

Secondary Schools: Pathways for
future education, training and employment

July 2013



Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter



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We welcome your comments and suggestions on the issues raised in these reports.



Foreword

The Education Review Office (ERO) is an independent government department that reviews the performance of New Zealand's schools and early childhood services, and reports publicly on what it finds.

The whakataukī of ERO demonstrates the importance we place on the educational achievement of our children and young people:

Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter

In our daily work we have the privilege of going into early childhood services and schools, giving us a current picture of what is happening throughout the country. We collate and analyse this information so that it can be used to benefit the education sector and, therefore, the children in our education system. ERO's reports contribute sound information for work undertaken to support the Government's policies.

In this evaluation ERO discusses how effective senior schooling is increasingly responding to a range of educational, vocational, cultural, health and social needs of students. By drawing on information gathered from 74 secondary school reviews, as well as previous ERO evaluations, this report looks at the current good practice of some schools and suggests ways in which schools can also improve.

Successful delivery in education relies on many people and organisations across the community working together for the benefit of children and young people. We trust the information in ERO's evaluations will help them in their work.

Diana Anderson
Chief Review Officer (Acting)
Education Review Office

July 2013

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Overview

Secondary schooling marks an important time in the life of a young person. It is a formative time when learners develop a greater awareness of the world and begin to pursue education, training and employment opportunities linked to their future.

This report follows on from ERO's 2012 report on careers education. The findings of *Careers Information, Advice, Guidance and Education (CIAGE) in Secondary Schools* emphasised the importance of school-wide processes to develop the career management competencies of students. It showed that, in the most effective examples, careers education is central to a school's delivery of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

This second report investigates how well 74 secondary schools have prepared their students for future opportunities in education, training and employment. It particularly focuses on how innovative schools are in responding to the diverse abilities and aspirations of all their students. The report includes information about school curricula, careers and pastoral systems, as well as the partnerships which schools have developed with businesses, iwi, parents and other educational organisations. A set of indicators detailing good practice is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

The broad scope of this work provides insight into the way secondary schools are responding to changes in the wider education context. This includes the implementation of *The New Zealand Curriculum*; the development of vocational programmes such as Secondary Tertiary Partnerships and Youth Guarantee; an increased emphasis on meeting the needs of priority learners; as well as the Government's Better Public Service goal to have 85 percent of 18 year olds achieving NCEA Level 2, or an equivalent, by 2017.

When combined with ERO's recent evaluations of secondary schooling,¹ this report indicates that fundamental questions remain about secondary schooling in New Zealand. It shows the need for schools to be far more innovative in responding to the individual pathways of each of their students. Effective secondary schooling is moving away from offering a programme that is suitable for most students, and towards identifying and responding to the aspirations, strengths, culture and needs of every student.

Increasingly, secondary schooling requires teachers to have a better understanding of what their students can do and where they want to go. This includes teachers knowing more about any educational or social barriers to success and what support each student needs to build a suitable pathway. Central to the future of secondary schooling is focusing all students' learning through the principles, values and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Students should have ongoing opportunities to develop career management competencies: through increasing their self awareness, exploring their options and making decisions.²

1 ERO (2012) *Evaluation at a Glance: Transitions from Primary to Secondary School*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

ERO (2012) *Literacy and Mathematics in Years 9 and 10: Using Achievement Information to Promote Success*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

ERO (2011) *Secondary Schools and Alternative Education*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

ERO (2011) *Enterprise in The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

2 Ministry of Education (2009) *Career Education and Guidance in New Zealand Schools*. <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/curriculum/resources/education/Downloads>

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Examples of responsive secondary schooling could be seen in the 10 most effective schools in this evaluation. In these schools ERO found:

- processes and practices that encouraged the individualisation of student pathways
- a school curriculum that was effective for a large majority of the students enrolled at the school
- senior students having access to a range of academic, careers and pastoral systems that worked together to support them
- individual course and school-wide initiatives that encouraged students to develop leadership and self-management skills
- an extensive range of vocational and academic options
- purposeful partnerships with others in the community to support student learning and development
- some effective initiatives for Māori and Pacific students
- some effective self-review systems.

The remaining schools in this evaluation were less innovative in responding to each student. Thirty-eight schools were identified as partially responsive. Many of these schools were large, high decile schools that were focused on providing a range of curriculum and pastoral initiatives. Despite this, these schools did not consistently target the individual needs of students and, as a result, significant numbers did not achieve. In addition, these schools had less of a focus on improving their performance through self review. While some of these schools had developed innovative approaches to engage students, they were generally not sufficiently focused on building partnerships with others, including families, community organisations, other educational institutions and businesses.

ERO found an additional 23 schools with limited responsiveness and three schools where the responsiveness for senior students was poor. Although some innovative programmes or approaches were found by ERO, many of these schools had low levels of student achievement and aspects, such as their student support systems and careers education, needed to improve. The development of successful student pathways at these schools was more challenging in light of the wider social and educational context of their students.

The concerns identified in this evaluation about the effectiveness of some smaller, low decile schools suggest that additional work is required to understand how these schools can support the development of individual student pathways and individual career management competencies. Part of this is about how schools, in combination with others, can respond to the social and health needs of students, so that each student's educational potential can be realised.

NEXT STEPS

ERO recommends that secondary schools:

- use robust self review to determine the extent to which their curriculum, careers and pastoral care processes assist students to develop career management competencies and successful pathways from school
- develop their curriculum and systems to ensure a focus on identifying and responding to the aspirations, strengths and needs of all students and their families or whānau.
- increasingly work with families, whānau and iwi to develop student pathways to education, training and employment
- systematically engage local businesses as well as other community health, social and education agencies to suitably respond to each student's future in education, training and employment
- identify and implement the innovation required to support the pathways and success of priority learners, including the development of academic courses for Māori and Pacific learners.

ERO recommends that the Ministry of Education:

- support secondary schools to develop more responsive school curricula, careers education and pastoral care systems that assist students to develop career management competencies
- ensure that secondary schools, especially those with high proportions of priority learners, focus on working in partnership with their families and other agencies to ensure students have access to high quality social and health services while at secondary school.

Introduction

SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLING

In the New Zealand education system senior secondary schooling encompasses the Years 11 to 13. During this time students have the opportunity to develop formal qualifications at school including the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) for Levels 1 to 3 of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Following on from their years at secondary school, young people are expected to go on to tertiary education, training or employment.

Student success at senior secondary school can be seen as a culmination of the knowledge, skills and attitudes they have developed throughout their time at school. The qualifications and knowledge students develop at secondary school provide a platform for a learner's life as an adult. The pathways students start to take in senior secondary school help shape the way they will contribute to our society as young adults.

