



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Papakura High School
Papakura, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Papakura High School

This review is designed to support schools that were experiencing difficulties at the time of the last review. ERO provides ongoing evaluation over the course of one-to-two years as the school works to improve its overall performance

6nd build its self-review capability.

This report answers key questions about the school's background and the context for the review. The report also provides an evaluation of how effectively the school is addressing areas identified for review and development and the quality of its practices and systems for sustaining performance and ongoing improvement.

Findings

1 Background and Context

What is the background and context for this school's review?

Papakura High School is a large secondary school catering for 886 students from Years 9 to 13. The roll numbers reflect significant growth since 2019. Māori students make up 60 percent of the roll and many whakapapa to Ngāpuhi. Students from Pacific heritage are 30 percent of the roll with Samoan, Tongan and Cook Island as the largest groups.

The school has a longstanding relationship with Ngāti Tamaoho and connections to Tainui - Waikato Kīngitanga and the local Papakura marae. The school enjoys strong support and guidance from a local kaumatua.

The school has recently appointed an experienced principal at the start of 2021. A significant number of new staff have also been appointed, including heads of departments, teachers, and a Learning Support Coordinator (LSC). Roll growth has contributed to this expansion of staffing.

The board of trustees elected a new chairperson in February 2020, and three community whānau representatives joined the board towards the end of 2019. The board has also retained some experienced members and is more representative of the Papakura community.

The Ministry of Education appointed a Limited Statutory Manager (LSM) in mid-2018. This role assisted the board to undertake curriculum and achievement reporting and employment responsibilities. The LSM and external expertise supported the board through the new principal's appointment process. The LSM completed her role with the school in August 2021.

The school continues to be a member of the Kāhui Ako ki Papakura. The new principal is focused on growing meaningful whānau engagement and connecting with the school's wider community. The school has been involved in a longitudinal evaluation process with ERO to support continuous school improvement.

2 Review and Development

How effectively is the school addressing its priorities for review and development?

Priorities identified for review and development

ERO identified four priority areas to monitor and evaluate school progress and performance to improve student outcomes. These are:

- the provision of a positive and safe school culture and student wellbeing services
- learner outcomes: attendance, learning opportunities, progress and achievement
- teaching effectiveness and impact for students
- leadership effectiveness and impact for students.

The provision of a safe and positive school culture and student wellbeing services

A sustained focus on improving school conditions and services continues to support student wellbeing and learning. This is strengthening students' sense of belonging and success as learners. Promoting a positive and supportive learning environment for students is a continuing priority for school leaders.

The school culture is increasingly inclusive and celebrates students' diverse cultures, languages and identities. Te ao Māori is becoming well embedded in school practices and events. Students take pride in being a member of the school community and in representing their school. This is an area of significant progress and improvement.

Whānau structures have progressed and strengthened to focus on growing students' engagement and success as learners. Whānau staff and student leadership roles continue to expand. These key school structures support students' sense of belonging and are broadening learning opportunities, including some careers education. Tuakana/teina practices are being enhanced.

The student support and services team works collaboratively in response to students' changing requirements. Innovative approaches are used to enable students to seamlessly access services, including external agencies, when needed. The Ka Ora, Ka Ako lunch scheme has been well implemented with students enjoying daily access to a range of healthy lunches.

The board has received a comprehensive report of students' access to the school's wellbeing services. The school is about to undertake a wellbeing survey for students, staff, and the parent/whānau community. This should help identify areas of strength and areas that require additional targeted actions to continue to build the school community's resilience and capacity to navigate change.

Learner outcomes: attendance, learning opportunities, progress and achievement

Attendance levels have increased since 2019, with a significant boost after COVID-19 closures in 2020. An annual school improvement target and specific resources continue to focus on further increasing attendance levels to ensure more students are actively participating in learning.

School processes for managing stand downs showed significant improvement in 2020. While student stand down numbers have increased in 2021, suspensions continue to be very low. This reflects a commitment to finding personalised pathways, increasing supports and addressing incidents to reinforce school values and expected behaviours.

Curriculum programmes continue to expand to respond to student interest including the service academy, Rūmaki Reo, access to trades, and other work and study pathways. There is a proactive approach to ensure students can access more global learning opportunities through digital technologies. Students access the virtual learning network (VLN) for curriculum areas not yet available on site.

Student leadership continues to grow through a planned and progressive approach from Years 9 to 13. There is recognition of the importance of developing this in a deliberate and considered way. Student perspectives are valued and increasingly used to inform school improvements. This remains an ongoing focus to ensure student views are known and responded to.

Students value the increasing breadth of co-curricular activities. These include sports, cultural events, the arts, and growth of clubs particularly for coding and other higher interest areas. Students appreciate having access to and participating in more learning experiences inside and outside of school. Police studies is valued as a possible future pathway.

