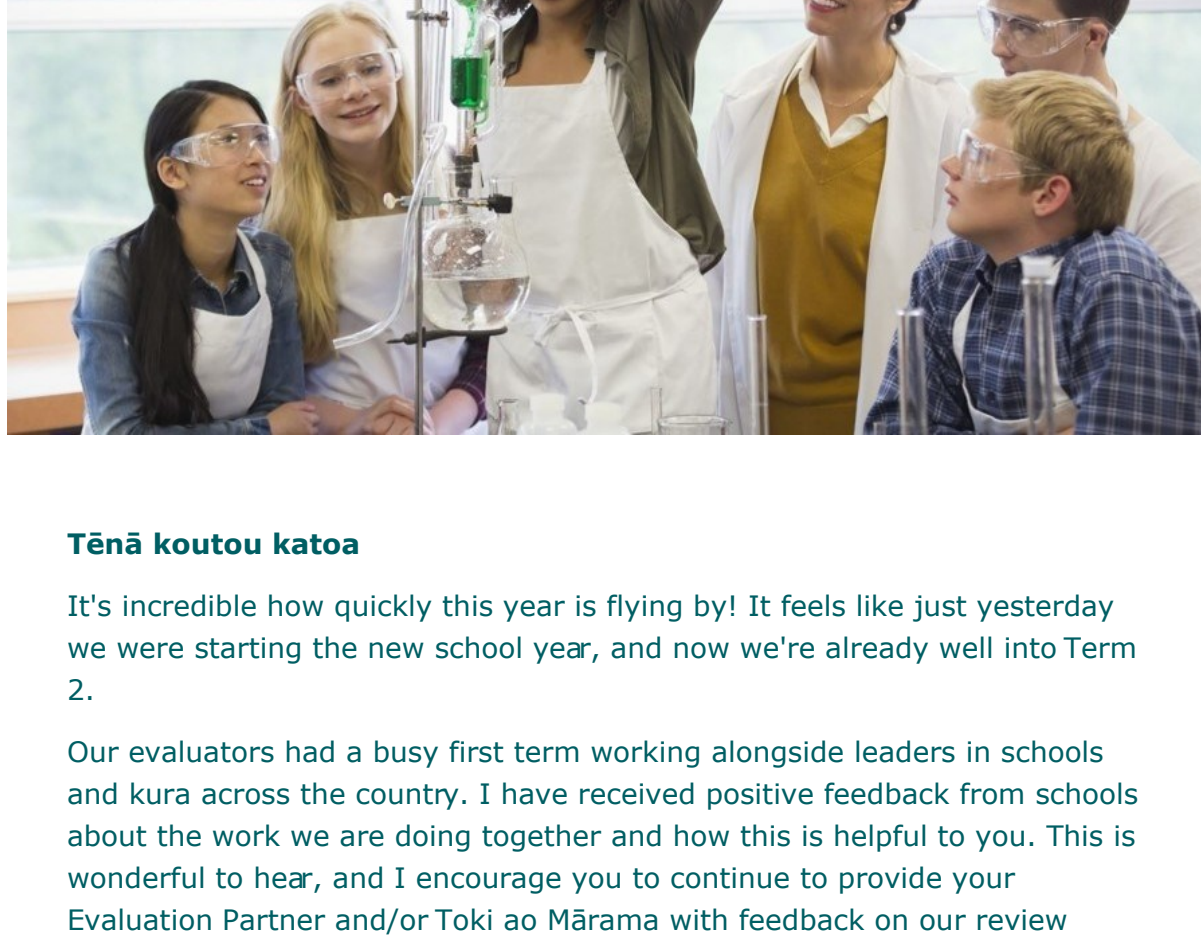




Sharing the mahi

MAY 2025



Tēnā koutou katoa

It's incredible how quickly this year is flying by! It feels like just yesterday we were starting the new school year, and now we're already well into Term 2.