The importance of students doing well at senior secondary school is reflected in the Better Public Services (BPS) goals of the Government. The BPS goals include the target that 85 percent of 18 year olds will achieve NCEA level 2 or an equivalent qualification by 2017. The same 85 percent target is in place for Māori and Pacific 18 year olds.

Ministry of Education data from 2011 shows that approximately 74 percent of 18 year olds achieved NCEA Level 2. While this represents an increase from earlier years, the education system will have to continue to improve if it is to reach the 2017 goal. In 2011 almost 80 percent of Pākehā New Zealand European 18 year olds, just over 57 percent of Māori 18 year olds, and approximately 66 percent of Pacific 18 year olds achieved NCEA Level 2. A stronger focus on priority learners (Māori, Pacific, students with special needs and students from low income families) is required to increase the percentage of students reaching NCEA Level 2.

YOUTH GUARANTEE, SERVICE ACADEMIES AND SECONDARY TERTIARY PROGRAMMES

The Government has introduced several initiatives aimed at supporting learners to achieve NCEA Level 2. This includes introducing additional learning pathways for students as part of the Youth Guarantee policy as well as those connected to service and trades academies.³

³ For more information on the Ministry of Education's approach to Youth Guarantee see: www.minedu.govt.nz
>>The Ministry>>Education Initiatives>>Youth Guarantee

The Youth Guarantee scheme is designed to support learners to develop specific vocational skills. It operates across secondary and tertiary sectors and has as its specific focus the development of NCEA Level 2 qualifications. The five vocational pathways of this scheme are:

- Manufacturing and Technology
- Construction and Infrastructure
- Primary Industries
- Social and Community Services
- Service Industries.

In May 2012 the Government announced an increase in Youth Guarantee places for the 2013 academic year. The Government also increased the number of student places in service and trades academies. Service academies are military-focused education initiatives that provide students with the opportunity to develop skills in a range of contexts, including numeracy, literacy, leadership and outdoor education.⁴

At the beginning of 2013, 22 Secondary Tertiary Programmes (STP) were established with clusters of schools and other vocational education providers in their communities. These STP allow students working towards NCEA Level 2 to spend part of their time in a secondary school and go off-site, typically to a polytechnic or other education provider facility, where they take part in courses which develop specific skills for work in a trade occupation.

RECENT ERO REPORTS DISCUSSING SECONDARY EDUCATION

Careers Information, Advice, Guidance and Education (CIAGE) in Secondary Schools (2012)⁵

In 2012 ERO evaluated the approach of 44 secondary schools to CIAGE. Four schools had high quality approaches to CIAGE, characterised by their innovative school-wide focus on helping students identify, plan and strive for their aspirations for the future. The school-wide focus of these schools meant that students had frequent opportunities to develop career management competencies through the school's delivery of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. These schools also had high quality approaches supporting priority learners, especially for Māori students and those with special needs.

The remaining schools did not have the same level of innovation or school-wide commitment to careers (or student aspirations for the future). Typically these schools had a more conventional approach to careers that centred on the work of a careers department. While many of these schools had hard-working careers staff, who provided

4 ERO (2011) *An Evaluation of Service Academies*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

5 ERO (2012) *Careers Information, Advice, Guidance and Education (CIAGE) in Secondary Schools*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

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some very good services, CIAGE primarily operated as an addition to the school's curriculum, rather than a more integrated component. In some of these schools the students had very few opportunities to set goals, develop self awareness, make decisions about their future and actively explore relevant opportunities.

**Literacy and Mathematics in Years 9 and 10:
Using Achievement Information to Promote Success (2012)⁶**

In this 2012 report ERO investigated how effectively schools used literacy and mathematics achievement information to improve learning for Years 9 and 10 students. Data was collected in 68 secondary schools throughout New Zealand as part of the regular ERO education reviews of these schools.

The report found that most schools lacked well-established processes for using assessment information to help Years 9 and 10 students learn. Generally, information gathered at transition points was not used well by teachers to identify what students already knew, and what teachers and students needed to work on next. Limited information was gathered throughout the year that told teachers how well students were achieving and progressing, or how effectively classroom programmes were improving students' learning.

Only a small number of Years 9 and 10 students experienced the opportunity to set goals, assess their own performance, and receive feedback about their progress. Given the substantial evidence indicating how effective these processes are in building students' engagement and understanding of their learning, it was of concern that teachers did not more readily integrate these practices into their programmes.

6 ERO (2012) *Literacy and Mathematics in Years 9 and 10: Using Achievement Information to Promote Success*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

Methodology

In this evaluation ERO reviewed the quality of senior secondary curriculum in 74 secondary and composite schools. The information was collected as part of school education reviews during Terms 2 and 3 of 2012. These schools from across New Zealand represented a variety of deciles and sizes, ranging from schools based in main urban centres through to some in small rural settlements (see Appendix 2).

The overarching question ERO sought to answer was – “How well are secondary schools preparing their students for their future education, training and employment?” The evaluation covered the following aspects.

Table 1: The six aspects included in the scope of this evaluation

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Philosophy | The school’s overall approach to senior secondary education focussed on ALL students achieving their potential. |
| Structures and Processes | The courses, pathways and support structures for ALL students into and out of senior schooling. |
| Outcomes | The success of student pathways into and out of senior schooling, with an emphasis on priority groups. |
| Outside the school gate | Partnerships with iwi, business, tertiary providers and families. |
| Leadership | Leadership’s impact on student pathways to education, training and employment. |
| Self review | The school’s analysis and use of data on its effectiveness in supporting students to develop career management competencies and their in-school and post-school pathways. |

These aspects are set out in more detail in the indicators ERO used to make judgements about each school’s responsiveness to their students’ future aspirations (see Appendix 1).

ERO used the indicators to make judgements about:

- How and how well do secondary schools develop courses, pathways and support structures for ALL students in the senior school (including junior students transitioning into Year 11)?

ERO reviewers also collected evidence to answer the following questions:

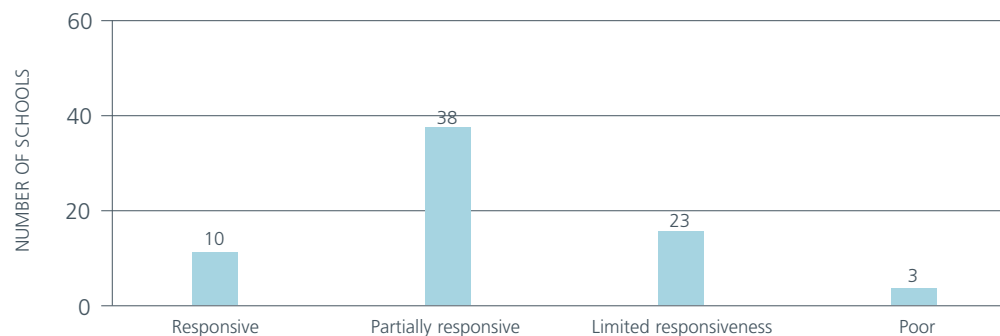
- What are the key strengths in each school’s approach to pathways and the curriculum?
- What are the key barriers affecting the school’s approach to pathways and the curriculum?

