Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

# Te Tāmata Huaroa

## Te Reo Māori in English-medium Schooling

# HE WĀHINGA KŌRERO NĀ TE TOIHAU AROTAKE

Kei te tino whakamanawatia ahau nā te matangareka i ngā kura reo Pakeha ki te whakaako i te reo Māori.

Ko ngā kura i kōrero mai ki a mātou hei wāhanga tonu o te rangahau nei, i kite ai i te reo Māori hei taonga, ā, ka nui tō rātou hiahia ki te whai wāhi ake ki te whakatairanga me te whakatupu hoki i te reo.

Kua ū te kāwanatanga ki te *Maihi Karauna*, ā, he rautaki tēnei e whakaraupapa ana i ngā whāinga rongomaioro e toru hei whakatutuki i mua i te tau 2040. Kia 85 ōrau o ngā tāngata o Aotearoa e kaingākau ana ki te reo Māori hei wāhanga matua mō te tuakiritanga ā-motu. Kia kotahi miriona te tokomaha o Aotearoa (kia nui atu rānei) e mōhio ana, e māia ana hoki ki te kōrero Māori ki tētahi taumata kāore i raro iho mai i te tūāpapa, ā, ka toru, kia 150,000 o te hunga Māori - kua 15 tau te pakeke, kua pakeke ake rānei - e kaha whakamahi ana i te reo Māori kia pērā i tā rātou whakamahi i te reo Pākehā.

He tāpaetanga matua tā te rāngai mātauranga hei hāpai i te whakatutukitanga o aua whāinga. Ko tā *Te Tāmata Huaroa* e tohu ai, e tika ana kia whai aronga ki te whakapakari ake i te āheinga me te whakapaitanga, hei hāpai i tā tātou rāngai ki te whakarato i ngā tino whai wāhitanga ako tūturu o te reo i roto i ō tātou kura. E mea ana taua tūāhuatanga, me whai wāhi nui te reo ki ō tātou kura, ā, me hāpai ō tātou kura i te ahu whakamua o ngā ākonga i roto i te marautanga. E ai ki ngā whakaaturanga e whakatakotohia ana i konei, ehara i te mea me whakatupu anake i te matatau ki te reo ō rātou mā e mahi ana ki te rāngai mātauranga. Engari tonu, me āta whakarite tahi anō hoki i te kaha o ngā māramatanga me ngā whakaritenga e pā ana ki te huarahi ako, ā, i tōna whai pānga ki te whakaako me te ako.

Ahakoa te tini o ngā taunahua, ko *Te Tāmata Huaroa* – me te hōtaka mahi a Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga ka whai ake i *Te Tāmata Huaroa* – ētahi o ngā tino āhuatanga nui e whai hua ai ki te hāpai i te whakatairanga ake e tika ana.

He kaitaunaki tūkaha ngā kaiako mō te reo Māori. Me āta toro atu tātou ki tērā, ā, me tautoko hoki i tā rātou whai wāhi nui ki te hāpai i te reo ruatanga o Aotearoa.

# FOREWORD

I'm immensely encouraged by the enthusiasm in English-medium schools for teaching te reo Māori.

The schools that we talked with as part of this study recognise te reo Māori as a taonga and want to do more to promote and grow it.

The *Maihi Karauna*, which government has committed to, sets out three audacious goals to achieve by 2040: that 85% of New Zealanders will value te reo Māori as a key part of national identity; that there will be at least one million New Zealanders with the ability and confidence to talk about at least basic things in te reo Māori; and that 150,000 Māori aged 15 and over will use te reo Māori as much as English.

The education system has a key contribution to make towards the achievement of these goals. What *Te Tāmata Huaroa* shows is that a focus on capability building and improvement is needed to support our system to provide genuine learning opportunities in the language in our schools. This means that our schools need to be language rich and support the progression of students through the curriculum. The findings we present here indicate that this does not merely rest on growing the level of fluency within the education sector workforce. Alongside this we need to ensure that there is strong pedagogical understanding and practice as it relates to teaching and learning.

While there are a number of obstacles, *Te Tāmata Huaroa* – and ERO's work programme that will follow it – are among the important steps to supporting the transformation required.

Teachers are passionate advocates for te reo Māori. We need to harness this and support them in their contribution to a bilingual Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Nicholas Pole**
**Chief Executive Officer / Education Review Office**

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# BACKGROUND

## History

Before the 1850s, te reo Māori was the predominant language of Aotearoa, used in interactions within the Māori majority, as well as between Māori and Pākehā in social, religious, commercial and political contexts.

In the later 19th century, as the Pākehā population grew, and during and after the New Zealand wars, there were effectively two parallel societies, with te reo Māori predominating in Māori areas, and English predominating in Pākehā areas. While the Native Schools Act of 1867 had decreed that English should be the only language used in the education of Māori children, for the first part of the 20th century, the vast majority of Māori school children were native speakers of te reo as the language was dominant in Māori homes and communities.

Several factors combined to impact negatively on the health of te reo Māori. Māori began to migrate to the cities in increasing numbers in the 1940s, the use of English in the home and community became more common, and the strong pro-English bias of schooling, in which Māori children were punished for speaking te reo, all contributed to the loss of the language. Māori groups began to raise the alarm in the early 1970s, while national surveys revealed that the percentage of Māori who were fluent speakers of te reo had dropped to around 20 percent, most of these fluent speakers were elderly (Te Puni Kokiri, 2018).

Māori mobilised across the country in response. In 1972, the Te Reo Māori Society presented a petition with more than 30,000 signatures to the Government calling for the introduction of Māori language in schools. The 1970s and 1980s saw such initiative flourish from Māori iwi and community groups to protect and revitalise te reo Māori, including the establishment of te Ātaarangi, te Wānanga o Raukawa, te Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori. These were community-led initiatives, conceived and enacted by Māori independently of any explicit Government support.