Our evaluators had a busy first term working alongside leaders in schools and kura across the country. I have received positive feedback from schools about the work we are doing together and how this is helpful to you. This is wonderful to hear, and I encourage you to continue to provide your Evaluation Partner and/or Toki ao Mārama with feedback on our review approach and the usefulness of our evaluation tools and resources.

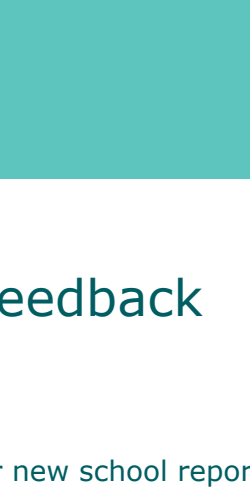
One way to provide feedback to our team is to complete the Post Review Questionnaire (PRQ). When your report is confirmed, we will send you a link for the PRQ. The information you provide in this questionnaire helps us to understand what's working well and where we can improve, so that we are all getting the most out of the review.

In this edition of *Sharing the Mahi*, we look at how we are shaping up our report format for schools that include students in Years 9 to 13. These reports follow the same foundations as the new school report for schools with students in Years 0 to 8 and include additional information about NCEA achievement and future pathways.

Also in this edition, we focus on the Teaching Observation Framework, which is available on our website (the link is in today's newsletter), and unpack how we approach classroom observations alongside you as part of a school review.

If you missed the last edition of *Sharing the Mahi*, all our school newsletters can be found on our [website](#).

I hope you and your team stay healthy and manage to avoid all the winter bugs this season. Best wishes for the rest of the term.



Ngā mihi
Shelley Booyesen
Deputy Chief Executive
Review and Improvement

In this newsletter:

- Our new school reports, your feedback and what's next
- Unpacking the Teaching Observation Framework (TOF)
- How are beginning teachers being supported in schools?
- ERO surveys this term
- Answering your questions

Our new school reports, your feedback and what's next

In the last edition of *Sharing the Mahi*, we outlined our new school reports for schools with students in Years 0-8. A key feature of our new reports is the parent summary that provides information about learner success and wellbeing, attendance, assessment, achievement, and progress.

The first of these new reports are now published on our website. If you'd like to view some of these reports, [go to our website](#) to find the most recently published school reports. Have a look at some of the more recent primary and intermediate school reports – you'll be able to tell if it's one of the new reports by the subheading after the report's date. This should say "School Report".

We continue to seek feedback from school leaders about the new reporting. We are also scheduling focus groups with parents to gather feedback about the report's clarity and usefulness.

This term, we are developing the reporting format for schools that include students in Year 9 and above. These reports will follow a similar format to the reports for primary and intermediate schools, with a parent summary at the top. A point of difference will be the inclusion of learner achievement for students in Years 9 and 10, as well as NCEA achievement and the processes the school has in place to ensure every learner is on a pathway towards qualifications, careers and/or tertiary education.

The next section of the report will provide details about the quality of teaching and learning through the provision of te reo Māori in Rumaki and Reo Rua classroom(s), where applicable.

The report will include findings for the school and provide detail for the school's planning for ongoing improvement, followed by regulatory and legislative requirements, including provision for international students and hostel reporting (if applicable).

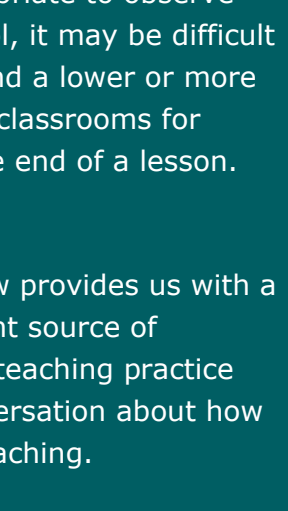
We look forward to sharing the report's format with you later this year.