The learning support area of the school has been strengthened by the appointment of the LSC, which should assist with the current review of this critical area. This work should help strengthen the role of connected learning supports for all students that require assistance to be successful learners. It should also improve the depth of evaluation and reporting to the board in relation to the impact of learning support services.

Years 9 and 10 progress and achievement

Te Tohu Rangatira is the school learning and engagement approach for Year 10 students. It continues to provide students with a clear framework to build self-management skills and increase ownership of their learning. This contributes to students' ability to better manage learning for National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) in Year 11. Building on the success of Te Tohu, the Year 9 Kia Puawai programme has begun and focuses on students' transition to high school and goal setting before entering the Year 10 Te Tohu programme.

The board received Years 9 and 10 student achievement information for reading and mathematics based on the Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT). Writing data based on the Assessment Tools for Learning (asTTle) was also reported. This data indicates that many students require more targeted support to improve their literacy and mathematical knowledge and skills.

Trustees are aware of the importance of strengthening their achievement targets for Years 9 and 10 and having complete data sets. More strategic actions are needed to enable students to make accelerated progress in foundational learning skills. This will be essential for changes coming to NCEA. More detailed analysis and reporting would help the board and school leaders to earlier identify specific groups of students who require more support and intervention. Improving teacher planning to better cater for student learning requirements is a critical area for strategy and focus.

NCEA and future pathways

The school is making a positive difference in NCEA achievement. Since 2018, sustained progress is evident in lifting student success in NCEA Levels 1 to 3. This is reflected between 2019 and 2020 in the increased numbers of students leaving school with at least NCEA Level 2.

Students' overall success in NCEA Levels 1 and 2 qualifications has improved significantly between 2018 and 2020 to be just above other similar schools. A positive lift in NCEA Level 3 is also evident and expectations continue to increase. More students are engaged in external examinations, and teaching is improving to ensure students can equitably access these opportunities.

University Entrance (UE) results rose but still remain low compared with similar schools. Females at all year levels have made valuable gains. Male Level 3 and UE results increased but declined in NCEA Levels 1 and 2. The school is making good use of this information and continuing to explore a range of pathways for all students, particularly males, to have greater success.

Qualification success for Māori students lifted significantly in NCEA Levels 2 and 3 and declined slightly at Level 1 in 2020. NCEA Levels 2 and 3 results are above the national average and other similar schools. Pacific student NCEA results have also improved since 2018 with more progress at NCEA Level 3. Pacific students' NCEA results exceed similar schools nationally.

There is a sustained focus on lifting the quality of qualifications, resulting in more subject and certificate merit and excellence endorsements. Continuing to improve the achievement and quality of NCEA qualifications, merit and excellence endorsements and vocational pathways remains the next key priority.

Strategic work in providing students with a breadth of pathways is strongly evident. This includes work with trades academies for access to building careers and mechanical pathways at Manurewa High Trades Academy (MHTA). Greater access to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) pathways is also a priority in this school. Board reporting on this area is planned to enable trustees to consider a wider range of valued student outcomes.

Teaching effectiveness and impact for students

Teaching effectiveness continues to develop, and more teachers are demonstrating culturally responsive and adaptive practices that purposefully engage students in learning. This continues to be a long-term priority for teacher development. Other priorities include strengthening the overall curriculum framework and implementing school expectations for effective teaching.

The lead team for teaching and learning worked through 2020 to refresh the pou that underpin teaching practice expectations using research and consultation with staff. The four new pou are becoming better understood as staff explore what these mean in teaching practice. The school values were recently refreshed as part of this work. Further consideration of future school structures are being explored by a group focused on strategic curriculum developments.

Well planned school processes support teachers to grow their professional practice. This includes the pedagogical lead team that provides feedback on teaching and offers suggestions. A critical friend assists each teacher to inquire into the pou, their link to the standards for teachers and other aspects of teaching. Observational feedback helps with critical reflections as part of the professional growth cycle. A programme of induction and mentoring is in place to assist new teachers.

Curriculum leaders continue to improve their ability to inquire and evaluate progress and achievement in their learning areas. They report annually on NCEA results and successes. Many middle leaders reflect on what actions improved learning and NCEA results. Increasing the focus on teaching strategies that worked would be helpful in all the curriculum reports. Continuing to strengthen the depth of inquiry and evaluation to guide the board's strategic curriculum decisions is a next step.

Early progress is noted with implementing the new mathematics professional development for teachers to help students make better progress in Years 9 and 10. This work is a worthwhile key focus area. It has the potential to enable more students to have equitable access to the senior curriculum areas that use mathematical knowledge and skills.

The board is directly funding two key student initiatives for 2021 and 2022. Intended outcomes and accountabilities for the services academy and Rūmaki Reo programme are clearly articulated. Trustees understand the importance of providing programmes, lifting expectations, having clear intended student outcomes, to ensure student outcomes progress over time.