Findings

This section presents what ERO found in relation to the four levels of responsiveness of each school’s curriculum and systems. The section begins by discussing the features of effective practice in the schools identified as having a senior secondary curriculum that responds to the interests, pathways and goals of their students. The features of the schools in the remaining categories are then discussed, summarising their strengths and areas for development. Finally, challenges including system-level issues affecting the overall quality of senior schooling in New Zealand are outlined.

A key responsibility for secondary schools is to ensure that a range of effective processes is in place to provide each student with an individual pathway that enables them to be successful at school and well-prepared for future education, training and employment. ERO found considerable variation in the extent to which the 74 secondary schools developed effective courses, pathways and support structures. Four categories are used below to highlight the degree to which schools’ curriculum and systems responded to the future plans of students. Figure 1 outlines the numbers of schools in each of the four categories.

Figure 1: Schools’ responsiveness to senior students’ future education and employment aspirations



RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS

ERO identified 10 schools with effective systems that contributed to a responsive curriculum, supporting the diverse learning pathways their senior secondary students were taking. These schools generally exhibited many of the features outlined in ERO’s evaluation indicators (Appendix 1). Nine of the schools were middle or high decile, with one low decile school in this category.⁷ Eight of the schools were in urban areas with a range of roll sizes from small to large, although there were no very large schools (over 1500 students).

⁷ This was a decile three school. This group consisted of four high decile schools (decile 8-10), five middle decile schools (decile 4-7), and one low decile school (decile 3).

The significant features of these 10 most effective schools included:

- processes and practices that encouraged the individualisation of student pathways
- having a school curriculum that was effective for a large majority of the students enrolled at the school
- senior students having access to a range of academic, careers and pastoral systems that worked together to support them
- individual course and school-wide initiatives that encouraged students to develop leadership and self-management skills
- an extensive range of vocational and academic options
- purposeful partnerships with others in the community to support student learning and development
- some effective initiatives for Māori and Pacific students
- some effective self-review systems.

Each of these aspects is discussed in more detail below.

Despite their various strengths, these schools still had areas in which they could improve. Some of these areas are discussed as part of this section and others are included in the Challenges section of this report.

The individualisation of the pathways

The 10 schools in the ‘responsive’ category had pastoral, careers and school curriculum initiatives that supported the interests and goals of individual students. The focus these schools had on individual student pathways was typically linked to the aspirations of students. These schools had effective school-wide processes where students identified their future pathways or directions and these were used to shape the school’s curriculum and related systems.

At one school the staff had developed Individual Achievement Plans for all junior and senior students. These plans were developed in consultation with the student’s family or whānau. The plans were also used for the ongoing monitoring of each student’s progress carried out by deans, and the ‘coaching’ discussions which form teachers undertook with each student. The idea of ‘knowing the student’ was an important theme in developing a programme for each student. In essence, the development of good quality pathways and support was linked to the relationships between staff and students.

In an area school that ERO identified in the responsive category, the staff put extra effort into understanding each student’s pathway. A variety of approaches was used to develop each programme. In some cases students took part in well-managed distance

learning options. In 2012, the use of distance learning meant that the 26 students in the school were completing courses across 39 different subjects. The subjects included psychology, building, agriculture, equine, early childhood education, tourism and outdoor education. In addition to the in-school and distance learning options, the school used Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) funding to send students on courses directly related to their future plans.

Other schools used similar initiatives such as academic monitoring and student led development of individual plans. One school used a learning advisor model where each senior student worked with an advisor to help monitor their progress as part of an independent study plan. For students at this school their learning time was evenly split between chosen subjects on the school timetable and the time they spent in independent study, including time with their learning advisor.

Academic, careers and pastoral systems working together

The focus on individual student pathways was complemented by the cohesive way in which curriculum, pastoral care and careers systems supported individual students. Curriculum leaders, careers staff, deans, form teachers, subject teachers and departments worked together in response to student pathways. This emphasis on cooperation was evident in the way schools were led by the board of trustees and school managers and the overall strategy in place to foster such cooperation.

The following case study provides an example of coordination at one of these schools. This low decile school demonstrates how a school can be effective for its Māori students.

A school that is effective for the majority of its Māori students

This school is a Catholic co-educational secondary school in a provincial city with a roll of just over 250 students. Over 40 percent of the students identify as Māori. The college's mission is to provide a holistic education that seeks to develop the whole person, in line with its special character. The focus on the school's mission is led by the board of trustees which ensures that the special character of the college permeates every aspect of school life including staffing, curriculum, pastoral care, cultural development, sport and recreation.

One of the board's stated aims is to work with families to prepare young men and women for their future roles in education, work and life. Trustees are focused on supporting inclusion and diversity. Considerable value is placed on students' individual differences and the school's bi-cultural traditions.

The senior management team is a strong driver of the school's overall direction. It has emphasised self review, introduced key student support programmes, developed systems to monitor student achievement and implemented suitable teacher appraisal and development mechanisms. The *He Kakano* programme has been significant in supporting the development of teacher practice and cultural understanding. Its implementation has led to improvements in Māori student engagement, attendance and achievement. The school has also built strong links with local hapu and iwi. Frequent whānau hui seek parents' aspirations for their children and provide an opportunity to report achievement and progress.

A strength in the school is the personal interaction between students and staff. The whānau/family atmosphere provides a platform for most teachers to understand and support student learning and career pathways. An emphasis is placed on restorative practice to underpin this pastoral care approach.

Māori language and tikanga programmes highlight the focus placed on Māori education. All Year 9 and 10 students take part in an introductory course focused on te reo me tikanga Māori. The pastoral team includes a Māori dean and a whānau support worker with strong links to the school's Māori community. There are four Māori teachers on the staff. Māori success is a priority and highly visible as a focus in annual planning, well-planned actions and ongoing monitoring and review.

As part of the school's programme, each senior student has a careers interview. All students also complete a careers education programme at Years 10 and 12. Careers NCEA unit standards are offered at Year 12. Each student has an individual

development plan, which is maintained by all form teachers. This development plan, along with information about each student's achievement and attendance, is used in the conferences that occur with each student's family. Approximately 80-90 percent of parents attend these family days.

The senior school offers students 23 subjects, including te reo Māori, Spanish and visual arts. Some subjects are taught in multi-level classrooms to support the range of academic pathways in subjects where small numbers have enrolled. Tailored learning support programmes are in place for students with special needs. A range of additional programmes available for Māori students include Māori tourism and Māori performing arts courses. Some students take part in STAR courses and the school's Gateway programme.⁸ Students can also enrol in university courses as well as NCEA standards. Students have gained additional qualifications that include a diploma in agriculture, a diploma in business, Te Waharoa national certificate in Māori performing arts, as well as national certificates in te reo, tourism and computing.

