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Background

Introduction

The confirmed Education Review Office (ERO) review of Kaikoura High School in December 2008 signalled a return review within 12 months.

This review evaluates the extent and effectiveness of actions the school has taken towards addressing issues specified in the previous review and/or any additional areas identified since that review.

This review report was prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

Terms of Reference

- This review is based on an evaluation of the performance of the Kaikoura High School Board of Trustees and management in relation to areas identified in the December 2008 ERO report or issues identified since that review. The terms of reference for this review are to investigate: the quality and use of student achievement information in teaching and learning, particularly in Years 7 to 10;

- the quality of curriculum design in mathematics for Years 9 to 10 students;
- consultation with Māori community and the review of Māori initiatives;
- the roles of the senior managers;
- the quality of governance; and
- compliance issues raised in the 2008 ERO report.

About the School

Location	Kaikoura
Ministry of Education profile number	307
School type	Secondary (Year 7 - 15)
Decile rating[1]	4
Teaching staff:	24.41
Roll generated entitlement	25
Number of teachers	
School roll	251
Gender composition	Girls 55%; Boys 45%
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā 59%; Māori 35%; Other 6%
Special features	Adult Community Education (ACE) Facility
Review team on site	November 2009
Date of this report	29 January 2010
Previous ERO reports	Education Review December 2008 Supplementary Review August 2006 Supplementary Review December 2005 Supplementary Review June 2004 Education Review June 2003 Supplementary Review June 2002

Discretionary Review March 2001
Discretionary Review March 2000
Discretionary Review June 1999
Accountability Review January 1999
Assurance Audit September 1993
Review Report August 1990

The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Kaikoura High School is located in the seaside township of Kaikoura and provides education for students in Years 7 to 13. Students and staff are very positive about changes that have been made since the appointment of a new principal in Term 3, 2009.

The 2008 ERO report identified a number of issues related to learning and teaching, the achievement of Māori students, senior management, governance and compliance. ERO returned to the school within 12 months to evaluate the progress that had been made in addressing these issues.

The board, principal and teachers have made progress in addressing the recommendations of the 2008 ERO review. In February, 2009 the commissioner appointed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) completed his term. The board received the resignation of the principal in March, 2009. Since then, the board has focused on the appointment of a new principal, in consultation with the staff and community.

The new principal has addressed some of the main issues identified in the 2008 ERO report with a clear mandate from the board. ERO's interviews with staff, students, members of the board and the community identified the positive impact the principal has had on the school culture in a short time. The development of a set of core school values has provided a shared understanding about the expectations for improved relationships. However, the effectiveness of the senior leadership team remains a concern for the board and principal.

The quality of learning and teaching in Years 7 to 10 is generally more consistent. ERO observed aspects of good teaching in most classrooms. There is now a greater focus on learning and teaching than on managing behaviour. Students would benefit from teachers' increased awareness and use of effective teaching practices.

Teachers are gathering a range of achievement information from a variety of national and in-class assessments. The next step for senior leaders is to develop guidelines and expectations for teachers for assessing the achievement and progress of Years 7 to 10 students.

The board and principal have consulted with the parents of Māori students and the wider Māori

community using a variety of approaches. These methods have included surveys, community meetings and informal discussions. The board and principal now need to develop a strategic plan that provides direction for them to improve Māori student participation, engagement and achievement.

The board is focused on improving its governance role and raising the performance of the school. However, trustees have yet to develop a systematic approach to strategic and annual planning and self review. They have yet to set appropriate and challenging student achievement targets. The board is currently receiving external support to help them address a financial matter.

Most of the compliance issues identified in the 2008 ERO report have been addressed by the board.

While the board, principal and teachers have made good progress since the 2008 review, it is too soon for ERO and the school to evaluate fully the impact and sustainability of the changes made. ERO has requested the board supplies a plan outlining how the actions and recommendations in this report will be implemented.

Future Action

ERO intends to carry out another review in 24 months to evaluate the extent to which improvements begun have been sustained and those planned have been implemented.

Findings

The Quality of Learning and Teaching and Use of Student Achievement Information in Years 7 to 10

Background

At the time of the last review, ERO recommended that senior leaders needed to clearly define school-wide expectations for effective teaching practice. These practices needed to be part of the school's strategic plan, professional development and performance management.

The principal and senior leaders had not developed consistent and meaningful assessment guidelines. Most subject assessments did not show students' progress in relation to national expectations. Teachers were less likely to provide learning programmes that matched students' prior achievements and current learning needs.

Areas of progress

- Relationships. ERO observed, and students confirmed, that there are now more positive, supportive and friendly relationships between teachers and students and students with each

other. Teachers know students and their families well. Relationships have been enhanced by the presence and work of the new principal. He is working with the school community to develop a set of values that underpin the way that members of the school community should relate to one another. Students and teachers spoken with by ERO appreciated these clear expectations to guide positive relationships.

