

# Tangowahine School Education Review

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# 1 Background and Context

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

Tangowahine School is a rural Year 1 to 8 school that provides education for students of the Kaipara district of Dargaville. Māori students comprise 33 percent of the school's roll, and other students are New Zealand European/Pākehā. The school roll has trebled since the beginning of 2014. Tuakana-teina relationships are a feature of this small school.

The 2013 ERO report identified concerns about aspects of the school's performance. These concerns included the quality of governance, school leadership and student achievement. For this reason ERO decided to continue to monitor the school's progress through a longitudinal review process.

In February 2014 the Secretary of Education appointed a commissioner to replace the board of trustees. The commissioner's role was to return the school to effective self-governance. By November 2014, the Ministry of Education (MoE) was confident that the school could operate effectively with a board of trustees, the commissioner intervention was revoked and a board was elected. The ex-commissioner continues to work with trustees in an advisory role.

In January 2014 a new principal was appointed, as well as new teaching and support staff. Together with the commissioner, and subsequently the board, the principal and staff have helped to address the concerns raised in the 2013 ERO report. The commissioner and principal agreed that the focus of the 1 to 2 year review would be to strengthen the quality of governance, leadership and teaching. ERO has visited and evaluated the school's progress over the past two years.

This concluding report assures the Tangowahine School community of the progress in the designated priority areas. The school now has a number of positive features and practices that are improving educational outcomes, potentially for all students.

## 2 Review and Development

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

Priorities identified for review and development

Following the 2013 ERO report, the board and ERO developed three overarching goals to build:

- leadership capacity
- governance capability
- the quality of teaching.

Tangowahine School has made good progress with each of these goals.

Progress

The new principal and staff have worked successfully with the commissioner and external advisers to address agreed priorities and have made very good progress. They show commitment and high levels of interest in students' learning and achievement.

Teachers know students well and they provide programmes that are responsive to their learning needs and interests. Targeted programmes enhance learning opportunities for students at risk of not achieving. Teachers increasingly involve students in knowing about their achievement and taking responsibility for their learning. They plan to support students to more regularly reflect on their learning and identify next learning steps.

Well-managed multi-level classes ensure that students' diverse learning needs are well catered for. Learning environments celebrate students' learning and progress. Students benefit from a good range of relevant resources and frequent use of digital learning opportunities.

Teachers provide students with a flexible curriculum. Students experience daily literacy and mathematics and they appreciate opportunities to learn through inquiry in other curriculum areas. Inquiry learning programmes are often based around future-focused, real-life contexts. Students are involved in planning and evaluating inquiry programmes.

The principal acknowledges that it is timely to develop a guiding curriculum document that aligns with The New Zealand Curriculum principles, values and key competencies and reflects current teaching practices observed.

More reliable data are used to form teachers' judgements about student progress in relation to the National Standards. Assessment processes have been reviewed and modified. The principal reports to the board more frequently on student achievement and on the progress towards meeting charter targets to raise student achievement.

The school's achievement information indicates that the majority of students, including Māori students, achieve the National Standards. Reading achievement is higher than national and regional achievement. The principal and staff have worked to raise achievement in writing and good progress is evident. They are considering seeking professional learning to support writing and mathematics learning and achievement next year.

### 3 Sustainable performance and self review

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

The board, the principal and staff are well positioned to sustain and continuously enhance the quality of education they provide for students. They are successfully developing an appreciative and optimistic environment. As a result the school has a more settled and inclusive culture.

Communication between the school and the community is more transparent and positive. Families and whānau have opportunities to share their perspectives through surveys, consultation evenings and the multiple school events. Positive profiles of the school are publicised on the school website and in newsletters, informing the wider school community of events, successes and celebrations. The principal and the board continue to seek ways to meaningfully consult with Māori whānau.

The board is working collaboratively and productively. Trustees are benefiting from training to understand and grow their governance role and skills. They recognise the need to develop the school's charter and use it as a pivotal, working document to drive school planning and review.

Students benefit from good quality teaching practices. Teachers work collaboratively and with external advisers to enhance students' learning experiences. They are open to learn, trial and innovate to motivate and engage students. Good use of assessment data to guide learning programmes and teaching practices is also evident in the teacher appraisal process.

Regular consultation, networking and school events assist trustees, leaders and teachers to gauge parent opinion and gain insight into community perspectives. Recent consultation is assisting the board of trustees to purposefully consider the school's long term direction and to review and develop the school charter.

The principal, board and staff acknowledge the value of ongoing self review. They appreciate the need to regularly document evidence to support their inquiries and evaluations. Evidence-based evaluation would be a sound guide for ongoing improvement.

The principal and board agree that other priorities for development include:

- further building relationships and partnerships with families, whānau and the wider community
- ongoing evaluation to show progress in relation to charter goals and targets

- annual collection of evidence of all Practising Teacher Criteria as part of teachers' appraisals.

### 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.

Compliance matters noted in ERO's 2013 report have been successfully addressed.

The board is aware of its responsibility in completing the review and updating of the school's policies. A review schedule is being developed to guide regular policy review so that trustees can be assured that the board is meeting its legal requirements.

### Conclusion

Tangowahine School provides good quality teaching and learning for Years 1 to 8 students. A responsive, inclusive culture and student-centred teaching motivates students to engage and make good progress. At all levels of the school there is openness to learning. This feature has supported significant improvements in leadership, teaching and governance.

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

Graham Randell  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

14 October 2015

## School Statistics

Location	Tangowahine, Dargaville	
Ministry of Education profile number	1105	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	33	
Gender composition	Boys 17 Girls 16	
Ethnic composition	Māori	11
	Pākehā	21
	Filipino	1
Review team on site	September 2015	
Date of this report	14 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2013
	Education Review	November 2010
	Education Review	November 2007