

ERO External Evaluation

Spotswood College, New Plymouth

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for those students who need it. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

Spotswood College, Te Kura Tuarua O Ngamotu, is a co-educational secondary school in New Plymouth. At the time of the ERO review there were 700 students of whom 29% identify as Māori. The school values its links with the local iwi, Te Ātiawa and continues to build community relationships with hāpu. Nearly 10% of the roll have moderate to high learning needs.

Diversity, inclusion and care principles underpin the school's vision and philosophy. The E Tū motto values of matauranga, whai wahi, and kotahitanga guide the school culture and overarching expectations for teaching and learning. These values and associated competencies are promoted, recognized and reinforced throughout school life.

Current strategic priorities are related to:

- strengthening learning partnerships with students, parents and whanau
- improving teachers' use of culturally responsive and relational practices.

The charter goals for 2017 relate to:

- all graduating students achieving at least a Level 2 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) to provide access to tertiary and other learning pathways
- raising attendance to 90%
- increasing rates of literacy achievement in Years 9 and 10
- increasing numbers of students learning te reo Māori.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement of all and groups of students in New Zealand qualifications
- end of year achievement in all curriculum areas
- literacy and numeracy achievement and progress at Years 9 and 10
- student engagement and wellbeing
- progress against school goals for valued student outcomes.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school has made very good progress, to achieve high levels of equity and excellence in outcomes for diverse groups of learners.

Steady improvement since the 2014 ERO review has led to high numbers of students gaining NCEAs. In 2016, achievement for students overall in the school at NCEA Level 1 was 82%, with 95% at Level 2 and 80% at Level 3. Students achieve well above national rates at all NCEA Levels. Achievement of University Entrance is lower at 41%.

In 2016, most students left school having gained Level 2 NCEA with a significant increase in the percentage of students leaving with Level 3.

Māori student achievement has continued to improve across all NCEA Levels and is comparable with students overall in the school at Levels 1, 2 and 3. However, disparity remains in University Entrance.

Over the past three years boys and girls have achieved equity at Level 1 and 2, with a significant reduction of gender disparity for Māori boys at Levels 1 and 2.

Year 9 literacy data shows significant disparity between groups on entry. Many students at Years 9 and 10 make accelerated progress to achieve at expected levels. The school has identified a priority to raise overall literacy achievement in Years 9 and 10, with an emphasis on improving equity for Māori and increasing the choice of learning pathways for all students.

1.2 How effectively does this school respond to those Māori and other students whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school has established effective processes to identify and respond to those Māori and other learners whose learning and achievement need acceleration, especially in Years 11 to 13. An holistic and personalised approach to these students enables the school to better respond to the diverse needs and interests of these learners. As a result, nearly all achieve success.

NCEA data since 2014 shows rates of Māori achievement have continued to improve, especially at Years 12 and 13.

A strong focus on inclusion and care and the provision of a wide range of individualised programmes supports learners with additional needs to gain success and for many to accelerate their rates of learning and progress.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence?

Trustees and senior leaders relentlessly promote the enactment of the school's vision for equity and excellence. They purposefully select, develop and review strategies to drive improvement. Highly collaborative practices are evident across the school. Future focused trustees and leaders have complementary skills and experience that contribute to ongoing improvement in outcomes for diverse groups of learners.

Students' wellbeing and pastoral needs are well supported to promote their engagement in learning and inclusion at school. Teachers make good use of a wide range of information about students to address and respond to their needs, strengths and challenges. Close tracking and monitoring of progress and achievement, especially in the senior school, improves partnerships for learning and success. Whānau structures, rewards systems and E Tū values expect, encourage and support students to be their best.

Improved and flexible curriculum provision together with increased opportunities and learning programmes enable most students to be successful. Students make well-informed choices from learning pathways that are responsive to their needs and aspirations. Students with high or complex needs receive individualised support in consultation with families, whānau and health specialists to achieve successful learning outcomes.

Leaders and teachers continue to build close relationships with a wide range of providers, agencies and specialists to cater for different learners' needs. A cohesive response by leaders through responsive professional learning and development (PLD) and meaningful appraisal processes increase teachers' knowledge and expertise to promote the school's vision.

There is a deliberate focus on providing a culturally responsive learning environment, relationships and values that support Māori to achieve success and equity. This has been evident through:

- a strategic approach to building professional capability and collective capacity
- high expectations for cultural competencies to be embedded into practices
- increased focus on curriculum perspectives and contexts that reflect te ao Māori
- programmes and interventions that engage and retain students at risk of poor educational outcomes.

Leaders and teachers are making increased use of inquiry, and evidence based review and evaluation to promote equity and excellence. In some cases practices lead to measureable improvements in outcomes for targeted students. Faculty reviews are increasingly focused on improvement in outcomes for priority learners. Leaders and trustees are beginning to model the use of evaluation tools to measure effectiveness of processes and programmes and to inform schoolwide priorities for ongoing improvement.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence?

Key next steps for trustees, leaders and teachers are to:

- align student target setting from classroom through to department and strategic levels to improve measures and reporting of success for priority learners
- continue to strengthen teaching, and tracking and monitoring of identified groups students in Years 9 and 10, to increase accelerated rates of progress in literacy and numeracy
- continue building schoolwide processes and capability in inquiry and internal evaluation to better inform school planning for resourcing and decision making
- extend inquiry into the valued outcomes of Māori students as defined by iwi, whānau and students to further promote success through their identity, language and culture.

3 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board and principal of the school completed the ERO board assurance statement and self-audit checklists. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legislative obligations related to the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- finance
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student safety and wellbeing:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

At the time of this review there were nine international students attending the school, including 2 exchange students.

ERO's investigations confirmed robust systems and processes appropriately guide the provision for international students. Programmes of learning are suitably designed to meet the aspirations of individuals and their families. Achievement is regularly monitored and reported. Students receive good quality pastoral care with a clear focus on promoting their wellbeing and positive inclusion. Their cultures are valued and celebrated across the school and in the wider community. The school makes positive changes in response to its self-review findings that further strengthen the provision for International students.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- collaborative and equity focussed leadership and governance
- culturally responsive teaching and relational practices
- systems and structures that promote and respond to students' wellbeing needs
- responsive learning programmes and interventions.

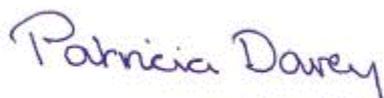
Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, development priorities are in:

- the systems and processes to better identify, respond and monitor the acceleration of literacy and numeracy achievement of target students in Years 9 and 10
- strengthened partnerships with whānau and iwi to inform and support the promotion of the language, culture and identity of Māori learners
- internal evaluation processes and practices.
[ERO will provide an internal evaluation workshop for trustees and senior leaders.]

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

ERO is likely to carry out the next external evaluation in three years.



Patricia Davey
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central (Acting)
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

15 January 2018

About the school

Location	New Plymouth										
Ministry of Education profile number	173										
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)										
School roll	700										
Gender composition	Male 52%, Female 48%										
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pākehā</td> <td>59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	29%	Pākehā	59%	Asian	3%	Pacific	2%	Other ethnic groups	7%
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Provision of Māori medium education	No										
Review team on site	November 2017										
Date of this report	15 January 2018										
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review, October 2014 Education Review, September 2011 Education Review, September 2008										