



Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): *The Schools Operating Model: ERO's approach for 2022*

Date	18 February 2022
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M22-5
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> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Note that ERO has engaged in a consultation process with the sector to inform its approach to reviewing schools in 2022.Note that ERO is responding to feedback received and is iteratively improving the school operating model as a result. In addition to taking on learnings from our roll out phase these changes also reflect the realities we face in 2021 in terms of persistent challenges in our system having been compounded by the disruptions to learning caused by COVID.Note that ERO is exclusively using the gifted name 'Te Ara Huarau' from the beginning of 2022.Note that the approach in 2022 has been streamlined to three phases.Note that changes have been made to how we provide our evaluation findings to parents, the community and to schools.Note that ERO is working with the Ministry in a joint pilot to ensure appropriate, tailored coordinated supports are made available to schools where the evaluation identifies significant needs in a school that are unable to be sourced through internal resources.Note that this briefing be pro-actively released once it has been considered by you.	



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Briefing report



***Education Review Office (ERO):
The Schools Operating Model:
ERO's approach for 2022***



Comments:

Minister's Office to complete

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



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

NATIONAL OFFICE
LEVEL 1, 101 LAMBTON QUAY
PO BOX 2799
WELLINGTON 6140
SX10166
T 0-4-499 2489
F 0-4-499 2482
info@ero.govt.nz
www.ero.govt.nz

Our Ref: M22-5

Date: 18 February 2022

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

The Schools Operating Model: ERO's approach for 2022.

Purpose

1. To update you on progress in the implementation of ERO's School Operating Model across all English medium state funded and state integrated schools.
2. To confirm the emphasis EROs will be applying in its approach to school reviews for 2022.

Background

3. This briefing updates the following ERO briefings:

M20-14 Proposed New Operating Model for School Reviews (June 2020)

M20-37 Proposed Operating Model for School Reviews (November 2020)

M21-16 Update on the implementation of the Schools Operating Model across all schools (March 2021)

M21-67 Toward a new approach to public reporting – update (July 2021)

M21-26 Turnaround Schools Evaluation – High Priority Schools Programme (July 2021)

4. ERO's strives to ensure that every school and kura is a great place to learn, has excellent teaching and contributes to the success and wellbeing of every learner.
5. The significant change made to how ERO reviews through the introduction of the new schools operating model aims to have a direct impact on the overall quality and performance of New Zealand schools. At the centre of the approach is shifting our system to one which is driven by the pursuit of continuous improvement and lifting outcomes for learners, particularly for those at risk of failing.

6. Whilst we continue to adapt and modify our approach, what doesn't change is EROs commitment to:
 - Placing the child at the heart of all that we do.
 - An unrelenting focus on equity and excellence, particularly for those groups or individuals underserved by the education system.
 - Holding schools to account where there is significant poor performance.
7. Following extensive research, consultation with the sector, feedback and evaluation of a pilot, the new school operating model was introduced at the beginning of 2021, rolling out for all eligible schools over a two-year period (2021 and 2022).
8. During our first year of implementation, we received valuable feedback from sector reference groups, all schools involved, our own evaluators and external evaluations. We are building on what we have learnt, making improvements and modifications to strengthen the School Operating Model for our approach in 2022. We expect to continue to refine and develop the model over time as ERO and the sector learn about its effectiveness in fulfilling our core function of promoting continuous improvement in the quality of education in New Zealand for all.
9. These are big shifts and involve a substantial upskilling of ERO's workforce and a recalibration of the way we work with the sector.
10. Although our work programme was disrupted by COVID-19, by the end of 2021 we had onboarded almost 1100 schools out of 2400 into the new model. We now estimate that we will have included all schools into this approach by early 2023, much of this will occur through this year.

Approach for 2022 - Te Ara Huarau

11. ERO has been gifted the name of 'Te Ara Huarau' for the school operating model, and it will be used exclusively from the beginning of 2022.
12. Te Ara Huarau is underpinned by the *Treaty of Waitangi*. It works to achieve equity and excellence by engaging in culturally and contextually responsive, participatory and collaborative evaluation for improvement. It aligns with the values and concepts of *He Taura Here Tangata – our Māori Strategy*.
13. Strong evaluation at every level in the system is critical to a system that is committed to learning and one that continually strives to do better.
14. ERO's external evaluation cycle supports accountability and improvement to the quality of school conditions, learning opportunities and outcomes for all students.
15. Research shows that both external and internal accountability are important to achieving equity and excellence within a school system.

2022 Contexts

16. As a system there are some concerning signs. Generally, our performance has stagnated as a nation, if not fallen in critical learning areas such as literacy, mathematics and science. There remain significant inequalities in outcomes achieved, particularly for Māori and Pacific learner and those from poorer backgrounds. A stark indicator of this gap can be seen in the NMSSA data at Year 8. In this research there is a 35-percentage point difference between the proportion of learners from affluent and poorer

backgrounds who are at or above the expected curriculum levels in Mathematics (e.g., 59% compared with 23%). Worryingly, this gap continues over time. The disruption from COVID has exacerbated these concerns and inequities in our system, and over the next year or two places an even greater onus on schools and teachers to address these challenges.

