

18 October 2010

To the Parents and Community of Waitara High School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Waitara High School.

Located in Taranaki, Waitara High School is a state co-educational secondary school, catering for students from Years 9 to 13. At the time of this review 57% of students identified as Māori. Considerable property development has occurred. The school has a small farm attached, allowing students access to practical farm work. The school environment is welcoming, and students, staff and trustees demonstrate pride in their school. Students are encouraged to be fully integrated into school life and develop a sense of belonging.

Since the July 2007 ERO report, staff have had an ongoing emphasis on establishing best practice teaching strategies in classrooms, implementing enhanced pastoral care provisions and improving student achievement.

The board of trustees' strategic plan and priorities are appropriately student centred. Goals and targets focus on providing a good quality service for all students to promote their success. High priority is placed on the school continuing to effectively engage with its community. Successful partnerships between students, their whānau, the community and the school are fostered.

The achievement of students in Years 11 to 13 within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) shows that overall, results are above those of comparable, national decile 1 to 3 co-educational schools. Longitudinal data for National Certificates of Education Achievement (NCEA) Level 1 indicates considerable improvement since 2006. Improved use of assessment information by teachers of Years 9 and 10 and ongoing professional development to extend the range of effective teaching strategies to engage students, have been identified by management as areas for further development and review.

The principal demonstrates a strong commitment to the school and community. She provides clear direction for raising student achievement. A continuing whole school focus on improving the environment for learning is having positive outcomes for students.

Staff place appropriate emphasis on respectful relationships as integral to engaging students. Considerable work has been undertaken to establish a culture of respect and attribute mana to students within and outside the classrooms. Te ao Māori is an integral part of students' daily experiences. Their well-being is effectively supported and students talk of a sense of belonging.

Future Action

ERO is likely to carry out the next review within three years.

Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's previous reporting history and is based on:

what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;

decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and selfreview information;

and

teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, www.ero.govt.nz.

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