

# Manawatu College Education Review

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## Disclaimer

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## School Statement

Prior to the review ERO offers schools the opportunity to provide some background in the form of the school's location and context, significant achievements since the last review, and issues being considered by the Board of Trustees.

The principal and board of trustees have provided a statement to accompany this report. This is attached to the signed copy of the confirmed report sent to the board of trustees. If the school's statement is not attached and you would like a copy, please contact the school.

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 (Year 9 - 15)
Decile rating	2
Teaching staff:	24.5
Roll generated entitlement	2.99
Other	27
Number of teachers	
School roll	322
Number of foreign (fee-paying) students	2
Gender composition	Female 51%, Male 49%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 55%, Māori 44%, Other ethnic groups 1%
Review team on site	June 2004
Date of this report	26 August 2004
Previous ERO reports	Accountability Review September 2001 Effectiveness Review September 1996 Assurance Audit July 1994 Review Report March 1991

## The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Manawatu College has developed strong links with its community and provides a wide range of appropriate courses for its students. A new initiative for the education of Year 9 and 10 students is having a positive impact. Well-maintained educational and sporting facilities provide extensive teaching and recreational resources for students. The college is well resourced to provide students with opportunities for elearning in all school programmes. The learning environment is conducive to students receiving a successful education.

This report includes an evaluation of the following areas: transition processes and outcomes for Year 9 students; student achievement; improving Māori students' achievement; the impact of e-learning on the quality of teaching; and student safety. This review finds that the college is performing to a high standard in these areas. Good performance and some aspects for improvement are identified.

An inviting and welcoming atmosphere is evident throughout the school. Pride in the college is apparent from trustees, staff and students. Students are interested and focused on their lessons. Interactions between teachers and learners and among students are very positive. Students are motivated to succeed through well-planned lessons and clear assessment strategies.

Enthusiastic teachers support students' learning and well being. A wide range of teaching strategies and carefully paced lessons are used. High expectations for student focus and success are evident. Teachers provide high level teaching in an encouraging environment. They are positive about recent change processes and acknowledge the resulting improvement in learning outcomes for students. Māori students experience success through good quality teaching, well-developed programmes and a high expectation to achieve.

Senior managers and staff successfully facilitate the transition of students between primary school and Year 9. Extensive involvement with contributing schools takes place in a number of ways, including the provision of extension classes and college students taking leadership roles in running sports activities in contributing schools. These activities familiarise potential students with college life. Year 9 students are competently taught in three core subjects in a homeroom situation. The curriculum has also been thoughtfully expanded in the junior school to give a wide range of learning opportunities.

The principal is a reflective leader who has a purposeful approach to change. The senior leadership and management team demonstrates effective collegial leadership. They successfully assist all teachers to improve outcomes for students.

Trustees, led by an experienced and knowledgeable chairman, have a wellconsidered vision

for the school and provide a sound balance of expertise. Clear objectives are articulated in their strategic plan. The board has established a valuable consultation process with parents and the contributing schools.

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

## School Specific Priorities

### The Focus of the Review

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 self-review 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 areas for the review:

- transition processes and outcomes for Year 9; and
- student achievement.

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

### Transition Processes and Outcomes for Year 9

#### Background

The college draws its students from a large number of smaller rural schools. As one of the objectives in its strategic plan the board recognised the need to have a caring and supportive environment for Year 9 students. Trustees and management also identified the successful transition of Year 8 to Year 9 and a settled introduction into college as priority targets.

A number of programmes are in place. A major change is the development of the Year 9 class structure. Four homeroom teachers provide a core programme.

Trustees asked ERO for independent feedback on the success of the initiatives. The board and ERO discussed, and ERO approved, an evaluation to assess whether the initiatives are making a difference to the learning environment and student achievement.

#### Areas of good performance

- Relationship building

The principal and senior staff communicate successfully and regularly with contributing

schools. The development of positive relationships has assisted management to collect valuable intake data and relate to contributing schools and prospective parents. Parents and potential students are clear about what the college has to offer.