17. In tackling these concerns schools and teachers need to be able to better respond to the diversity of needs that they face within their classrooms, and have the systems, skills and strategies that support acceleration for those that are struggling while at the same time extend the most capable. ERO's assessment suggest that we need to see stronger use of evidence-based teaching, learning and assessment approaches and a stronger capacity among teachers to adapt their teaching practices to the individual needs of their learners. Ensuring a strong focus on learner wellbeing and getting it right with respect to foundation skills must be a priority.
18. The refinements to ERO's approach aim to ensure that we place our effort where it is most needed and that we are very deliberate in supporting the sector to address the concerns described here.
19. Through our approach schools and their communities are being supported to engage in an ongoing process of internal evaluation, planning and action focused on lifting the quality of teaching and learning for tamariki.
20. Te Ara Huarau further strengthens the developmental approach to supporting improvement over time. The integration of ERO's external evaluation together with the internal evaluation of the school, positions school leaders as the key agents for change. Te Ara Huarau focusses on building the school's own ability to develop a sound strategic direction and embed evaluation cycles which focus on the impacts that a school is having in lifting its performance in an ongoing way.
21. The approach increases support for the development of professional and collective responsibility for continuous improvement through providing evaluation capacity building opportunities. Evaluation partners will support schools to access or develop evaluation tools for their own evaluative activities and support them in interpreting findings. Where required evaluation partners will also facilitate school planning activity in support of identifying the key strategic initiatives required to take the school forward.
22. Modifications made to strengthen the approach for 2022 provide ERO with clarity of process and greater differentiation in resource deployment. It will enable us to manage the frequency and nature of engagement with individual schools fostering a stronger internal evaluation culture and a lighter touch on well performing schools, allowing us to work more intensely with those that are struggling.

Three key stages in our approach

23. The approach in 2022 has been streamlined to three phases:
 - Evaluation for improvement.
 - Planning for improvement.
 - Implementing for improvement.
24. The *Evaluation for Improvement* phase commences by gathering evidence into the quality of learner outcomes and of the school conditions. Using these findings evaluation partners determine the nature of future engagement that they will have with the school. These decisions are based on the maturity level, conditions and performance of the

school, and may result in confirming the direction that the school is taking or in establishing a school improvement team to undertake further diagnostic evaluation aimed at unpacking those areas which warrant further attention.

25. For those schools where stronger support is required, Evaluation Partners will work with schools in interpreting evaluation findings and assist them in understanding the implications of these to take the school forward. This *Planning for Improvement* phase involves identifying key priorities for action and ensuring that the schools' efforts are focused on evidence based and evidence informed strategies which take the school forward. Underpinned by a strong theory change, Evaluation Partners will work with the school's Improvement team to ensure that improvement actions are appropriately scoped, stair-cased and resourced, that key milestones are clearly identified, and support Improvement teams in identifying potential external expertise or support. Where there exists substantial need for external supports evaluation partners will work alongside the Ministry of Education to identify these and the Ministry may equally become part of the school's improvement team. This approach with the Ministry is currently being piloted in the Auckland region.
26. Underpinning this work will be the role Evaluation Partners play in ensuring the evidence for and efficacy of particular strategies and change initiatives, and in supporting the identification of systems to monitor and measure improvement.
27. ERO's role in *Implementing for Improvement*. Where Evaluation Partners continue their engagement with schools in the *Implementation* phase, ERO's role is to ensure that the improvement focus and resulting impacts are realised. This engagement will also assist in triggering subsequent stages in the roll out of a change or turn around programme where the school is involved in a significant rebuild in terms of its capability and the underlying conditions that contribute to equity and excellence. Evaluation Partners engagement involves checking in on progress and consulting on mid-course adjustments and problem solving in respect of potential barriers to implementation.

Reporting

28. EROs evaluation reports provide public evaluative information to parents, whānau and communities about the quality and effectiveness of their school.
29. As Te Ara Huarau is being rolled out, an initial, one-off *profile report* for each school will be published on our website within six months of schools being on boarded. Once Te Ara Huarau is fully implemented, ERO will report every three years for every school. Some schools may receive additional internal reports on their progress in response to their context and the pathway they are following.
30. ERO will publish a Board Attestation report for all schools to provide information to parents and the community about the school's compliance with its legislative responsibilities. If a school has a hostel and/or international students, we will publish reports for these areas at that time.

Measuring our Impacts

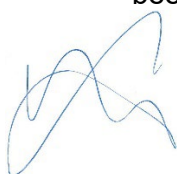
31. Part of the refinement to the way we work with school in 2022 will be to establish up front a baseline measure in relation to the outcomes the school is achieving and the underlying conditions that operate in the school. This assessment will occur in partnership between ERO and the school's leadership or improvement team. Over time we expect to be able to monitor shifts in the performance of school we are working with in relation to these measures. The measures employed reflect current evidence in

respect to what good schools do. This approach is very similar to our approach in the Turn Around School initiative which we have previously shared with you (M21-26 *Turnaround Schools Evaluation – High Priority Schools Programme*).

Recommendations

32. It is recommended that you:

- a) **Note** that ERO has engaged in a consultation process with the sector to inform its approach to reviewing schools in 2022. **Noted**
- b) **Note** that ERO is responding to feedback received and is iteratively improving the school operating model as a result. In addition to taking on learnings from our roll out phase these changes also reflect the realities we face in 2021 in terms of persistent challenges in our system having been compounded by the disruptions to learning caused by COVID. **Noted**
- c) **Note** that ERO is exclusively using the gifted name 'Te Ara Huarau' from the beginning of 2022. **Noted**
- d) **Note** that the approach in 2022 has been streamlined to three phases. **Noted**
- e) **Note** that changes have been made to how we provide our evaluation findings to parents, the community and to schools. **Noted**
- f) **Note** that ERO is working with the Ministry in a joint pilot to ensure appropriate, tailored coordinated supports are made available to schools where the evaluation identifies significant needs in a school that are unable to be sourced through internal resources. **Noted**
- g) **Agree** that this briefing be pro-actively released once it has been considered by you. **Agree** **Disagree**



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive/ Chief Review Officer

NOTED/APPROVED



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

18/02 /2022