

ERO External Evaluation

Ross Intermediate, Palmerston North

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 students. 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

Ross Intermediate in Palmerston North, caters for 541 students in Years 7 and 8. Of the total roll, 23% are Māori students and 3% are of Pacific heritage.

The vision for students is to Act with Integrity, Learn with Purpose, Inquire and Dream.

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

- achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- outcomes related to student behaviour and their wellbeing.

Since the November 2014 ERO report, progress has been made in developing partnerships with iwi and whānau. This has led to a shared vision for Māori success and further culturally responsive curriculum practices.

Professional learning for teachers is being undertaken to build their practice and strengthen learner outcomes in mathematics and writing.

Two bilingual classes have been introduced in 2018. The school is currently implementing the second tier of the Ministry of Education (MoE) initiative, *Positive Behaviour for Learning* (PB4L). It is a member of the Papaieoa North Kāhui Ako.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

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

In 2017, school data showed the majority of students achieved expectations in reading. Achievement in writing and mathematics was lower, with approximately half of students achieving at or above school expectations. Māori learners achieve slightly lower when compared to Pākehā students.

School reported data for students over their two years at intermediate shows an increase in the number of learners achieving at or above expectations at the end of Year 8. This increase is more evident in reading and writing.

1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school has effectively accelerated progress in reading, writing, and mathematics for many students over their two years at intermediate. The rate of accelerated achievement for Māori learners is higher, when compared to other groups in the school.

Leaders and trustees are appropriately focused on raising achievement levels overall, and addressing the remaining disparities in achievement for Māori students, and for boys in reading and writing.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

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

Curriculum provision effectively promotes students' participation and engagement at school. The board's resourcing ensures the interests and options for students are accessible and equitable. Digital technologies and e-learning are an embedded feature and widely used to support curriculum delivery. Partnership developed with Rangitaane O Manawatū iwi, and the introduction of bilingual education are strengthening the school's response to Māori students' culture, language, and identity.

Students with complex needs are purposefully included in the supportive school environment. Individual education goals are developed collaboratively with parents and whānau. Transition practices for these students are well managed and individualised.

Leaders, teachers and trustees actively promote a positive and inclusive learning environment. Developing and maintaining key relationships underpin shared teaching principles. Leaders and teachers know students well. A wide range of practices and initiatives are implemented to encourage the positive inclusion of individual students at school. Shared school values are evident in the positive interactions between students, peers, and teachers.

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

The school's annual goals are focused on: curriculum development to strengthen the response to priority learners; development in science; building on the established relationship with Rangitaane O Manawatū Iwi; and developing strong and effective teacher collaboration. ERO's evaluation affirms this direction.

Ongoing development of the curriculum and teaching provides the opportunity for leaders to revise school achievement targets linked to addressing disparities for Māori learners and boys. Continuing to strengthen collaborative coaching, inquiry, participation in teachers' professional learning and development and effective models of current practice should support improved effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment practice.

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.

Appraisal audit

The school has a documented process to support the issue and renewal of teacher practising certificates. However, the implementation of the process requires greater rigour, including alignment to the school guidelines and The Education Council requirements to meet legislative requirements, as introduced in January 2018.

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 was one international student attending the school.

The school has appropriate policies and processes to ensure appropriate provision for international students. Students are suitably included in the positive and inclusive learning environment.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- ensure appraisal, including the principal's appraisal, meets legislative requirements, as introduced in January 2018.

Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- curriculum provision, that encourages student participation and engagement
- pastoral care, that promotes student wellbeing, a positive environment and inclusive relationships to support learner success.
- purposeful response to Māori students' culture, language and identity by the introduction of bilingual education and developing partnership with Rangitaane O Manawatū iwi.

Next steps

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

- assessment practice, including revision of achievement targets, that better focuses on acceleration of learning to improve student outcomes
- further developing teacher practice by participation in current PLD to continue to improve outcomes for learners
- knowledge and use of internal inquiry, that more effectively analyses the impact of programmes and initiatives on student outcomes.
- implementation of the school's appraisal process, that supports teacher development and meets the legislative requirements, as introduced in January 2018.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Alan Wynyard
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Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

27 April 2018

About the school

Location	Palmerston North
Ministry of Education profile number	2440
School type	Intermediate
School roll	541
Gender composition	Male 54%, Female 46%
Ethnic composition	Māori 23% Pākehā 65% Pacific 3% Other ethnic groups 9%
Provision of Māori medium education	Yes
Review team on site	February 2018
Date of this report	27 April 2018
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review November 2014 Education Review August 2011 Education Review August 2008