

Manawatu College Education Review

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

About The School

Location	Foxton
Ministry of Education profile number	205
School type	Secondary School (Years 9 - 13)
Decile rating	2
Teaching staff:	35.58
Roll generated entitlement	2.37
Other	49
Number of teachers	
School roll	337
Number of international students	11
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%
Ethnic composition	NZ Māori 40% NZ European/Pākeha 39% Other European 18% Asian 2% Pacific Island 1%
Special features	Resource Teacher : Learning and Behaviour Adult and Community Education Programme
Review team on site	October 2007
Previous ERO reports	Education Review, August 2004 Accountability Review, September 2001

Effectiveness Review, September 1996
Assurance Audit, July 1994
Review Report, March 1991

Date of this report 21 December 2007

The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Manawatu College is a co-educational secondary school catering for students from Year 9 to 13 from the township of Foxton and surrounding rural areas. The grounds are imaginatively landscaped and provide an attractive school environment that is both practical and conducive to learning. The community and students respect and take pride in their school, which has continued to experience sustained roll growth. Since the last review significant building upgrades and classroom refurbishments have been completed. Trustees have committed considerable funds to employ additional teachers and support staff in order to provide low teacher student ratios in classes. School management has responded effectively to recommendations in the previous ERO report regarding evaluation of homerooms in the junior school, written feedback to students and academic goal setting.

This report evaluates the effectiveness of programmes, practices and initiatives intended to improve student achievement. The Education Review Office selected this focus area following consultation with the board of trustees. The report also evaluates areas of national interest. These are progress in Māori student achievement, the provision of gifted and talented education, thinking about the future, planning for a pandemic, provision for international students and provision of Adult and Community Education (ACE).

2006 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) data indicates that the proportion of Year 11 students gaining compulsory Level 1 numeracy credits was above the national average, and the proportion of students gaining compulsory literacy credits and completing the qualification was comparable to schools of similar decile.

The proportion of students gaining Level 2 NCEA was above national average, and the proportion gaining Level 3 and university entrance was above schools of similar decile. Māori student achievement at NCEA Levels 1 and 2 is above national averages for Māori students and comparable to their non-Māori peers in the school.

The school uses nationally standardised tests in aspects of literacy, and their own school mathematics tests to assess students at entry to Year 9. This achievement information is used to place students in class and identify those needing special programmes. Ongoing testing in Year 9 and 10 indicates that a majority of students make significant positive progress in this time, and that girls and non-Māori students continue to achieve at higher levels on average than Māori students and boys. The Manawatu College Achievement Certificate (MAC) successfully provides motivation and encouragement to students in Year 9 and 10.

The school provides an extensive range of academic, cultural, leadership and sporting opportunities for students. Support for learning includes homeroom classes at Year 9 and 10,

MAC, a homework centre and the mentoring programme. A feature of the school is the well-developed leadership programme that begins at Year 10 and prepares students for leadership roles in the senior school. A useful start has been made in establishing policy and systems to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. There is scope for this to be strengthened by developing more targeted programmes. A greater diversity of appropriate courses has been developed at senior school level to cater for a wide range of abilities and interests. Additional courses continue to be offered by video conferencing and industry providers.

At Year 9 all students are provided with a course in Māori performing arts which reflects the school's commitment to partnership and biculturalism. Most Year 9 homeroom classes are taught by teachers knowledgeable in te reo which helps students with a high level of proficiency in te reo to develop their English literacy skills. In reviewing the school's behaviour management systems, school leaders will continue to engage in consultation with the Māori community to ensure Māori aspirations and expectations are included.

Teachers are hard working and committed to improving student achievement. They know students well, lead the learning and give extra support when needed. Teachers are developing skills in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) for administration and planning. There is evidence of good teaching practice in classrooms, and teachers are receptive to initiatives intended to strengthen professional practice and enhance educational outcomes for students. The work of teachers is complemented by the valuable contribution of a team of committed support staff and teacher aides. Strong staff and community support contributes to a high level of student participation in cultural and sporting activities.

