



Briefing for the Incoming Minister

Maramarua / February 2023



Ihirangi

Table of Contents

He kupu whakatakī An introduction.....	1
Part 1: Ngā wero nui kei mua i te aroaro o te rāngai mātauranga	
The key challenges facing our education system	3
Education is critical to our future success	3
Delivering on the government’s reform agenda	4
Priorities	5
Part 2: E ara nā Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga kia tautoko ai	
How ERO supports you	12
ERO’s role.....	13
Our people	14
Conclusion.....	12
References	16

He kupu whakatakī | An introduction

Welcome to your role as Minister with responsibility for the Education Review Office | Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga (ERO). We are here to help, and to support you in your role.

A world class inclusive public education system is critical to achieving the government's vision that New Zealand is the best place in the world for children and young people.

ERO helps the government achieve this by reviewing and reporting on the performance of early learning services, kura, kōhanga reo, puna reo, immersion settings, and schools. Our ambition in doing this is to drive equity and excellence in outcomes for all learners. Our approach is driven by our whakataukī, Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa – The Child – the Heart of the Matter.

Your government is currently delivering on an ambitious reform agenda – our role is to make sure you can trust that your investment and reforms are delivering outcomes for New Zealand learners. Your reforms and work programme focused on lifting outcomes, the refresh of the curriculum and NCEA, lifting the quality of teaching and leadership in the system, and improving literacy and numeracy are supported by our independent evidence and assessments as being critical to our learners, including those of diverse backgrounds and needs.

This will be an exciting year in working in the education sector, with a number of your government's priorities due to be implemented or further progressed. These include the Highest Needs Review, pay parity in the ECE sector, the new school planning and reporting regime, the attendance strategy, and the Mahi Karauna (The Crown's Strategy for Māori Language Revitalisation).

As you continue to deliver on a tightened agenda in line with the Prime Minister's expectations, ERO is an independent voice that can provide intelligence, a sense check and evidence base against which to test and track your policy initiatives and let you know what is providing you with benefits proportionate to the time, energy and money you are investing as Minister.

At our core we are an evidence centre in terms of system insights, performance insights and growing and translating evidence to inform practice, and when in conversations with you, the Ministry of Education, and other education system partners, we can provide advice to you that is informative and constructive.

As Minister, you can also ask the Chief Review Officer to initiate a review into any element of the early childhood and school sectors, and we will keep you informed where urgent support is needed in the course of our work. This complements our work at a system level, where we investigate areas that are of national interest and importance in delivering improved educational outcomes.

In this coming year, ERO will also become the host to the Independent Children's Monitor (ICM). While the ICM will be an independent Government Department and ERO will provide it with back office corporate services, there are huge potential synergies in terms of a shared focus in our joint commitment to successful outcomes for vulnerable and at-risk children and young people, our focus on system wide review and performance, and the development of highly specialist skills in evaluation, research and system monitoring.

We look forward to working with you, discussing our findings and insights and how you might use these to promote a stronger, more equitable system.

This briefing is structured in two parts

Part 1: Ngā wero nui kei mua i te aroaro o te rāngai mātauranga

The key challenges facing our education system.

This section provides an assessment of system strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Part 2: E ara nā Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga kia tautoko ai

How About ERO supports you.

This section provides an overview of who we are and how we support you.

Part 1: Ngā wero nui kei mua i te aroaro o te rāngai mātauranga

The key challenges facing our education system

Education is critical to our future success

Quality education that meets the changing needs of all New Zealanders is critical to our future success – economically, socially and culturally. As Minister, you will shape the future of our education system to deliver this.

Higher education levels are linked to higher incomes, better health and wellbeing, higher rates of prosocial engagement and behaviours.¹²³ Education also supports New Zealanders to be more productive and more innovative.⁴ Consequently, education is one of the single most important policy contributors to breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty and disenfranchisement.

As the key review agency in the New Zealand education system, our work with services and schools and at a national level enables us to make assessments as to the state of the system, where it is succeeding for our learners, and where improvements are needed.

This briefing outlines the challenges we see, how we can support your agenda and the changes your government has identified as needed.

