

# The Starpath Project

# Academic Counselling



*Conversations for improving academic performance*

Joy Eaton  
Deputy Director  
j.eaton@auckland.ac.nz

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**Starpath**

A University of Auckland Partnership for Excellence



**THE UNIVERSITY  
OF AUCKLAND**

**NEW ZEALAND**

Te Whare Wananga o Tāmaki Makaurau

# Hokule'a



# Starpath Project: 39 schools

## Aims:

To research, identify, develop and deliver a 'toolkit' of strategies to transform current patterns of under achievement.

## Phase 1 Research Findings:

There are structural and systemic barriers to achievement

- Lack of longitudinal data for goal setting and tracking
- Unequal access to relevant NCEA subjects
- Inadequate understanding of NCEA
- Lack of evidence based academic guidance
- Failure to achieve NCEA Level 2 literacy standards
- Lack of effective leadership focused on academic achievement
- Real challenges for transition to University

## Phase II: 39 Schools, 2011-2015

5 Original schools  
16 new in 2011  
18 new in 2012

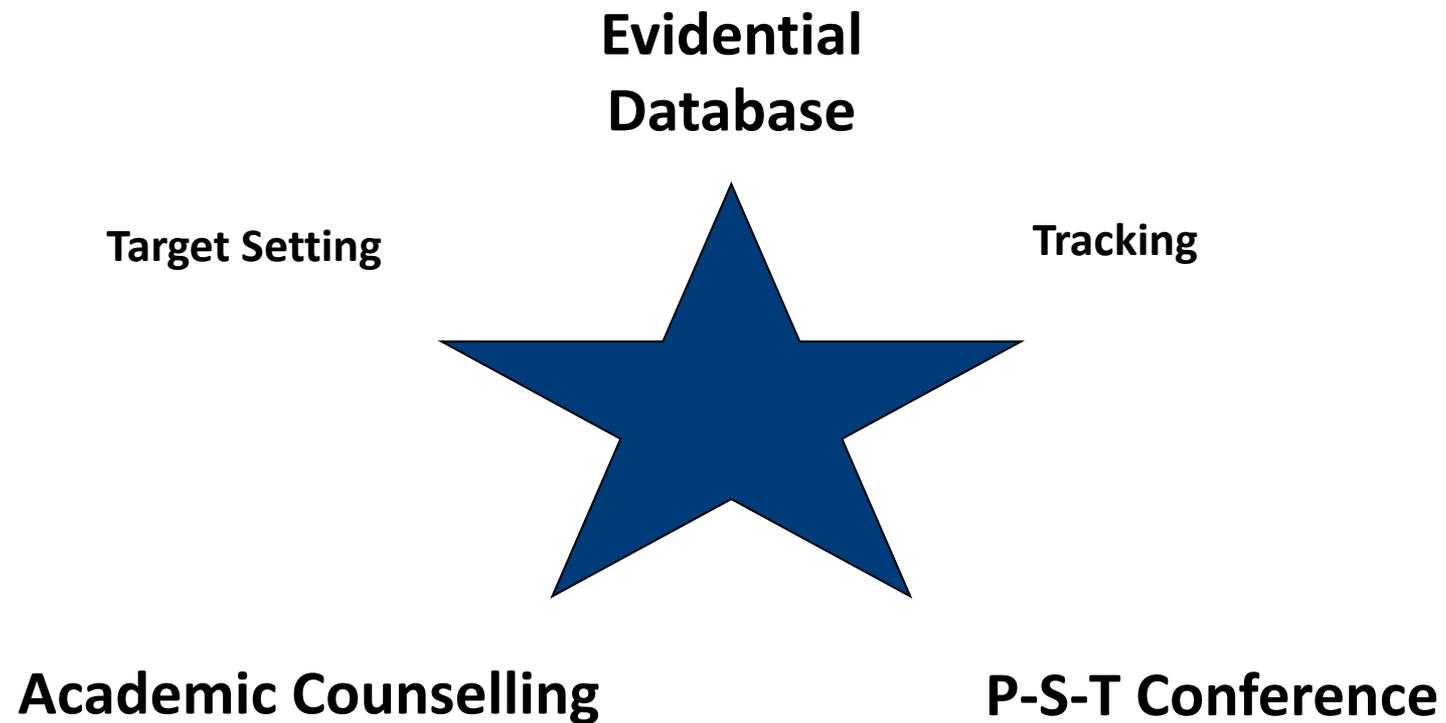
8 schools Maori are over 50%  
8 schools Pasifika are over 50%  
7 schools Maori and Pasifika over 50%  
1 school Asian are over 50%