- Year 9 homerooms

Year 9 students are successfully taught English, social studies and mathematics in homerooms by experienced teachers. Specialist teachers teach other subjects. A wide range of one-term or half year modules completes an extensive choice for Year 9. Students receive teaching at an appropriate level in a flexible curriculum. They work in an environment that is purposeful and includes varied learning activities. Initial surveys and data show that students enjoy their learning and achieve at appropriate levels.

- Curriculum development

Worthwhile weekly meetings take place between the junior syndicate teachers and subject heads of department. These meetings allow for structured programme planning. Department leaders give sound support for Year 9 teachers. This twoway dialogue is essential to the successful development of a coherent approach to curriculum planning, delivery, assessment and reporting.

- Achievement data

Teachers receive well-annotated achievement documentation at the beginning of the year. Data is based on contributing school results and testing by the college. Students are carefully placed into Year 9 classes and this assists with a positive learning introduction to secondary school work. Systems for monitoring and reporting progress during the year are comprehensive. Students' ongoing learning needs are carefully considered.

- Teacher planning

Unit and lesson plans have clear learning outcomes and are presented in ways that stimulate student interest. Thorough planning enables teachers to maintain a regular pace in their lessons and ensures that students are enthusiastic and on task. Learning outcomes for students are maximised.

- Teacher student relationships

Teachers demonstrate supportive attitudes in their relationships with students. Junior syndicate staff have consistent expectations for high standards of student work. They use a wide range of teaching strategies to support individual needs. Students respond by confidently participating in their learning tasks. They respect their teachers, work hard and achieve success.

- Support for contributing schools

College teachers offer extension courses in a range of subjects for students from the contributing schools. The schools appreciate these courses. College students also take

lunchtime activities in the outlying schools. Technology for Year 7 and 8 is also being centred at the college. Primary students gain a good insight into the operation of the school, which supports them with entry into Year 9.

## Areas for improvement

- Evaluation of the homeroom initiative

Success criteria for the homeroom initiative are not clear. The development of criteria needs consideration to support an evaluation of the programme's merit and worth. Clear long-term planning with objective setting and achievement criteria would enable management and the board to feel confident that the Year 9 programme is suitable and successful in increasing student achievement.

- Curriculum linkage

Links between curriculum areas are not fully developed. Teaching staff and heads of department continue to review teaching units to assist in developing skill linkages across curriculum. In particular, further consideration of possible skill integration between English and social studies should promote positive student outcomes.

## Student Achievement

### Background

As an outcome of ongoing review of external examination results, the board places high priority on improving student academic achievement. The principal and the board implement strategies to improve achievement levels and assist students to experience successful outcomes. Regular review of progress takes place.

The board welcomed an external evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies leading to improving student academic achievement. ERO approved this focus area.

### Areas of good performance

- Expectations for student achievement

Comprehensive, schoolwide expectations for student achievement are evident at all levels of planning. The board's strategic plan provides overarching goals to improve teaching and learning, with specific targets to improve levels of achievement. These goals are reflected in departmental objectives and clearly outlined indicators. Most departments share specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria with students at the beginning of modules of work and during each lesson. Well planned strategies to raise expectations assist all students in understanding what is required to achieve at the appropriate level.

- Improving achievement in the junior school

The introduction in 2003 of the Manawatu College Certificate of Educational Achievement

(MAC) for Year 9 and 10 students was purposely designed to assist students to improve academic success during secondary school years. The MAC programme is well planned and carefully implemented by supportive staff. Constant review leads to modifications and improvements of the programme.

- Monitoring progress

All departments consistently monitor the progress of students by awarding credits for academic achievement. These credits relate to assessment results and effort in class and homework activities. Students understand and respond well to the realistic goal to achieve the credits required to graduate to the next year level.

