



Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): ERO's work programme: The impact of Covid-19

Date	14 October 2021
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M21-105
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
Associate Minister of Education	<p>It is recommended that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Note that ERO's review programme has been significantly impacted by the continuing lockdowns in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. b) Note that ERO will continue to provide you with regular updates on progress towards the tentative year end targets in this paper. c) Agree that the Education Review Office release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you. 	



Attachments:

Education Review Office (ERO):



Comments:

Minister's Office to complete

Noted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to:	
Date signed by Minister:	



Our Ref: M21-105

14 October 2021

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

ERO's work programme: The impact of Covid-19

Purpose

1. The purpose of this briefing is to provide you with an early update of the impacts of the Covid-19 lockdowns on ERO's ability to progress its workplan.
2. The recent lockdowns across New Zealand in August and those continuing in the north of the North Island have greatly impacted our ability to work with schools and early learning services. While we have been able to work with some schools remotely, that has been the exception.

The work programme for Review and Improvement Services

3. *Schools*

- 3.1 The implementation of the school approach is going to extend the time taken to bring the remaining schools into the new Schools: Evaluation for Improvement model. Our current plan is to initiate all schools into the model by June 2023, a delay of two terms. This is primarily due to the situation that exists in the upper half of the North Island. The limiting factor remains the readiness/ability of schools to engage in discussion with us.

4. *Early Learning Services*

- 4.1 At this stage, and dependent our ability to return to reviews across the central north Island, Auckland, and Northland we are aiming to review between 950-1150 early learning services for across the 2021/22 period. This reduction places us somewhere between 10 and 14 percent behind in respect of our multiyear review cycle.
- 4.2 When we are able to get back into services we will look to schedule our programme around the risk profile that we see for services, and try and explore how we might achieve greater efficiencies in our review approach. Key priorities for our review work through the end of this financial year includes:
 - a) New services.
 - b) Services that ERO has not visited for some time.
 - c) Services who have previously had a record of non-compliance with operating requirements.

Māori review, research and evaluation

5. The work programme for Te Uepū ā Motu and Te Pou Mataaho (*reviews, evaluations and research*) has continued, using a range of remote options to gather evaluation insights. This work will contribute to our system evaluation and research work.
6. Our numbers across kura, wharekura, kōhanga, puna and immersion settings will decrease significantly, not the least because the parts of the country most impacted by the lockdowns are where the majority of our kura and kōhanga are located. Our review staff are located in Hamilton. We are keeping in touch with centres to understand the impact and at this stage, expect a decrease of a third in the reviews completed.
7. We continue to work alongside peak bodies to ensure where we are able to gather real time information about what is happening in kura and kōhanga, wellbeing and leaning, we will continue to do so.
8. We will continue to update you every two months with further details of where we expect to be at year end together with any relevant information from our contacts with schools/kura and centres.

National Research & Evaluation Programme

9. Our inability to work in schools and early learning services is also impacting our National research and evaluation (R&E) work programme. Key areas of concern here include our work in respect of understanding the factors affecting student attendance, the development of our Pacific Bilingual quality framework and the collection of school self-assessment through the Education Now suite of tool. At the same time, we are continuing to look at the issues relating to the impact of COVID-19's disruption on learning. This work includes a specific focus on impacts for Pacific learners which complements He Iho Ruruku our programme exploring the experiences of Māori learners.
10. We will provide you with subsequent advice in respect of a proposed redesign and rescheduling of our national R&E programme.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that you:
 - a) **Note** that ERO's review programme has been significantly impacted by the continuing lockdowns in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - b) **Note** that ERO will continue to provide you with regular updates on progress towards the tentative year end targets in this paper.

Noted

Noted

c) **Agree** that the Education Review Office release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you. **Agreed** **Disagreed**



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED/APPROVED



Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

18/10 / 2021