

FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING SOLUTIONS

From the smallest primary school to the largest secondary school, Edtech has accounting and financial management solutions ranging from a full accounting service to training, consultancy and support as required.

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*Arihia Stirling, Principal
Te Kura Māori o Ngā Tapuwāe*



Empowering school leaders at Te Kura Māori o Ngā Tapuwāe

A move to Edtech’s accounting support services, and Xero, has empowered school leaders at Te Kura Māori o Ngā Tapuwāe to better understand their own finances and ultimately make more informed financial decisions.

A change of accounting service provider can be unsettling for a school’s financial management team. But as the principal, Arihia Stirling explains, the way that Edtech managed the change – including a visit from Edtech’s CEO Jeff Stirling (no relation to Arihia) – quickly put her at ease.

“Jeff came out to meet us and talked through how the support works. It’s very important from a maori perspective that we get to have this face to face connection. I really liked Edtech’s approach with building the relationship right from the outset.”

With a focus on continuity of service, Edtech’s accounting support agreements are based around regular visits from a dedicated school-accounts specialist. This approach ensures that all advice and guidance provided is tailored to the specific needs of the school.

When comparing Edtech to other providers Arihia comments: “I’ve found it really difficult dealing with other providers. You constantly wait for someone to get back to you, and then when you do talk to someone you have to go up a level, and all you want is the balance of an account. You feel like it’s your school funds but you don’t have any control. Everything is very locked down.”

Edtech’s approach ensures the school’s accounting information is in their own hands at all times, empowering ownership and the ability to make informed decisions. “With Edtech’s service, we have all the control, while Edtech provide the monitoring service that keeps us all safe. It’s really different. Overall, we have found the relationship very empowering,” says Arihia.

Clear, timely and accurate monthly reports

At the heart of Edtech’s financial support agreement is the provision of clear, timely, and accurate monthly reports for school management. “The reports we receive from Edtech are excellent, very informative, very easy to understand and they give you lots of information,” Arihia says. She continues “The reports are very helpful to our board, it allows them to ask informed questions, why is that particular budget being spent above the line, why are we underspending here, etc.” The reports make it quite noticeable where the different movements of money are, and what they are, and also allow us to make sure that our policies are active,” says Arihia.

The school has robust policies and procedures in place, and Edtech worked closely with the school to set these up, mitigating against financial risks. “It shouldn’t be the service provider that tells us what we can and can’t do to. That’s ▶

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what I like about Edtech – they have allowed us to work within our policies – they are not the gatekeeper of our money. We have so much more independence. But still have the security of an accounting service behind us,” says Arihia.

24-7 access to financial data

A move to Xero - a global award winning cloud-based accounting system - enabled the school to increase efficiency in a number of ways. Many of the accounting software packages used in schools today still rely on files being exported and imported so that various functions and checks can take place. With Xero, as Arihia explains “Edtech just checks what needs to be done online. With other systems we had to batch stuff up, it’s time wasted, and time is money.”

Xero provides authorised school users 24-7 access to their financial data, from school, home and on the road. Arihia says “I really like the ability to do it all online. I have access

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Edtech’s support agreement includes Xero training, a key component in empowering school staff to take more control of their own finances. For Arihia and office staff, the regular visits from Edtech Financial Services Accountant, Nellie Shaw, are hugely valuable. “Nellie has taught my finance staff and myself so much about what we can do in Xero. Every time Nellie comes out we learn something new. Our office staff love it, Xero is so much easier than other systems we’ve used in the past.”

On-going advice and guidance

The regular visits from Nellie provide an opportunity for ongoing advice and guidance, that’s ‘very comforting for us’ explains Arihia: “There is some face to face contact and

that is a really important part of the way we want to be in a relationship with a service provider.” A tangible example of the difference these visits make was when “Nellie saw we weren’t managing our bank staffing effectively. She picked up that the way we were doing it could be improved, and saved the school \$50k in overstaffing,” says Arihia.

“We are very active constituents of our own way forward. We’re more empowered, absolutely. Myself, my finance team and Nellie – we all have a good relationship. And Jeff is always available too. Edtech are so people orientated, they really know their stuff, and are very skilful in their ability to empower you. It’s a really positive relationship.”

Key Points

Te Kura Māori o Ngā Tapuwae is a composite state school located in Mangere, Auckland, with a student roll of approximately 300.

The Edtech Solution

- Service tailored to specific requirements
- Regular scheduled visits from Chartered Accountant
- Exception reporting on monthly reports to the BOT
- Robust financial policies and procedures
- Advice and guidance on all financial matters
- Preparation of annual accounts and liaison with Auditors

Xero Accounting Software

- Anywhere, anytime access to financial data
- Easy to use for school staff
- Ongoing training and support from Edtech

About Edtech

Edtech are specialists in delivering customised accounting solutions for schools using Xero, Musac and MoneyWorks. Empowering schools to take control of their finances, Edtech teach Principals and Boards how to understand their finances, identify areas of opportunity or concern, and ultimately make informed decisions. Talk to Edtech about tailor making a plan that fits your school’s needs now, and in the future.

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