In 1985, Huirangi Waikerepuru and Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i te Reo lodged a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal (the Tribunal) seeking official recognition of te reo Māori and arguing that the Crown was under obligation to guarantee Māori possession of te reo as a taonga. The Tribunal agreed and recommended that te reo Māori be made an official language of New Zealand, and that a Māori language commission be established (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986). Both these recommendations came to fruition in 1987 with the passing of the Māori Language Act.

The 1990s saw substantial growth in te reo Māori broadcasting, but a sharp decline in the number of children enrolled in kōhanga reo from the middle of the decade. By the time of the 1996 census,

the proportion of Māori who could hold a conversation in te reo had risen to 25 percent, but the age profile of fluent speakers was still elderly. The 2006 and 2013 censuses registered a decline to 24 percent, and then 21 percent.

In 2016, Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori (Māori Language Act 2016) replaced the Māori Language Act 1987. The purpose of the Act was twofold. It affirms the status of te reo Māori as the indigenous language of New Zealand, a taonga of iwi and Māori, a language valued by the nation, and an official language of New Zealand. Additionally it provides means to support and revitalise te reo Māori. Specifically and relevantly, it established Te Mātāwai as an independent statutory entity to provide leadership on behalf of iwi and Māori as kaitiaki of te reo. It also provided for Te Mātāwai and the Crown to develop revitalisation strategies. Further, the Crown acknowledged "the detrimental effects of its past policies and practices that have... failed actively to protect and promote the Māori language and encourage its use by iwi and Māori." (Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016, §6).

Subsequently, the Māori Language Advisory Group developed te Whare o te Reo Mauriora acknowledging the separate but complementary roles for the Crown and Māori in revitalisation of te reo Māori. This 'whare' is the organising metaphor encompassing the Maihi Māori (on the left-hand side of the whare where tangata whenua are situated) and the Maihi Karauna (on the right-hand side of the whare, in the space reserved for manuhiri). The Maihi Karauna sets out three 'audacious goals' for the revitalisation of te reo Māori. These are:

1. **Aotearoatanga** – by 2040, 85 percent of New Zealanders (or more) will value te reo Māori as a key part of national identity.
2. **Mātauranga** – by 2040, 1 million New Zealanders (or more) will have the ability and confidence to talk about at least basic things in te reo Māori.
3. **Hononga** – by 2040, 150,000 Māori aged 15 and over will use te reo Māori at least as much as English.

## The role of the education system

Many of the people who came before the Tribunal during the hearings into te reo Māori specifically criticised the education system and its role in suppressing the language. Officials from the then Department of Education denied that there had ever been any formal policy in place to punish Māori children for speaking te reo. Responding to this, Sir James Henare told the Tribunal – "The facts are incontrovertible. If there was no such policy there was an extremely effective gentleman's agreement!" (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, p. 9).

The Government has recognised, in the Maihi Karauna, that the English-medium schooling sector is an important lever in supporting the revitalisation of te reo Māori. The current situation for English-medium education is characterised therefore by both obligation and opportunity.

## Current situation

Ministry of Education data show that the number of secondary students enrolled in te reo Māori programmes in 2018 was 24,807, representing around 8% of total secondary student numbers. This appears to include students enrolled in Māori-medium education as well as English-medium. As a point of comparison, for the same year, the data show 12,420 enrolments in Spanish, 15,538 enrolments in French, and 11,300 enrolments in Japanese. More broadly, Ministry of Education data based on Māori Language Programme (MLP) funding levels for all schools (primary and secondary) show that, as of July 2019, 2.6% of the total school population were enrolled in Māori-medium education, 22.0% were involved in Māori language in English-medium education, and 75.6% were not enrolled in Māori language in education beyond the basic Taha Māori level of simple words, greetings or songs.

Further information on the current situation is available through the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) iteration of 2016 focused on Learning Languages (Ministry of Education, 2019). This included a focus on te reo Māori provision and achievement in Years 4 and 8. This study found that the most commonly reported learning experience for both Year 4 and Year 8 students was 'hearing teachers give instructions in te reo Māori', followed by 'singing waiata' and 'learning new words and phrases'. Very few teachers reported differentiating their teaching of te reo Māori, with almost all reporting they used whole class activities, rather than ability grouping or individualised programmes. Furthermore, 81 percent of teachers of Year 4 students and 87 percent of teachers of Year 8 students estimated that students spent less than one hour a week learning te reo Māori.

The study did find that most students, teachers, and leaders professed positive attitudes towards learning te reo Māori and that te reo Māori was seen as important. Māori students were more likely to agree that the language was important and to enjoy learning it, but general attitudes were positive across the board.

However, students' reported confidence did not reflect this positivity. Students reported being more confident to understand what they heard in te reo Māori, but increasingly less confident at speaking, using te reo during performances, reading and, especially, writing.

Teachers reported confidence in teaching and assessing te reo Māori, although counter-intuitively, only 34 percent of teachers of Year 4 students, and 49 percent of teachers of Year 8 students expressed that it was moderately or very true they could hold a simple conversation in te reo Māori. Student achievement in te reo Māori as measured in this study was all within Level 1 of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.[1]

[1] For an explanation of the different curriculum levels, see Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori (The curriculum guidelines).

## *Whakanuia te reo*

In June 2019, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (The Māori Language Commission) published a report on provision of te reo Māori in English-medium schools, entitled *Whakanuia te reo kia ora*. The report was based on interviews with school leaders, teachers, learners and their whānau, in 11 schools, and a broader national survey. It noted the contribution leaders in English-medium schools were making to revitalisation of te reo Māori. However, it also found that the ability of English-medium primary schools to deliver programmes above Level 2 of the curriculum was limited by a lack of fluency in te reo Māori and knowledge of second-language learning pedagogy.

