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CONFIRMED EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT: WESTERN SPRINGS COLLEGE

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

1 About the School

Location	Western Springs, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	48
School type	Secondary (Year 9-15)
Decile rating ¹	7
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	59.40
Other	3.78
Number of teachers	70
School roll	935
Number of international students	35
Gender composition	Boys 61%, Girls 39%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 68%, Māori 16%, Cook Island 4%, Samoan 3%, Niuean 2%, Tongan 2%, Indian 2%, Asian 1%, other 2%
Special features	Auckland Secondary Schools' Centre; Rumaki (Māori immersion)
Review team on site	June 2007
Date of this report	4 September 2007

¹ Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.

Previous ERO reports

Education Review, November 2004
Accountability Review, December 2001
Accountability Review, December 1997
Effectiveness Review, December 1994
Assurance Audit, April 1993
Review, April 1991

2 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

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.

3 The Focus of the Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

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. In 2006 Western Springs College students gained 23 scholarships in 11 subjects, ranking third among state schools for the Auckland region for the per capita percentage of scholarships achieved in Year 13. On a range of six indicators, Western Springs College is the top decile 7 coeducational secondary school in New Zealand and ranks second for all 29 state decile 7 schools for 2006 NCEA results. The very high achievement of students in Nga Puna o Waiorea is also particularly significant. Students' academic achievement is very closely monitored throughout the year with targeted support, including that from the learning centre, and extension strategies, including the opportunity to sit university papers provided for nominated students.

Year 9 and 10 students complete Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs) in reading comprehension and mathematics. Results show that students are meeting age related expectations. A few departments use an internally developed and referenced system to analyse junior student achievement information. Some numeracy information about national strategy levels has recently been collected but has yet to be formally analysed.

Students' holistic development is fostered at the college through the arts and cultural performances and the increased sporting opportunities available since the last ERO review.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Western Springs College was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Western Springs College.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus area for the review:

- the impact of student support systems on improving student progress and achievement.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

The impact of student support systems on improving student progress and achievement

Background

The 2004 ERO report noted that effective pastoral care systems continued to operate to support students in their learning and that the board had an expressed goal of high academic achievement. The board chose this focus area to ascertain the impact of a wide array of interventions since the last ERO report on student progress and achievement.

Student support systems are broadly defined by the school to include academic, pastoral and organisational processes. In light of the breadth of student support systems at Western Springs College, this review used school self-review information as the springboard for the current evaluation.

Student progress and achievement

Academic data. The Principal's annual report contains detailed analysis and evaluation of student achievement information for university entrance and for NCEA by Level, by the type of NCEA grade (achieved, merit, excellence), gender, ethnicity and for retention rates, and compared to previous years' school, current national and decile 7 average. The Year 11 cohort is compared against the school's own PAT results for interventions for the next year. This report is made readily available to the school's community thereby fostering transparent reporting. The board uses this report to confirm various interventions for the coming year in response to evaluation of the data. Actual Year 9 to 13 student achievement is outlined earlier in this report.

Qualitative information. Staff have collected and analysed qualitative information for each student on the peer reading and mentoring programmes, special needs programmes, gifted and talented programme and on aspects of the learning centre. This qualitative information provides a sense of student progress and/or achievement in these areas.

Quantitative information. Quantitative data is available from entry testing using PATs for literacy and mathematics and for the large number of students requiring specialist assessment conditions. Data also includes attendance monitoring, and pre and post Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students funded by the Ongoing Renewable Resource Scheme and for some students with teacher aide support. Homework centres record individual student's attendance levels and work undertaken each session. Health service and guidance department data are separately collated for students collectively and reported regularly to senior management. Students post school careers destinations are collated. Staff use this information well to monitor, guide and adjust students' course selection, additional support or enrichment requirements, and to plan service delivery to meet changing student needs.

Areas of good performance

Positive relationships. Positive student relationships with staff are a feature of learning and underpin the good quality support and notable achievement at Western Springs College. In addition, most staff give generously of their own time throughout the year to support student learning and achievement. Student morale is consequently high and most students are fully engaged in classes. Tuakana-teina; two way relationships between students of different ages are evident in a wide array of different settings within college life.

Comprehensive guidance, careers and health programmes. Students' well being is being overseen effectively. They experience well-coordinated school-wide guidance provision and health programmes. Close monitoring also contributes to high attendance levels that support students' learning in class and overall achievement. Careers education for Year 9 is appropriately under development in 2007 and various external contracts for Year 11 to 13 careers are in place for the second half of this year. Regular surveys of students are used to inform ongoing adjustment to programmes and systems for meeting their overall needs.