The principal is highly respected and is continuing to provide strong strategic leadership for the school and its community. His open and affirming style of leadership has enabled significant positive change to be successfully managed. He is ably supported by senior and middle managers who have multiple roles for leading staff in curriculum, pastoral and administrative areas. Distributed leadership structures have led to a sense of ownership of school operations and overall direction.

Strengthening aspects of assessment practices at Year 9 and 10, professional learning and performance management, needs to occur to enable senior management and the board of trustees to be better informed for ongoing decision making and resource allocations.

The college is well governed and effective succession planning and training have ensured the continuance of strong and knowledgeable leadership. The chairperson has established a positive working relationship with the principal and the new board is committed to maintaining and enhancing the process of consultation to update its strategic plan. Achievement targets

are linked to student educational outcomes and are useful in providing reference points for reporting. Effective asset management has supported the continued development of school facilities and resources.

The school complies with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, and high quality systems are in place for all aspects of care and education of international or exchange students.

From 2008, the provision of Adult and Community Education (ACE) will be coordinated from Horowhenua College in Levin.

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.

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.

2006 NCEA data indicates that the proportion of Year 11 students gaining compulsory Level 1 numeracy credits was above the national average, and the proportion of students gaining compulsory literacy credits and completing the qualification was comparable to schools of similar decile. The proportion of students gaining Level 2 NCEA was above national average, and the proportion gaining Level 3 and university entrance was above schools of similar decile.

Māori student achievement at NCEA Levels 1 is above national averages for Māori students and comparable to their non-Māori peers. Retention rates for all students to Year 12 and 13 continue to increase, and the proportion of students leaving without formal qualifications has followed the national trend downwards.

The school uses national standardised tests in aspects of literacy, and their own school mathematics tests to assess students at entry to Year 9. This achievement information is used to place students in class and identify students for special programmes. Ongoing testing in Year 9 and 10 indicates that a high proportion of students make significant progress and that girls continue to achieve at higher levels on average than boys. The MAC successfully provides motivation and encouragement to students in Year 9 and 10.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Manawatu 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 selfreview information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Manawatu College.

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

- programmes, practices and initiatives to improve student achievement.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

Programmes, Practices and Initiatives to Improve Student Achievement

Background

Since the last ERO review, the school has continued to develop and implement programmes both within classrooms and school wide, intended to improve educational outcomes for students. This report evaluates the impact of these initiatives and developments in professional practice, in raising student achievement.

Student progress and achievement

NCEA data for Levels 1, 2 and 3 in the previous three years indicates that, with the exception of Level 1 in 2006, the proportion of students gaining the relevant qualification has steadily increased, and continues to be comparable to national averages for all schools, and above schools of similar decile.

MAC data from 2004 to 2006 shows that, while gender and ethnic groups were performing at comparable levels in 2004, in recent years girls and non-Māori have achieved a higher percentage of available credits than boys and Māori students. A very high proportion of junior students continue to achieve the certificate.

Areas of good performance

Education opportunities for students: The school provides a wide range of quality educational opportunities for students. Strong staff and community support is contributing to a high level of student participation in cultural and sporting activities. A feature of the school is the well-developed leadership programme that begins at Year 10. It includes a leadership training camp and regular visits to contributing schools to organise recreational activities. Senior students have extensive leadership opportunities at school, house and student council levels, and through taking lead roles in the vertical tutor groups and the peer support programmes for junior students. These opportunities contribute to a sense of community, within which students develop pride in their school and positive respectful relationships.

Classroom support for teaching and learning: The school has an extensive range of classroom programmes and initiatives intended to improve student achievement. At Year 9 and 10 these include the provision of additional staffing to ensure small class numbers, homeroom teaching for designated core subjects, frequent use of teacher aides and the MAC to encourage motivation and reward desired work habits. Innovative facility development has

resulted in many classrooms having access to additional spaces for group work and activities. The college is providing a supportive learning environment where Year 9 and 10 can experience educational success.

