

- 1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation
- 2 Western Springs College's Curriculum
- 3 Provision for International Students
- 4 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements
- 5 Future Action
- About The School
- Community Page

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1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report:Western Springs College

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

Students at Western Springs College are highly engaged in learning. They are proud of their school and respond well to expectations to excel. Trustees, teachers and senior leaders have a clear sense of purpose in their governance and management of the school. The school charter values of individuality, creativity, opportunity, friendship and inclusiveness are clearly reflected in school practices. Positive relationships between students and teachers continue to underpin the school's good practices for teaching and learning.

The college is located in the well established Western Springs community and trustees aim for it to be the school of choice for local families. The college has experienced rapid roll growth in recent years and, as a result, has introduced an enrolment scheme that restricts entry to home zone students only in 2010 and 2011. The board of trustees and staff actively seek parents' and community members' participation in the life of the school. The contributions of Pacific and Māori parents through whānau hui are encouraged and valued. The transformation of the physical environment of the college has continued and new buildings have been added, including a centralised student services centre, known as Waiora.

Students make very good progress in the junior school and continue on into the senior school to achieve high levels of success in the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) and the New Zealand Scholarship examinations. High rates of retention and achievement for Māori students in Nga Puna o Waiorea continue to be attained. The planned introduction of individual student's learning goals and junior subject endorsements will complement well established academic counselling and targeted learning support for students of all abilities. A review of provision of careers counselling for students, and the extension of senior subject options, has resulted in more options being available to students. Student achievement is recognised and celebrated in a wide range of academic, creative, cultural, sporting and leadership areas.

The principal is a capable and productive school leader. Together with the collaborative leadership team, the principal has developed reflective models for planning and reporting that align with the board's strategic direction. A professional culture has been established throughout the school and senior managers invest resources in order to further develop staff leadership skills. Trustees continue to support the professional leadership of the school and plan targets to further raise student achievement. Trustees regularly review the school charter and maintain cohesive strategies for ongoing school improvement. The development goals identified in the strategic plan provide an effective framework for school self review.

Future Action

ERO is likely to carry out the next review within four to five years.

2 Western Springs College's Curriculum

How effectively does the curriculum of Western Springs College promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

School context and self review

Western Springs College has continued to strengthen systems designed to raise student achievement. Stable leadership, a well organised leadership team, and a long-serving board chair, are factors in the school's successful self review and continued development. Previous ERO reports in 2004 and 2007 highlight the school's high academic achievement and effective pastoral care. The additional strengths identified in ERO's 2007 report, notably positive relationships, curriculum management, use of achievement data, and intensive professional learning and development, have been maintained and further extended.

The school roll has increased significantly in the last three years and the school's decile rating has changed from 7 to 8. Trustees decided not to enrol students from out of zone during 2010 and 2011 to limit roll growth and to manage the transition to a student population drawn exclusively from within the school zone. This move, combined with extensive revision of the school charter, informed by community consultation over the last two years, demonstrates the board's desire to make the college the school of choice for parents and whānau in the community. .

Trustees' commitment to immersion education and to working in partnership with the Māori school community continues to be evident in the effective operation and administration of the rumaki, Nga Puna o Waiorea. The board and staff value the contribution of the rumaki whānau and take pride in sharing the achievements of students with the community. Rumaki whānau and the board of trustees are currently conducting a feasibility study to explore better ways of delivering a full immersion education for students.

The board has strongly supported the development of representative community groups to increase the role of parents in their children's education. The board is actively working to further strengthen home-school and community relationships.

The restructure and expansion of the senior leadership team in 2009 and 2010 has resulted in new appointments to fill vacancies and to complement the skills of the established team. Roles and responsibilities are being defined as the new team is being established.

Students are encouraged to do their personal best, whether it be in academic, sports or co-curricular areas. High student achievement is evident in many aspects of school life, including NCEA, kapa haka, sports, learning centre progress, and students making choices that support successful transitions to the workforce.

Areas of strength

Centre for learning. Students experience a purposeful education, supported by teachers' high expectations for individual students' learning and success. The majority of classrooms are well resourced and attractive learning environments. Good relationships are evident between teachers and students and facilitative approaches mean that students are engaged in learning, know about the purpose of lessons, and are increasingly able to monitor and evaluate their own progress. The partnership between teachers and students is focused on learning. Open communication is a feature of the school. Senior leaders have carried out a review to provide information about how they could further foster student leadership skills.

Student learning and well-being continue to be well supported and have been further enhanced by the development of a new building to house the integrated student support services, Waiora. A clear focus on reducing barriers to learning, within the school's deans' and guidance network, helps to maintain effective communication and proactive approaches to supporting student engagement in learning.

Supporting student learning. Achievement information is well analysed and is used purposefully by teachers to review the effectiveness of learning programmes and to monitor the progress and engagement of students. Progress since the 2007 ERO review includes greater teacher use of nationally recognised assessment tools to set achievement targets for Year 9 and 10 students, and heads of departments' improved practices for reporting on student outcomes. This improved information supports more effective practices in board decision making and self review.

