



Dame Dr Iritana Tawhiwhirangi

Education in a Māori Context

Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi was one of the cornerstones of the Kōhanga Reo movement as a means to revitalize the Māori language. Picking up on the playcentre philosophy of community ownership and management, Dame Tawhiwhirangi helped create a whānau development model that is not only underpinned by cultural and administrative sovereignty, but has also created new opportunities in education and employment for Māori women, and whānau involvement. Internationally, the Kōhanga Reo model is now the established benchmark for the regeneration of indigenous languages. The topic of her seminar is about Education in a Māori context.

Currently a member of Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust [Trustee], Māori Education Trust [Deputy Chair], Te Taura Whiri [Commissioner], Te Pataka Ohanga Company [Chairperson], Te Whare Tapere Performing Arts Board, Māori TV Electoral College, Māori Spectrum Trust Electoral College, NZCER Electoral College, Life member of Māori Women's Welfare League, and Lady President of NZ Māori Golf Association. Honours include 1990 Commemoration Medal, 1992 Member British Empire [M.B.E.], 1993 - Women's Suffrage Medal, 2001- Companion of New Zealand Order of Merit, 2003 Adjunct Professor, Aotearoa Wananga, 2006 - Hon. Doctorate of Literature [Victoria University] 2007 and was made a Dame in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours for services to Māori education.