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Better Relationships for Better Learning
Schools addressing Maori Achievement
Through Partnership

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the policy document *Better Relationships for Better Learning: Guidelines for Boards of Trustees and Schools on Engaging with Māori Parents, Whanau, and Communities* (Ministry of Education, 2000a).

The thesis is concerned with an examination and analysis of the Ministry of Education's policy *Better Relationships for Better Learning* document and its implementation as evidenced by a case study school.

The thesis demonstrates that while Government policy may intend to benefit Maori, the outcomes do not necessarily do so. It is argued that neither Government nor schools, as agents of the state, are neutral bodies but in large part reflect the influence of the majority over the provision of education for Maori. The claim for school/Maori partnerships made in the policy *Better Relationships for Better Learning* ignores the founding partnership envisaged through the Treaty of Waitangi. Maori participation as partners in negotiating the terms of the relationship with the school is ignored. This thesis examines the function of those relationships in terms of 'Better Learning', investigating the developments and practices in schools for Maori children's learning

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*My skill does not come just from me,
But comes from the combined skill of those around me.*

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