ERO's findings affirm and corroborate the findings of *Whakanuia te reo*, and we recommend that school leaders take note of that report, which is available online at: https://thehub.swa.govt.nz/resources/whakanuia-te-reo/

## Nihinihi Whenua

ERO developed a work programme focused on the provision of te reo Māori in English-medium settings. The first phase of this programme, Nihinihi Whenua (*Te aka o te reo*), involved case study visits to six schools who had recently taken steps to increase their provision. ERO reviewers spoke to leaders, teachers, learners and whānau. The findings of the case studies also contributed to the development of the investigative framework for the current project.

SECONDARY STUDENTS ENROLLED IN TE REO MĀORI PROGRAMMES IN 2018

**24,807**

**representing around 8% of total secondary student numbers**

AS A POINT OF COMPARISON, FOR THE SAME YEAR, ENROLMENT DATA SHOWS

**12,420** IN SPANISH

**15,538** IN FRENCH

**11,300** IN JAPANESE

# METHODOLOGY

For this second phase, ERO was interested in the nature of te reo Māori provision in English-medium schools across Aotearoa, not just in schools that were specifically focused on increasing or improving their provision. We wanted to inquire into the 'state of play' for schools across different regional contexts, and school types and locations. The purpose of this project is investigative, rather than evaluative, and the findings are intended as a point-in-time stocktake of provision, contributing to future evaluative work as part of the broader programme.

We surveyed a simple random sample of English-medium schools (n=102), and invited school leaders and teachers with oversight and responsibility for te reo Māori in their school to participate in a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI). These structured interviews were conducted by an ERO reviewer with deep knowledge and expertise in te reo Māori. The interview included both closed-response, scaled items, and open-ended questions, yielding both quantitative and qualitative data. The full interview schedule is given in Appendix 2.

Data were collected and analysed to answer the following four broad investigative questions:

- How does leadership support te reo Māori provision in schools?
- How is te reo Māori taught and learned in New Zealand schools?
- How confident are teachers and other school staff to teach te reo Māori?
- What are schools' intentions for improved te reo Māori provision?

The sample is broadly representative, and the findings can therefore be generalised to the target population of all English-medium schools in Aotearoa. Characteristics of the schools where ERO completed interviews are given in Appendix 1.

# FINDINGS

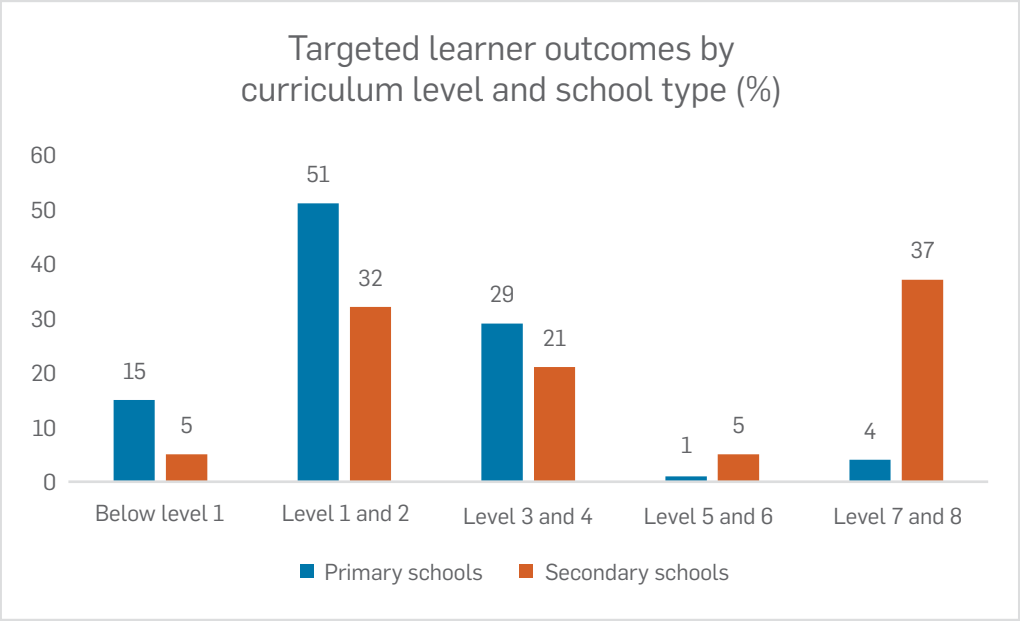
## Leaders are generally positive towards te reo Māori

Almost all leaders ERO spoke with appeared to understand the importance and value of te reo Māori, and most expressed a desire to expand and improve their provision. Leadership commitment and advocacy for te reo Māori was important in providing the conditions for teachers to develop te reo Māori programmes, while signalling to the broader community that te reo Māori was valued. For both staff and communities, it was important to have leadership that challenged negative or ignorant attitudes, and positively articulated a clear sense of moral purpose for the teaching and learning of te reo Māori, both for Māori students as their birthright, and for non-Māori students as a component of a bicultural New Zealand identity.

Leaders in most schools (90 percent) said that te reo Māori was part of their strategic planning, though further prompting from ERO indicated that this was often aspirational. When we asked about specific strategic goals, leaders in around half of the schools in the sample were able to give examples of goals around te reo Māori provision. These goals were most often focused on improving teacher capability and confidence, whether through targeted recruitment of teachers with expertise, or accessing ongoing professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers.

We asked leaders to identify where their goals for learner outcomes sat in relation to the curriculum levels for te reo Māori. Unsurprisingly, there was a clear difference between primary and secondary schools in terms of their desired learner outcomes, with secondary schools much more likely to be targeting the higher levels of the curriculum. For the majority of primary schools, the targeted learner outcomes were at Level 2 or below. It is also worth noting that, even among secondary schools, nearly a third had targeted outcomes at Level 2 or below. This potentially limits learners' access to NCEA in te reo Māori, with NCEA Level 1 corresponding to curriculum Level 5.