- · Focus on learning. Teachers and students reported, and ERO observed, that there is now a greater focus on learning and teaching rather than on managing behaviour. Senior managers reported a decrease in incidents of inappropriate behaviour within and beyond the classroom. They have identified that they are now in a position to review pastoral care structures in order to provide a greater focus on improving learning outcomes for students. Recent professional development has focused more on improving teaching practices.
- · Teaching practices. ERO observed examples of teaching practices that are known to improve student engagement and achievement. These included:
 - · sharing the purpose of the learning, what students needed to do and how they would achieve success;
 - · making connections with previous learning and students' own knowledge;
 - · using local contexts to enhance learning;
 - · using a variety of group and practical activities;
 - · cross-curricular sharing of knowledge and themes;
 - · good questioning techniques;
 - · teachers supporting, guiding and mentoring students; and,
 - · effective oral feedback and feed forward.

In these classrooms, students were more actively engaged in their learning.

- · Assessment information. Teachers are gathering a range of achievement information from national assessments and class assessments. Some of this information is stored electronically and is available to all staff. In numeracy and literacy, teachers are able to show and report on student progress against levels in the New Zealand Curriculum. Teachers in other curriculum areas are making considerable efforts to show students' progress against these levels.

Areas for further improvement

- · Developing a vision for teaching and learning. The board, principal and teachers now need to reflect the school's values in their development of what constitutes high quality teaching and learning. Senior leaders need to document these high quality practices and ensure that they are used in all classrooms. These expectations should also be reflected in the school's strategic

goals, annual planning, departmental goals, professional development programme and teachers' performance management. All students are likely to benefit when there is consistent use by teachers of these high quality practices in all classrooms.

- Use of student achievement information. Teachers could make greater use of student achievement information through:
 - strengthening links with contributing schools to increase teachers' awareness of the progressions in learning;
 - analysing achievement and progress of cohorts and groups of students over time;
 - continuing to develop individual profiles for students to show all round achievement, progress and success over time;
 - using the information to reflect on their teaching practices and how they can better meet students' learning needs;
 - sharing achievement information with students so that they know what progress they are making and their next steps in learning;
 - refining the descriptors used in reporting to parents so that students' progress is more accurately shown; and,
 - more detailed reporting to the board on the achievement and progress of students against national expectations in the New Zealand Curriculum.

Senior leaders now need to develop clear guidelines and expectations for teachers in assessing the achievement and progress of students in Years 7 to 10. [Recommendation 4.1]

The Quality of Curriculum Design in Mathematics for Years 9 to 10 Students

Background

When ERO visited the school in 2008, the head of department in mathematics was on leave. Students in some classes were not receiving good quality teaching in mathematics. ERO recommended that the head of department needed to establish better guidelines for mathematics teaching, provide better resources and clearer learning expectations for students.

Area of progress

- Initiatives to improve teaching and learning. The head of department has introduced some measures to improve outcomes for students in mathematics. He has re-written the mathematics scheme and guidelines for teachers in Years 7 to 10. He has sought external advice from a mathematics adviser, supported other teachers and ensured that there are adequate resources to support the programmes. He is beginning to develop more student-centred approaches in planning programmes of learning and assessment.

Area for further improvement

- Extending good teaching practices. Teachers in the mathematics department could now extend their use of a range of teaching strategies that are likely to more effectively engage Year 9 and 10 students in their learning. These practices could include:
 - sharing expectations about what constitutes high quality learning and teaching in mathematics with teachers and students;
 - a greater focus on planning activities and lessons that will cater for the range of learning needs, interests and strengths of students; and,
 - encouraging students to take more ownership of and pride in their learning and progress.

In addition, the head of department needs to extend the reporting of Years 9 and 10 student progress and achievement in mathematics to the board of trustees. [Recommendation 4.2]

The Achievement of Māori Students

Background

The 2008 ERO report noted that the board had not yet consulted with the Māori community to develop and make known plans and targets for improving Māori student achievement. The board, principal and teachers needed to review Māori initiatives. They also needed to survey Māori students and parents regularly to seek their opinions on matters that directly affected the needs of Māori students.

Areas of progress

- Consultation with the Māori community. The board and the principal have consulted with the parents of Māori students and the Māori community to develop common understandings about ways to improve outcomes for Māori students. The principal uses the local marae facilities one day a week as a meeting place for parents and the community. He has used the school motto, Tama Tu Tama Ora, as the foundation for the development of a set of core school values. These actions are a positive way to increase participation by the Māori community in the school.
- Review of Māori initiatives. The principal has completed a school-wide survey of students and staff to see how well students' needs are being met, including Māori students. Generally, Māori students were positive about the improvements in relationships with teachers and appreciated the changes made since the arrival of the principal. The weekly meetings at the marae are ensuring that the views of the parents of Māori students and the wider Māori community are heard.