Based on ERO's research, evaluations and on-the-ground intelligence, we know many schools and early learning services (ELS) do a good job and most children thrive. However, our regular reporting shows there is significant room to lift educational outcomes for many.

Even within New Zealand's good early learning services and schools, the government has acknowledged that the system can be improved to do better in delivering the outcomes we expect for every learner.

Our work suggests that there continue to be significant challenges to overcome. Our insights, and programme of work can act as a significant asset for the government in identifying the blockages or challenges that are hindering progress, shining a light on areas for intervention and in showcasing what works.

Delivering on the government's reform agenda

Your government has embarked on an ambitious multi-year policy programme in recognition that our education system is failing to deliver on expectations. This programme recognises and prioritises an agenda for education that focuses on changes that aim to lift learner outcomes across multiple fronts.

The 2023/24 period are significant in terms of sector implementation to progress this reform agenda. Key initiatives that will be implemented or substantially progressed through this period include:

- the curriculum refresh
- implementation of the Literacy & Communications and Maths Strategy
- embedding the Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories curriculum
- NCEA reform programme
- changes in school planning and reporting
- Attendance and Engagement Strategy and the pursuit by schools across the country to address attendance concerns and reach set attendance targets
- delivery of the Early Learning Action Plan, changes to the Equity Index, ECE Tranche 2 Regulations Review decisions, network planning and Pay Parity across early learning services
- Gazetting Te Whāriki
- strengthening leadership and teaching quality
- continued delivery on Ka Hikitia
- extending Te reo Māori provision and quality in line with government's Maihi Karauna commitments
- implementation of the High Needs Review and changes to the Learning Support and delivery model
- progress on the Action Plan for Pacific Education
- government's response to the recommendation of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into abuse in care of faith-based organisations
- the extension of the Ministry of Education's regional support systems provided through Te Mahau.

ERO's reviews and evaluations have shown that key to achieving these reforms is providing clarity and direction in the outcomes we are pursuing, strengthening leadership, teaching and support systems, reforming curriculum and assessment to better clarify what is taught and how it is taught, and supporting changes within the Ministry of Education. As a system, ERO's assessment is we need to strengthen our ability to implement and embed changes. This is doubly challenging given the continuing impacts of COVID-19.⁵

In the coming year, ERO will support you and the sector as you work to embed these reforms through our established system role as an independent, trusted voice. During the formulation, implementation and evaluation of many of these initiatives, ERO's role has been to ensure that as

Minister you can have confidence that these significant budget investments and system changes are having the impact you want to see for learners. Our voice provides evidence-based assessments so you can be alerted to challenges in delivery and make the changes necessary to maintain the momentum of the reform agenda.

Our scope and knowledge can also support you in identifying and being alerted to new challenges. The breadth and depth of our work means we have a presence across the country, with strong relationships with the sector and peak bodies. We are equally working in Early Learning Services and schools on a daily basis. Alongside the Ministry of Education, we will be able to provide you with information as you need it in your day-to-day engagement with our communities, media, or Parliament.

Priorities

The Prime Minister has signalled to Ministers a need to consolidate and prioritise their work programmes for the 2023 year, while also acknowledging pressures facing New Zealand that the government needs to address. From ERO's perspective, while there are many challenges and opportunities facing our system, to see the shifts your government has identified as priorities, we have identified for your consideration areas which we would advise will require immediate and concerted focus through this coming year:

1. Lifting outcomes in literacy and numeracy;
2. Providing better supports, programmes and interventions to reengage disengaged and disengaging learners;
3. Lifting the quality of early learning provision, particularly in poorer communities;
4. Better supporting the aspirations of tangata whenua and Māori learners as Treaty Partners.

These focus areas build off existing work programmes and require collective effort across education agencies and beyond to achieve change. At the heart of effecting change in each of these priority areas is maintaining clarity with the sector about what is required and ensuring strong and effective support for implementation that is tailored to the contexts and needs of different schools and early learning services. Our actions as government are most effective when based on an understanding of what works for both different types of learners and contexts combined, and our investment is focused on those practices, initiatives and programmes that evidence and insights show have the greatest impact.

1. Ensuring a priority is given to, and that there are more deliberate approaches in the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy outcomes are a critical concern for us as a nation. Your government has prioritised this area, recognising both literacy and numeracy are foundational to accessing the wider curriculum and to long term success.

