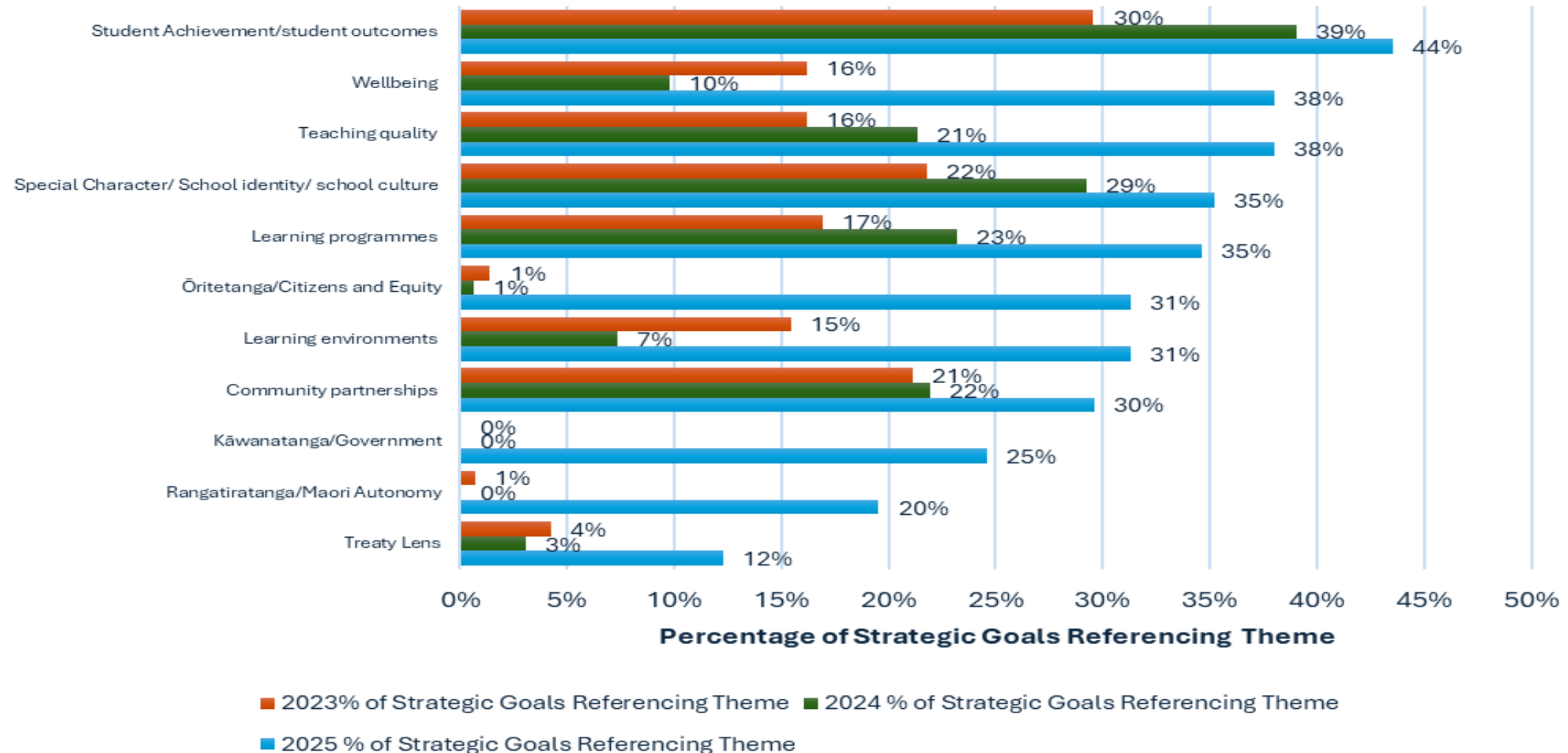
*Success at Greenacres
School is not only
measured by the success
of the individual but the
success of us all.*