Area for further improvement

- Strategic planning for Māori student achievement. The board, principal and teachers, in consultation with the Māori community, have discussed and developed a range of initiatives to improve learning outcomes for Māori students. They now need to develop a school-wide strategic plan that provides a clear direction for this to occur. This process should include the school's vision and expectations for Māori student achievement and all aspects of teaching and learning

that will improve outcomes for Māori students. The annual targets that the principal and board set for Māori student achievement need to be more specific and measurable. [Recommendation 4.1 and Action 5.1]

The Roles of the Senior Managers

Background

The 2008 ERO report identified a number of issues related to the professional roles and working relationships of the senior leadership team. Despite the rigour of an external appraisal of the senior managers' team in 2007, there had been very little improvement.

Area of progress

- Leadership. The recently appointed principal has had a positive impact on how students and teachers feel about their school. Teachers told ERO that there is now a greater sense of direction, clearer expectations and a focus on respectful relationships and good communication. The principal is working with the school community to develop the values that are reflected in the school's motto and embed these in the culture of the school. Students and teachers told ERO that they feel more confident about the direction and success of the school.

Area for further improvement

- Roles and expectations for leaders. The working relationships among the senior leadership team are still not effective. The new principal has already begun to address this issue as directed by the board. He now needs to work with both the board and external support to revise and clarify senior leaders' roles and responsibilities and develop clear expectations and outcomes for their professional performance and conduct. [Recommendation 4.3]

The Quality of Governance

Background

In February 2009, the commissioner, appointed by the Ministry of Education, (MoE) completed his term. In March, 2009 the board received the resignation of the principal. Since then, the board has focused on the appointment and induction of a new principal. The board consulted with the community and staff about what they wanted in a new principal. Shortly after the appointment of the new principal, the board was faced with the deterioration in the financial circumstances of the school.

Areas of progress

- Appointment of the new principal. The board had used a good process for the appointment of the new principal. Trustees consulted the school community before developing their criteria for selection. They identified the main issues for the school and gave the new principal specific direction about what they expected of him.
- Reflective practice. Trustees are united in their commitment to improve their governance roles

and raise the performance of the school. They recognise the need to seek external advice and support to increase their capability. They have sought support for governance training and guidance in financial matters. They have improved their communication with staff. They are now asking for more consistent and detailed student achievement information from managers. The board is now in a good position to work effectively with the principal in providing good governance for the school.

Areas for further improvement

- Planning and review. The board has yet to develop a systematic approach to strategic and annual planning and self review. This process includes the development of appropriate and challenging student achievement targets. Trustees are aware that these are the next steps for them in lifting student achievement across all year levels. [Recommendation 4.1 and Action 5.1]
- Extending board capability. The board has identified that it needs to continue to build its knowledge and skills in governance matters. For example, during the review, ERO became aware that aspects of financial management needed to be addressed. The board is receiving external support from a MoE adviser to deal with this matter.

Compliance

The board and principal have responded positively to the compliance concerns mentioned in the previous ERO Review. Sound procedures are now in place for the approval of EOTC activities. However, it is time to review these procedures and associated documentation in the light of the new EOTC guidelines. Current documentation for the approval of EOTC activities, viewed by ERO, was not always completed even though the trip had been approved.

ERO recommends that in order to review current practice the board should:

- review procedures and documentation for the approval of EOTC activities and ensure that these procedures are always completed before trips are approved; and,
- formally delegate responsibility for the approval of EOTC activities annually.

The board charter does not meet MoE requirements. It does not meet all of the provisions outlined in sections 61 to 62 of the Education Act (1989). The MoE plans to work with the board to develop the charter. In particular, the board needs to set appropriate and challenging achievement targets to improve student achievement. [Action 5.1]

Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees developed the following recommendations.

4.1 The board and principal complete a strategic plan that includes self-review processes and links

to the annual plan, department plans and the performance management system.

4.2 Senior managers and teachers develop teaching and assessment guidelines and expectations for Years 7 to 10 students.

4.3 The board and principal develop and monitor clear expectations and outcomes for senior leaders' professional performance and conduct.

Actions Required

In order to meet its agreed accountabilities, the board must:

5.1 meet MoE requirements for planning and reporting and each year set appropriate and challenging achievement targets to improve student achievement.

[School Charter; s61 Education Act 1989 and s62 Education Act 1989]

Future Action

ERO intends to carry out another review in 24 months to evaluate the extent to which improvements begun have been sustained and those planned have been implemented.

Graham Randell

National Manager Review Services

Southern Region

29 January 2010

29 January 2010

To the Parents and Community of Kaikoura High School

This review evaluates the extent and effectiveness of actions the school has taken towards addressing issues specified in the previous review and/or any additional areas identified since that review.

The Education Review Office [ERO] evaluation of Kaikoura High School follows.

Community Page

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Review Coverage

When ERO has reviewed a school we encourage boards to inform their community of any follow-up action they plan to do. You should talk to the board or principal if you have any questions about this evaluation, the full ERO report or their future intentions.

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

Graham Randell

National Manager Review Services

Southern Region

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