Prior to COVID-19, ERO was already reporting decreased outcomes in literacy and numeracy. In particular, junior learners are well behind where they should be, with a significant drop in literacy and numeracy performance between years 4 and 8.⁶ For some learners these patterns have been further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, particularly for learners who have missed out on learning at key milestones in their development. While small in size, the NCEA co-requisite pilots in 2022 reinforce these concerns at years 9 through 11.

ERO's work with schools has provided us with useful insights in addressing these concerns. These include boosting literacy programmes across schools (better start literacy, ALL/ALiM, structured literacy programmes) and focused teacher capability building, including coaching and the option of collective teaching teams with regular observation and feedback from peers.

As we continue to be present within schools, it continues to be pressed on ERO as representatives of the government that our schools and teachers need greater support with resources, guidance and professional development to fully take advantage of the New Zealand Curriculum. While there are competing demands from multiple curriculum areas as a system, we would suggest that for a period these two areas of the curriculum become central priorities across early learning, primary and secondary sectors.

A priority in this is strengthening the emphasis on oral language development for those in early learning. Critical here is teachers understanding the progress of learners through strengthened assessment and adapting their practise on the basis of measured impacts. Equally important is supporting schools, and classroom teachers with strategies and programmes, including high quality small group tuition, to address the needs of learners who might be falling behind. Strengthening the New Zealand evidence base on effective practice will also be key.

As the government continues to deliver on its literacy and numeracy work programme, we are ready to support you and the Ministry in the implementation of the strategy to ensure that you can have confidence in how governments programme is leading to change on the ground. ERO will be working with schools and providers to understand their current performance against your expectations and to support schools on a case-by-case basis with a roadmap to improvement.

2. Providing better supports, programmes and interventions to reengage disengaged and disengaging learners

It has been recognised that currently too many learners are lost from our system. The consequences are that these individuals fail to fulfil their potential and are often drawn into destructive and anti-social activities, resulting in wider harm to the community and themselves. These outcomes are often the result of both family factors and failure at school.

Alienated learners

In a recent report into the performance of Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu or Te Kura (New Zealand's correspondence school) ERO highlighted that the school had over 2000 alienated learners on its roll.⁷ These learners typically had been excluded from their local school or had faded out of the system through increasing truancy or transience, and local solutions were either not available or unprepared to take on these enrolments. We identified that their academic results were generally poor and that Te Kura on its own was not well placed as an education provider for this group of students. Currently 9.8% or 31,000 young people aged 15 to 19 years are not in education, training or employment (NEET).⁸ Contributing to this number, over recent years we have also seen increasing numbers of students leaving school early with no or few NCEA credits. Māori young people are disproportionately represented in these statistics.

Falling attendance

ERO data has also contributed to the wider national spotlight on the high rates of absenteeism in our system.⁹ School absence has a direct impact on learning outcomes. As a system and nation this is a critical issue warranting urgent attention. We have lower attendance than other countries and alarmingly attendance is falling. The drop has been steepest for Māori and Pacific learners. Alongside action to improve understanding and awareness of the importance of attending school regularly, special attention is required in responding to learners with persistent and chronic school absence.

The disruption caused by COVID-19 over the last three years has worsened attendance and ERO is particularly concerned about the extent to which learners have missed critical milestones in their learning, such as establishing strong reading or numeracy foundations. While ERO is supporting schools to focus on and understand their attendance, more is required.

Learners most at risk

ERO has a strong focus on those most at risk of disengaging. Our assessment of education provision for some children and young people in the Care and Protection or Youth Justice systems, found that education provision was of mixed quality, and that we lacked a national oversight, models of practice or support wrapped around learners as they moved through the system. We found that current models of provision are likely to be ill-suited to changes in the care and protection and youth justice systems, and that responses need to be more localised to the communities that these learners are living in. ERO is working with other agencies to support urgent improvements in education for these learners. Many learners most at risk of disengaging are in Alternative Education. We are currently reviewing the quality of education they receive and how it could be strengthened.