The school's self review supports its goals and targets. A credit monitoring process identifies the students who are in danger of not completing NCEA assessments. Several students have attended 'catch up' classes to ensure they have enough credits. The school runs a three-week long summer school for students who need extra support to achieve qualification milestones.

The school has good levels of achievement, especially at NCEA Level 1. Māori students achieve at a similar level as their non-Māori peers. The 2011 NCEA results showed that Māori students achieved a higher pass rate for NCEA Level 1 than the rate for all students nationally. In 2012 roll-based NCEA data showed that 74 percent of year 12 Māori students achieved NCEA Level 2.

Opportunities for students to develop self-management skills

The responsive schools typically had a strong focus on students developing self management and leadership opportunities within, and in addition to, the students' courses. ERO found that these schools had a range of extra-curricula activities in which senior students could develop leadership. For most of the schools in this group, showing responsibility across sporting, artistic, cultural or spiritual domains (in addition to academic ones) was an important school objective. Schools varied in how this was emphasised, according to their communities, but the essential quality was based on the concept of developing well-rounded citizens.

⁸ Senior secondary students (Years 11 to 13) in the Gateway programme undertake structured workplace learning across a range of industries and businesses around New Zealand, while continuing to study at school.

Opportunities to develop leadership and self management were evident, for example, in the independent study options exercised at the different schools. Similarly, these self management qualities were observed in those schools where students took part in distance learning options as part of their study. One school, for example, supported students to develop self-management skills as part of their distance learning by way of a 'learning contract'. Students managed their own video conferences and study timetable as part of their contracts. Students who struggled to manage their learning in this medium were monitored more closely until they had developed the necessary self-managing skills.

A range of academic and vocational options

The schools in the responsive category had a wide range of academic and vocational options for their senior students. This was evident in the options available to students and the extent to which these reflected the full intent of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

While it may be easier for larger schools to have a wide range of in-school programme options, a good range of options was also found in the smaller responsive schools. In the smaller schools several initiatives were used to develop programmes that supported each student's learning or career pathway. One such approach was the use of 'multi-level' classrooms where, for example, Years 12 and 13 students were taught in one class, despite working on both NCEA Level 2 and 3 qualifications. Well-managed, multi-level classrooms were an effective way for a small school to manage their curriculum. This school's ability to implement a wide range of academic and vocational courses depended on teachers' emphasis on building students' self-management skills and teachers' ability to adapt their teaching.

Academic and vocational programme options were also enhanced, at both the smaller and larger schools, through the use of STAR courses and distance learning options. Distance learning options were effective when suitable monitoring and support structures were in place to ensure that students could consistently achieve the components required to gain the qualifications they needed for future learning and employment.

The range of courses at the responsive secondary schools included 'alternative' pathways at Years 11 and 12 in particular. These courses were used to differentiate between those students taking programmes to prepare them for university and those needing a different sort of approach to achieve NCEA Level 1 or 2 for further training or employment. Commonly these schools had alternative mathematics, English and science programmes. In one of the 10 schools, robust data analysis meant they recognised the need to

specifically improve NCEA Level 1 science results for Māori students. The school developed and introduced a new Year 11 science course to address this.

In developing alternative learning pathways at Years 11 and 12, schools have to ensure students can move through the school's overall programme without limiting their entry to certain courses in the future. One school had overcome this by developing three curriculum pathways within the school. These reflected a 'mainstream', 'academic/scholarship' and 'trades' focus. The school had introduced a broad range of courses to support these different pathways and students were able to move from one pathway to another. The school emphasised the high level of achievement required within its trades programmes and the importance of not seeing this as a 'low status' programme for potentially disengaged students. This flexibility also avoided students becoming blocked in a pathway that ended at NCEA Level 2 without giving them access to Level 3 courses and the opportunity to gain university entrance.

Some of the vocational and academic courses at the responsive schools

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Fine wood construction (Level 1) | Electronics (Level 2) |
| Applied science (Level 1) | Employment skills (Level 1-2) |
| Environmental science (Level 1) | Automotive engineering (Level 2) |
| Wellbeing (Level 1) | Outdoor recreation (Level 3) |
| Fish and game (Level 2-3) | English through contemporary issues (Level 2) |
| Industrial engineering (Level 2-3) | Product and spatial design (Level 2-3) |
| Early childhood education (Level 2-3) | Audio visual (Level 2-3) |
| Māori tourism (Level 2 and 3) | English through contemporary issues (Level 2) |
| Environmental geography (Level 2-3) | English through film (Level 3) |
| Aviation (Level 2) | Indonesian (Level 1-3) |
| Sports studies (Level 2 and 3) | |
| Applied design (Level 2 and 3) | |

Purposeful learning and development partnerships

Schools in the responsive category had a range of partnerships that supported their students' learning. The connections these schools had with other educational organisations, employers, iwi and whānau/families demonstrated the degree to which 21st century education in New Zealand goes 'outside the school gate'.

All the schools maintained good relationships with employers. This happened through the Gateway programmes primarily and, to a lesser extent, through other curriculum

programmes.⁹ For example, one school had placed 40 students in local early childhood education centres so they could complete practical components of their school's early childhood education course.

Links with tertiary education providers typically involved students taking part in a variety of tertiary courses while enrolled at school. Across the responsive schools the students took part in courses from Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (Te Kura), universities and polytechnics. Some of these courses were established through STAR funding, while some were developed as part of the Youth Guarantee initiative. One school had involved iwi in the development of a performing arts course.

High levels of family involvement were evident across these schools, especially during academic counselling processes or discussing career aspirations. At its best, this involved good connections with the families of priority learners. At one school, for example, a group of refugee students was made the focus of individual career plans for students in the context of ongoing contact with their parents. These refugee students were also provided with taster courses to aid in their understanding of tertiary education in New Zealand.

Some effective initiatives for Māori and Pacific students

The schools in the responsive category generally had fewer Māori and Pacific students than many other New Zealand schools. While these schools were responsive for individual students, ERO identified areas for improvement related to their initiatives to support Māori and Pacific students. Overall, the lower and middle decile responsive schools, which were also those with higher numbers of Māori students, were more likely to have initiatives to specifically improve the achievement of these students.

Initiatives that supported Māori students included schools making strong links with whānau (often through the academic counselling approach of the wider school), the use of pastoral care staff dedicated to work with Māori students, specific careers initiatives for Māori students, and links with iwi groups. One school had a homework centre for Māori students operated by whānau members. Māori students at this school also took part in wananga at tertiary institutions.