**Figure 1: Targeted learner outcomes tend to be at lower curriculum levels outcomes**




ERO did not ask leaders to identify their progress toward, or achievement of, these goals. However, we did ask about how learner achievement in te reo Māori was assessed and reported on. In general, few schools were using formal assessment tools. In around 20 percent of schools there was no assessment of te reo Māori. The most commonly cited source of assessment information in te reo Māori was teacher judgment. Much of what was reported to parents focused on learners' participation in, and engagement with te reo Māori, rather than progression and achievement. At senior secondary level, the requirements of NCEA structured the assessment for those students taking te reo Māori.

## DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**Given the paucity of assessment information, how can schools prioritise and better measure progress towards achieving their desired learner outcomes?**

## Community partnerships are potentially powerful but vary in practice

ERO asked how leaders engaged with local iwi, particularly with respect to the iwi language plan, and more generally about how leaders engaged with parents and whānau around the provision of te reo Māori. The previous phase of ERO's English-medium te reo Māori project, *Te Aka o te Reo*, signalled that whānau demand and engagement can be a powerful influence on schools' decisions around provision of te reo Māori. Whānau, hapū and iwi are also sources of knowledge of te reo Māori.

Only in some schools did ERO find engagement with whānau that was focused on the provision of te reo Māori. Whānau engagement tended to pertain more to learner achievement, or just making connections in general. A few schools (about 15 percent) had engaged with iwi around the iwi language plan. A further fifth of schools had made connections with local iwi, but not specifically around language plans, or were unaware of the iwi language plan. In a few schools, engagement with iwi flowed through the Kāhui Ako|Community of Learning. Close to a quarter of schools had no direct contact with iwi, but cited contacts at whānau, hapū, or marae level, which were sometimes part of their te reo Māori provision (e.g for marae visits), incorporating both te reo and tikanga Māori. The remaining quarter of schools felt they did not have any connection to local iwi.

Leaders cited some challenges they experienced in engaging with iwi around te reo Māori, and iwi language plans. The most commonly cited challenge was where there were multiple iwi represented in the school's Māori community. For this reason, school leaders were unsure with whom they should be talking.[2] Another challenge leaders cited was trouble maintaining contact when those they had engaged with moved away or changed roles. Other challenges included school capacity issues to make time for these connections, low Māori population, or uncertainty around protocols for engaging.

DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**How can the potential of strong iwi-school partnerships be realised?**

**What future work, taking a community perspective, could support and strengthen these connections?**

**What support and knowledge do school leaders need to engage appropriately and fruitfully with iwi?**

[2] The first point of contact should be with mana whenua in the rohe where the school is located.

## Few teachers in English-medium schools are well equipped to teach te reo Māori

The most fundamental challenge to effective provision of te reo Māori in English-medium schools is that not many teachers are themselves able to speak te reo Māori fluently. This necessarily limits the range of learning experiences they can provide for their students, their confidence to teach te reo Māori, and their capability to assess student progress.

This issue was more acute in primary schools, where the teaching of te reo Māori was more likely to be the responsibility of classroom teachers, rather than specialist teachers. Forty percent of primary schools had no teachers who were fluent in te reo Māori, and a further 29 percent had only one fluent teacher. By contrast, almost all secondary schools had at least one fluent teacher.

DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**What level of te reo Māori knowledge is required at a minimum for generalist teaching at primary level?**

**What are the implications for initial teacher education, Our Code, Our Standards and teacher registration?**

### Second language learning pedagogical knowledge was not widespread

Slightly more teachers had some knowledge or experience in teaching second languages than had fluency in te reo Māori, but the overall level was still low. Half of primary schools had either one teacher, or no teachers with expertise in this area. This is understandable, given the breadth that generalist primary school teachers are required to cover. However, it is likely to limit the effectiveness of their te reo Māori provision.

Secondary schools were much more likely to have teachers with pedagogical knowledge in second language learning, but it was not necessarily true that these teachers had te reo Māori knowledge as well. In many cases, the teachers with second language learning pedagogical knowledge were those responsible for teaching English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), or other languages, and it was not evident that this expertise was shared with those teaching te reo Māori.

## DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**Given that te reo Māori provision will be much more effective if it is delivered by teachers with second language learning pedagogical knowledge, how can this expertise be more effectively shared?**

## Many teachers are interested in building their capability, but challenges remain

School leaders and teachers generally recognised the importance of teachers' te reo Māori capability as a precondition for effective provision. Building teacher capability and knowledge of the language was the single most commonly cited strategic goal for schools around te reo Māori. Around a quarter of schools indicated that this was a formal, written priority for them.

Even where it was not a strategic goal, some capability building was evident in most schools, although the formality and extent of this varied widely. Eighty percent of schools reported accessing some level of PLD associated with te reo Māori within the past three years. Only a few schools reported deliberate whole-school PLD in te reo Māori. More commonly, teachers were undertaking PLD on their own initiative, and often in their own time. The most commonly cited external provider for PLD was Te Wananga o Aotearoa, although a range of other providers were mentioned. In a few schools, teachers were engaged in the Ministry of Education's pilot Te Ahu o te Reo Māori PLD programme.

In around a quarter of schools, PLD predominantly involved mobilising expertise internal to the school. This included specialist te reo Māori teachers working with other classroom teachers' te reo Māori to improve their knowledge of the language, or modelling teaching of te reo Māori. In almost all schools, teachers at least occasionally had opportunities to engage in professional learning conversations about te reo Māori. In 80 percent of schools, teachers had opportunities to observe others' teaching of te reo Māori, at least occasionally.