Across all areas of disengagement, the evidence shows us that effective early interventions – early in the life course and early in the identification of the problem – have the biggest impact and the greatest return for investment. ERO is supporting schools to tackle disengagement through better addressing learning needs across the full spectrum of needs, identifying problems early, and using evidence-based interventions. ERO would suggest that given the current trends, this area be a critical part of your government’s work programme.

3. Lifting the quality of early learning provision, particularly in poorer communities

Substantial increases in investment have been made in recent years in the early learning sector. High quality early childhood education has the promise of establishing a strong platform for later success in schooling and longer term. In particular, the first 1000 days of a child’s life are critical to forming long term patterns in terms of health, social and educational outcomes.

ERO’s reviews in this sector indicate that the quality of provision is mixed. Many services struggle to meet their minimum regulatory requirements and equally services are struggling to provide the quality of education which the evidence suggests leads to the development and learning outcomes that we desire from this system. In poorer communities the benefits of high-quality provision are at their greatest, but quality of provision is often lower.

The Government’s Early Learning Action Plan establishes a road map to address these issues, including raising the quality of teaching. ERO is placing a deliberate focus on service improvement and requiring services to establish and deliver on a quality improvement plan. This is guided by resources we have developed for the sector which provide a road map for improvement. More however needs to be done. ERO sees a need for stronger obligations on services in terms of meeting quality expectations and better supports to assist them to do so.

4. Better supporting the aspirations of tangata whenua and Māori learners as Treaty Partners

Māori learners need an education system that better responds to their needs and aspirations. While many Māori learners experience success in education, we know that there is more that we can do to ensure better outcomes for all Māori learners.¹⁰ We know poorer outcomes occur early in our system and are progressively compounded through the learning journey. Our Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations also include ensuring Māori taonga (identity, language and culture) and self-determination is respected and upheld.

ERO continues to learn more as to why some Māori learners thrive within our education system while others are left behind. ERO has found that achieving long-term, sustained success for all Māori learners requires reshaping of our system on multiple fronts. These include removing structural barriers; ensuring high expectations for Māori success at a system, school and classroom level; ensuring access to high quality teaching, and teaching strategies and programmes which accelerate Māori learner outcomes, ensuring culturally appropriate teaching practices that affirms and builds on language, culture and identity.

The requirement on schools, introduced in 2020 (Education and Training Act section 127), to ensure a greater demonstrable commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi provides a strong platform for these changes. This requirement requires schools and their leadership to actively engage with whānau, hapū and iwi in those decisions that impact their children's learning and ensures that parents and whānau are active partners.

Schools are also required to take all reasonable steps to make instruction available in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori. ERO can support you in your commitment to have more te reo teachers and continue to integrate te reo Māori into schools.

During the 2023 year, ERO will be rolling out a new programme of review aimed extending and strengthening the quality of Te reo Māori teaching in English medium school settings.

Equally, Te Te Tiriti o Waitangi places obligations on the system to support and foster self-determination. This is most significantly expressed through the work of the Māori-medium education sector. The Māori-medium and Kaupapa Māori sector often provides strong foundations for how English medium can innovate to better deliver for Māori.

The shifts described here will require our system to work more closely with and be guided by iwi, hapu and whānau; that more Māori work within the system and that as a system, practitioners are more culturally aware and responsive to the needs of all Māori learners. Ultimately it will require quality teaching for every learner.

ERO has a strong reputation for working with schools, whānau, hapu and iwi to focus outcomes for Māori learners. Our approach in Māori medium, Kaupapa Māori and English medium settings acknowledges the importance of working by, with, for, and in te reo Māori as appropriate. ERO's key changes through 2023/24.

ERO's new operating model for improved outcomes in education

ERO is changing how we work so that we can better support you in delivering on your priorities.

We are making seven key changes:

1. Embedding our approach to driving improved school performance
2. Driving up quality and tackling performance in early childhood education services
3. Shining a light on the performance system, and growing the evidence base to drive this
4. Relentlessly focusing on equitable, responsive, and culturally relevant outcomes for Māori and Pacific learners
5. Strengthening effective teaching and leadership
6. Contributing to the growth of fluent speakers of Te Reo Māori
7. Standing up the Independent Children's Monitor.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss with you our current work programme and other areas that you would like to see as part of our undertakings in the coming year.