Few initiatives were in place in the 10 schools for Pacific students. One of the schools encouraged Pacific students to attend the Pacific Leaders of Tomorrow (PILOT) careers initiative. The school had also encouraged some of its Pacific students to attend a service academy hosted by another school.

⁹ For examples of secondary schools working well with the community through the curriculum see ERO's 2011 report, *Enterprise Education in The New Zealand Curriculum*.

Some effective self-review systems

The schools in the responsive category carried out some particularly effective self-review activities. However, most of these schools also had ways in which their overall self review could be improved. All 10 schools used NCEA achievement information to analyse senior student achievement. Some of these schools effectively analysed and used student destination information to reflect on the effectiveness of their careers and transitions programmes. Some had also used the Careers New Zealand benchmarks to review the overall quality of their careers provision.¹⁰

Effective self review at the responsive schools was often linked to each school's focus on individual learners. For example, at one school the focus on understanding the learner's aspirations, along with an emphasis on self review, contributed to improved retention rates and achievement. The review process started with the school gathering information about the students entering the school. The school analysed information provided by its contributing school and had face-to-face meetings with teachers from the intermediate school to discuss each student.

Subject teachers in the junior school subsequently built career competencies into their Years 9 and 10 programmes. Years 9 and 10 students also took part in specific careers activities to develop their self-awareness, decision-making and options for the future. The goals students developed from these exercises were placed on the school database to inform the individual's subject choices.

Once in the senior school the NCEA data of each student was analysed in combination with what was understood about each learner's career pathway. This analysis provided a framework for deans and other staff to support each student through school and then on to their destination. School leaders sought information about the destination of each student leaving school and used this information to review their overall provision for senior students.

Across the other schools in the responsive category, the types of self review which ERO identified as needing improvement included destination analysis, departmental reviews, the quality and usefulness of Years 9 and 10 achievement and other information, and Māori and Pacific educational achievement.

PARTIALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS

Thirty-eight schools were judged to be 'partially responsive'. Many of these were high decile and large urban schools. Most of the remaining schools in this category were middle decile schools of various sizes. Six were low decile schools that were medium-sized to very large.

¹⁰ The Careers New Zealand benchmarks are available from the Careers New Zealand website: www2.careers.govt.nz Schools developing self-review processes for careers education should also read ERO's 2012 report *Careers Information, Advice, Guidance and Education (CIAGE) in Secondary Schools*.

In general, these schools had developed curriculum, pastoral systems and careers initiatives that supported a majority of their students. Most of the schools in this category were relatively conventional in their approach to senior students. Most had areas to develop in terms of their overall strategy or coordination of their senior school systems, including their approach to self review. A few schools showed promising levels of innovation with some initiatives in the early stages of development. While some had approaches that specifically supported Māori or Pacific students, almost all needed to improve Māori and/or Pacific students' retention, attendance or achievement. Māori and Pacific students were over-represented in the small groups of students who did not achieve well at these schools.

Range of academic and vocational subjects

The partially responsive schools had developed a senior curriculum that included conventional academic options and alternative academic pathways for Years 11 and 12 students. Most of these schools had Gateway, and vocational and transition programmes for learners who were not doing academic courses to prepare for university.

These schools focused more on providing a range of programmes rather than the individualisation of each student's programme. While most of the partially responsive schools had a variety of subjects for students to choose from, their systems for supporting students to make choices related to their career aspirations were less apparent. Partially responsive schools were less likely to tailor a student's programme to their goals for the future.

Conventional and effective careers departments

ERO found that most of the schools in this category had conventional approaches to careers education with hard-working careers departments supporting students to build suitable pathways. This echoes ERO's findings in the 2012 evaluation of CIAGE in secondary schools.¹¹

Most of these schools had established an introductory careers programmes in Years 9 and 10 which focused on career competencies and, in some cases, informed student's subject choices for Year 11. Senior students were usually interviewed by careers leaders and/or deans about their career aspirations. Gateway was available and additional support was typically put in place for those intending to leave school before the end of Year 13. Some careers staff noted the uneven focus on careers concepts across the different departments in the school. This hindered school-wide approaches to careers education for some of the schools in this category.

11 ERO's 2012 report *Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAGE) in Secondary Schools* found that a high proportion of schools tended to draw far more on their careers departments than use effective school-wide approaches to careers education.

Some of the schools had developed academic counselling models and were starting to build good relationships with parents. Some schools in the North Island were involved in The University of Auckland Starpath project.¹²

School-wide strategy, self review and innovation

The partially responsive schools had positive cultures and developed thoughtful plans to continue to introduce ongoing improvements. However, a common issue in each school's approach was the minority of learners who did not reach their potential and dropped out of school early. The schools had different perspectives on how to support these learners. Some were actively investigating who these learners were and what they could do to improve the management of their learning or pathways. Some of these schools were in the early stages of developing innovations to support these learners. Others were less focused on either identifying or responding to the individual needs of small, underperforming cohorts of students.

Many of the new initiatives were similar to those in the responsive schools category and were used with individual students. This included mentoring/buddying and intervention and support from a member of the pastoral team. Initiatives to build links with the community occurred through links with large businesses and iwi organisations, through to working with local employers and student's family and whānau.

A low decile school was working with a youth coordinator, employed by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), to support 16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET). The youth services provided by the coordinator were complemented by the school's Gateway and transition programmes with the aim of increasing the number of students in the area who gained qualifications before leaving school.

A high decile school made each teacher more accountable for students at risk of underachievement by making their success part of teachers' performance appraisal. As part of their performance agreement teachers were expected to develop strategies to accelerate the progress of these students.

These initiatives, like many others across these schools, needed improved self review to determine whether the intended outcomes occurred or reached the students that needed the support. Overall, more effective self review across these schools could have provided useful information about the effectiveness of the school's programme. For example, better analysis of destination information could also have indicated how exit transitions could be improved. The collection and analysis of student feedback could have helped identify the careers initiatives that were most effective in building student confidence and self awareness.

¹² Starpath is a Partnership for Excellence project led by The University of Auckland in partnership with the New Zealand Government. It aims to address New Zealand's comparatively high rate of educational inequality with Māori and Pacific students, and students from low income families.

Māori and Pacific achievement, retention and attendance

Some Māori and Pacific students achieved well at the ‘partially responsive’ schools. The achievement rates of Māori and Pacific students were generally better at the high decile schools. Despite this, Māori and Pacific achievement rates were usually lower than that of other students in the individual schools.

Most of these schools had developed some initiatives in support of Māori and Pacific students. These initiatives were often broad and did not differentiate between the needs of Māori and Pacific students who were succeeding and those who were underperforming. It was difficult to identify any particular initiative that was more effective than others because schools had limited evidence about the effectiveness of specific strategies (sometimes because they were new). Despite this, some evidence indicated that Māori and Pacific students’ achievement, retention and attendance had improved in many of these schools at the same improvement rates as seen for other students.

