

Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): ERO Research Programme and Upcoming Publications

Date	10 November 2020
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M20-38
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
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**Associate
Minister of
Education**

It is recommended that you:

- note** the ERO research and evaluation work programme
- note** that the report Covid-19: Impacts on Education is planned for publication in early December 2020 and the summary findings
- note** that this briefing is recommended for proactive release.
- agree** to forward a copy of this report and attached appendix 1 and appendix 2 to the Minister for Education



Attachments:

***Education Review Office (ERO):
ERO Research Programme and
Upcoming Publications***



Comments:

Minister's Office to complete

Noted

Seen

Approved

Referred to:

Date signed by Minister:

Our Ref: M20-38

10 November 2020

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

ERO Research Programme and Upcoming Publications

Purpose

1. This briefing sets out the key pieces of research and evaluation work underway in ERO to support your education priorities. In particular it highlights the upcoming planned publication of our *Covid-19: Impacts on Education* report.

Background

2. ERO is your eyes and ears on the ground. We use this information and other research to tell you what is happening at a system level and advise you which programmes and initiatives are making the biggest difference to learning outcomes. We work closely with, but are independent from, agencies that set policies, funding and standards. This enables us to provide you with assurance about the quality of education.
3. In the *Briefing to the Incoming Minister* we identified building the evidence base on effective education policies, practices and programmes as a key priority for ERO. Te Ihuwaka (the Education Evaluation Centre) has been established within ERO to strengthen our ability to provide evidence to inform decision makers and promote quality teaching practices. In response to Government's review of Tomorrow's Schools, we are making two significant shifts within our research and evaluation work programme:
 - a. A stronger ability to evaluate at a system (rather than individual school) level.
 - b. A greater focus on where our evidence can make the most difference, for example for priority learners.
4. To support your priorities you can ask Te Ihuwaka to look at the performance of any element of the early years and school system, evaluate the effectiveness of any initiatives or programmes in these sectors, or shine a light on any aspect of teaching practices.
5. Te Ihuwaka is one part of the broader research, evaluation and insights work across education agencies. ERO is playing a leading role in increasing co-ordination and joint working on research and evaluation. We are currently putting a formal partnership in place with New Zealand Centre for Education Research (NZCER) and lead the cross-agency group developing a Research and Evaluation Strategy for the education sector. We will provide you with a separate briefing on the draft Strategy.

Research and Evaluation Work Programme

6. We are resetting our work programme to reflect our increased focus on system level evaluation and areas where we can make the biggest difference. In addition to the work set out in Table 1, we are also scoping work to support Ka Hikitia (Government's Māori education strategy); the Pacific Education Strategy; the Early Learning Action Plan; and curriculum and assessment reform.
7. We look forward to discussing with you how our work programme can further support your priorities going forward.

TABLE 1: Te Ihuwaka Work Programme

Questions we are asking	Work underway
1. Supporting System Performance	
<i>What impact have education reforms had in improving system performance?</i>	We are building a baseline of data that will enable you to assess the impact of education reforms on the performance of the education system overtime.
<i>How do we strengthen the teaching of science (early years – year 10)?</i>	We have identified strategies and good practice examples that can support schools and services to strengthen their teaching of science – these will be published in Term 1 in 2021.
<i>How do we strengthen teaching of te reo Māori?</i>	Our previous reports have identified the need for clear guidance about what effective teaching of te reo Māori in English medium looks like. We are developing this. Alongside this we are also monitoring progress on Tau Mai Te Reo (Government's Māori language strategy for the education sector).
2. Focusing on Priority Learners	
<i>How well does the system deliver education outcomes for children in Oranga Tamariki residential care?</i>	We are undertaking an in-depth evaluation of the education provided in these residential settings, the outcomes it achieves and the education experiences of these highly vulnerable children and young people. This evaluation report is due for publication in April 2021.
3. Initiatives – building our understanding of what works	
<i>How does access to counselling in primary schools support learners' outcomes?</i>	We have an ongoing work programme looking at effective initiatives to support student wellbeing, as part of this we are evaluating the impact of the counselling for primary school students pilot that starts in Term 2 next year.
<i>What works in supporting senior secondary students post lockdown/disruptions?</i>	We are undertaking rapid work to evaluate the impact of the additional support from Te Kura put in place for Auckland NCEA students following the Auckland lockdown. This will inform responses to future lockdowns or similarly significant disruptions.

What is the effect of cohort entry on students, whānau and teachers?	We will be working with schools who have adopted cohort entry to understand why they have chosen cohort entry and what impacts it has had.
4. Promoting Good Practice	
What does an education Community of Practice look like and how does it work?	We have an ongoing work programme on learning networks. As part of this, we have worked alongside the Kahukura Community of Practice in Christchurch to capture the key elements of their model of learning networks as an example to other schools. We will publish the report late this year or early 2021. Results from this study have already been shared with the schools concerned.

8. This work programme builds on our previous national evaluations work. Appendix 1 sets out the reports we have published over the last year.

Upcoming Publication: Covid-19

9. Our next major publication is *Covid-19: Impacts on Education*. ERO is supporting the ongoing response by government agencies, schools and early learning services through providing a complete picture of:
- What the impact of Covid-19 has been on students, teachers, schools and early learning services.
 - How early learning services and schools responded to the Covid-19 crisis and what lessons can be learned.
 - The challenges remaining going forward.
10. The work has been fast tracked to inform real-time decisions by policy makers and teachers. We published two interim reports in June and August. The final report draws on extensive evidence, in English medium education this includes:
- Survey responses from more than 10,000 students, 1,800 school principals and 700 teachers.
 - In-depth interviews with 580 schools and 400 early learning services.
 - Nine focus groups across the country with students, parents and teachers.
11. The draft findings of this work are set out in the attached slides (Appendix 2). The findings show that:
- The sector is strongly positive about the support they have received to date from the Ministry of Education and Government more broadly.
 - Significant action and innovation has occurred in services and schools to support students and whānau.
 - Wellbeing, engagement and learning challenges remain, particularly in senior secondary (appearing to be more acute now than under lockdown).
12. In the Māori education sector, ERO's specialist Māori medium evaluation and review team, Te Uepū ā Motu, has gathered Covid-19 insights alongside Māori medium partners, Kōhanga reo, Puna reo, Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori, Ngā Kura-ā-lwi and Ngā Kura Motuhake.
13. Looking to next year principals have also highlighted re-engaging senior secondary students as one of their key challenges and they are working closely with the Ministry of

Education on that. To support principals, accompanying the Covid-19 report we will publish a summary of evidence-based strategies for re-engagement.

Next Steps

14. We will provide you with a complete briefing and final Covid-19 report on 19 November and intend to publish the report on 3 December. Services and schools have told us that they are very keen to see the report before the end of the school year to enable it to inform their planning for 2021.
15. We look forward to discussing with you how our work programme can further support your priorities going forward.

Recommendations

16. It is recommended that you:

- a) **note** the ERO research and evaluation work programme **noted**
- b) **note** that the report *Covid-19: Impacts on Education* is planned for publication in early December 2020 and the summary findings. **noted**
- c) **note** that this briefing is recommended for proactive release. **noted**
- d) **agree** to forward a copy of this report and attached appendix 1 and appendix 2 to the Minister for Education **agree/disagree**



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED



Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

20, 11, 20