Leadership effectiveness and impact for students

Significant growth in professional leadership continues to sustain ongoing improvements for students, staff, whānau, and the community. School leaders are collaborative and critically reflective about their roles and responsibilities.

The use of evidence, ongoing monitoring and evaluative thinking has significantly progressed. Senior and middle leaders, along with teachers, now access opportunities that enable them to grow their leadership skills. These include developing external professional leadership mentoring and networks.

The stewardship capacity of the board has increased significantly. Trustees have a clearer understanding about their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities to students, staff and whānau. Better scrutiny of data and clarity around processes is evident. Whānau and family engagement in school events continues to grow. Trustees are focused on lifting equity and excellence in opportunities and outcomes.

External expertise is well used to support ongoing improvement. This includes the LSM's support for employment and curriculum matters. New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) regularly provide targeted training to support the board to proactively respond to new requirements. There is a systematic approach to reviewing policies, procedures and practices that guide school operations. Significant progress is noted in the depth of review and readiness to manage legislative changes.

3 Sustainable performance and self review

How well placed is the school to sustain and continue to improve and review its performance?

The school is much better placed to sustain and to continue to improve its performance for students. School leaders operate collaboratively, display adaptive leadership practices and have made significant growth.

The board has made significant progress in building its stewardship effectiveness since 2019. Trustees and leaders work constructively to manage change. Board expectations for resourcing decisions to have a clear impact on student outcomes have strengthened. There is a clear focus on lifting expectations for students' success over time.

Trustees continue to work towards expanding and deepening the school's connections with Ngāti Tamaoho iwi and whānau Māori. The board is well positioned to implement the new requirements in the *Education and Training Act 2020*. This includes student, whānau and community consultation for redeveloping the school curriculum and the enabling strategic plan.

Key next steps

School leaders and the board recognise the importance of sustaining the positive improvement in student outcomes. To continue this momentum, the design of the school curriculum needs to be carefully planned and systematically implemented. This includes:

- developing the overarching curriculum framework for giving effect to *The New Zealand Curriculum* values, key competencies and curriculum areas and the key role of literacy

- continuing to develop the curriculum framework for *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* for Rūmaki Reo and its place within the school's overall curriculum
- building teacher and student understanding of assessment for learning as part of students' ownership of their learning
- further clarifying the expectations for effective culturally responsive and adaptive teaching and how it links to and enacts the four school pou
- continuing to develop suitable implementation structures for the curriculum, including consideration of how these will support equitable access to the curriculum, particularly for Years 9 and 10 students.

The board and school leaders should continue to build on the valuable progress made in data analysis and reporting to better guide trustees' strategic resourcing decisions for improving valued outcomes for students. Priorities include:

- using Years 9 and 10 progress and achievement reports in literacy and mathematics to identify and regularly monitor students who require extra support to improve their progress and achievement
- sustaining a collective focus on the intended outcomes for the services academy and Rūmaki Reo, including regular progress reports towards achieving these goals.

The board, leaders and staff should continue to build on the improved relational trust with the school community to increase whānau and local iwi engagement. This includes consultation and learning partnerships to develop:

- a graduate profile, refresh the school curriculum and school strategic plan
- specific provisions for Pacific students and families to increase equity and excellence.

4 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school completed the *ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklists*. 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
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the *Children's Act 2014*.

The board and school leaders have undertaken a comprehensive review of their policies, procedures and practices. They have identified the following actions:

- consult with the school community at least every two years to adopt a statement on the delivery of the health curriculum [Section 91 Education and Training Act 2020]
- in consultation with the school's Māori community, develop and make known to the school's community policies, plans and targets for improving the progress and achievement of Māori students. [NAG 1(e)].

The board and school leaders identified that they will further strengthen school guidelines for:

- supporting students with severe behavioural requirements and review restraint provisions, training and practices to better reflect recent legislative changes.

5 Recommendations

Recommendations, including any to other agencies for ongoing or additional support.

ERO recommends that the school continue to work with external curriculum expertise, including the Ministry of Education to design and implement the school curriculum. This includes progressing the ongoing work in redeveloping the school's learning support provision.

6 Conclusion

Papakura High School has made significant improvement in its overall performance. Leadership have a continued focus on improving teaching practice and this is leading to accelerated progress for students at risk of not achieving, particularly in NCEA.

The board receives better student achievement information and are able to make informed resourcing decisions. The board is much better placed to sustain ongoing school improvement for students, staff, whānau and the wider school community.

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement is that Papakura High School has made very good progress and will transition into ERO's School: Evaluation for Improvement | Te Ara Huarau approach.



Phil Cowie
Acting Director Review and Improvement Services (Northern)
Northern Region - Te Tai Raki

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About the school

[The Education Counts website provides further information about the school's student population, student engagement and student achievement.](#)