Growing future-ready tamariki in our mana-enhancing community

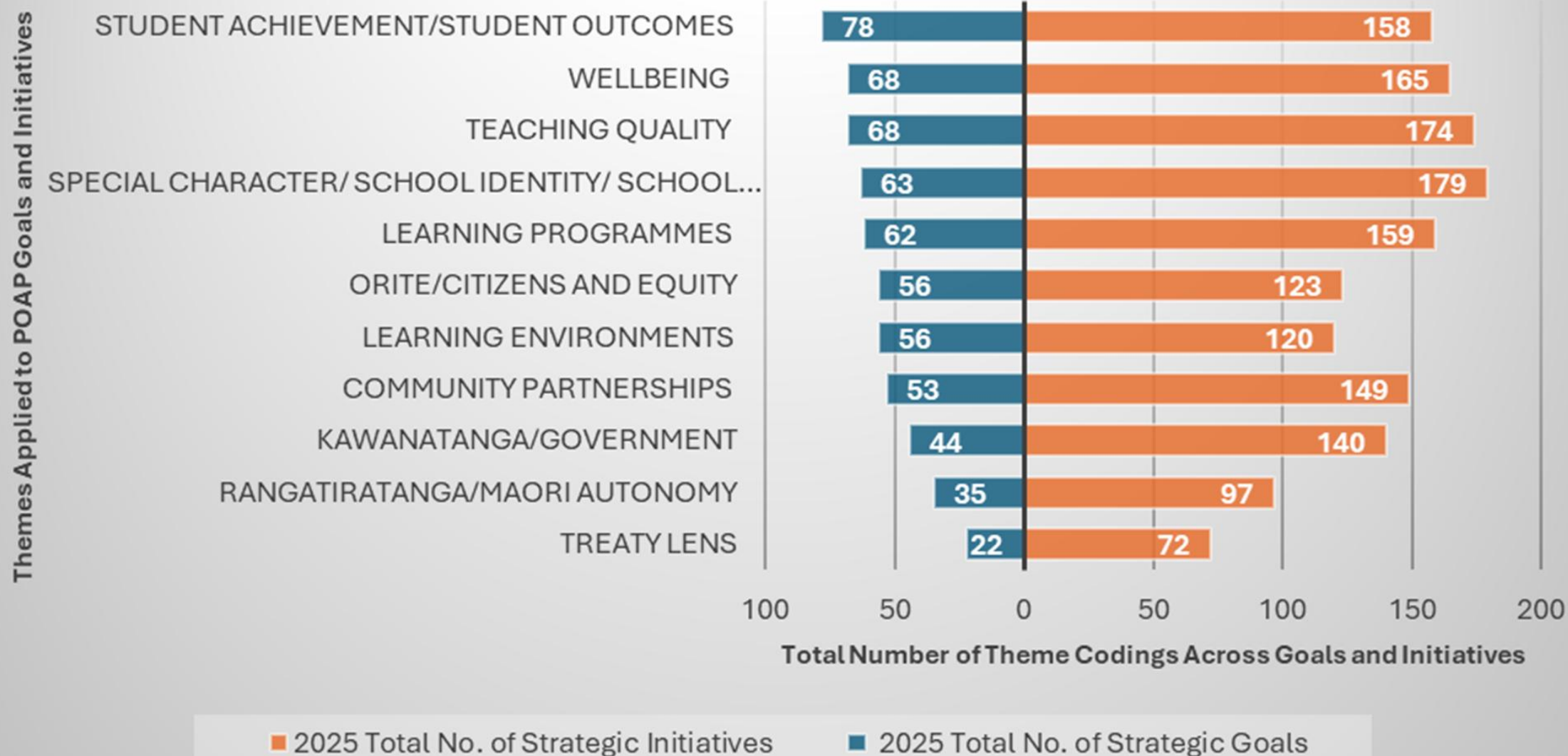
GOAL	INITIATIVES	SUCCESS STATEMENT
Teaching and Learning We have high quality teaching and learning programmes focused on raising achievement for all.	• Develop and embed evidence based teaching and learning programmes that are highly effective in our context and align with our NZ Curriculum. • Ensure we have ongoing and sustainable approaches to accelerate progress for our priority learners. • Strengthen our knowledge and skill around culturally responsive pedagogy, including te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. • Review our Professional Growth Cycle to include our new Professional Standards.	Students are well equipped and confident to take on their next stage of learning.
Community Partnerships Build a vibrant, active and engaged community with strong connections and dynamic partnerships.	• Deepen relationships and partnerships with Māori whānau, hapu and iwi through authentic collaboration. • Foster inclusive engagement with all cultural groups within our school community. • Build strong connections with local groups and schools. • Improve attendance rates for tamariki.	Our strengthened community connections ensure diverse voices are actively captured, valued, and integrated into school decision-making and development.
Environment Our vibrant school environment inspires and supports the learning, success and hauora of all tamariki.	• All MOE buildings and spaces are maintained and renovated as part of the 10YPP/5YA. • Outdoor spaces are developed and enhanced. • Revitalise our school Hall improving its functionality and appearance.	Greenacres School has amazing inside and outside spaces that the children and community are proud of and embrace their responsibility as kaitiaki.