Positive attitudes towards te reo Māori and a desire to learn were evident in around a fifth of the schools in the sample where teachers were undertaking PLD in their own time, as well as in the quarter of schools where capability building in te reo Māori was an identified strategic focus.

However, many leaders also cited challenges including: accessibility of face-to-face PLD for geographically isolated schools, financial cost, finding PLD that was appropriately pitched to the level of teachers' prior knowledge, and competing PLD priorities. The most commonly cited challenge was simply to find time for PLD. Learning any language requires an ongoing investment of time that many leaders felt was unmanageable with existing workloads.

Almost all PLD that teachers were accessing pertained to knowledge of te reo Māori itself. There was little to no PLD accessed that focused on second language learning pedagogy. Many leaders also appeared to conflate some level of culturally responsive pedagogy, or tikanga Māori PLD with PLD more specifically on te reo Māori.

## Te reo Māori provision is likely insufficient to produce conversational speakers

ERO asked about the specific learning opportunities learners of te reo Māori could engage in. We were also interested in whether schools offered a te reo Māori curriculum that progressed from simpler to more complex forms of the language, and enabled learners to improve their receptive and productive capability in te reo Māori as they progress through school. In general, our findings suggest that the level of explicit instruction, time spent, and progression of te reo Māori learning programmes are likely to be insufficient to develop learners who are able to hold everyday conversations in te reo Māori.

### The majority of learners learn te reo Māori for two hours or fewer per week

Time spent learning te reo varies across contexts and year levels, but overall, the majority of learners study te reo Māori for two hours or fewer per week. Some learners in secondary schools, or schools with bilingual or immersion rumaki (about ten percent of the schools in our sample) had opportunities to learn te reo Māori for more than five hours per week. Learners who were studying the language at secondary level were likely to spend more time on explicit te reo Māori instruction as part of their timetabled classes, while learners in primary schools were more likely to have te reo Māori integrated incidentally across the curriculum and throughout their school days.

The integration of te reo Māori into classroom routines, through teacher instructions, or through waiata and karakia, can help to normalise use of the language and improve learners' pronunciation and familiarity with te reo. While this can provide a baseline level of familiarity and comfort, progressing through to conversational capability requires a greater level of explicit instruction on grammatical forms and a concerted effort to improve learners' vocabulary, which was not prominent in the schools we investigated.

### Learners often sing waiata and say karakia, but are less likely to have conversations or write in te reo Māori

The table over page shows the relative frequency of opportunities learners have to engage in a range of te reo Māori learning experiences, as reported by teachers and/or leaders. Lower level, more easily integrated learning experiences happen more often. However, in less than a third of schools did learners 'often' get to have conversations in te reo Māori.

**Table 1: Lower level learning experiences are more common**[3]

| Learning experience | Never | Occasionally | Often |
|---|---|---|---|
| Learn and sing waiata | 0 | 19 | 81 |
| Say karakia | 2 | 22 | 76 |
| Take part in kapa haka | 7 | 23 | 71 |
| Hear teachers give instructions in te reo Māori | 1 | 30 | 69 |
| Learn new words and simple phrases | 0 | 32 | 68 |
| Translate between te reo Māori and English | 5 | 58 | 37 |
| Watch videos in te reo Māori | 12 | 54 | 34 |
| Learn new grammatical forms in te reo Māori | 14 | 54 | 32 |
| Read books or online resources in te reo Māori | 10 | 57 | 33 |
| Have conversations in te reo Māori | 15 | 57 | 28 |
| Deliver formal speech in te reo Māori | 42 | 36 | 23 |
| Write in te reo Māori | 23 | 59 | 19 |

[3] Some percentages sum to over 100 due to rounding.

## Many students do not experience a progressive curriculum pathway

To improve their ability to converse, learners need to experience a curriculum that supports progression – beginning with simpler forms of the language and moving on to more complex forms as their knowledge and confidence grows. The curriculum guidelines for te reo Māori – *Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori* (the guidelines) set out just such a progression.

However, ERO found that there was clearly a curriculum pathway that supported this progression in 37 percent of schools overall, and much more commonly in secondary schools than in primary. This is understandable, given that the requirements of NCEA will provide a progressive structure to what students are learning at the senior level.

Additionally, in primary schools, the responsibility for teaching te reo Māori tends to sit with classroom teachers, rather than specialist teachers. Therefore, as they progress through their primary school years, learners may be taught by teachers with varying levels of capability to implement a te reo Māori programme. Consequently, many learners did not progress through curriculum levels in primary schooling. Leaders in some secondary schools reported facing challenges in covering considerable ground in Years 9 and 10 to prepare learners for the demands of te reo Māori as a Level 1 NCEA subject.

Most schools (84 percent) told ERO they were aware of the guidelines, but the level of explicit use was somewhat lower, with around 60 percent of schools saying they used them. The most commonly cited use was, unsurprisingly, to support curriculum review and development, with some leaders saying they or their teachers used the document to support more specific lesson and assessment planning. Only a few schools used the guidelines to inform their strategic planning, or to link to PLD or appraisal.

## There is no shortage of te reo Māori resources, though not all are immediately useable

Leaders in many schools spoke positively of the usefulness of both official Ministry of Education resources, such as those found on the Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI) website, and resources that they sourced through other channels. YouTube, in particular, was mentioned often as a great resource for teaching and learning waiata. Many leaders commented on the range and quantity of resources that were available.

DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**How can primary schools, in particular, ensure that learners experience a curriculum pathway that builds their te reo Māori knowledge over time?**

In a few cases, leaders reported there was a mismatch between the level of the resources they had accessed and the capability of their teachers to use them. Where readers or books were all in te reo Māori, this was seen as less accessible, and by contrast dual language resources with English translations were highly valued.