An example of a specific initiative supporting Māori and Pacific students included the use of mentors at one high decile school. This school had several personnel track the attendance and progress of individual Māori and Pacific students. They then provided or organised additional tutoring and career pathway support, such as connecting students with tertiary and business contacts as part of a student’s career plan.

At a low decile school a Whānau Achievement project was linked with a significant increase in the educational achievement of Māori students. The project, funded by Te Puni Kōkiri, focused on improving the engagement of students and families.

Innovation

Compared with the responsive schools, most of the partially responsive schools demonstrated less innovation when it came to meeting the diverse interests and pathways of their students. The students at the partially responsive schools had fewer opportunities to take responsibility for planning their learning or to develop self management and leadership skills.

Elements of innovation were identified in some of these schools. One high-decile school had introduced two study periods a week at the end of the school day, so that students could more readily access local tertiary courses. The study periods at the end of the day made it easier for students to be off-site without losing time for in-school courses. This school, like some of the responsive schools, had also developed an independent study programme for all Year 13 and some Year 12 students. Two days a week for the first three terms, students could pursue individual mentored study as part of their overall qualifications.

A middle decile school considerably increased the flexibility of its timetable by creating two whole-day blocks a week for senior secondary students. This structure allowed students to have more substantial amounts of time to work in options such as outdoor education, agriculture, Gateway, art and technology.

Although the partially responsive schools introduced some initiatives and a range of programmes, the schools provided fewer opportunities to have a responsive curriculum and systems that catered for individual students' strengths and career aspirations.

SCHOOLS WITH LIMITED RESPONSIVENESS

Twenty-three schools were found to have limited curriculum responsiveness across their senior secondary schools. These schools had difficulty developing a broad curriculum for a relatively small cohort of students with diverse strengths, needs and aspirations. Many of these schools had low levels of student achievement, especially for Māori or Pacific students.

Almost all of these schools had significant numbers of students who did not achieve Level 1 of NCEA. The limited or poor analysis and self review in place reduced the extent to which these schools were able to introduce and maintain programmes and processes they were confident would contribute to ongoing improvements for their students.

In the lower decile schools in this category, the poor achievement of some students was not solely related to the responsibilities of the school. Some schools were attempting to manage low levels of student literacy on entry to secondary school, as well as difficult social contexts including drug use and family welfare dependency.

The middle and higher decile schools in this group tended to have taken narrow approaches to the curriculum. For example, most did not adequately design and implement a school curriculum that responded to their Māori students. Often schools were at the beginning stages of developing a strategy for responding to Māori achievement issues in their school.

Despite the difficulties these schools faced, ERO found evidence of effectiveness and innovation in some contexts. Gateway provision and the careers departments of most of these schools were operating satisfactorily – although there generally needed to be a greater schoolwide focus or strategy linked to transition from school into careers.

Some good initiatives were provided for limited numbers of students. One school, for example, had developed outdoor education courses to respond to student interest and to take advantage to their proximity to wilderness locations. Another school, in

partnership with its District Health Board, had developed a health services academy which specifically supported Māori and Pacific students to gain relevant qualifications to enter the professions in the future.¹³ In following their interests in areas such as pharmacology and occupational therapy the students achieved high numbers of science NCEA standards. This initiative was one of the few academic options found in this evaluation that was developed specifically for Māori and Pacific students.

SCHOOLS WITH POOR QUALITY SENIOR SCHOOLING

Three schools were found to have poor quality approaches to designing and implementing a responsive senior school curriculum. All were small low decile schools and two were in rural locations. They each had difficulties developing a broad curriculum for their cohorts and had additional management issues to improve. One school, for instance, had financial issues to solve, while another had a high staff turnover making it difficult to introduce and sustain improvements. Two of the schools also had low student achievement. These schools lacked cohesion in the way their curriculum, careers and pastoral systems worked together to support students' learning or career pathways.

CHALLENGES FACING ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Increasingly, schools are developing approaches that help them understand and respond to the individual pathways of their students. Central to this is the work some schools have done to identify the aspirations or direction of senior students. Frequently, effective school-wide processes are in place to build students' self-awareness and enable them to explore opportunities and then make decisions about future careers and learning. However, more innovation is needed in many secondary schools to ensure all students achieve meaningful qualifications that enable them to access the future education, training and careers in which they are interested.

School decile, social issues and responding to student needs

A trend identified in this evaluation is the extent to which school responsiveness broadly correlated with decile. While the links between socio-economic status and educational achievement have been widely documented,¹⁴ what was significant was the extent to which decile was specifically linked to the challenges for these schools. In some instances, schools were attempting to focus on curriculum and vocational programmes when they were almost overwhelmed with the social needs of some of their students.

This does not mean that students at low decile schools are less likely to receive a good education. One of the 10 schools ERO found to be responsive was a low decile school.

13 One other District Health Board had developed a similar programme aimed at all secondary students.

14 See for example Susan E. Mayer (2002) *The influence of parent income on children's outcomes*. Download from www.ms.govt.nz.

There are other examples of highly effective low decile primary and secondary schools across New Zealand. In this sense, decile is not an indicator of school quality. It does, however, indicate the socio-economic status of its students and the likelihood that a higher proportion of students will face challenges that are often associated with lower income. Similarly it should not be forgotten that students at high decile schools can also be affected by health, social and learning issues.

Socio-economic factors were not the only variables affecting school performance. In this evaluation, for example, the schools that struggled to support senior students typically had problems with aspects such as the quality of their curriculum, their responsiveness for Māori and Pacific students, and the effectiveness of their careers and pastoral care support programmes. The fact that most of these schools had more socio-economic challenges than schools in the responsive group is an additional issue affecting their performance.

Similarly, socio-economic challenges do not mean that schools are powerless to support diverse students to achieve. As examples from this evaluation suggest, schools need to work with families, communities and a range of government agencies to continually improve their support for students. It can also be anticipated that system-wide initiatives such as the Social Sector Trials¹⁵ and the Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health¹⁶ project should contribute to improved social and health outcomes for youth. While these initiatives are in their early stages, they represent the focus on schools increasingly working in partnership with families and social agencies to improve social and health outcomes for students. In this regard it is important that staff across both schools and the Ministry make it a priority to support coordinated wrap-around services as part of improving students' access to the curriculum, especially at low decile schools.

Curriculum innovation

ERO found few examples of curriculum innovation for academic learning programmes. Schools were usually opting for traditional subject disciplines, which operated in year-long courses. Few schools attempted to develop academic courses that spanned two or more curriculum areas. Few academic courses were specifically aimed at improving outcomes for Māori or Pacific students. Instead the emphasis was mostly on supporting these students to take part in vocational courses.