THE 4Cs: COLLABORATION • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY • CRITICAL THINKING

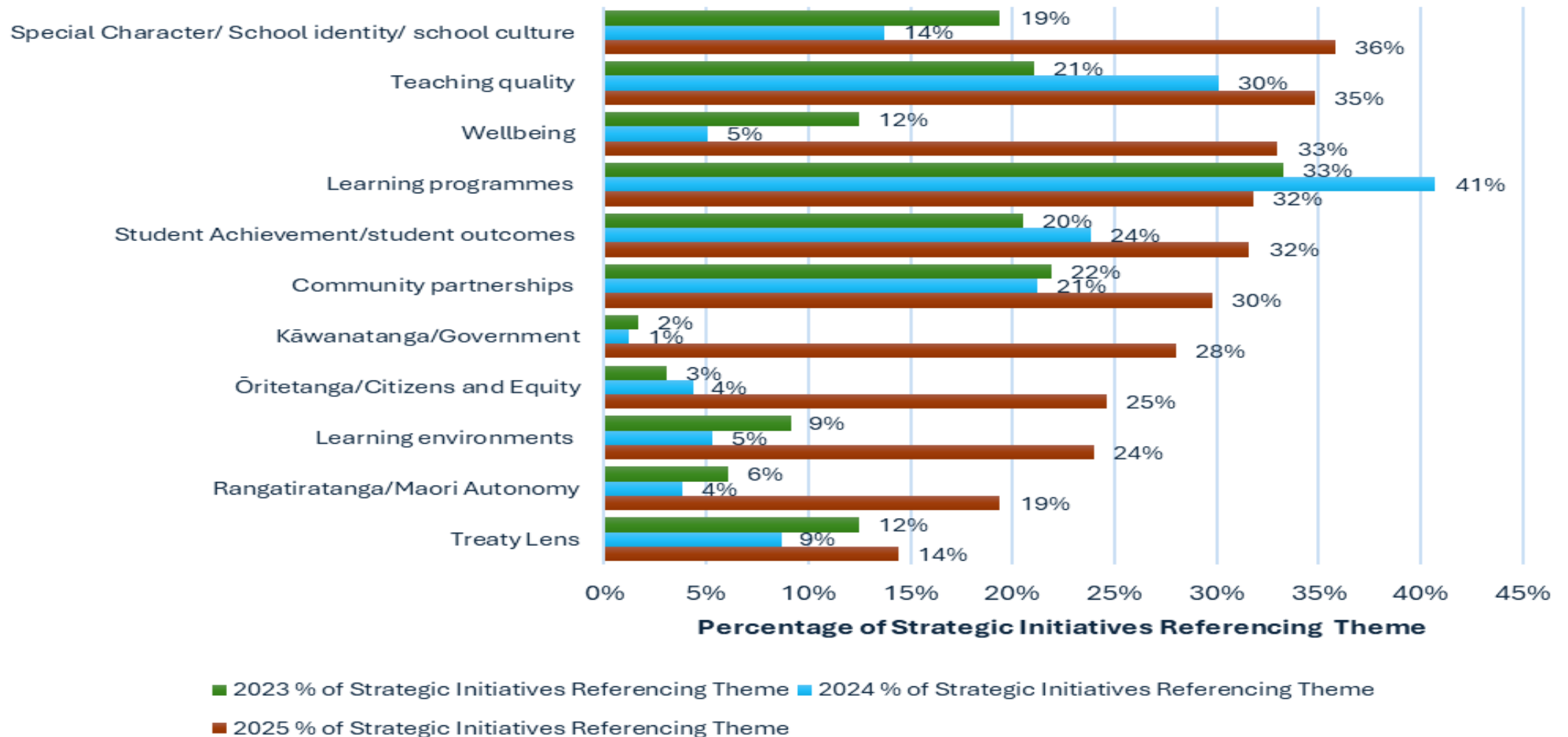
Shifting Strategic Goal Priorities Across SLPP POAPs (2023–2025)



Categorised Themes of 2025 POAP Goals and Initiatives



Shifting Strategic Initiative Priorities Across SLPP POAPs (2023–2025)



A woman with short, reddish-brown hair and red-rimmed glasses is speaking. She is wearing a dark top with a plaid scarf. The background is a grey wall with vertical lines. To the right, another person is partially visible, sitting at a desk.

Karen Wellington
Te Kura o Hau Karekare
Wellington

What do you say to **other** principals

From schools to system change

- Focus on long-term strategic change
- Understand what success looks, feels and sounds like
- Measure progress toward success and act on the results
- Communicate clearly



How will we use the insights?

- Building an evaluative culture and reflective practice
- Transferring a system level the learning
- Greater a higher level of insight, not just at the school level
- Bring together leaders from education and business to understand schooling better