Where schools had been able to develop or access resources specific to their local iwi, they found these were particularly useful and engaging. These exemplified local dialect features, and helped schools to develop a localised approach to te reo Māori, linked to the specific contexts and histories of their local areas.

## Most schools would like to improve their provision of te reo Māori

Most schools indicated they would like to provide more te reo Māori, but for the majority this was more aspirational than immediate. Around a third of schools were undertaking immediate actions to support improved provision. The most common actions were some form of deliberate capability building around te reo, improving curriculum design, and improving community connections.

Teachers with expertise in te reo Māori were highly sought after. Leaders told ERO that where they had this expertise in their school, they saw it as the most important factor contributing to effective provision. Conversely, when they did not have access to this expertise within their staff, they saw this as the biggest challenge to effective provision. Many leaders commended the energy and enthusiasm of their teachers, and recognised when teachers spent their own time and effort on upskilling in te reo Māori even outside of any deliberate whole-school capability building.

Other common enabling conditions were: demonstrated passion and commitment from leadership, support from trustees, community knowledge and aspirations, and being well connected to their local Māori communities. Other common challenges included a perceived lack of time, or lack of financial resources.

Finally, in around a fifth of the schools, leaders told ERO they were aware of negative attitudes within their communities about the value of learning te reo Māori. A few leaders commented that they believed that these attitudes have shifted in a positive direction over recent years. Some noted the increasing visibility of the language in media, and initiatives like Te Wiki o te reo Māori, which they saw as contributing to this shift. They also recognised their own roles in championing te reo Māori and challenging negative attitudes.

DISCUSSION PROMPT:

**Discussion prompt: More positive attitudes toward te reo Māori are a necessary precondition for effective provision. It is clear that the low overall levels of te reo Māori expertise within the English-medium teaching workforce constitute the biggest challenge to provision. What can we do in the short-, medium- and long-term to build on this willingness to raise capability and confidence?**

# DISCUSSION

In recent decades, language revitalisation has become a concern for communities around the world. Grenoble and Whaley (2005, pp. 1-3) argue that the confluence of three factors has driven this: a large increase in the number of languages becoming endangered, greater concern for the rights of minority groups, and globalisation. While the contexts for language revitalisation efforts differ widely, the situation facing te reo Māori is not internationally unique.

In particular, the revitalisation of the Welsh language is seen as a successful example and an obvious international comparison to New Zealand. Wales is similar in terms of the size of the population involved, and the dominant language is English. However, the majority of Welsh residents identify with Welsh ethnic heritage, which is not the case in New Zealand, where Māori have been a numerical minority since the late nineteenth century.

Barrett-Walker et al. (2020) have published their development of a quantitative model of language transmission, the parameters of which they calibrated using Welsh language revitalisation efforts. Using the available data on transmission and learning rates of te reo Māori, their model shows te reo Māori on an extinction trajectory, rather than a revitalisation trajectory – at least with respect to the whole New Zealand population (Māori and non-Māori). For Māori, considered as a sub-group, the prognosis is more positive. The authors suggest that, given limited resources, language revitalisation efforts may be more effective if they are targeted specifically at Māori learners.

This is a somewhat concerning result, though it is important to be clear that the prevailing conditions are by no means immutable. Specifically, if the learning rate – the rate at which learners of te reo Māori proceed from basic to proficient to advanced speakers of the reo – can be improved, the overall trajectory of the language revitalisation effort could shift. This learning rate is exactly the condition which would be addressed by improving the provision of te reo Māori in English-medium schools.

In a literature survey on second language learning, specifically te reo Māori, McComish (2004, pp. 8-9) summarises important research-based principles for effective teaching and learning. These include:

- learning the language within its socio-cultural context
- explicit and focused instruction on all aspects of language
- systematic vocabulary learning
- many opportunities for learners to produce and comprehend the language meaningfully in a range of contexts
- tasks and activities that allow for repetition of aspects of language
- scaffolding in all areas
- meaningful, systematic and regular assessment.

She further notes that second language teaching is a specialised field and identifies necessary skills and knowledge for second language teachers. These include general teaching and communication skills, but also more specific subject matter knowledge to language teaching (i.e. phonetics and phonology, grammar, etc.) that are not covered extensively in initial teacher education.

If teaching of te reo Māori in primary schools remains the responsibility of generalist classroom teachers, we should consider what level of te reo Māori knowledge and pedagogy for these teachers is desirable, achievable, and required to support effective provision.[4] Clearly, it would be desirable for all teachers to be fluent bilingual speakers of both te reo Māori and English, but from the current state, and with the current inputs in initial teacher education and in-service professional learning and development, this is not a particularly feasible short- or even medium-term goal.

It therefore remains to be decided what level of te reo Māori knowledge is required, and what is achievable. At the lower curriculum levels, it is likely sufficient to have teachers who are somewhat ahead of their learners, provided they are actively upskilling. These teachers will be able to model correct pronunciation, and teach simple idiomatic phrases and basic vocabulary. To extend learners beyond Level 1 or 2 of the curriculum, however, teachers will need at least a conversational level of proficiency. Additionally, at this level, learners need to experience deliberate teaching informed by second language learning strategies. This is where the current level of staff capability is clearly insufficient in most primary schools.

[4] i.e. provision sufficient to achieve the Maihi Karauna goal of one million conversational speakers of te reo Māori by 2040.

One immediate opportunity could be for schools to mobilise second-language learning pedagogical knowledge where they have it in their ESOL departments. This would help inform the development and delivery of their te reo Māori programme. Long-term, further investment in te reo Māori as part of initial teacher education and professional learning and development should slowly improve the pool of conversational and fluent speakers of te reo Māori among the teaching workforce. The Government's investment in *Te Ahu o te reo Māori* has the potential, if expanded, to significantly improve capability within the current workforce. Early indications are that the various delivery models for *Te Ahu o te reo* have improved participants' knowledge of, and confidence with, te reo Māori. The focus on local dialects and stories is a particularly valuable aspect of the programme.

