



Sharing the mahi

ERO New Schools Operating Model Newsletter | September 2021 | ISSUE #7



The new schools Operating Model

ERO maintains a regular review programme to evaluate and report on the education and care of young people in schools.

Under our new Operating Model, ERO will shift from event-based external reviews to supporting each school in a process of continuous improvement.

This more differentiated approach will use a developmental evaluation that reflects individual schools' context, culture and needs. It aims to strengthen the capability of all schools through embedding a continuous improvement approach, strengthening schools' own engagement with and accountability to whānau.

ERO will become an evaluation partner alongside each school, to support every school to be a great school and every child a success.

What doesn't change is our commitment to putting the child at the heart of everything we do.

Welcome from ERO

Kia ora koutou

In last month's edition, I shared some of the resources that are available in ERO's published series Learning in a Covid-19 World.

This month, ERO has released two new reports that set out how prepared students and schools felt ahead of the current Covid-19 outbreak, and how schools can support their students as they return to the classroom.

While schools have gone above and beyond in supporting students to learn in lockdown, it will come as no surprise that our research shows some students are likely to need additional support when they return to the classroom. For example, we know that not all students were confident about being able to learn from home when we talked to them in June. Our evidence shows NCEA students were least confident, and that lockdown is likely to disproportionately affect Māori and Pacific students.

These reports provide some practical actions that can assist schools to support students in re-engaging with schooling and address any learning loss that may occur as a result of lockdown. You can access these reports on our website:

Primary school resource - [Learning in a Covid-19 World: Supporting Primary School Students as They Return to the Classroom](#)

Secondary school resource - [Learning in a Covid-19 World: Supporting Secondary School Students as They Return to the Classroom](#)



Jane Lee

We hope that school leaders find these new resources helpful in providing additional insights into the impact of lockdown on students and actions that can be taken to support learners. We are looking forward to providing the sector with a further more detailed report in November that captures learnings from this most recent lockdown experience.

Supporting Auckland NCEA students

In August, ERO released a report that looks at how three targeted programmes supported Auckland NCEA students after lockdown in 2020. These programmes included pop-up sites in community venues, online learning, and summer school and were provided by Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu.

In this new report, we look at these programmes and how the learnings from these can inform future responses to crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Read the report on ERO's website here: [Responding to the Covid-19 crisis: Supporting Auckland NCEA students](#)

The report also has a short summary, available here: [Responding to Covid-19: Supporting Auckland NCEA students - Summary](#)

Jane Lee
Deputy Chief Executive
Review and Improvement



Partnership profile

“ERO’s new approach is focused on partnering with the schools, who do the assurance role – which is really important for the Board and the school community – but also collaboratively looking for areas of opportunity and improvement ... the school leadership and Board feeling like it is a partnership to say where those areas of improvement and support are.” [Watch the video here](#)

Pt Chevalier Board Chair Louise Gardiner

Board Assurance process update

ERO is adjusting the way the Board Assurance Statement (BAS) is used in the new evaluation approach. The self-audit process for schools provides assurance that school Boards are taking all reasonable steps to meet regulatory and legislative requirements. A school Board attests that it is meeting requirements through the Board Assurance Statement and this will be publicly reported.

ERO is changing its approach to the Board Assurance Statement for schools coming into the evaluation approach from Term 3 2021. Your Evaluation Partner will discuss this with you. There is no change for schools that have onboarded prior to Term 3.

- As from Term 3 2021, the full self-audit process will be completed in the first six months. This gives your school time to identify and address any areas or to improve practice where necessary.
- A public report will be posted on ERO’s website in due course. It is expected that the first of these reports will be towards the end Term 1 / beginning of Term 2, 2022.
- Your ERO Evaluation Partner is there to help you through this process and to clarify anything that your Board is unsure about. They will also want to verify specific aspects that potentially have a high impact on student safety and wellbeing.
- [More information is available here.](#)

Education Now survey

- Do you want ready-made tools for gathering the views of students, teachers, leaders and your Board?
- Are you interested in what different groups at your school think about student outcomes, teaching, leadership, and more?
- Are you keen to add the voices of your school to a comprehensive look at what’s happening for learners in Aotearoa?

ERO is undertaking a new study called Education Now, and is looking for schools that would like to participate. Your Evaluation Partner may have already talked to you about this.

Participating is easy. Short surveys will be sent to your school for school leaders, teachers, students and Board Chairs to complete. Most surveys take just 10-15 minutes. You will then receive a data pack collating the views from the student and teacher surveys, for use in your school.

ERO will use the information to provide a high-level view of how things are going for students in Aotearoa by drawing together the voices of students, teachers, leaders, Boards, parents and whānau, as well as administrative data plus local and international studies.

This is available to **any school** that would find these tools and data useful. Feel free to share this message with other schools in your community, kāhui ako or professional networks.

If you’re interested in finding out more, email EducationNow@ero.govt.nz

Resources



- **Find out** which schools have joined the new evaluation approach
- **Read** past issues of these Newsletters
- **Watch** Partnership Profile videos
- **Download** and print a Go-To-Guide on the new Operating Model (PDF 268.6 KB)
- **Download** a slide pack on ERO’s new approach to school evaluations for your presentations (PDF 2.1 MB)
- **Read** the School Self Audit and Assurance Statement



Your feedback matters

ERO’s approach will continue to be iterative as all schools are introduced to the new approach.