1. Embedding our approach to driving improved school performance in attendance, wellbeing for learning, literacy, and numeracy

To drive improvement ERO has changed how we engage with English-medium state and state integrated schools. Previously our engagement provided limited snapshots (or “event-based” reviews) of schools every 3-4 years and schools and communities have been clear that ERO needed to change to an ongoing relationship working alongside schools to support continuous improvement.

We are now in the second year of implementing this model, Te Ara Huarau. This model is designed to be able to adapt to meet the needs of changing contexts and challenges, and appreciate individual schools' context, culture and needs. Through an evaluation lens, we assist schools to identify areas for improvement and support their strategic planning and actions to achieve change.

As part of our work to support school improvement, we are developing new tools for education services to evaluate how well they are delivering on the National Education and Learning Priorities. These tools are being designed to empower education services to track their progress against the government's educational priorities for our children and young people. This includes supporting education providers in improving student wellbeing and engagement, reducing bullying, and developing policies, resources and programmes that create an inclusive culture free of discrimination, bullying, racism, and violence.

2. Driving up quality and tackling performance in early childhood education services

To tackle poor and mediocre performance in early childhood education, ERO has developed a new indicators framework underpinned by robust research about what constitutes quality early learning provision. This provides a clear, common statement of what good quality looks like to support early childhood leaders and teachers. These indicators underpin our new approach to reviews which is differentiated, dependent on the organisation or service's length of operation, quality and performance history. It encourages and supports services to establish a quality improvement plan.

In order to maximise our impact in the sector, ERO has also introduced a new approach to evaluating organisations that have oversight of 20 or more early learning services. In this approach ERO works with those responsible for governance, management, and support for their services to drive improvement.

These reviews focus on what the organisation leaders know about their services' performance and communities and what steps are being taken to improve teaching, learning and maintain health and

safety practices. ERO visits a sample of services within the organisation to verify and validate what the organisation knows about the quality of learning, curriculum and the provision for the physical and emotional safety of the children. ERO visits these larger organisations more frequently to evaluate progress and improvement.

Recent changes brought in through the Education and Training Act also allow ERO to take a more active role in the review of home-based early learning services.

3. Shining a light on the performance system and growing the evidence base

ERO is investing in building our ability to provide robust insights into the performance of the education system, evidence on what works and for who, and translating evidence to inform practice.

Te Ihuwaka (the Education Evaluation Centre) was established in 2020 within ERO to draw on the insights from our work in schools and services, alongside broader research and identify the strengths and weaknesses in our system, effective programmes and innovative practice. It provides a stronger evidence base to inform the decisions of policy makers and leaders, and most importantly promote quality teaching practices. In the past year, it has provided in-depth evaluations on a range of areas including the drivers of falling attendance, the quality of education for disabled learners, and the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 (on students, principals and teachers).

Te Pou Mataaho (ERO's Māori research and Evaluation function) conducts research and evaluation to support Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori. It uses our research and data in this area to inform Māori immersion, and high population Māori education environments. Our strong relationships and kaupapa Māori approach enable research that upholds the tikanga and integrity of a Māori learning environment.

ERO is in a privileged position to often be invited as a preferred research and evaluation partner by Māori-medium providers to undertake research within the Māori-medium system; an acknowledgement of the strong partnerships ERO has worked to uphold within the Māori education sector. Te Pou Mataaho research in the last year has focused on kaiawhina teacher aides in Māori-medium, Te Reo in English-medium, conditions for success in Māori-medium for te Reo Māori to thrive, and literacy and numeracy in Māori-medium.

Together ERO's research and evaluations in English and Māori Medium/Kaupapa Māori sectors can provide you with real-time insights into the delivery and impact of your reforms and initiatives and also emerging innovative practices and approaches.

Te Ihuwaka and Te Pou Mataaho also use their research to highlight opportunities for practitioners to improve their own practice, with clear recommendations that are implementable by peak bodies, services and schools. They provide targeted guides and webinars and are a key part of ERO's increased focus on supporting schools to improve.