15 north of Auckland  
15 South Auckland  
9 West Auckland

18 over 1000 students  
11 1000 to 500 students  
10 less than 500 students

16 are decile 1 or 2  
18 are decile 3 to 5  
5 are above decile 5

# 5 KEY DUACTS ELEMENTS



# Academic Counselling (AC)

Ongoing – both formal and informal

Uses comprehensive learning profile – taken from EDB and SMS

Responds to evidence from the tracking and monitoring of student progress

- Meeting with each student 2-3 times per year
- Students in small groups or individual
- Meetings are timetabled
- Students set short, medium and long term goals – reviewed in these meetings when appropriate

Variety of models used – school specific

# Engagement with Family

Parent-student-teacher (PST) conferences – part of ongoing AC

An extended meeting with form/whānau teacher

Uses comprehensive learning profile – taken from EDB or SMS

20-30 minutes duration

Focus on student's educational goals, progress and understanding how families can support their child's school work and achievement

Information available (e.g. summary of NCEA requirements)

Referral to subject teacher available

# Key Features

- Uses up-to-date achievement data to make evidence-based decisions in relation to student academic goals. Quality data supports quality conversations.
- Assists students to identify their areas of difficulty and develop strategies to improve their academic performance.
- Shifts the focus from pastoral to academic conversations.
- Provides individualised information and support regarding coursework expectations, academic prerequisites and learning and study skills. Seeks to keep career pathways open.

# Important Teacher Skills

- Relationship building (with students and parents/whanau).
- Ability to differentiate for different students needs.
- Use of culturally appropriate communication strategies.
- Ability to understand and analyse achievement data.
- Being able to provide feed-back and feed-forward.
- Being able to guide student in setting realistic targets/goals.

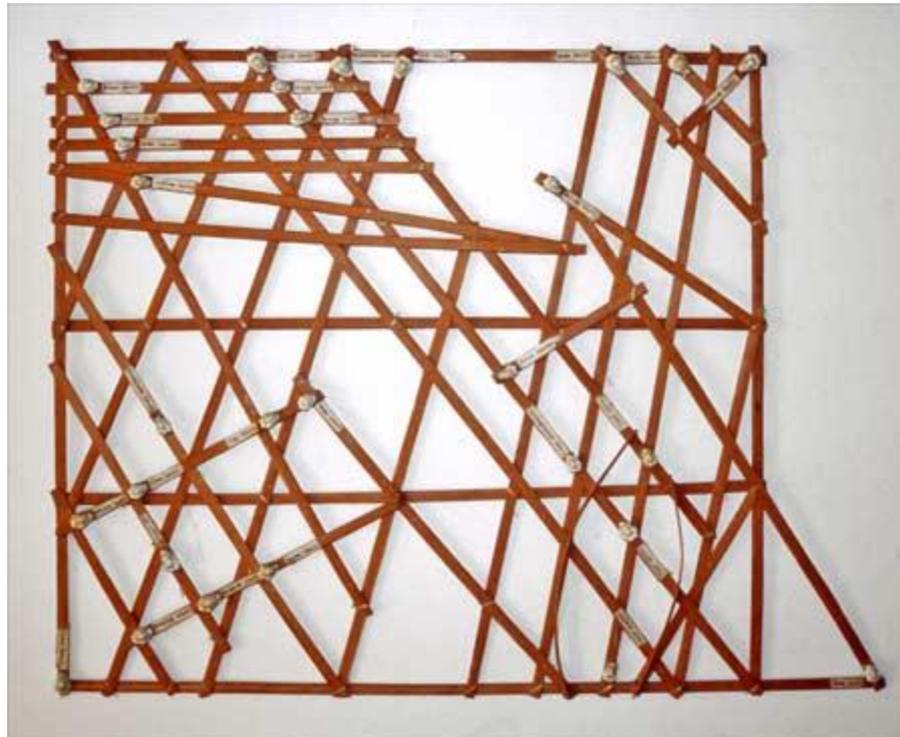
# Teacher Knowledge

- Broad NCEA knowledge – pathways, available subjects, progression, prerequisites
- Specific NCEA knowledge – achievement standards and credit distribution across a range of courses, credits needed for endorsements
- School mechanisms and support services re NCEA
- UE requirements –for a range of university/tertiary courses
- Knowledge of the student and their background

# Benefits

- AC is individualised, differentiated and responsive to student needs.
- AC is effective in picking up and motivating the “middle band” students who have the potential to do well academically, but who might need clearer goal setting and closer monitoring to achieve their full potential.
- AC ensures that students are enrolled in the right courses for their educational and career paths.
- AC ensures that every student’s goals and aspirations are known to at least one teacher in the school. Every student has a significant adult at school who cares about their overall academic progress.

# Following the Starpath



# Contact:

**Joy Eaton**

Deputy Director

Tel: 09 623 8899 Ext 48776

Mob: 021 468 851

Email: [j.eaton@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.eaton@auckland.ac.nz)

Starpath Project: Partnership for Excellence

Faculty of Education

The University of Auckland

Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142