

**Piopio College
Piopio, King Country**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Piopio College

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 and 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?

Piopio College is a co-educational secondary school for students in Years 7 to 13. Students come from the township of Piopio, and the surrounding rural King Country areas. The current student roll is 190. Approximately half of the roll identifies as Māori, and most are affiliated to Ngāti Maniopotō. There has been a slight decrease in the roll since the 2013 ERO review, and the college may be required to reduce its overall teaching staff levels for 2015.

The principal and senior managers have continued in their positions, and there have been significant changes of teaching and support staff since the 2013 ERO review. The leadership and composition of the board of trustees has remained stable. Through an extensive process of consultation involving all sections of the college and wider community, the mission, vision and values statements have been redefined. Strategic priorities for the college as it moves forward are to:

- improve levels of student achievement
- develop modern teaching and learning environments
- continue to be an outwardly focussed school
- ensure it is a culturally and linguistically responsive school.

These strategic priorities are clearly reflected in key governance and management documentation, and college action plans.

Trustees, school leaders and staff have responded very positively to a sustained programme of advice and support coordinated by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Student Achievement Facilitator (SAF) has worked with a change team on site. In addition, other personnel and consultants have worked with the college staff and board on:

- developing digital technologies
- college practices that are responsive to different cultures and languages
- attendance, retention and transition.

This report acknowledges the significant progress made by the college in addressing the issues identified in the 2013 ERO report, and identifies areas for further consolidation and development.

2 Review and Development

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

Priorities identified for review and development

Management of assessment information

The 2013 ERO report identified that student achievement information at Years 7 to 10 was not being used effectively by school managers, teachers or trustees to inform decision making and raise student achievement.

Considerable progress has been made in this area. Teachers have greater access to student achievement information, and have been supported to make effective use of this data. There is an expectation that achievement information is used to plan for the different learning needs of students. This includes the identification and close monitoring of students at risk of not achieving their potential. Teachers report to parents on student achievement in Years 7 and 8 against National Standards, and in Years 9 and 10 against *The New Zealand Curriculum* levels.

Curriculum leaders are required to complete appropriate annual reports that analyse student achievement in their department, and set relevant targets and goals for the coming year. These reports are monitored by the principal and shared with the board.

Next step

Further consideration should be given to monitoring student achievement as they progress through the school.

Self review

Substantial progress has been made in strengthening self-review systems at all levels of the school. This was an area for improvement identified in the 2013 ERO report.

With the assistance of external expertise, the board completed a review of support staff. This led to rationalisation and greater efficiencies in school operations. In addition, a complete review and upgrade of the board's policy framework has been undertaken.

School managers and staff have worked cooperatively on a curriculum review that resulted in significant changes to curriculum design and the length of instructional periods. External expertise was used to support school management and staff as they reviewed performance management processes. In 2014, trials were completed on 'Te Ara Poutama' an appraisal initiative, which balances accountability with teacher professional development and improvement.

Next steps

The school recognises the need to extend the Te Ara Poutama trial to all teachers in 2015. The principal also acknowledges that school operational procedures need to be reviewed with reference to the changes made in the policy framework, curriculum review and other initiatives.

Parent and contributing school partnerships

The school has made deliberate and strategic progress in developing productive partnerships with its parent and wider community.

The principal and special needs coordinator have made professional visits to the two main contributing schools. Strategies to support students as they transition to the college have been reviewed and strengthened. An emphasis aimed to help those students at risk of not transitioning successfully. The sharing of achievement and other relevant information between these schools and the college has been improved.

The principal has taken a lead role in building constructive partnerships with community and business groups in the area. These partnerships are enhancing the range of educational opportunities available to students through the special Tuesday programmes that include sports activities and other initiatives involving the college and community.

The principal has also built her own professional networks through the Waitomo Principals' group.

Next step

School leaders recognise that a next step in building constructive partnerships with their contributing schools is to extend shared understandings and confidence in assessment practice and curriculum design. This is likely to provide more seamless or coherent learning, especially for students at risk, as they transition to college.

Bicultural perspectives

The 2013 ERO report recommended the continued integration of te reo and tikanga Māori into school documentation, operations and environment. Substantial progress has been made in this area, particularly the strengthening of links with Ngāti Maniopoto.

The redefined 2014 school charter states that the school shall be culturally responsive to the needs of Māori students and whānau. A senior manager has been given specific responsibility for overseeing and promoting this across the school. The college has increased the number of Māori teachers, all staff have undertaken professional development in te reo and tikanga Māori, and the Maniopoto Education Plan is being incorporated into curriculum design.

The principal attends regular whānau group meetings, and Māori whānau are being encouraged to have meaningful input into school matters.

Next step

School leaders recognise that a useful next step is to build the leadership opportunities for senior Māori students.

e-learning opportunities

Important progress has been made to extend e-learning opportunities for students. The school has recently been connected to the Network 4 Learning and this has considerably increased information download and upload speeds on site. Most areas of the school now have wireless internet connectivity.

Staff continue to work with the Ministry of Education to build increased confidence and capability in the effective use of digital technologies to enhance teaching and learning.

Next step

School leaders recognise that further development in the area of e-learning is still required to increase the electronic access to achievement information by students, and their immediate access to digital technologies.

3 Sustainable performance and self review

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

Progress

The school is now well placed to sustain and continue to improve and review its performance. Factors that support this are:

- trustees who are strongly supportive of the principal, and focussed on its strategic priorities
- a principal who brings energy and a clear vision to her professional and ethical leadership
- staff who are prepared to embrace and adopt change to enhance educational outcomes for students
- a community, including Māori, who have responded positively to the opportunity to increase their contribution to, and partnership with, the school.
- students who articulate a sense of pride and belonging in the school
- the strengthening of self-review processes.

Areas for further development and consolidation

Student achievement data in Years 7 to 10 shows improvement from 2012 to 2013. However, overall achievement remains below national comparisons. Achievement levels in writing are of particular concern. The board and school leaders recognise this as a matter of strategic priority.

The principal has been pivotal in driving the changes and recent improvements in the school. In order to sustain these significant changes it is important to:

- extend the leadership capacity and professional confidence of staff across more levels of the school
- evaluate the improved educational outcomes for students
- recognise and review any unintended consequences of change.

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.

Conclusion

Piopio College has implemented significant, positive changes. The recently appointed principal has played a key role in the successful management of change. She has worked with staff and the community to extend and enhance the educational opportunities for students.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.



Dale Bailey
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

3 December 2014

About the School

Location	Piopio, King Country	
Ministry of Education profile number	162	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	190	
Number of international students	1	
Gender composition	Boys 55% Girls 45%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Pacific Other Asian Other European	49% 47% 1% 1% 2%
Review team on site	October 2014	
Date of this report	3 December 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	May 2013 May 2010 June 2007