The reasons for such low levels of innovation included challenges in the traditional departmental structure used in secondary schools and the way this structure encourages a continuation of conventional subject disciplines. The traditional departmental structures make it difficult to develop the sort of inter-disciplinary learning and assessment that is promoted in *The New Zealand Curriculum*. As an example, a school

15 See www.minedu.govt.nz
>>The Ministry>>Education Initiatives>> Social Sector Trials.

16 See www.ms.govt.nz
>>About us and our work
>>Newsroom>>Fact Sheets
>>Budget fact sheets>>Budget 2012>>Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project.

mathematics department may be reluctant to support statistics being taught and assessed in a course focused on biology or business studies.

Complicating the ability to be innovative with academic programmes, is a perception in some of the schools that many parents and students have an expectation that subject disciplines, along with formal summative assessment tasks, are necessary for an academic programme. The perception is that curriculum innovation, which breaks away from traditional subject silos and teaching approaches, may be seen as second-class compared to academic education.

Vocational courses and ethnicity

One of the noticeable trends across the schools in this evaluation was the extent to which vocational programmes have become part of the senior secondary experience. Gateway, Youth Guarantee, Work Experience and other school and polytechnic linked programmes at school have diversified what can be offered in secondary schools to enable many more students to succeed.

However, it is also clear that some schools are seeing vocational programmes mainly as a way to increase qualifications for Māori and Pacific students, particularly for the boys. While many students experience the benefits of these vocational courses, very few schools were developing academic courses specifically to increase the numbers of Māori and Pacific students who are able to enter university.

While many Māori and Pacific students may succeed in vocational contexts, and thereby achieve NCEA Level 2, the question remains – how many Māori and Pacific students may also have thrived in more academic programmes that responded to their interests, strengths and aspirations? Schools need to raise the expectations for some of these students by ensuring that their curriculum and systems are enabling Māori and Pacific students to achieve to their potential.

Timetabling

The organisation of secondary schools is often dependent on what the timetable will allow. Timetabling will continue to be a challenge for schools, especially as they increasingly respond to the individual pathways of students.

One of the key timetable issues is how to manage the time for students who attend off-site courses. These may be students on individual STAR courses, those on a Gateway programme, or those within another programme occurring off-site such as those in Secondary Tertiary Programmes as part of the Youth Guarantee programmes. Schools are dealing with timetabling challenges in various ways. In the best cases students are not disadvantaged by learning in programmes outside of the school's normal timetable.

Conclusion

At the centre of this evaluation is the importance of **individual student needs**. Effective senior secondary pathways and curricula are linked to how well schools have responded to the individual learning and career pathways of their students.

This evaluation identifies the need for schools to be more innovative to meet the needs of all their students. It signals that the future success for secondary school students is dependent on schools identifying and responding to the aspirations, strengths, culture and needs of their students.

The **most responsive schools** put considerable effort into ensuring teachers understood the goals for each student and designed programmes that encouraged students to increase their own self awareness and self management to monitor progress towards achieving their goals. The question that remains is – how can such leadership and self managing skills be developed in all schools, to help students find out about their future opportunities and what they need to do to achieve them?

The innovation required in secondary schools should be supported by **robust self review** that can determine whether new approaches are making the intended improvements for students. Many of the schools ERO identified as responsive to the individual pathways and strengths of students are relentless in the development of their curricula, careers and pastoral systems. When new approaches are developed they are examined in terms of how they support individual students, and changes are made to ensure that they can respond as necessary.

The pattern of underachievement across the schools in this evaluation reflects the central focus on designing a school curriculum and having systems that work for each student enrolled at the school. However, while responsive schools had systems that tended to work for individuals, most of these schools did not have high numbers of students with challenging social needs. Many of the schools that had limited responsiveness tended to have significant areas to develop in their curricula, careers or pastoral care systems. They also had higher proportions of students who were already well behind when they started in Year 9 and brought with them challenges associated with their socio-economic status.

An increasing response to the individual pathways of students necessitates the need for greater **coordination between the educational, social and business programmes** available for students and their families. Almost all schools in this evaluation had students who did not achieve national qualifications. Improvements cannot be achieved by schools

working in isolation. Schools need to have families, iwi and community businesses, along with other government agencies and education providers, working together with them to support the diverse interests of each student.

To achieve greater numbers of students succeeding across the education system more coordinated social support is needed for some students to complement the curriculum improvements that are required in some secondary schools. Further work is needed to highlight and introduce good practice related to how schools with high numbers of priority learners, in particular, can work with families, outside agencies and other educational institutions to meet the educational and social needs of learners.

Next steps

On the basis of this report, ERO will continue to investigate high quality schooling for priority learners in secondary schools.

ERO recommends that secondary schools:

- use robust self review to determine the extent to which their curriculum, careers and pastoral care processes assist students to develop career management competencies and successful pathways from school
- develop their curriculum and systems to ensure a focus on identifying and responding to the aspirations, strengths and needs of all students and their families or whānau
- increasingly work with families, whānau and iwi to develop student pathways to education, training and employment
- systematically engage local businesses as well as other community health, social and education agencies to suitably respond to each student's future in education, training and employment
- identify and implement the innovation required to support the pathways and success of priority learners, including the development of academic courses for Māori and Pacific learners.

ERO recommends that the Ministry of Education:

- support secondary schools to develop more responsive school curricula, careers education and pastoral care systems that assist students to develop career management competencies
- ensure that secondary schools, especially those with high proportions of priority learners, focus on working in partnership with their families and other agencies to ensure students have access to high quality social and health services while at secondary school.

Appendix 1: Indicator framework - Responsive Secondary Schooling

| Philosophy | | |
|---|--|---|
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| The school's approach, philosophy or expectations for its senior school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All student pathways are seen as equally important by the leadership and staff (The curriculum is to support ALL students, i.e. not just university pathways) There are processes in place to provide additional support to priority groups i.e. Māori, Pacific, special needs and students at risk of under-achievement The school is focused on all students achieving their potential in line with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Education Goals eg, NEG 1 - The highest standards of achievement, through programmes which enable all students to realise their full potential as individuals, and to develop the values needed to become full members of New Zealand's society; and <i>The New Zealand Curriculum/ Te Marautanga</i> e.g. the school's senior curriculum specifically aims to develop learners in line with the NZC vision and principles i.e. confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners. The principles are evident in the school's senior curriculum, for example high expectations, Treaty of Waitangi, learning to learn, community engagement, coherence, cultural diversity and future focus. | <p>As articulated by its leaders, planning and reporting documents</p> <p>Major curriculum documents</p> <p>Student option booklets</p> |
| School structures and processes | | |
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| Curriculum structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a range of courses in the school that supports a wide range of learners There are good levels of student retention into Year 13 There are high numbers of students achieving at least NCEA level 2 (68 percent is the current national average) The school has a flexible approach to their options, course prerequisites and timetable aimed at supporting a wide range of student individual pathways Students in the senior school understand why they have taken their options and how they relate to their possible futures | Interviews and documents i.e. student handbooks |

