

4 September 2007

## **To the Parents and Community of Western Springs College**

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Western Springs College**.

Western Springs College has an inclusive philosophy of education, it celebrates difference and it promotes a strong sense of community. Student achievement has significantly improved since the 2004 ERO report. The board and senior managers have addressed the areas for improvement from the previous ERO report, and ongoing development of the college is evident. Since that time the school has continued to experience considerable roll growth and trustees have put in place an enrolment zone.

Year 11 to 13 student achievement in the National Certificates of Educational Achievement has continued to improve in the last three years with some outstanding NCEA results in both 2005 and 2006. The very high achievement of Māori students in Nga Puna o Waiorea is also particularly significant. Students' academic achievement is very closely monitored throughout the year with targeted support and extension strategies provided for nominated students. Staff are further enhancing the data gathering and monitoring of Year 9 and 10 student achievement. Students' holistic development is fostered, particularly in the arts and the increased sporting opportunities since the 2004 ERO review.

The young men and women of Western Springs College are open, confident, articulate and proud of their school. Staff encourage students to become self-reliant and to engage positively in learning. Student surveys help inform developments for them such as the recent increase in senior leadership opportunities.

Positive relationships between students and teachers underpin the school's good teaching practice and effective learning. High expectations are maintained for students' learning and achievement and teachers give generously of their time to support this learning and achievement. Some very good teaching practice was observed by ERO. Senior managers have identified the need to continue to develop teaching methods as part of their ongoing improvement in the provision for students. Staff are highly collegial and receive good professional development opportunities resourced by the board.

A shared leadership approach, modelled by the principal, characterises the management of the school at all staff levels and in all parts of the school. Various systems are in place to support professional conversations amongst staff about teaching and learning. Research, both internal and external, and reflection are being used to nurture the quality of practice. Senior managers and staff are responsive to this research and to other forms of self-review.

The board is culturally representative and inclusive. Trustees have a good range of complementary skills as board members. They ask searching questions and use data well to inform their decision-making. Through the charter and forward planning, the board provides clear direction for the college. While trustees face extraordinary site issues, they have continued with renovations and the addition of key buildings such as the performing arts centre and the social sciences block since the 2004 ERO review.

The school community is very diverse, both socio-economically and ethnically. It is an increasingly involved and very supportive community of the college, providing a range of parent and whānau support groups. Celebration of the success of students and the college is the focus for parents and the community.

This report evaluates the impact of student support systems on improving student progress and achievement. It also comments on student achievement overall, Māori and Pacific student achievement, provision for international students, pandemic planning and on aspects of adult and community education. In addition, the report evaluates how well the board meets legislative requirements to support students' safety. This report finds many areas of good performance and a small number of areas for development. It concludes with a recommendation that has the potential to further enhance understanding about student achievement at Western Springs College for Years 9 and 10.

### **Future Action**

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

### **Review Coverage**

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.



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**for Chief Review Officer**