4a. Relentlessly focusing on equitable, responsive, and culturally relevant outcomes for Māori learners

As a Treaty partner, ERO remains committed to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supporting the education system to become a place that delivers consistently, responsively and equitably for Māori. ERO is currently implementing our Māori Strategy, *He Taura Here Tangata* that supports the aspiration of Ka Hikitia, Tau Mai Te Reo and the Education and Training Act 2020 to improve outcomes for Māori learners. This work acknowledges and reaffirms that ERO, as a Treaty Partner, is committed to improving its own capability and focus on driving improvement in outcomes for Māori learners.

Over recent years, ERO has worked closely with the Associate Minister of Education (Māori) to provide insights into how well education provision is delivering on the needs and aspirations of Māori. Our work in this space has shown that the Māori-medium and Kaupapa Māori education sector has demonstrated great success at providing an education system where tamariki Māori can

succeed as Māori.⁹ ERO will continue to support Māori-medium education services to be even better by working to strengthen the pathways from kōhanga reo to kura kaupapa or kura reo rua.

4b. Relentlessly focusing on equitable, responsive, and culturally relevant outcomes for Pacific learners

Our Pacific learners are a growing population that face many challenges. In working closely with the previous Associate Minister for Education (Pacific), ERO has been focusing on raising outcomes for Pacific learners, contributing to the government’s Action Plan for Pacific Education. Our Pacific Strategy¹¹ outlines how we will support improvement to Pacific students’ outcomes here in New Zealand and also the contribution ERO can make to strengthen the education systems of our Pacific regional neighbours. ERO is implementing new approaches and support for Pacific bilingual and immersion programmes. Through 2023, ERO will continue to grow our support for the Pacific region, including completing a review of education provision in Samoa, and providing ongoing support to Tokelau, Cook Islands and Niue.

5. Strengthening effective teaching and leadership

ERO is investing in growing leadership across the schooling sector through our Leadership Partners Programme. This programme identifies talented leaders in the sector and invests in building their understanding of evaluation.

It also enables us to have a strong dialogue and “real world” test for the work of ERO.

Through this programme ERO can support you to build capability across the sector for continuous improvement. It promotes peer-to-peer support from principals and builds ERO’s knowledge base around what is working and current educational programmes, strategies, and theories. It strengthens ERO’s ability to inform you about what is happening for learners across the sector.

6. Contributing to the growth of fluent speakers of Te Reo Māori

As part of the Government’s initiative, Māori Language Education Funding, ERO has been tasked to evaluate, research, monitor and support English-medium schools as they contribute to delivering quality te reo Māori opportunities for all learners.¹² We are privileged to be part of this important mahi to support the Government Strategy for Māori Language Revitalisation — Maihi Karauna. We developed a te reo Māori Quality Framework for schools to support self-assessment and planning progression of te reo Māori over time. Poutama Reo was trialled throughout 2022 and will be rolled out in 2023 across all English-medium schools.

We will continue to work with schools to develop a collaborative delivery approach.

We continue to capture experiences in the revitalisation of te reo Māori, leadership within learning, quality teaching and learning, whānau, and Mana Motuhake Māori. In these system wide reports in Māori-medium we follow the developmental journey of individuals, whānau and education settings to reflect what conditions provide te reo Māori to thrive.

7. Standing up the Independent Children’s Monitor

In this coming year, ERO will become the host to the Independent Children’s Monitor (ICM). While the ICM will be an independent Government Department and ERO will provide it with back office corporate services, there are huge potential synergies in terms of a shared focus in our joint commitment to successful outcomes for vulnerable and at-risk children and young people, our focus on system wide review and performance, and the development of highly specialist skills in evaluation, research and system monitoring. There has been a briefing prepared for the incoming Minister with responsibility for the Monitor.

Conclusion

ERO looks forward to supporting you through its roles as an independent reviewer of the quality of provision, a source of real time on-the-ground information, and as a provider of in-depth evaluations of system performance and the effectiveness of initiatives.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this briefing with you and to provide more detail in regard to those areas where you would like to seek further detail.

Part 2: E ara nā Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga kia tautoko ai How ERO supports you

ERO's role

Our independent insights into the quality of education provision at both service provider and system level is one of the keystones to ensuring New Zealanders can have confidence in the integrity and delivery of education.