Learning support and pathways. Students with a range of learning needs are offered a wide array of effective support programmes, including those offered through the learning centre, to build their ability to learn independently. Good provision is also made for gifted and talented students, including those with sports strengths.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF) student achievement information has informed decisions to diversify learning pathways for Years 11 to 13 students both within and across learning areas. This change is helping to better meet students' needs and fosters retention at school.

Teaching practice. Students experience good teaching at Western Springs College. The best teaching practice observed by ERO is characterised by:

- lessons being adapted for the varying needs of students within the class;
- teachers clearly outlining, orally and in written form, the purpose of the lesson;
- high expectations for student learning and achievement;
- conscious thinking and talking by teachers and by students about the learning processes being used;
- well paced lessons that optimise learning time;
- students being engaged in cooperative learning strategies;
- frequent oral feedback to students about their learning;
- students' self and group reflection on learning;
- regular marking of student work with targeted feedback and next steps for learning identified; and
- stimulating visual classroom environments with good displays of current student work.

Senior managers have appropriately identified the need to continue to develop the teaching practice in the school.

Enhanced curriculum management. Systems for curriculum management have been strengthened since the previous ERO report. Clear guidelines inform scheme development. Senior managers undertake robust self-review of schemes and learning areas on a cyclical basis. These refinements are supporting staff to continue to raise their provision for students' learning.

Formative professional development. Staff have had good school wide and individual professional development opportunities resourced by the board. Professional development is linked effectively to the appraisal system and school-wide goals. Teams of staff have worked collegially to research aspects of teaching and learning and to implement successive changes for students as a result. The nature of the professional development is fostering ongoing improvement in teacher practice.

Use of student achievement information. Strengthened processes are evident for annual departmental reporting. These reports include good analysis and next steps for student achievement in Years 11 to 13. The analysis is linked to the school's annual

goals and reports achievement trends, including those for gender and ethnicity. Increased monitoring of student achievement data by the deputy principal, heads of department, deans, academic directors for Years 12 and 13, and teachers is occurring school wide. Close monitoring and analysis of achievement information is being suitably used to inform requests for professional development and annual planning, and to foster student progress and achievement. Transparent reporting of NQF analysed data is informing students, teachers, trustees and families about student success in NCEA.

External links. Good links with external providers and agencies including those related to guidance and health, learning and behaviour, student qualifications and staff professional development are evident. These links enable staff to access effective support that ultimately benefits students' learning and development.

Areas for improvement

Student achievement measurement at Year 9 and 10. Heads of department do not consistently set targets for student achievement at Year 9 and 10. A core group of staff has documented plans to begin professional development using Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (asTTle) in Term 3 of 2007. This professional development could further inform teachers about students' achievement at Years 9 and 10 compared to national achievement levels and may also help with target setting.

Enhancing reporting. Aspects of reporting could be enhanced. Academic directors at Years 12 and 13 could complement their annual oral reports to the principal or board with a written report. Heads of department meet annually with senior managers to discuss their annual report. This meeting could have its outcomes formally recorded. Such records are useful in times of staff change, roll growth and to document decisions made about next steps. Written evidence of outcomes of some student support programmes is variable. Consistently analysing and documenting such outcomes would help resource decision-making and ongoing monitoring.

First point of contact resourcing. Changed eligibility criteria have led to the loss of district health board funding for the school as a first point of contact for students' health and well being. The good quality service provided by the school's full time nurse under this contract should be continued with different funding if at all possible, in order to reflect the board's commitment to students' holistic well being.

4 Areas of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Western Springs College ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

The Achievement of Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of Māori students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement. Sixteen percent of students at Western Springs College identify as Maori. Of these, a third of students learn in the well-established rumaki, Nga Puna o Waiorea, and two thirds in mainstream classes.

Nga Puna o Waiorea - Rumaki

Areas of progress

Student achievement. Rumaki students had a higher overall pass rate at Level 2 and 3, and for University Entrance for NCEA in 2006 than for all students at the college. This outstanding result is underpinned by the strong whanaungatanga and tautoko shown in extensive, ongoing whanau support, targeted careers advice and work placements arranged by the whanau. It also results from a strong partnership between whānau and teachers in the homework centre that fosters the achievement of the entire rumaki and the retention of rumaki students at school.