Manawatu College Achievement Certificate (MAC): The MAC certificate serves to motivate and encourage students in Year 9 and 10. Their progress is reported regularly to parents and the board of trustees. Credits are gained within each subject area for effort and performance in assessment activities. Students are awarded the certificate if they gain at least 60% of the available credits, and the school has a target of getting 100% of students to achieve. The MAC certificate is allowing students to experience recognition and success at school.

School-wide support for learning: The school has been active and responsive in implementing programmes and initiatives to support and celebrate student learning. The homework centre operates in the library after school two days a week, at which teachers give students support and guidance with their studies. Through the mentoring programme, teachers continue to assist students in academic goal setting and future career pathways. Student success is shared and celebrated through school assemblies, newsletters, the newly established junior prize giving, and senior awards ceremony. These initiatives foster a culture that values educational achievement.

Teaching and support staff: Teachers are hard working and committed to improving student achievement. They know students well, lead the learning and give extra support when needed. Teachers are developing skills in the use of ICT for administration and planning.

There is evidence of quality teaching practice in classrooms, and teachers work is complemented by a committed team of teacher aides and support staff who bring valuable whānau networking opportunities into the school. Staff are receptive to initiatives intended to strengthen professional practice and enhance educational outcomes for students.

Senior curriculum development: A greater diversity of courses has been developed at the senior school level to cater for a wide range of abilities and interests. Flexible timetable organisation and course design allows students to study at varying NCEA levels, and makes effective use of combinations of unit and achievement standards. Additional senior level courses are offered by video conferencing and industry providers. These course developments are contributing to increased student retention to senior levels, and thorough preparation for further training or employment.

Senior and middle management: Senior and middle managers have significant opportunities for leadership of school programmes and operations. Many managers have multiple roles to lead staff in curriculum, pastoral and administrative areas. They closely monitor school expectations for student behaviour and achievement, share information and provide directed

guidance. Distributed leadership structures have led to a sense of ownership of school operations and overall direction.

Principal leadership: The principal is highly respected and is continuing to provide strong strategic leadership for the school and its community. Through taking the initiative to engage in a principal professional development programme, he is establishing a useful model for reflective and informed practice. His open and affirming style of leadership has enabled significant change to be successfully managed. His professional approach to development of collegial relationships has contributed to a positive shared vision for improved educational outcomes for students.

Physical environment: Considerable care and strategic planning have contributed to creating a school environment which is attractive, practical and conducive to learning. The grounds are imaginatively landscaped with extensive planting, decking and covered ways. Student safety has been enhanced by the redesigned bus and car parking bays. Many classrooms have been refurbished, including the use of ergonomic furniture. Students respect and enjoy the school environment that encourages a sense of pride and belonging.

Governance: The college is well governed. Effective succession planning and training has ensured the continuance of strong and knowledgeable leadership of the board. Trustees have made significant efforts to ensure their actions reflect the interests and aspirations of its community. The new board is committed to maintaining and enhancing the process of consultation to update its strategic plan. Property management and resource allocation decisions are aligned to strategic priorities and intended to improve student achievement.

Area for improvement

Assessment for learning: Assessment practice at Year 9 and 10 needs to be reviewed and strengthened. The school uses both standardised and internal assessment tools for class placement and to identify students for special programmes. At Year 9 and 10 there is now a need to:

- ensure all assessment meets its agreed objectives;
- set expectations for achievement and progress, linked to levels in the curriculum documents and based on national benchmarks;
- continue to strengthen the monitoring of achievement and progress against expectations, and subsequent reporting to students, parents and the board of trustees;
- continue to strengthen the use of assessment information to plan and implement teaching strategies to meet identified learning needs; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of learning programmes and initiatives.

Strengthening these aspects of assessment practices, professional learning and performance management is needed to enable senior management and the board of trustees to be better informed for ongoing decision making and resource allocation.

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 Manawatu 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.

Progress and achievement

NCEA results show that Māori student achievement is above that for schools of a similar type. In te reo Māori students achieve at comparable levels to the expected national figures. Analysis of NCEA results of a cohort of students from Level 1 to Level 2 shows a significant improvement in the percentage of students, including Māori, who achieve. Māori student achievement across all subject areas at Levels 1 and 2 is comparable to non-Māori students.