Our aim is to be a trusted partner in supporting equitable and excellent outcomes for all learners

At provider level - We carry out impartial and objective review and evaluation that aims to inform and facilitate continuous improvements in Māori-medium, English-medium and Pacific-medium contexts. Through review and evaluation, we identify issues and opportunities that can deliver improvement in: kura; schools; early learning services; kōhanga reo and puna kōhungahunga.

At a system level – We are your strategic leader with an enduring commitment to shining a light on critical issues as well as workable solutions aimed at improving education outcomes. We do this by building a knowledge base (through research and evaluation) and translating this knowledge for the sector, education practitioners, boards, and management of services.

We support you by providing assistance and advice on:

- kura; schools; early learning services; kōhanga reo and puna kōhungahunga that are doing well; and those at risk of underperforming, along with advice on appropriate interventions
- system performance and key issues based on an in-depth picture gained from our daily work in kura; schools; early learning services; kōhanga reo and puna kōhungahunga, and the international evidence base
- raising performance in early learning, school and kura through evaluation tools and shining a light on best practice
- the performance of system-level education programmes, initiatives and reforms, advice which is grounded in our evidence base.

Our people

We have 211 staff. Most of our staff are in our seven regional offices working with schools and services throughout New Zealand. In addition, we have a small national office based in Wellington.

ERO's work is spread across five business units:

- Review and Improvement Services
- Te Ihuwaka (Education Evaluation Centre)
- Te Tāhū Whare (Evaluation and Review Māori)
- Methodology and Professional Practice, and
- Corporate Services.

Chief Executive and Chief Review Officer



Chief Executive and Chief Review Officer Nicolas Pole

ERO's Chief Executive and Chief Review Officer has been in this position for just over five years.

He originally trained as a teacher and has had an extensive career working in a range of Government research, policy and operational roles in education and welfare both in New Zealand and across the Tasman.

The Executive Director of ERO's Methodology and Professional Practice team also reports directly to Nicholas. This team develops the evaluation tools and frameworks for ERO's reviews and oversees professional development

Review and Improvement Services



Deputy Chief Executive Jane Lee (Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, and Waitaha)

Each year, our evaluation partners and review officers, who have extensive sector backgrounds, undertake external evaluations in early learning services and schools.

Our approach with schools has moved from 'a one-off event' every three years to an evaluation partner having a long-term relationship with individual schools.

We are present on the ground across New Zealand and can provide you with real time, independent information on both how the system is performing and if your priorities are being met.



Deputy Chief Executive Ruth Shinoda

Te Ihuwaka evaluates the performance of the education system and will be able to provide you with information on the effectiveness of programmes and interventions; and shine a light on good practice.

Te Ihuwaka draws on research from here and abroad to build a stronger evidence base to better support decision makers such as yourself at all levels of our system including leaders and teachers.

Te Tāhū Whare



**Deputy Chief Executive Lynda Pura-Watson
(Ngāti Kahungunu, Naga Tahi, Ngai Tūhoe)**

Reviews in Māori-medium settings are led by our dedicated Māori immersion review team, Te Uepū ā-Motu. In the case of kura and wharekura, ERO's methodologies reflect the distinctive philosophies and approaches in Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori, and Ngā Kura ā Iwi. These approaches have been developed with these respective groups and are considered world-leading in indigenous education.

Te Pou Mataaho conducts evaluation and research and develops evaluation methodology for Māori- medium settings.

As a whole, Te Tāhū Whare can inform you on Māori-medium education delivery and outcomes from a local to national level and provide you with evidence as to what makes the most effective change for Māori in these settings.

Corporate Services



Deputy Chief Executive Jeremy France

The Corporate Services team play a direct role in our ability to support you. Corporate Services is home to our legal, Official Information Act, communications, and other functions that we use to support your office to uphold your legal obligations and public engagement.

The Corporate Services team also ensures our staff have access to the tools and infrastructure needed to achieve ERO's functions and your expectations of us as a government agency.

With the passing of the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Act 2022, Corporate Services has an additional responsibility in preparing ERO to onboard and host the Independent Children's Monitor as a departmental agency, in line with your government's policy agenda.

