

Professional Learning and Development Accreditation

Personal Profile

Name	Ben Laybourn
Personal statement	Ben is an experienced educator, leader and facilitator. He has an unrelenting focus on effective teaching and learning which leads to improved outcomes for students. <i>"Ben has excellent facilitation skills ... he capably leads both our leadership and staff teams. All of us find him to be extremely knowledgeable with a great amount of practical advice and guidance. I'm thankful that we've found some PLD that I can genuinely say is strengthening our teaching team, leadership team and improving the achievement of our students."</i> Kyran Smith, Principal, Kahurangi School

Professional learning and development overview

Ben is an experienced facilitator of professional learning and development. He lives in Masterton, works out of Wellington and leads the Central South team for Evaluation Associates. Confident and experienced across both primary and secondary sectors, Ben has the following areas of specialist expertise:

- school leadership and change management
- evaluative capability
- developing active learners – assessment for learning
- coaching staff in effective pedagogy for accelerating learning
- data analysis – e-asTTle and other standardised assessments
- seriously cool science teaching
- collaborative inquiry
- coaching staff to lead learning within and across schools
- literacy

Professional information

Qualifications

Ben has a Bachelor of Science degree (Biochemistry and Chemistry) and a Diploma of Teaching (Primary).

Professional learning and development expertise and experience

Ben has worked as a leadership and assessment facilitator for Evaluation Associates for the last three years. Prior to joining Evaluation Associates, he was a deputy principal and teacher at Makoura College. He has a background in primary and secondary teaching, so covers the full spectrum of school-based education. He has an unrelenting focus on effective teaching and learning which leads to improved outcomes for students. As a facilitator with Evaluation Associates he has had training in open to learning methodologies, evaluative practices and assessment for learning, all of which sit at the heart of Evaluation Associates' principles and practices.

His passion is the facilitation of effective leadership. He has worked in a number of schools supporting principals and middle and senior leaders to build collective visions and embed robust learning cultures across and between schools. He quickly wins the trust of those he works with. He supports leaders to lead effective change processes. He has real strength in strategic thinking and planning. Working alongside this is his ability to effectively use data and track student progress longitudinally to help make evidence-based decisions.

Ben is one of the Evaluation Associates go-to people on all things involving data and analysis, both across schools and within schools. He has skills in interpreting and displaying data in ways which help students, teachers and boards of trustees identify and plan for future learning. He also has considerable experience in the use of student management systems and big data analysis. Having led a large team of facilitators in the Central South region, Ben is adept at pulling together a range of evidence from across schools in order to evaluate progress and adapt approaches as required.

Ben has real flair and expertise when it comes to the effective teaching of science. He runs hands on science workshops

and sessions that certainly capture the imagination. This is his specialist subject area and his teaching excitement, helping teachers understand what effective STEM education could look like for students in both primary and secondary.

Ben has also led literacy and curriculum development in secondary schools, focusing on effective pedagogy across all curriculum areas and for all students. His experience and understanding across the curriculum and across the different age levels are hugely valued by the schools that he works with in his facilitation role.

Other experience / expertise

Ben is very proud that, while he was DP at Makoura College, the school won the Prime Minister's Excellence in Education Awards for Excellence in leading. The judges commented that *"Makoura College is determined to recognise the value of every student. The whole school embraces tikanga Māori and the significance of mutual respect and high expectations. The result is an impressive improvement in student achievement, pride and engagement in education."* Ben has presented at a range of conference including uLearn and the edchatnz conferences. His workshops on using data effectively which are run around the country are always in high demand.

Summary of examples of practice

While working as a **leadership and assessment** facilitator in a large urban college, Ben was asked by the school to support their goal of raising Māori and Pasifika achievement in a robust and sustainable way. In order to achieve this, Ben's facilitation included:

- working with the senior management team (SMT) to understand the current strengths and needs within the school in order to design a customised programme of support which would meet their needs
- supporting the SMT to embed effective inquiry processes across the school
- supporting the SMT to interrogate school-wide data in order to be able to make effective decisions regarding future planning at all levels and to clarify the school goals and targets.
- using his deep knowledge of data and SMS systems to help the school to set up sustainable systems to track and monitor student achievement
- building the SMT and teachers' confidence to achieve targets related to their focus of raising the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students
- coaching deputy principals to lead the teaching as inquiry process across the school
- supporting teachers and leaders to use data to identify and respond to target students
- training team leaders in open to learning and carrying out observations and practice analysis conversations
- ongoing review meetings with the SMT to ensure all teachers' needs were being met.

Throughout the professional learning, Ben worked alongside the school leaders, as a facilitator and critical friend, asking the questions and helping ensure decisions considered many different aspects of what was happening in the college. This approach, which built a strong working relationship, enabled the SMT to focus on what worked best for their college and help shape sustainable improvement into the future. Over the period of two years Ben's work helped influence and shape more effective teacher inquiry processes that focused on data, evidence and accelerating student learning. The result was a positive impact on student learning and achievement with year 9 and 10 students showing accelerated achievement. The principal of this school commented that Ben *"provided an invaluable and unique 'outside the school' perspective and allowed us to step back and see the wider impact of our decisions. Ben's insightful questions ensure our intended decisions and actions are thoroughly critiqued ... Ben has allowed us to see how we could best align strategies for maximum impact."*

STEM and science: Ben has been delivering dynamic science PLD to teachers for the past four years. He has a thorough knowledge of science and the curriculum and weaves literacy and mathematics into investigative hands-on science activities that focus on raising student competencies through the nature of science and science capabilities. Combined with his knowledge of National Standards, e-asTTle, PACT and assessment tools he facilitates PLD that really impacts on student learning, increasing student agency and engagement in a meaningful and accessible way.

Reference one

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Reference two

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