In the short-term, however, ensuring that learners in primary schools have opportunities to experience a progressive curriculum may well require greater use of specialist teachers of te reo Māori. Integration of te reo Māori at a low level into classroom routines would appear to have contributed to a greater familiarity with, and positive attitudes towards, te reo Māori among learners. While all of this is valuable, integration on its own, at the levels of intensity and duration described in our findings, is unlikely to produce conversational speakers of te reo Māori.

The supply of specialist teachers of te reo Māori is limited, and the relative geographic isolation of many schools also presents challenges to access. It would therefore be sensible to consider opportunities for delivery through existing Kāhui Ako|Communities of Learning or other types of school cluster where economies of scale could be achieved. Another possibility is to make greater use of digitally-enabled teaching from a distance, allowing the system to better share its existing teaching capacity. Furthermore, as with any other situation in which schools draw on external expertise, ensuring that there is a staff capability-building component to the provision will increase the usefulness and sustainability of the effort. There may also be benefits for learners to see their teachers learning alongside them, modelling enthusiasm, commitment to and progress with te reo Māori.

Iwi, hapū and whānau Māori are obvious sources of expertise and knowledge in te reo Māori. The biggest barrier to effective teaching of te reo Māori is the overall low levels of fluency within the teaching workforce. Our findings suggest that there is unmet potential in school-iwi connections to share this expertise. In this study, we spoke predominantly with school leaders, who provided an important perspective on iwi-school partnerships, but further work in this space should encompass iwi and community perspectives on how these could be activated to support improved te reo Māori provision in schools.

Our finding on the limitations of assessment in te reo Māori echoes the concern raised by McComish (2004, p. 22) that "assessment of second language performance is a highly specialised area" and that "the practices in New Zealand schools are still not highly developed". Indeed, the problem of validly and reliably assessing te reo Māori proficiency applies not just to the schooling context, but to what we know about the population more broadly. Most high-level data are collected based on self-reported proficiency (Te Puni Kokiri, 2018), which is particularly vulnerable to reference bias – someone who is conversational, but living among fluent speakers in Kawerau may rate themselves at the same level of proficiency as someone who knows a few phrases, but who lives in a community where even this is unusual.

This vagueness in assessment complicates efforts to monitor progress towards target achievement outcomes, both at the national level – i.e. the Maihi Karauna audacious goals – and at the level of individual schools where they have strategic goals around te reo Māori. Additionally, without assessment as a basis for planning differentiated teaching, some learners may experience an overly repetitious te reo Māori programme that neither recognises their previous learning, nor extends it.

While assessment is clearly an important component of an effective te reo Māori teaching and learning programme, it is one of several areas where there is evident need for significant capability-building. Rather than sitting on its own, we therefore recommend that professional development aimed at teachers of te reo Māori explicitly includes a focus on assessment strategies and tools as part of the overall package. Further development and distribution of formal, validated assessment tools aligned to the curriculum progressions, which teachers are confident to administer and use to inform planning, could potentially improve the quality of monitoring and differentiated teaching.

Finally, this study has focused primarily on issues of supply. We have inferred from the desire of school leaders to improve their provision that demand is also robust. Additional evidence of increasing demand, at a broader societal level, can be seen in the trend towards more students enrolling in te reo Māori courses – an average increase of 11 percent per year since 2012 (Education Counts). Further inquiry into the level of learner demand within the English-medium schooling sector could provide a sharper focus on this side of the equation.

# CONCLUSION

There is now widespread recognition within English-medium schools of the value and importance of te reo Māori as a taonga for Māori, and a component of a bicultural Aotearoa New Zealand identity for Māori and non-Māori alike. Our findings in this project reflect school leaders' positive attitudes towards the language, and in many cases, their sense of moral responsibility to language revitalisation. This, and the greater visibility of te reo Māori in media, signage, and events like Te Wiki o te reo Māori, is cause for celebration.

However, to achieve the second audacious goal of the Maihi Karauna strategy, significant structural challenges remain to be overcome. Most crucially, the pool of fluent, or even conversational, speakers of te reo Māori within the English-medium schooling workforce is small. A majority of learners spend fewer than two hours per week on te reo Māori, overall targeted student outcomes tend to be at the lower end of the curriculum, and te reo Māori programmes often do not support progression towards higher curriculum levels over time.

Learning to be conversational, let alone fluent, in a second language is not a trivial undertaking. It is not realistic to expect that current provision, absent outside input, will support most learners to reach a conversational level of proficiency in te reo Māori.

The challenge for the English-medium schooling system as a whole is to seize on the evident enthusiasm and interest in te reo Māori as a starting point for improving provision in the short-, medium- and long-terms.

***There is now widespread recognition within English-medium schools of the value and importance of te reo Māori as a taonga for Māori...***

# OPPORTUNITIES

ERO suggests that the Ministry of Education seek opportunities to:

- work alongside the Teaching Council to embed knowledge of te reo Māori and second language learning pedagogy as priority areas within the overall workforce strategy
- continue and expand Te Ahu o te Reo Māori to upskill the existing workforce in te reo Māori
- explore innovative ways to connect English-medium schools with fluent speakers of te reo Māori
- support the development of localised te reo Māori resources, reflecting dialects and local stories
- support iwi-school partnerships with a view to improving te reo Māori provision
- support more formal and valid assessment of learners' achievement in te reo Māori.

ERO suggests that school leaders:

- continue to model commitment to te reo Māori as a core part of Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural heritage and identity
- review and strengthen their te reo Māori provision with reference to *Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori*
- identify priorities for capability-building in te reo Māori and second language learning pedagogy, and incorporate this into strategic planning
- strengthen the assessment of achievement in te reo Māori for monitoring and planning purposes
- consider other sources of strength in te reo Māori within their communities, e.g. their relationships with mana whenua, and how these might be mobilised to support improved provision.