Although it is too soon to evaluate the full impact on improving academic achievement, MAC is making a significant difference in improving student motivation and work habits.

- Use of assessment information

Comprehensive and extensive assessment information from all subject areas is collected, recorded and carefully analysed to support student learning. This information is appropriately used for a variety of purposes. Specific individual learning needs are identified and students are placed in classes or programmes designed to meet their needs. Variations in achievement of groups of students in relation to gender or ethnicity are identified and carefully monitored in each subject area.

Analysis of class results helps teachers track progress of the class throughout the year and leads to review and modification of programme planning and implementation. Teachers use assessment information effectively to support high expectations and respond to students' learning needs

- Students learning support

A range of successful strategies both within classes and schoolwide address identified learning needs. These strategies include:

- - effective use of the learning support centre. This centre supports students on individual learning programmes such as correspondence; English as a Second Language; students needing individual assistance; and students needing time out from regular class programmes. Students benefit from individual support and encouragement;
- - additional literacy and numeracy support for identified Year 9 and 10 students. Progress of these students is well monitored and tracked. Results indicate students make gains in achievement levels and show increased motivation for reading;
- - the use of trained teacher aides, both in learning support centre and classrooms, to provide additional assistance for individual students and enhance on task behaviour;
- - the mentoring of senior students. Many students benefit through teachers' availability to meet regularly with them to discuss progress and assist with their learning needs; and
- - career and course selection assistance. Students value the individual assistance and

advice available when considering appropriate school courses or making decisions regarding future employment or tertiary study.

- Senior programmes

Senior courses are designed to appropriately meet a variety of learning needs. Students have opportunities to choose courses that lead to tertiary or university courses as well as more vocationally based courses. The introduction of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at Level 1, 2 and 3, incorporating useful combinations of both unit standards and achievement standards in many subjects, enhances opportunities for gaining credits.

Additional programmes such as Gateway, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and other vocationally based courses funded by Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) have increased opportunities for students to achieve successful outcomes. Most senior students experience success at an appropriate level.

- Recognising and reporting student achievement

The board receives high quality, detailed annual reports from each department that includes analysis of student assessment data and evaluation of courses. In addition, regular reports from the principal inform the board about students' academic progress and the appropriateness of courses. This information assists the board in decision making. All students can achieve academic awards by demonstrating an excellent standard of achievement or personal improvement in performance. Students' academic progress is recognised and valued and their successes celebrated and appropriately reported.

- Information for parents

Parents are well informed about the academic achievement of students through a variety of ways. Many parents receive personal letters from teachers recognising and praising the achievements or efforts of their children. Students gaining academic awards are listed in the college newsletter. Written reports, three times a year, provide valuable information to parents about levels of success, effort and motivation for learning.

## Areas for improvement

- Written feedback to students

The quality and usefulness of written feedback to students varies. Most teachers provide valuable verbal feedback and individually discuss assessment results with students. Some teachers write purposeful comments that assist students to understand and implement improvement in their learning. More consistency from all teachers in written comments, both in students' workbooks and on formal reports, should provide students with clearer direction on how to improve achievement.

- Student goal setting

Individual student goal setting is not widely used throughout the school. Most departments successfully share specific learning intentions with students at the beginning of modules

and lessons. The next step is to assist students to recognise and clarify their own learning goals and regularly review these. Regular goal setting should help students take increased ownership of their learning.

## Areas Of Specific Government Interest

### Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to the Government. This information will be used as the basis for long term and systemic educational improvement.

ERO collected information about Manawatu College. These findings are included in this report to ensure that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

### Current Areas of Specific Government Interest

ERO is currently collecting information for reports to the Government on:

- improving Māori student achievement; and
- impact of e-learning on the quality of teaching.

### Improving Māori Student Achievement

The school has collected comprehensive information about Māori student achievement in all major learning areas. Analysis of the information showed that in 2003/2004 there was very little difference in achievement between Māori and nonMāori junior students.