Wider choices. As a result of the expansion of options and learning pathways, the senior curriculum now includes subjects that are not orientated exclusively to enabling students to gain entry to university courses. The junior school options structure has also been reviewed. Academic and careers counselling for senior students is well developed, and students are encouraged to consider option choices and learning pathways carefully. Broader learning pathways are contributing to greater student retention in the senior school.

Improved monitoring. The academic directors have had a major impact on the monitoring and guidance of senior students undertaking NCEA courses which has been reflected in the significantly improved level 2 and 3 results achieved since their appointment. Strategies to enhance the academic culture of the junior school are currently being established and include individual academic goal setting, subject achievement endorsements, and programmes for enhanced career awareness.

Learning support. The learning centre continues to play a pivotal role in helping to meet students' wide range of learning needs. Targeted interventions for individuals and groups of students support students' ability to learn independently. A large number of students self refer, seeking a boost in particular aspects of their learning. Senior students willingly volunteer to tutor and mentor younger students. Good provision continues to be made for gifted and talented students, including those with strengths in sport. Participation in school sports teams and activities has increased significantly over the last three years.

Facilities. Improved facilities and resourcing to support student achievement and engagement include the construction of health and physical education and social sciences blocks, refurbishment of the food technology area and the integration of student services into a single complex. Ongoing investment in information and communication technologies has increased student access to electronic learning. The campus grounds are currently undergoing major renovations.

Support for Māori and Pacific students. The principal and trustees have continued to raise expectations for the retention and achievement of Māori and Pacific students so that rates for these students match those of other students at all levels of the school. Senior staff have been appointed to support the achievement of Māori and Pacific students. The development and success of the rumaki is having a positive impact on achievement in the school. Pacific students report that they have pride in their home cultures. They benefit from ongoing targeted support and monitoring of their rates of success in NCEA.

Collaborative culture to enhance learning. School leaders and heads of departments are working with teachers to further improve teaching and learning. Considerable work has been undertaken to review curriculum documentation so that it aligns with The New Zealand Curriculum. The new charter for the school is well aligned to the principles of The New Zealand Curriculum and provides a platform for curriculum development and improved professional practice. All teachers are involved in learning discussions to consider teaching as inquiry and to develop teaching across all curriculum areas.

Areas for development and review

ERO affirms the school's priorities for further improvement, which have been identified by the principal and board, in consultation with senior leaders.

Leadership at senior management and curriculum levels. The principal is continuing to improve the leadership skills of the senior team and middle managers. New appointments have been made and roles and expectations have been defined. Effective ways of working, and strategies for team building, are identified and planned.

Consolidating best practice in teaching and learning. Senior leaders and heads of departments are focused on improving practices for teaching and learning. They are working with teachers to develop models of effective teaching that are based on research and best practice. These models include strategies that enable differentiated teaching.

3 Provision for International Students

Western Springs College is providing its international students with high levels of pastoral care and education. Students are well integrated into the life of the school. They receive a good quality programme of English language support and report high levels of satisfaction with curriculum learning programmes. Plans are underway to relocate the international student department to provide more space for these students and staff.

Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the Provision of English Language Support

Western Springs College is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school meets the requirements of the Code.

4 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Western Springs College completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- board administration;
- curriculum;

- management of health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management;
- financial management; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO looked at the school's documentation, including policies, procedures and records. ERO sampled recent use of procedures and checked elements of the following five areas that have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

The board of trustees is aware of the need for vigilance to ensure the safety of students, staff and visitors during the extensive property developments that are currently underway.

5 Future Action

ERO is likely to carry out the next review within four to five years.

Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

9 November 2010

About The School

Location	Western Springs, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	48
School type	Secondary (Year 9-15)
Decile <u>[1]</u>	8

School roll	1110
Number of international students	56
Gender composition	Boys 56% Girls 44%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 63% Māori 17% Cook Island Māori 3% Indian 3% Samoan 3% Niuean 2% Tongan 2% Chinese 1% other 6%
Special features	Rumaki (Māori immersion) Auckland Secondary School Centre
Review team on site	September, 2010
Date of this report	9 November 2010
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review, September 2007 Education Review, November 2004 Accountability Review, December 2001

[1] School deciles range from one to ten. Decile one schools draw their students from low socioeconomic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.

Community Page

9 November 2010

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.

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Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's

previous reporting history and is based on:

- what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;
- decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and selfreview information; and
- teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

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

Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

General Information about Reviews

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting integrates the following:

- school curriculum;
- national evaluation topics –contribute to the development of education policies and their effective implementation; and
- the Board Assurance Statement, including student and staff health and safety.

ERO's review is responsive to the school's context. When ERO reviews a school, it takes into account the characteristics of the community from which it draws its students, its aspirations for its

young people, and other relevant local factors.

ERO also builds on the school's own self-review information. ERO is interested in how a school monitors the progress of its students and aspects of school life and culture, and how it uses this information to improve student learning.

This helps ERO to answer the major evaluation question for reviews:

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

Areas for Development and Review

ERO reports include areas for development and review to support on-going improvement by identifying priorities. Often the school will have identified these matters through its own self review and already plans further development in those areas.