# APPENDIX 1:
# SCHOOLS IN THIS SAMPLE

## Table 1: School Type

| School Type | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Composite (Years 1 – 15) | 5 | 4.9 | 3.1 |
| Contributing (Years 1 – 6) | 39 | 38.2 | 34.4 |
| Full Primary (Years 1 – 8) | 32 | 31.4 | 43.2 |
| Intermediate (Years 7 – 8) | 9 | 8.8 | 5.4 |
| Secondary (Years 7 – 15) | 7 | 6.9 | 4.1 |
| Secondary (Years 9 – 15) | 10 | 9.8 | 9.8 |
| Total | 102 | 100 | 100 |

## Table 2: Decile

| Decile Group[5] | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low decile | 28 | 27.5 | 28.9 |
| Medium decile | 40 | 39.2 | 39.2 |
| High decile | 34 | 33.3 | 31.9 |
| Total | 102 | 100 | 100 |

## Table 3: Location

| Urban/rural area[6] | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Main urban area | 61 | 59.8 | 54.8 |
| Secondary urban area | 7 | 6.8 | 6.0 |
| Minor urban area | 10 | 9.8 | 12.2 |
| Rural area | 24 | 23.5 | 27.0 |
| Total | 102 | 99.9[7] | 100 |

5 Deciles 1-3 are low decile schools; deciles 4-7 are medium decile schools; deciles 8-10 are high decile schools.

6 Main urban areas have a population greater than 30,000; secondary urban areas have a population between 10,000 and 29,999; minor urban areas have a population between 1000 and 9,999; and rural areas have a population less than 1000.

7 Does not sum to 100, due to rounding.

## Table 4: School size

| School roll[8] | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very small | 7 | 6.8 | 6.3 |
| Small | 18 | 17.7 | 19.8 |
| Medium | 34 | 33.3 | 38.2 |
| Large | 25 | 24.5 | 23.0 |
| Very Large | 18 | 17.7 | 12.7 |
| Total | 102 | 100 | 100 |

[8] Roll sizes for primary and intermediate schools are: very small (1-30); small (31-100); medium (101-300); large (301-500) and very large (more than 500). Roll sizes for secondary and composite schools are: very small (1-100); small (101-400); medium (401-800); large (801-1500) and very large (more than 1500).

# APPENDIX 2:
# INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What is the school profile number?
2. What is your role in the school?
3. Who has primary oversight for te reo Māori in your school?
4. How have you engaged with local iwi around their language plan?
5. How would you describe the level of te reo Māori knowledge in your community?
    a. Few fluent speakers
    b. Some fluent speakers
    c. Many fluent speakers
    d. Don't know
    e. Other
6. Is te reo Māori provision part of your strategic planning?
7. Is te reo Māori part of Kāhui Ako focus? (if applicable)
8. How did you consult with parents, families and whānau as part of your planning?
9. What are your written formal school goals for te reo Māori teaching and learning?
10. At what level are your desired student outcomes for te reo Māori?
    a. Hearing and being familiar with te reo Māori (pre curriculum level 1)
    b. Beginning to use te reo Māori (levels 1 and 2)
    c. Developing communication skills in te reo Māori (levels 3 and 4)
    d. Achieving social competence in te reo Māori (levels 5 and 6)
    e. Achieving personal independence in te reo Māori (levels 7 and 8)
    f. Other (please describe)
11. How is te reo Māori assessed and reported on with respect to these outcomes?
12. Do you have a rumaki/bilingual/immersion unit in your school?

13. Who teaches te reo Māori? [all that apply]
    a. Specialist teacher
    b. Classroom teachers
    c. Community members
    d. Other (please specify)
14. How much time per week do students typically spend learning te reo Māori?
15. How often do students have opportunities to engage in the following learning experiences:?
    a. Hear teachers give instructions in te reo Māori (never, occasionally, often)
    b. Sing waiata
    c. Learn new words and phrases
    d. Take part in kapa haka
    e. Play games in class using te reo Māori
    f. Say karakia
    g. Learn new grammatical forms in te reo Māori
    h. Read in te reo Māori
    i. Watch videos in te reo Māori
    j. Have conversations in te reo Māori
    k. Deliver formal speech in te reo Māori
    l. Write in te reo Māori
16. How does your curriculum support pathways to improve students' te reo Māori?
17. Are you aware of the curriculum guidelines for te reo Māori (Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i te reo Māori – Kura Auraki)?
18. Do you use the guidelines? How / or why not?
19. What other te reo Māori resources do you have access to? How useful are they?
20. How many of your teachers/staff are fluent/conversational in te reo Māori?
21. How many of your teachers have expertise or experience in second-language learning pedagogy?
22. Please describe any recent (within the last three years) PLD in te reo Māori, or second-language learning.

23. If you have had PLD in the last three years, what was the impact of it?
24. If no, and you would have wanted to, what were the barriers or challenges to doing so?
25. How often do teachers have opportunities to build capability internally by:
    a. Participating in professional learning conversations about te reo Māori? (never, occasionally, often)
    b. Observing others' teaching of te reo Māori?
    c. Connecting with whānau, hapū and iwi around te reo Māori?
26. Do you have any strategic goals around providing more teaching and learning opportunities in te reo Māori? Please describe.
27. What actions are planned to support these goals?
28. If not already planned, would you otherwise be interested in providing more teaching and learning opportunities in te reo Māori?
29. If yes, what would help you to do this?
30. What have been the key things that have supported you to provide te reo Māori in your school?
31. What have been the main barriers to improving provision of te reo Māori in your school?
32. Any additional comments not captured above?

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**Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa**
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