| Pastoral systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are strong systems for working with students to build their self awareness, provide options and make decisions that are meaningful to the student’s possible futures – these systems should involve form teachers and deans and possibly careers advisors • Where learners are not well catered for by the school’s courses, there are effective processes in place that support learners to transition to education, employment or training | Pastoral interviews |
|---|---|---|
| Careers guidance and support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has processes in place to identify and respond to the strengths and interests of individual students (e.g. individual mentoring, tutor groups, external careers advice, links to the community) • The school has processes in place to provide additional support to the Career Management Competencies of priority groups i.e. Māori, Pacific, special needs and students at risk of under-achievement | CAs interviews Curriculum documents and Student booklets |
| Junior to senior transitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Years 9 and 10 students have a career education programme that builds their career management competencies, identifies their strengths and interests, and informs their Year 11 course selection • Students and their families are well informed about the relationship between their Year 11 option choices and their future options both at school and when they leave school | |
| Outcomes | | |
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| Outcomes, career competencies and pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All leavers have achieved well at the school (potential) and are going on to future education, employment or training • School leavers remain in education or training until 18 (this includes those who go to other institutions before they turn 18) • ALL students, including Māori, Pacific, students with special needs and students at-risk of under-achievement - have a range of opportunities to develop self-awareness, explore options and make informed decisions. They get this through their experience of the curriculum, high quality goal setting, mentoring relationships and opportunities ‘outside the gate’ • All students (including Māori, Pacific, students with special needs and students at-risk of under-achievement) develop a clear understanding of themselves and the pathways available to them as they progress through the senior school and/or transition from school to employment/training and education | Interviews with students Interview with the careers advisor School data School self review |

| Outside the school gate | | |
|--|--|--|
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| Links to tertiary, business and iwi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The links to the other institutions, businesses and the wider community that help students develop self-awareness and explore opportunities • Partnerships with iwi include benefits for the school's curriculum and support for individual student pathways | |
| Family involvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parents of ALL students are included in processes that help students develop the career competencies and understanding of their future possible pathways • Families understand how they can support their children as they explore options and make decisions | Interview with the careers advisor Interviews with students |
| Leadership and Management | | |
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| Goals and expectation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders lead, initiate and actively support strategies for ALL students to develop positive pathways • Senior leaders actively encourage approaches to curriculum design that reflect principles and requirements of NEGS and The NZC | Interviews with HODs/ BOT |
| Self review | | |
| Context | Indicator | Evidence |
| The analysis and use of data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school records and analyses the leaving destination of all students and this information is used to inform improvements in school curriculum and processes • The analysis includes a focus on Māori, Pacific, students with special needs and students at risk of under-achievement | School-wide data analyses Destination data |

Appendix 2: Schools in this evaluation

Table 1: School type

| School type | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools with Years 11–15 students |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Secondary (Years 7–15) | 14 | 19 | 20 |
| Composite (Years 1–15) | 11 | 15 | 31 |
| Secondary (Years 9–15) | 48 | 65 | 49 |
| Secondary (Years 11–15) | 1 | 1 | <1 |
| Total | 74 | 100 | 100 |

The sample contained fewer Secondary (Years 7–15) and Composite (Years 1–15) schools and more Secondary (Years 9–15) schools compared with national percentages. These differences were statistically significant. NB no Māori-medium schools have been included in this sample.

Table 2: Roll size group

| Roll size group (number of students) | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools with Years 11–15 students |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Very small (1–100) | 4 | 5 | 11 |
| Small (101–400) | 19 | 26 | 32 |
| Medium (401–800) | 16 | 22 | 27 |
| Large (801–1500) | 23 | 31 | 22 |
| Very large (1501+) | 12 | 16 | 8 |
| Total | 74 | 100 | 100 |

The sample contained fewer very small, small and medium sized schools and more large and very large schools compared with national percentages. These differences were statistically significant.

Table 3: Locality

| Locality and population size | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools with Years 11–15 students |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Main urban (30,000+) | 47 | 64 | 60 |
| Secondary urban (10,000–29,999) | 3 | 4 | 8 |
| Minor urban (1000–9999) | 18 | 24 | 18 |
| Rural (1–999) | 6 | 8 | 14 |
| Total | 74 | 100 | 100 |

The sample contained fewer secondary urban and rural schools and more main urban and minor urban schools compared with national percentages. These differences were not statistically significant.

Table 4: School decile group

| Decile group | Number of schools in sample | Percentage of schools in sample | National percentage of schools with Years 11–15 students |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Low (1–3) | 23 | 30 | 33 |
| Medium (4–7) | 27 | 37 | 39 |
| High (8–10) | 24 | 33 | 28 |
| Total | 74 | 100 | 100 |

The sample contained fewer medium decile schools and more high decile schools compared with national percentages. These differences were not statistically significant.

Appendix 3: Self-review questions for schools

THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY

- To what extent is the school focused on ensuring that all students develop successful pathways to further education, training and employment?
- Is careers education a whole-school focus or something that is primarily the responsibility of a careers department?

THE SCHOOL'S STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

- What school-wide initiatives are aimed at supporting priority learners to access the curriculum, develop career management competencies, and establish suitable pathways to further education, training and employment?
- To what extent do the school's curriculum, pastoral and careers systems respond to students who may be at risk of not achieving NCEA Level 2 or of not developing a suitable pathway to further education, training and employment?
- Does the school's curriculum support a range of student pathways? How well are Youth Guarantee and the Vocational Pathways used to support individual student pathways?
- Do all students have someone at school who effectively acts as a mentor and supports them to develop suitable goals, pathways and career management competencies?

OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

- How many of the school's leavers have achieved NCEA Level 2 and above?
- How many leavers go on to further education, training or employment? How well prepared are they? What feedback has the school received about how students are transitioning from school to education, training or employment?

OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL GATE

- What partnerships does the school have to support student learning? What other partnerships could be developed, with businesses and other education providers, to give students as many opportunities as possible?
- What links does the school have with health and social agencies so that support can be accessed for students needing their services?
- How well are families included in processes for understanding and developing student pathways, goals and learning opportunities?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- To what extent has the school's leadership developed a clear vision for staff about how the school's curriculum will respond to the diverse pathways of students?
- How well has the school's leadership used evidence to identify the changes that are needed to improve the responsiveness of the school?

SELF REVIEW

- Has the school drawn on tools such as the Careers Benchmarks to review careers education?
- Has the school analysed its NCEA data and school leaver destinations to determine how they can make improvements for future students?
- How well are the school's structures and processes helping priority learners to achieve the qualifications needed to successfully access future training and employment?

NOTES

SECONDARY SCHOOLS: PATHWAYS FOR FUTURE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

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