References

¹ OECD (2017). *Educational opportunity for all: Overcoming inequality throughout the life course*. OECD Publishing: Paris. Retrieved from: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264287457-en>

² The Economist Intelligence Unit (2018). *Worldwide educating for the future index 2018: Building tomorrow's global citizens*. Retrieved from: <https://educatingforthefuture.economist.com/EIUYidanPrizeEducatingFortheFuture2018WP.pdf>

³ UNESCO (2016). *UNESCO strategy on education for health and well-being: contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246453>

⁴ Ministry of Education (2022). <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/dashboards-and-infographics/dashboards/post-compulsory-education-and-training#>

⁵ Education Review Office (2022). ERO intelligence on the impact of Covid-19 in early learning services, schools, and kura in August 2022. <https://ero.govt.nz/sites/default/files/media-documents/2022-10/M22-51%20signed%20ERO%20Covid%20intelligence%20in%20ELS%2C%20schools%20and%20kura.pdf>

⁶ [Achievement in English – NMSSA 2019](https://nmssa-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/2019_NMSSA_ENGLISH_SUM.pdf). National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (2019). *Achievement in English*. https://nmssa-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/2019_NMSSA_ENGLISH_SUM.pdf

[Achievement in mathematics and statistics – NMSSA 2018](https://nmssa-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/2018_NMSSA_MATHEMATICS_SUM.pdf); National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (2018). *Achievement in mathematics and statistics*. https://nmssa-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/2018_NMSSA_MATHEMATICS_SUM.pdf

[Learning in a Covid-19 World: The impact of Covid-19 on Schools – ERO report 2021](https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/learning-in-a-covid-19-world-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-schools) Education Review Office (2021). *Learning in a Covid-19 world: The impact of Covid-19 on schools*. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/learning-in-a-covid-19-world-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-schools>

[Results of First Assessment: 2022 Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau | Literacy and Numeracy Pilot – Ministry of Education 2022](http://ncea.education.govt.nz/results-first-assessment-2022-te-reo-matatini-me-te-pangarau-literacy-and-numeracy-pilot) Ministry of Education. (2022). *Results of first assessment: 2022 Te Reo matatini me te pāngarau | literacy and numeracy pilot*. NCEA Education. <http://ncea.education.govt.nz/results-first-assessment-2022-te-reo-matatini-me-te-pangarau-literacy-and-numeracy-pilot>

⁷ Education Review Office (2021) Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu Education Review Report November 2021. <https://ero.govt.nz/institution/498/te-aho-o-te-kura-pounamu>

⁸ As reported by MBIE. [Labour Market statistics snapshot – September 2022 \(mbie.govt.nz\)](https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/25540-labour-market-statistics-snapshot-september-2022)
<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/25540-labour-market-statistics-snapshot-september-2022>

⁹ Missing Out: Why Aren't Our Children Going to School?" report November 2022; Education Review Office (2022). *Missing Out: Why aren't our children going to school?* <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/missing-out-why-arent-our-children-going-to-school>

¹⁰ Education Review Office (2021). Te Kura Huanui: The treasures of successful pathways. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/te-kura-huanui-the-treasures-of-successful-pathways>

¹¹ Education Review Office. (2019). ERO'S Pacific strategy: Driving success for Pacific learners – 2019-2022. <https://ero.govt.nz/about-us/our-strategies/pacific-strategy-2019-2022>

¹² Kura Huanui: The treasures of successful pathways. Education Review Office (2021). Te Kura Huanui: The treasures of successful pathways. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/te-kura-huanui-the-treasures-of-successful-pathways>

Tamata Huaroa: Te Reo Māori in English medium schooling. Education Review Office (2020). Te Tāmata Huaroa: Te reo Māori in English-medium schooling. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/te-tamata-huaroa-te-reo-maori-in-english-medium-schooling>

Nihinihi Whenua: Valuing te reo Māori. Education Review Office (2022). Nihinihi Whenua – Valuing te reo Māori: Student and whānau aspirations. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/nihinihi-whenua>
Poutama Reo. Education Review Office (2022). Poutama Reo: The improvement journey – Te reo Māori in English-medium schools. <https://ero.govt.nz/sites/default/files/media-documents/2022-09/Poutama%20Reo%20ERO%2021%20September%202022.pdf>