Entry testing in recent years indicates that, on average, Māori students have lower achievement levels in aspects of literacy and numeracy than their non-Māori peers. Assessment data from re-testing during Year 9 suggests some closing of this achievement gap occurs.

Areas of progress

Te reo me nga tikanga Māori: The compulsory Māori Performing Arts programme at Year 9, with its emphasis on te reo Māori, ensures students at this level are provided with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understandings in te reo nga tikanga Māori. Te reo Māori is an option subject in Year 9, and two ability-grouped classes accommodate different levels of fluency. Three of the Year 9 homeroom classes are taught by teachers with

a good knowledge of te reo. These staff are able to effectively cater for students with a high level of proficiency in te reo to develop their English literacy skills. These junior students are given the opportunity to gain NCEA achievement standard assessments in te reo.

Māori achievement: Māori students have pride in their school and value the variety of experiences that the school offers. They have opportunities for trips outside the area to extend their knowledge and confidence, and to explore future career pathways. The higher levels of achievement and the improved retention rate of Māori students over the same period indicate that more Māori students are leaving school with higher qualifications.

Area for further improvement

Māori students and discipline: In the last two years a disproportionate number of Māori students have been stood down or suspended, as compared to their non-Māori peers, particularly at Year 9 and 10. With the introduction of the new 'Respect' programme it is now timely for school leaders to continue to engage in consultation with the Māori community to ensure changes made are consistent with Māori aspirations and expectations.

Providing for Gifted and Talented Students

National Administration Guideline 1 (iiic) requires schools to identify students with gifted and talented needs and to develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to meet their needs. ERO is currently evaluating how schools nationally are providing for gifted and talented students.

Area of good performance

Initial planning: The school has made a useful start in establishing a policy and systems to meet the needs of Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students. This includes the appointment of a coordinator and committee to oversee the implementation of a programme. Teachers have participated in relevant professional development and been provided with criteria for the identification of students to be included in the various programmes. These developments provide a sound basis for meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented students.

Area for improvement

Implementation of the GATE programme: Teachers understanding about the identification of GATE students and designing programmes to meet their individual needs, is at an early stage. Further teacher understanding is needed to fully implement and extend the relevant programmes. Planning should involve students, parents and whānau in the process of identification and programme development.

Thinking about the Future

ERO is currently discussing with secondary schools how they are thinking about the future and what it might mean for their students.

The school reports that it has thought about the future and what it might mean for their students in the following ways:

- ICT developments;
- senior course developments;
- changes to the behaviour management system;
- future employment markets;
- a Scholarship development programme; and
- by encouraging students to take advantages of extra-curricula opportunities offered at the college.

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 Manawatu College has taken steps to prepared for such a pandemic.

Provision for International Students

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

Manawatu 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.

The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

Areas of good performance

Quality accommodation: The home stay coordinator monitors the accommodation offered to

exchange students and applies the same conditions to home stay parents that would apply to fee-paying students. She keeps a file on all home stay parents and all have been police vetted. This thorough approach ensures that exchange students arriving during the year can be accommodated immediately in appropriate homes.

Pastoral care: The dean of international students meets weekly with all exchange students to discuss their progress in all aspects of college life. This communication provides an important channel for students to share their achievements and concerns. Students feel valued and part of the college population.

Provision of English Language Support

Area of good performance

Use of resources: High quality English language support is being offered to those exchange students who need it. The teacher in charge is up to date in the use of Ministry of Education resources, and has developed a comprehensive programme to meet identified student needs.

Board Assurance On Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Manawatu 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.

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

Recommendation

ERO recommends that:

6.1 school leaders continue to facilitate ongoing whole school professional development, including external expertise as appropriate, on strengthening the links between assessment practice and professional practice.

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.

Ian Hill
Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

21 December 2007

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To the Parents and Community of Manawatu College

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Manawatu College.

Community Page

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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>.

Ian Hill
Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

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 is based on three review strands.

- School Specific Priorities - the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- Areas of National Interest - information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- Compliance with Legal Requirements - assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

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