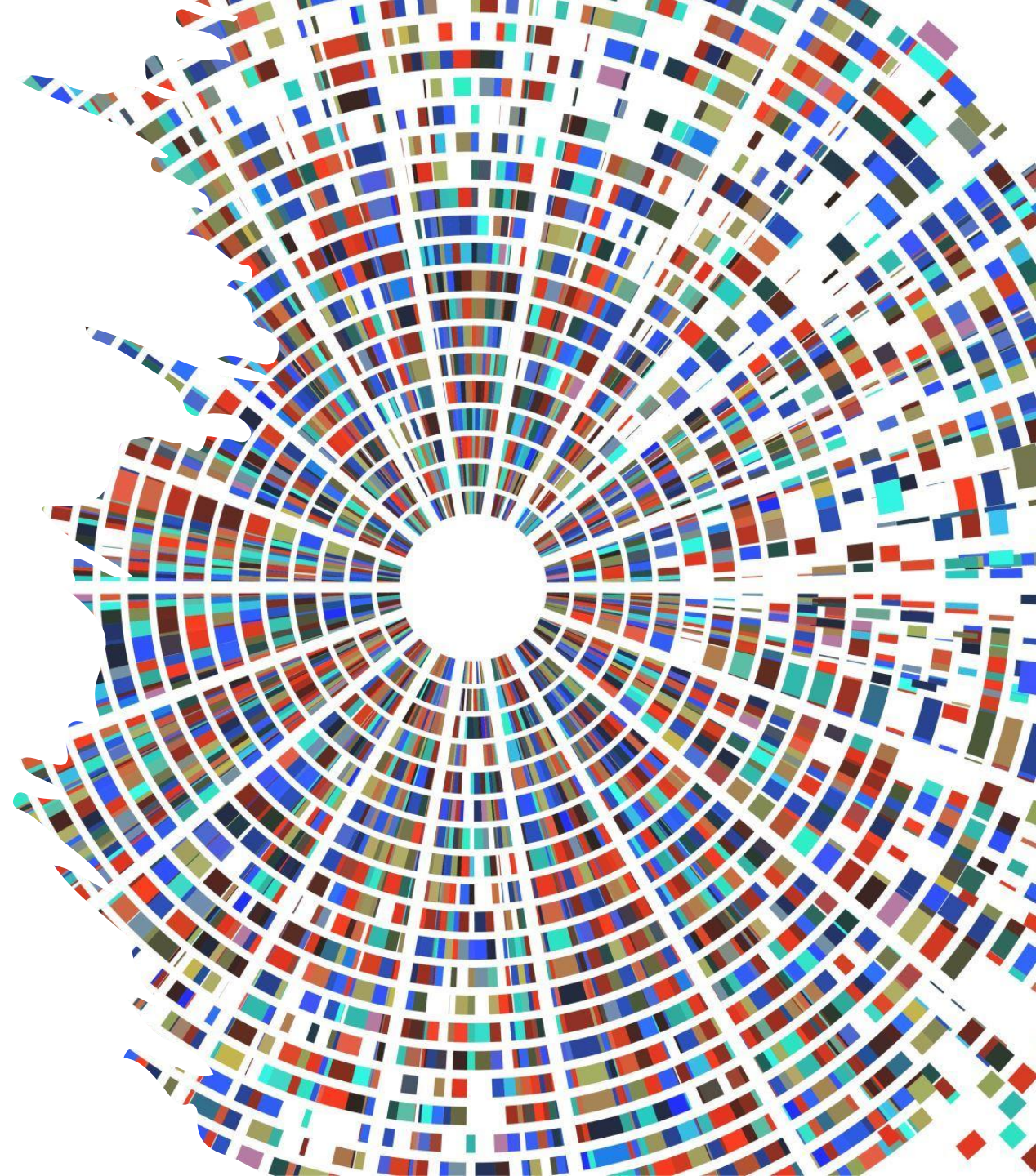
Volunteer evaluation 2024



- Net promoter score 85
- Springboard encourages participants to adopt more open, reflective, and collaborative approaches when navigating challenges in their professional lives.
- There is also a deepening empathy for the unique challenges within the education sector and the value of collaborative and reflective practices.
- The experience of working closely with school leaders left a profound impression
- Themes of resilience, dedication, and professionalism in principals were repeatedly emphasised, with many likening school leadership to high-level executive roles in terms of complexity and responsibility.
- Volunteers expressed increased humility and admiration for educators, a broader understanding of the leadership journey, and recognition of the loneliness and pressure school leaders often face.
- Collaboration with school leaders, as well as with each other, was described as both professionally instructive and personally inspiring

1. Invest in leadership, principals need support to do the job they need to do.
2. Take the profession, parents and whanau with you
3. Clear national blueprint needed to provide strategic clarity
4. Key focus is on tamariki mokopuna and making a difference for them
5. Local decision making is important
6. Non education leaders want to help and care (cross sector support for education)
7. Schools are Treaty supportive & want examples of what works so they can think about in their local context
8. Māori student achievement clear priority
9. Problems of NZ education are not new and quite resilient, will require sustained and coordinated action.

AI is creating a seismic shift to our society & economy and school leaders will have to navigate in complex & complicated times



Thank you



Dale Bailey

Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive

dale@springboardtrust.org.nz

www.springboardtrust.org.nz

www.linkedin.com/in/dalebaileynz



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