Parent guide to our reports

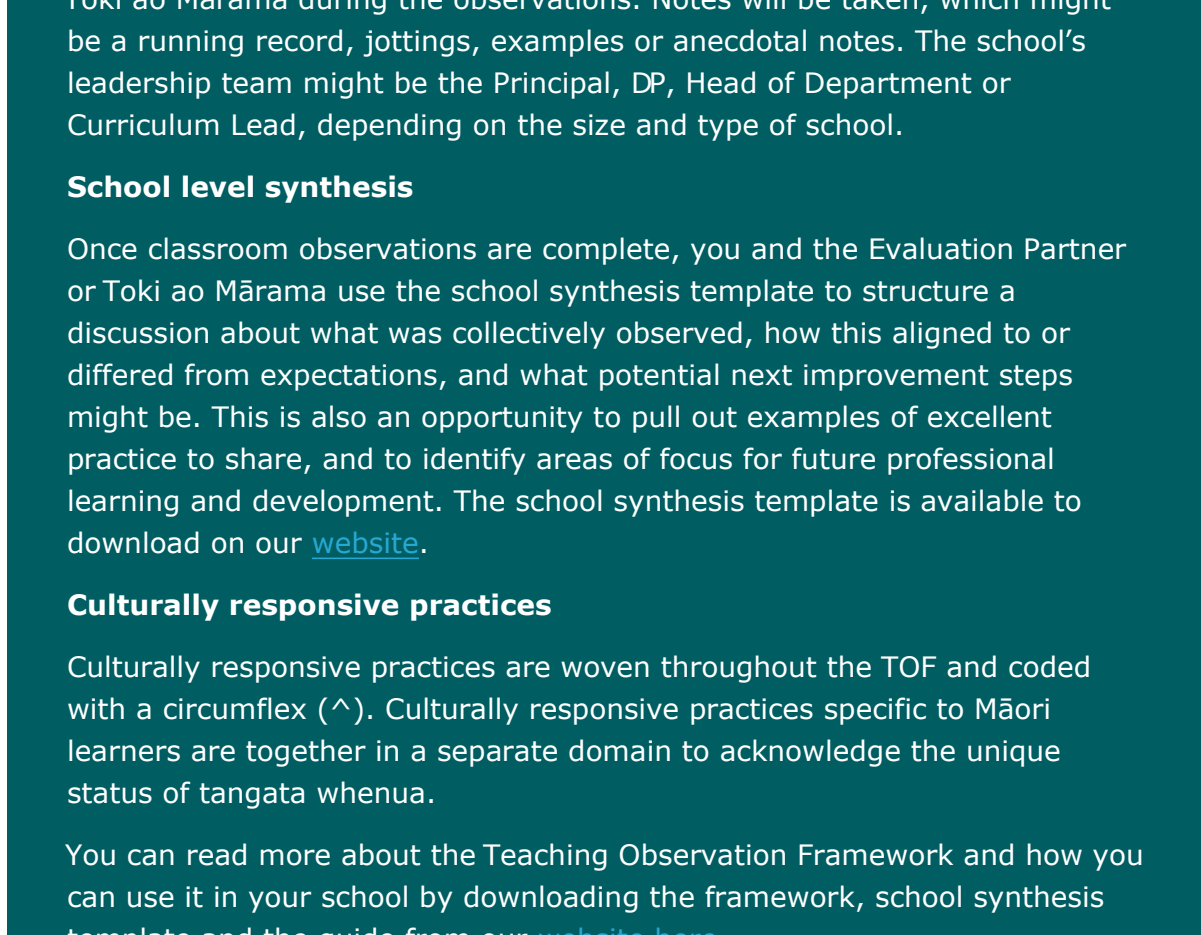
Our [Guide to ERO's School Reports](#) can be found on our website and is a useful resource for parents and whānau to better understand our reports and key findings.

Feedback on the new school reports

We are keen to hear your thoughts on our new school reports. When your confirmed report is sent to you, you will find a link to a quick survey seeking your views about the report's usefulness to you.



Unpacking the Teaching Observation Framework (TOF)



Effective teaching practice is key to learner engagement, achievement and progress. We have developed a [Teaching Observation Framework \(TOF\)](#) for use by you and our Evaluation Partners and Toki ao Mārama to help identify effective teaching practices and/or make improvements where necessary.