Rumaki systems. Since the previous ERO report, whanau have established a strong policy, practice and system base to guide Nga Puna o Waiorea. This development provides a firm foundation for the sustainability of the rumaki over time.

Use of school-wide systems and events. Rumaki staff and students make effective use of school-wide systems and events. For instance, the close monitoring of attendance, as occurs school wide, has assisted the much increased rumaki attendance levels. Rumaki students contribute to school-wide events and attend some mainstream classes.

Consistency. Te reo me ona tikanga Māori is practised consistently in the rumaki, which has strong protocols and practices. Students are regularly involved in kapahaka and have some well placed results in speech contests. Teachers have completed further professional development in teaching te reo Māori that also supports the consistent provision of te reo me ona tikanga Māori.

Resourcing. The board has committed a high level of resourcing to the rumaki. An administrative support person now provides valuable assistance to teachers, whanau and students. In 2007 an additional teacher has been funded by the board to separate the role of the tumuaki and the head of te reo Maori appropriately. Trustees have also resourced property developments including additional and reorganised learning and

administration spaces. Plans are clearly documented to further develop the rumaki in due course.

Inter-kura links. Inter-kura links have been significantly strengthened since the previous ERO report. Rumaki students and staff participate in or host various inter-kura events such as sports, exchanges and teacher professional development. These connections foster student self esteem as Māori.

Areas for further improvement

Te reo Māori in curriculum areas. Rumaki teachers have nominated, and then documented plans to further increase their use of te reo Maori in curriculum areas.

Communication about resourcing. Some whanau are unclear about the extent of additional resourcing for the rumaki already provided by the board. In the interests of clarity, senior managers could, once more, share this information with the whanau.

Marketing. Whanau and senior management have appropriately identified the need to raise the profile and increase the student numbers in the rumaki to an optimal level. Such marketing is likely to be an additional support for the long-term sustainability of the rumaki.

Māori students in the mainstream

Areas of progress

Student achievement. Compared to the previous ERO report, senior managers now separately analyse and report on the student achievement results for Māori students in Years 11 to 13 mainstream classes, as well as for rumaki students. High pass rates for NCEA in 2006 for mainstream Māori students in Level 2 and University Entrance suggest that Māori students who are retained for Years 12 and 13 are succeeding at levels more than comparable with other students overall at this college.

School-wide initiatives. Senior managers have responded very positively to the suggestion in the previous ERO report to increase support for mainstream Māori students in their learning. Their responses have included the following.

- Teachers have been involved in professional development that fosters the building of strong teacher and student relationships as a foundation for Māori student learning.
- Schemes of work in each subject have been or are being updated and learning situations relevant to Māori increased within units of work.
- Courses offered have been diversified to better meet student needs and this has assisted the increased retention of Māori into the senior school.
- Additional support through the learning centre and a homework centre assists students with particular needs.
- Deans at Year 11 and academic directors at Years 12 and 13 closely monitor the academic achievement and well being of Māori students in the mainstream.

- Departments report annually on Year 11 to 13 Māori student achievement, and some on Years 9 and 10 achievement.
- Teachers are appraised against a robust set of performance indicators for matters Māori.

These initiatives indicate a strong commitment on the part of the board and senior management to improving student achievement for Māori students in the mainstream.

Consultation. The previous ERO report identified the need to consult parents of Māori students in mainstream classes. The board has recently co-opted a representative from these parents and established a related parent group. This parent group made vital contributions to drafting of the 2007 annual plan goals for Māori students in the mainstream.

Areas for further improvement

Student achievement. Senior managers and the board have established strategic and annual plan goals and sound school wide targets to address the underachievement of Māori students in the mainstream at Level 1 of NCEA. A next step for development would be to make target setting and reporting on Māori student achievement consistent across all departments, most notably in Years 9 and 10.

Training. The board has expressed a willingness to undertake Treaty of Waitangi training. Such training has the potential to enhance trustees' understanding of their responsibilities under the National Administration Guidelines.

The Achievement of Pacific Students

During the review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of its Pacific students. Eleven percent of students at Western Springs College identify as Pacific, with heritage from the Cook Islands, Samoa, Niue and Tonga.