The feedback from your school and ERO evaluation partner will contribute to the development of the model. Please share your feedback directly with your Evaluation Partner.

For more information on the new schools Operating Model go to ero.govt.nz

New Evaluation Approach FAQs - September 2021

How does ERO work during the different Covid-19 alert levels?

At Alert Level 4 – All our offices remain closed and onsite review work is deferred. We will keep in contact with schools.

At Alert Level 3 – All our offices remain closed, and staff are still working from home. Onsite review work is deferred. If your school is due for a visit or review, ERO will be in touch on a case-by-case basis to check whether working with you digitally is something you would like to do.

At Alert Level 2 – Our offices are open, and we are doing business as close to usual as possible. We aim to continue to work onsite in schools, consistent with the Public Service Commission advice.

(Note, we are aware that there may be some restrictions around Alert Level 2 between Auckland and the rest of the country).

At Alert Level 1 – ERO offices are open, and it is business as usual.

What is the new evaluation approach?

ERO maintains a regular review programme to evaluate and report on the education and care of young people in schools. Under our new approach, ERO will shift from event-based external reviews to supporting each school in a process of continuous improvement.

The new approach aims to complement your school's own internal evaluation, strategic and annual planning and reporting approach, and to strengthen schools' own engagement with and accountability to whānau.

ERO will become an evaluation partner alongside each school, to support every school to be a great school and every child a success.

What doesn't change is our commitment to putting the child at the heart of everything we do.

What role does ERO play in this new approach?

ERO is shifting to a more developmental approach to evaluation, supporting each school's improvement over time.

An ERO evaluation partner will work alongside each school. The evaluation partner will build a professional relationship with each school over time.

ERO's evaluation role will connect with each school's strategic planning and reporting cycle as part of an ongoing improvement journey. ERO is supporting schools to build and sustain high-quality evaluation as part of your planning for improvement focus.

Consideration of a school within its wider network and community is woven throughout the new Operating Model, which will also identify an opportunity to undertake evaluations at a community level.

What is an Evaluation Partner?

An ERO Evaluation Partner is a designated evaluator who will be assigned to work with your school. They bring evaluation expertise and will work through the evaluation process collaboratively with you, responding to your school's unique context.

They will have an ongoing relationship and work with your school over time.

At the completion of an evaluation for improvement phase, your school and ERO will work together to report and plan key actions and next steps in your school's improvement journey.

What is an Evaluation Focus?

The focus for an evaluation is based on what the school knows about itself, its learners/ākonga and its understanding of what matters most. ERO and the school will work together to use the evaluation focus to shape the subsequent evaluation plan. Primary consideration when developing an evaluation focus should be given to equity and excellence in outcomes for all learners, in particular those who are at risk of not achieving or experiencing success.

What is an Evaluation Plan?

This is a bespoke plan designed to address the Evaluation Focus. It includes:

- a clear rationale for the purpose and scope of the evaluation
- how the plan will be actioned, the questions posed and evidence gathered
- how stakeholders will be engaged in the process
- what ERO's involvement in the evaluation will be

What will reporting look like?

ERO's view is that all children and young people should have access to high-quality, effective

education provision. Parents, caregivers, whānau and the community should have access to evaluation information about the quality and effectiveness of that education provision. Schools are encouraged to update their communities as they progress through the new evaluation process and inform them about evaluation findings. In addition, there will be a publicly available online report, on average every three years.

How often will I see my Evaluation Partner, and for how long?

Every evaluation is a bespoke process that responds to a school's individual context. A responsive approach allows ERO to direct more resource into working with schools who would benefit the most. This means the Evaluation Partners will spend varying amounts of time in different schools depending on identified needs.

What is the biggest difference that schools will notice going into Phase 1 (Initiating) of the new approach?

The school will have the opportunity to develop an ongoing evaluation relationship with ERO. During phase 1, initial organisational arrangements are

established and doors opened to engaging with key stakeholders and other participants who may be involved in the evaluation. This phase will lead quite quickly into Phase 2 (Exploring and Focusing).

How and when are schools onboarded?

Schools are being brought into the new approach progressively, starting at the beginning of each Term throughout 2021 and 2022. Each school will receive a letter from ERO during the previous term advising when it is due to join the new approach.

Decisions on when each school is brought into the approach are systematically planned within each ERO region and include factors such as the timing of a school's most recent review and ERO's internal resourcing.

Your feedback matters

ERO's approach will continue to be iterative as all schools are introduced to the new approach.

The feedback from your school and ERO evaluation partner will contribute to the development of the model. Please share your feedback directly with your Evaluation Partner.

Information on our website

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- [Find out](#) which schools have joined the new evaluation approach
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Sharing the mahi: A partnership model

At ERO, we look forward to working with you. We want to ensure that we are effective partners, adding value to each school's improvement journey.

We share an obligation to put the learner at the centre, to equity and excellence in outcomes for all learners, and an understanding that quality education is a right for every New Zealand learner.

We welcome this opportunity to collaborate with you so that together, we can make a positive difference for all learners. We thank you for your commitment to supporting the successful implementation of this new approach.