We trialed the TOF with a group of schools in 2024 and have been using it as part of all school evaluations since the beginning of this year. Feedback so far has been largely positive, with school leaders finding the tool useful to understand more about their school's teaching practices. We have continued to refine the TOF following sector feedback.

How you can use the TOF in your self-evaluation

You can use the TOF as part of your own evaluation activities to help identify effective teaching practices and/or make improvements where necessary.

How we'll use the TOF as part of a school evaluation

Our Evaluation Partners and Toki ao Mārama use the TOF with you as part of the review process to make judgements about where your school sits in the Teaching and Learning domain of the [School Improvement Framework \(SIF\)](#). This also means that our SIF judgements for this domain will be consistent across the motu.

Classroom observations

Planning

When we plan the onsite part of a school evaluation, we will discuss with you an appropriate sample of teaching observations that represent a range of teaching practices. We aim to observe approximately 10 per cent of teaching staff, however this will vary depending on school size, type, and context. For example, in small schools it might be appropriate to observe teaching practice in all classrooms. In a very large school, it may be difficult to observe 10 per cent of staff during the time onsite, and a lower or more targeted sample may be negotiated. We aim to observe classrooms for approximately 30 minutes, at either the beginning or the end of a lesson.

Point-in-time teaching observations

It's important to acknowledge that this part of the review provides us with a sample of brief teaching observations. While an important source of evidence, it remains a limited point-in-time snapshot of teaching practice and observations need to be framed within a wider conversation about how senior leaders know about and improve the quality of teaching.

Pre-observation discussion

Prior to any observations, we will discuss your school's teaching and learning programmes, internal teaching observation tools and evidence, recent PLD foci, and what you expect to see in classrooms during observations.

Observation and note taking

A member of the school's leadership team will join the Evaluation Partner or Toki ao Mārama during the observations. Notes will be taken, which might be a running record, jottings, examples or anecdotal notes. The school's leadership team might be the Principal, DP, Head of Department or Curriculum Lead, depending on the size and type of school.

School level synthesis

Once classroom observations are complete, you and the Evaluation Partner or Toki ao Mārama use the school synthesis template to structure a discussion about what was collectively observed, how this aligned to or differed from expectations, and what potential next improvement steps might be. This is also an opportunity to pull out examples of excellent practice to share, and to identify areas of focus for future professional learning and development. The school synthesis template is available to download on our [website](#).

Culturally responsive practices

Culturally responsive practices are woven throughout the TOF and coded with a circumflex (^). Culturally responsive practices specific to Māori learners are together in a separate domain to acknowledge the unique status of tangata whenua.

You can read more about the Teaching Observation Framework and how you can use it in your school by downloading the framework, school synthesis template and the guide from our [website here](#).

We are keen to hear from schools that have used the TOF about its usefulness. Please provide your feedback to the Evaluation Partner or Toki ao Mārama.

Questions about the TOF?

If you have any questions about how to effectively use the TOF in your self-evaluation or want to know more about how we'll use the tool as part of your next school review, please contact the Evaluation Partner or Toki ao Mārama.

How are beginning teachers being supported in schools?

Last year, ERO published a [report](#) that looked at how well prepared and supported new teachers are in schools. To achieve our shared goal of improved learner achievement, it's important that Provisionally Certified Teachers (PCTs) feel supported and have access to all the tools and resources they need to be great teachers.

Beginning this term, during the school review process, we will be asking you, some of your PCTs and mentor teachers, some questions about what's working well and what additional support may be needed.

We appreciate your feedback and insights on this topic. The collective findings from these discussions will inform a useful system-wide picture of PCT support in Aotearoa New Zealand and will be shared with the Minister of Education.

ERO surveys this term

This term we are surveying schools about two national review projects. We are looking at how the rollout of the revised English and maths curriculum is going for schools, and also looking at what works well for schools to improve students' attendance. We encourage you to complete the quick surveys.