Areas of good performance

School-wide student achievement planning, analysis and reporting. As a new initiative since the previous ERO report, the board and senior management set high, school-wide Pacific achievement targets for student retention and for achievement in Levels 1 to 3 of NCEA. The principal reports transparently to the school community on the outcomes of these targets in the annual report. Retention rates for Year 11 and 12 Pacific students are close to target levels and the majority of Pacific students who attempt Level 2 of NCEA gain this qualification. Trustees and senior managers analyse the difference between the targets and the outcomes to determine suitable interventions for the following year. These interventions combine to form the robust Western Springs College Pacific student achievement plan for the current year. In these ways the board and staff are making a concerted effort to improve Pacific student achievement.

Resourcing. At the time of the previous ERO report the school was part of a Community Liaison Project that has now finished. The board has since appointed a teacher with management responsibility and time release to oversee Pacific student achievement, to work with nominated Pacific students in the learning centre and to oversee the Pacific homework centre. Many teachers generously volunteer their time to assist students in the various homework centres run at the school. Pacific staffing levels reflect the proportion of Pacific students in the school with Pacific students being able to opt into a form class or house led by a Pacific teacher. These approaches to resourcing are helping foster the well being, learning and achievement of Pacific students.

Benefit of school-wide systems. Pacific students are assisted through various school-wide systems such as the attendance monitoring and learning centre. Pacific student attendance is close to the very high attendance levels school wide. Students' attendance is closely monitored and appropriate follow up occurs for any Pacific student should this be an issue. Regular attendance at school is an important first step for learning.

Celebration of Pacific cultures and achievement. Students have increased opportunities to learn using Pacific themes and situations. Other positive developments since the last ERO review have included successful Fia Fia nights and the very large attendance (400) in 2006 at the Pacific prize giving. Parents, students and staff value these opportunities that honour Pacific heritage.

Parent communication and consultation. The board has increased its communication with Pacific parents by establishing a regular fono for Pacific parents and staff. This action has been well received by parents and provides a sound basis for an ongoing partnership about the learning and achievement of Pacific students.

Areas for improvement

Student achievement monitoring and reporting. The principal has appropriately identified the need to systematise Pacific student achievement monitoring and to enhance expectations and reporting by deans, academic directors, heads of department and form teachers about Pacific student achievement outcomes, especially at Years 9 and 10.

Pandemic Planning

In all school reviews ERO is currently evaluating the extent to which schools have planned for a potential influenza pandemic in terms of the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

In ERO's view Western Springs College is taking steps to prepare for such a pandemic.

School Engagement with Parents, Whānau and Communities

As part of this review ERO evaluated the extent to which school practices contribute to meaningful and respectful relationships with parents and whānau that have a positive impact on students' learning, achievement and well being.

During this review ERO met with about 45 parents and whānau from four different parent groups comprised of parents and whānau of rumaki students, Māori in the mainstream students, Pacific students and general students. ERO also examined parental survey information and other related school documentation. Some findings related to this area are reported under the Māori and Pacific sections of this report.

Western Springs College has well developed ways of engaging with parents, whānau and communities. The most well developed school practices for engaging parents/whānau, according to parents are:

- the open door policy and the approachability of staff that makes it easy for most parents to contact staff;
- having key contact staff for rumaki, Maori mainstream and Pacific parents and whānau;
- a range of communication strategies such as mailed or emailed newsletters, phone calls and emails that keep parents and whānau informed about school events and matters related to their own child;
- key events designed to involve prospective parents and parents new to the school such as the open day and the new families barbeque each year;
- having various parent committees for parents and whānau of rumaki students, Maori in the mainstream, Pacific and general students that meet regularly and a range of annual prize givings to match most of these populations;
- offering many types of activities which parents can attend or become more involved in, including performing arts, sports and cultural events; and
- holding parent, teacher and student report meetings to discuss students' learning and achievement.

The challenges to parent/whānau engagement in this school as outlined by parents include:

- a lack of clarity about the school policy on staff responding to emails and phone calls;
- the need for increased communication about sports and physical activities;
- the need to maintain and further strengthen the parent groups; and
- the high demands of the active involvement of rumaki parents and the need to find a sustainable way forward.

The benefits and value of parent/whānau engagement in this school as identified by families include:

- parents are better able to support their child's learning;

- peace of mind for parents and whanau who are well informed;
- parents and whanau getting to know the teachers and the education system;
- addressing any issues about one's child at an early stage;
- the building of a sense of school community and links to the wider community;
- parents having informal opportunities to talk with and learn from other parents; and
- reduced fear in approaching the school about other matters.