The information collected for junior students is based on English and mathematics testing and the MAC results. The MAC certificate is in its second year and credits are awarded for effort, academic achievement and an expectation of 85% attendance. The statistics collected show that the MAC certificate results for this year are an improvement on the results from 2003.

The school's annual plan and the Māori achievement policy reflect the need to continue to aim to raise Māori achievement in Manawatu College. However, data shows an improvement in Māori achievement over the past year.

NCEA results showed significant improvement from 2002 with 80% of students achieving either unit or achievement standards. Māori students achieve above the national level as reported in the statistics provided by NZQA.

Information on stand-downs and suspensions is collected and analysed. Stand-downs of Māori students were at 53% and non-Māori 46% of the total. Suspensions of Māori students were significantly less at 33% compared with non-Māori at 62%.

The school has developed several successful initiatives in place to improve educational outcomes for the students. These include:

- Extension classes for Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 that have introduced students to the college environment at an early age and provided extension activities in a range of subjects. Māori students feel comfortable when they enter college;
- The employment of primary trained teachers, three of who identify as Māori, who teach in 'home rooms'. Students are grouped together according to specific needs. Māori students engage in learning, confidently answer questions and interact well;
- The MAC certificate that addresses some of the concerns identified by the college through self-review processes. Each subject links clear learning outcomes to a credit value. Māori students are motivated to achieve the certificate, which awards effort as well as academic achievement;
- The way in which the successes of Māori students are celebrated at the college. Students are commended in special assemblies and letters recognising good work are sent home to parents. Parents and students attend teacher interviews to discuss next steps for learning;
- The Māori performing arts programmes that have been introduced to the school have a high profile. The programmes, including the kapahaka group and senior courses, offer students the opportunity to gain credits in the performing arts; and
- Tu Tangata programme that supports students identified 'at risk'. Very small groups of students are mentored and instructed until ready to return to the classroom.

Policies, plans and strategies for improving the achievement of Māori students have been developed. These targets have been made known to the community through the Māori achievement committee and whanau meetings. Staff have undertaken significant professional development and continue to develop their knowledge aimed at improving Māori achievement.

### Impact of E-learning on the Quality of Teaching

E-learning is using Information Communication Technologies (ICT), in flexible ways to promote student learning and achievement. E-learning is referred to in all National Curriculum statements. Boards of trustees are expected to ensure that all students have appropriate opportunities to engage in e-learning.

The school leadership effectively promotes and supports e-learning in this school. Teaching programmes adequately facilitate student engagement in e-learning. Teachers demonstrate

that they do not always have the knowledge and skills to effectively integrate e-learning opportunities into their teaching programmes. The school's e-learning programmes adequately provide opportunities for all students to enhance their learning and achievement.

The college is well resourced to provide students with opportunities for e-learning. Computer Studies programmes are an integrated part of the school curriculum and students have the opportunity to achieve NCEA unit standards at Levels 1 - 4 in the senior school. The self-paced programmes cater for the individual learning needs of students.

Most other curriculum areas include e-learning within their programmes and the school has a booking system that supports equal access to the computing facilities.

Some teachers are highly skilled in the area of e-learning. Staff receive considerable professional development in the use of computers for delivery of lessons, student learning and reporting to parents.

## 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 investigations did not reveal any areas for concern. However, in order to improve practice the board should ensure that all staff appraisals are completed this year. A new performance management process has been developed and requires implementation.

## Recommendations

ERO and the board have developed the following recommendations that:

- 6.1 college staff continue to develop a clear long term plan with success criteria to evaluate the success of the Year 9 homeroom initiative; and
- 6.2 senior staff and heads of department develop and implement ways to improve consistency in providing students with written guidance for next steps learning that leads to improved goal setting.

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

signed

Diana Anderson  
Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

26 August 2004

26 August 2004

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>.

signed

Diana Anderson  
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 Specific Government 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.

## Review Coverage

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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.