Links to the surveys for leaders, teachers, students, and parents will have been emailed directly to your school, but if you can't find them, email us at teihuwaka@ero.govt.nz.

Quick links to the surveys for principals are here:

[Leader survey on improving attendance](#)

[Leader survey on English \(Yr 0-6\) and Maths \(Yr 0-8\) curriculum rollout](#)

These projects are different from, and complement, the Ministry of Education's check-ins about curriculum and attendance.

You can read about ERO's ongoing national reviews on our evidence website: [ERO Evidence and Insights - Questions we are answering](#) or contact our Evaluation Centre directly at teihuwaka@ero.govt.nz.

Answering your questions

We welcome questions and feedback on our reviews and evaluation tools from schools and representative groups. Here, we share the questions we have been asked recently:

What are the plans for the future of ERO reviews and reports?

Te Ara Huarau remains our approach to reviews of English-medium state and state integrated schools. We have developed tools and resources to support evaluation activities, including the [School Improvement Framework \(SIF\)](#) and the [Teaching Observation Framework \(TOF\)](#). We have also recently developed fit for purpose evaluation tools for schools with Rumaki and Reo Rua. We look forward to sharing this with you soon.

We introduced our new school report for schools with learners in Years 0-8 in Term 4 last year. This new school report is designed to be more parent-friendly, so parents and whānau can have the information they need to be active partners in their children's learning.

While we develop the new school report format for schools that include learners in Years 9-13, we continue to produce School Evaluation Reports. We expect to introduce schools to this new reporting later this year.

Why do the new reports use terms such as small majority, large majority, almost all?

When we developed our new school reports, we were focused on using plain language and simple terminology, so that parents and whānau could easily understand our findings.

The terms: almost all, most, large majority, small majority, less than half and less than a third are described here in our [Guide to ERO's School Reports](#).

How is ERO reducing the evaluation preparation required by school leaders?

We have made some changes to reduce the amount of time school leaders need to spend preparing for an evaluation.

We no longer ask schools to supply, in advance, up to three pieces of evidence for each domain of the [School Improvement Framework \(SIF\)](#), and the [Board Assurance Statement \(BAS\)](#) has been refined and shortened. It is more sharply focused on what matters most for learners, including health, safety and wellbeing, attendance, progress and achievement.

The content of the BAS is now more closely aligned to the information that we seek to verify as part of the evaluation process. Additionally, there are also fewer items on the Self-Audit Checklist, with Boards no longer needing to attest to finance or asset management items.

If you have feedback for us on other ways you think we can reduce the preparation required by school leaders, please let us know.

How does ERO make its School Improvement Framework judgements?

School leaders look at a range of evidence to determine where on the SIF their school currently sits. Schools will be asked to consider their evidence and use the SIF to reflect on and consider their practice across domains; make judgements about where their school is at currently; and identify next improvement steps. This helps schools to make sure they are in the best possible position to help every student reach their full potential.

ERO will then work with the school's SIF judgements and supporting evidence, validating and verifying the evidence the school has provided as part of the external evaluation cycle.

We focus initially on the key domains that make the greatest different for improvement:

- Learner outcomes
- Teaching and learning
- Curriculum
- Leadership

We find that most schools know themselves well, and through their own processes can successfully place themselves on the SIF continuum.

Of course, there will be some challenging conversations, where evidence is examined, and questions are asked. Often the evaluation team and the school will agree to alter the SIF positioning during an evaluation.

We strongly encourage you to be very involved in the evaluation process. You should ask Evaluation Partners and Toki ao Mārama questions about why they are doing what they're doing, and what they're seeing emerge, and what else they need throughout the process. The joint team should create plenty of space in the programme for regular conversations about what is emerging.

Feedback

We invite feedback on our way of working through the Post Review Questionnaire, our Evaluation Partners and Toki ao Mārama. We welcome feedback and suggestions on how we can ensure that our school evaluations are having the greatest impact on learner success.