Recommendations

To develop or strengthen parent/whānau engagement at Western Springs College, ERO recommends that:

- senior managers continue to survey parents, maintain and strengthen the various parent groups and investigate establishing class based parent networks;
- senior managers offer again opportunities for parents and whanau to meet and talk about parenting issues; and
- senior managers consider the feasibility of having a senior manager linked to each parent group, to spread the workload and for equity of access to senior management.

Provision for International Students

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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

There are 35 international students currently enrolled at Western springs College with one of these students being an exchange student. The school complies with all aspects of the Code for these students.

Areas of good performance

Administration and management of international students. A homestay coordinator and an administrative assistant support the director of international education (the director) who also has the position of dean of international students. His role includes both marketing and the pastoral care of international students. The international student team has a dedicated office that enables students to have easy access to information and assistance. Students are also able to use the office facilities at break times during the day. There are comprehensive files for each student and an extensive database enables staff to quickly access all information about individual students. The

director provides the principal and board with comprehensive reports that keep trustees well informed about provision for international students.

Monitoring accommodation. The homestay coordinator provides effective support for both students and homestay providers. She maintains regular contact with homestay providers and designated caregivers through home visits, a requirement of the Code. All homestay providers are given a comprehensive information booklet that has been specifically compiled for them.

Pastoral care. International students are well assisted by various support services at Western Springs College. The director is meticulous in monitoring the wellbeing of international students. Students who talked with ERO are enthusiastic and spoke very positively about the college. They are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life.

Provision of English language support. The head of department for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) has developed a comprehensive programme for students. She is supported by a teacher aide who provides individual assistance to selected students in both the ESOL classes and in some individual subject classes. The head of ESOL also organises trips outside of school to broaden the language experience of international students. Many teachers have undertaken professional development in learning through language that has the potential to further support international students with English language in mainstream subject classes.

Areas for improvement

ESOL resources. Although there is a wide range of print resources available for students in the ESOL department there is only one computer currently available for use by students in the ESOL area. This limits the ability of staff to enhance provision of ESOL for these students.

Provision of Adult and Community Education (ACE)

Progress with the Implementation of Provision of Quality Assurance Arrangements

New funding and quality assurance arrangements for ACE providers are being progressively implemented over a three-year period 2005 to 2007. The quality assurance arrangements are set out in the NZQA publication *Quality Assurance Arrangements for Providers of Adult and Community Education* (March 2005). From 2008 these requirements will become a requirement of continued funding.

In this review ERO evaluated the progress of Western Springs College towards meeting these arrangements. Given the positive progress evident and further planned developments the school is well placed to meet the requirements in 2008 for continued funding.

Areas of good performance

Commitment to ACE. The board, senior management and ACE coordinator are committed to the provision of ACE. ACE is seen as an effective way to extend the school's learning community and further strengthen partnership with parents and the wider community. These commitments are clearly documented in the Western Springs ACE mission statement and school charter.

Effective coordination and positive progress. The community education co-ordinator demonstrates a well-informed awareness and knowledge of the new funding and quality assurance arrangements that underpin the effective provision of ACE programmes at Western Springs College. Proactive development of comprehensive administration and reporting systems and documentation to meet the quality assurance arrangements has occurred. To keep up-to-date with ACE requirements and information the coordinator regularly attends professional development, network meetings and conferences.

The programme. The ACE programme is clearly documented and well publicised. The college offers various programmes for its community, including those that focus on languages and literacy, recreation and health, and the development of creative and special interests. The coordinator liaises effectively with community groups and other ACE providers in the central Auckland area about programmes to be offered. Robust systems are in place to effectively monitor and review the ACE programmes being delivered onsite and through community groups.

5 Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

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 legislative obligations related to:

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

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they 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.

Each school needs to acknowledge that bullying is a risk to be managed. In this school staff have systematic strategies for the prevention of bullying. These strategies include, but are not limited to, topics delivered within the health programme and regular surveys of students that include questions about bullying.

Compliance

Through the Ministry of Education funded Student Engagement Initiative, the board and management have significantly reduced the proportion of stand downs and suspensions since the previous ERO report. Trustees and senior managers are committed to retaining students in education wherever possible.

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern.

6 Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees agree to the following recommendation:

- 6.1 that senior managers, heads of department and teachers increase the use of externally referenced data collection, analysis and reporting about Year 9 and 10 student achievement to assist the board with robust comparison and to better inform governance decision making.

7 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.



Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

4 September 2007

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**.

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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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Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer