



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE  
TE TARI AROTAKE MATAURANGA

THE EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE  
MINISTERIAL BRIEFING

November 2008

Box 2799 Wellington 6140 • Phone 0-4-499 2489 • Fax 0-4-499 2482  
[www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz)



## Education Review Office Briefing to the Incoming Minister, November 2008

### CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Literacy and Numeracy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Role and Responsibilities</b>	<b>4</b>
The Role of the Education Review Office	4
Adding Value in the Education Sector	4
ERO's Legislative Authority and Scope of its Statutory Powers	5
Scope of operation	5
<b>Strategic Intent and Medium Term Initiatives</b>	<b>6</b>
Target Audience	6
Impact – adding value for our target groups	6
Strategic Focus Initiatives	7
Sector Findings and Emerging Issues	9
<b>External Relations</b>	<b>11</b>
ERO and the Ministry of Education	11
Education Sector Alignment	11
International links	11
<b>Organisation Structure and People</b>	<b>12</b>
Executive Management Group	12
Regional Structure	13
ERO's Evaluators	13
<b>How Does ERO Evaluate?</b>	<b>14</b>
What happens in the review?	14
Reviews in schools	14
Reviews in early childhood education services	16
Reviews in kura kaupapa Māori and kōhanga reo	17
National Evaluation Reports	18
<b>Output Classes and Expenses</b>	<b>19</b>
Expenses and Revenue	19
Summary of Outputs	19
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>20</b>
Appendix 1: ERO's Statutory Powers and Duties	20
Appendix 2: ERO National Education Evaluation Reports 2006-2008	21



**Hon Anne Tolley**  
**Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office**

**Foreword**

**Literacy and Numeracy**

The incoming Government has outlined its education policy under the heading *Crusade for Literacy and Numeracy*, saying it will focus the work of the Education Review Office (ERO) on supporting schools in specific areas. Through the flexibility of its operations ERO is able to provide information to individual schools and to the Government on meeting national standards in literacy and numeracy, targeted funding, assessment, and special education.

ERO reviews schools and early childhood services every three years on average. For high performing schools the three-year cycle affirms their self review and helps them maintain their good performance. For other schools three-yearly reviews give assurance to the government and encourage improvement.

In poorer-performing schools the time between reviews is shorter, and in about 15 percent of schools a follow-up review is scheduled within the next 12 months.

ERO contributes to education policy through the information it gathers in its reviews of schools and early childhood education services. This is a rich source of current information that can be analysed and reported as national evaluations to the Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office and to the Ministry of Education, giving current information for ongoing policy development.

The national education evaluation programme is based on the priorities of the Government and decided in consultation with the Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office.

*ERO School Reviews*

The focus of reviews is on student achievement. ERO asks what schools know about their students and their progress. ERO's reviews investigate the way in which programmes and processes in schools contribute to student achievement.

New Zealand has a range of sophisticated world-standard assessment tools that have the potential to provide rich information to teachers, students and boards of trustees about students' progress. ERO expects that schools will use a range of assessment practices to gather information on the progress and achievement of individual students. ERO investigates what schools know about how well students achieve against the norms and standards that exist in nationally referenced assessment tools.

ERO also discusses with boards, principals and teachers what they know about the performance of their school in relation to schools of a similar type, size and decile, and how effectively they use this information to improve the overall performance of their students. The availability and use of good assessment data is an important tool to drive school improvement.

As part of its review process, ERO investigates the ways in which schools make use of their resources to improve student achievement. This includes how a school budgets for and implements programmes that will meet the identified needs of their students. ERO is interested in how effectively a school uses its funding and staffing for improving student achievement.

ERO's reports are published on ERO's website and give evaluative information to the boards of trustees, the Government, parents, and communities to help them to bring about improvements.

#### *ERO's Flexibility*

ERO's review process has evolved over time in line with progress in the sector.

The aim is always to provide efficient and high quality evaluations for schools, both individually and collectively, to give good information to parents and communities, to the Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office, and the Ministry of Education. One of the strengths of ERO's review methodology is, for example, that it is flexible enough to take the individual social, cultural and educational context of each school into account. This means that ERO review teams can pinpoint areas in which a school is succeeding and where it needs further support and development.

Because its reviews focus on both breadth and depth, ERO can respond promptly to changes in education policies and expectations, and is well-placed to support the initiatives of the incoming Government.

I look forward to working with you.

Graham Stoop  
Chief Review Officer

*19 November 2008*

## Introduction

### *Purpose and structure*

This briefing provides general background information on the Education Review Office (ERO). The purpose is to provide a summary description of ERO's role and functions and give the new Minister sufficient information to meet initial requirements. The briefing is structured so that it outlines ERO's:

- role and responsibilities, including its legislative basis and scope of reviews;
- strategic direction and medium term initiatives;
- sector findings and emerging issues;
- relationships with other agencies;
- organisation structure and people;
- review methodology; and
- output classes and expenses.

Further details regarding ERO's statutory powers and a list of recent national education evaluation reports are attached as appendices.

### *Accompanying information*

More detailed information on the work of the department is available in the accompanying copies of:

- *Education Review Office Statement of Intent 2008*;
- *Annual Report for year ending 30 June 2008*; and
- publications covering ERO's review processes.

These, together with ERO's institution and national review reports, are also available on ERO's website <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

## Role and Responsibilities

### The Role of the Education Review Office

The role of the Education Review Office (ERO) is to review and report on the quality of education and care of students in schools and children in early childhood services.

To be successful, ERO knows that it must build on its relationships with the community, and collaborate with education and government agencies to achieve a common vision. Children and young people are central to this vision and are the foundation for ERO's mission statement:

*“To provide external evaluation that contributes to high quality education for all young New Zealanders”*

and its whakatauki:

*Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa  
The Child – the Heart of the Matter*

### Adding Value in the Education Sector

The Education Review Office adds value by:

- providing assurance to the government of the quality of education and care of schools, early childhood services and other education providers in the pre-tertiary education sector;
- playing a key role in raising education achievement. Through its reviewing and reporting processes, ERO assures the government that there are high quality early childhood education services that provide children with the foundations for success; and that the schooling system helps students to realise their potential and develop the knowledge and skills needed for their effective participation in the community;
- providing early warning to the Ministry of Education of schools and early childhood services that are underperforming;
- informing decisions and choices made by parents, teachers, managers, trustees and others, at the individual school and early childhood level, and at the national level by government policy makers; and
- providing an unbiased and objective view of the quality of the education provided by New Zealand's schools and early childhood education services.

### **ERO's Legislative Authority and Scope of its Statutory Powers**

The Education Review Office is a public service department established under the State Sector Act 1988. The Chief Executive of ERO is the Chief Review Officer.

Under Part 28 of the Education Act 1989 it is a function of the Chief Review Officer to administer reviews of general or particular matters about the performance of pre-tertiary education providers in relation to the educational services they provide.

The Chief Review Officer is required to carry out reviews when directed to do so by the Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office. The Chief Review Officer may also initiate reviews.

Review Officers are statutory officers designated under Part 28 of the Education Act, and they exercise powers of entry, investigation and reporting.

ERO's legislative authority and the scope of its statutory powers and authority are set out in Appendix 1.

### **Scope of operation**

The core activity of ERO in schools and early childhood education services is the conduct of Accountability Reviews. Included in the review classes are:

- *Education Reviews* - regularly scheduled reviews carried out in schools and early childhood education services;
- *Supplementary Reviews* – undertaken where, as a result of an education review, ERO is not satisfied with the performance of a school or service and decides to carry out a follow-up review within 12 months;
- *Special Reviews* - carried out where a matter needs to be investigated and reported outside the regular cycle;
- *Private School Reviews* - carried out under section 35A and Part 28 of the Education Act 1989 (the Chief Review Officer is required to review registered private schools at least every three years);
- *Homeschooling Reviews* - reviews of programmes for students exempted from enrolment at a registered school (and undertaken within the context of section 21 and Part 28 of the Education Act 1989); and
- *Post Review Assistance* – provided to schools and early childhood education services on request, following a regular or supplementary review that has identified issues that need to be addressed.

ERO also reports on significant education issues through its national evaluations of education sector performance and educational good practice.

How ERO conducts its reviews is described on pages 14 to 18 of this briefing.

## **Strategic Intent and Medium Term Initiatives**

### **Target Audience**

Different groups participate in early childhood and school education, and each has a distinct role that is crucial to improving our education system. The quality of teaching, the role of parents and whānau in nurturing their children's learning, and appropriate and well-implemented education policy are all contributors to student achievement.

Therefore, ERO's strategic intent reflects its partnership with each of the different groups. In the course of its work, ERO will seek to inform and influence:

- schools and early childhood services;
- parents, whānau and communities; and
- government agencies.

### **Impact – adding value for our target groups**

ERO's work focuses on outcomes. For each of its three target groups, ERO has identified a medium term objective, operating intentions, and measures to help assess the progress and impact on each group.

#### *Schools and early childhood services*

Through its evaluation processes, ERO aims to encourage improvements to student achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, governance, and self-review. Both accountability reviews and national evaluation reports increase schools' and early childhood education services' ability to know what they are doing well and what they can do to improve current practice.

#### *Parents, whānau and communities*

ERO aims to raise, among parents, whānau and communities, an awareness and understanding of the performance of pre-tertiary education providers. ERO will continue to look at ways to increase the usefulness of its information and reports so that parents, whānau and communities can take an active and constructive part in their children's education.

From time to time, ERO asks parents and whānau how useful they find ERO reports, how easy these are to read, and the use that parents make of them.

#### *Ministry of Education and other government agencies*

ERO adds value to the education sector's policy decision-making processes by providing evaluation reports and policy advice to the Ministry of Education and other government agencies. Because ERO evaluates education sector performance and good practice it is in a position to assist policy agencies to establish future priorities for schools and early childhood education services. ERO also evaluates the usefulness of its reports in informing the development of education policy.

### *Reporting the impact of ERO's interventions*

The measures used to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives are documented in ERO's *Statement of Intent 2008*. Progress against the measures is summarised in a six-monthly performance report to the Minister, and in ERO's annual report.

### **Strategic Focus Initiatives**

ERO has identified three focus areas to guide its medium term strategic development. These will assist ERO to shape the delivery of its service to its target audience. The focus areas are:

- to increase evaluation capacity in the sector;
- to build on the strategies and practices that will uphold the rights of Māori; and
- to build the capacity to deliver a system of world class professional state services serving the government of the day and meeting the needs of all New Zealanders.

### *Increase evaluation capacity in the sector*

Research shows that positive outcomes are more likely to occur when internal and external evaluations are complementary. ERO believes that by promoting an understanding of this relationship and, in particular, achieving a balance between the 'development' and 'accountability' roles of evaluation, it can contribute to an overall increase in the sector's evaluation capacity, leading to improved education outcomes.

Achieving this balance requires a partnership between those evaluating and those being evaluated. If schools and early childhood services understand the purpose and process of evaluation, they are more likely to use external evaluation findings to complement their internal evaluation.

In particular, ERO is midway through a project that focuses on building self-review evaluation capacity in schools and increasing the usefulness of the external review process in the sector.

### *Build on the strategies and practices that will uphold the rights of Māori*

Meeting the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi is an integral part of ERO's strategic focus and operating intentions. As a part of this focus, ERO is committed to strengthening its partnership with iwi and the community, building evaluation capacity and participating in cross-sector programmes to advance Māori achievement.

ERO's commitment to relationship building will be assisted by ongoing engagement with whānau, iwi, Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, and Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust. Project initiatives include:

- participation in working groups to advance Māori student achievement (for example, the National Monitoring Project for Māori Medium Kura);
- the preparation of a strategy to develop internal capability and relationships with iwi and communities;

- evaluating the achievement of Māori students in its reviews of schools; and
- evaluating the provision for Māori children in its reviews of early childhood services.

*Build the capacity to deliver a system of world class professional state services serving the government of the day and meeting the needs of all New Zealanders”*

ERO has documented a working plan to integrate the Development Goals for the State Services into its business. Consistent with the working plan, initiatives underway include:

- integrating the Lominger competency model into aspects of ERO’s capability planning;
- implementing actions identified from a staff engagement survey;
- investing in a proactive and responsive information systems infrastructure via a documented strategic approach; and
- embedding a new Code of Conduct for all ERO staff.

## Sector Findings and Emerging Issues

ERO's national evaluation reports give robust information on the factors that promote success for children and young people in schools, early childhood services, kura kaupapa and kōhanga reo.

We know what works. We know what effective practice looks like. The evidence points to some significant factors that promote high quality education and that help to lift student achievement.

ERO has also identified significant challenges. Its national evaluation reports provide high quality summative information for policy making, and ongoing evaluative information on the effectiveness of education policies.

### *Success factors*

Regardless of type, location, decile rating or philosophy, ERO reports show that schools, early childhood services, kura kaupapa and kōhanga reo provide high quality education when they:

- *focus on meeting the potential of learners through a careful analysis of needs, progress and achievement.* Appropriate and timely assessment practice pinpoints the needs of learners and their next steps; evidence-based decisions are made about curriculum, teaching strategies and interventions; programmes and resources are selected and evaluated carefully; learners are encouraged take responsibility for their own learning; progress is monitored and achievement is communicated.
- *promote leadership in an inclusive culture.* School and early childhood service leadership begins with the principal or service manager who sets the direction, but it goes beyond that to recognise that all those in leadership, management and governance have roles to play. These roles are defined and grounded in shared visions, values and expectations. Leaders are given support to develop the skills needed for the tasks they undertake. They set the tone for the school or service culture and build respectful relationships. Leaders celebrate diversity and model inclusive, culturally appropriate ways of operating. They work in partnership with and offer leadership opportunities to other staff, students, parents, whānau and people in the broader education community.
- *enhance effective teaching.* Good teachers are committed to providing high quality education for all their learners. They treat children and young people as individuals, acknowledge their differences and build collaborative learning relationships. Teachers set high yet attainable expectations, providing learning-rich programmes that encompass learner needs and interests. Effective teachers differentiate the curriculum as needed and engage students in purposeful learning through a range of media and resources. Teachers undertake professional learning and strengthen their pedagogical content knowledge. Research shows that quality in-school professional development for teachers is an effective way to improve student achievement in core areas such as literacy and numeracy.
- *engage their communities.* Effective schools and services listen to the aspirations of parents and whānau for their children. They consult them on relevant matters and communicate with them in a timely and appropriate manner. Staff are approachable,

knowledgeable and willing to share their realistic appraisal of learner potential and progress. Effective schools and services value two-way communication. They also make use of agencies, organisations, resources and personnel in the wider community to enhance learners' educational and social outcomes.

- *implement coherent policies and practice in a cycle of continuous self-review.* A feature of effective schools and services is that all aspects of their operations are aligned and consistent with agreed values, aims and priorities. Thoughtful decision-making is evident from the board of trustees, through school or service management to the individual group of learners. There are high levels of respect, trust, transparency and “big picture thinking.” Systems and processes are coherent, coordinated, logical and clearly expressed. Decisions are made in a cycle of continuous self review and critical reflection. External critique is welcomed, carefully considered and built into planning and decision-making.
- *understand and use assessment to improve the achievement of students.* Assessment of student achievement, the process of collecting, examining and using information about what students know and can do, is the basis of effective teaching and learning. New Zealand has a range of sophisticated world standard assessment tool that have the potential to provide rich information to teachers, students and boards of trustees about student progress, and many of these tools are referred to in the ERO reports referred to below. ERO has published reports on how teachers collect and use assessment information, and a report for parents on how and why teachers assess and what tools they use to do this.<sup>1</sup>
- *use achievement information to drive school improvement.* The availability and use of good assessment data is an important tool to drive school improvement. ERO discusses with schools what they know about the performance of their school in relation to schools of a similar type, size and decile, and how effectively they use this information to improve the overall performance of their students.
- *use their targeted funding for the benefit of their students.* ERO is interested in how a school budgets for and implements programmes that will meet the identified needs of its students. In recent years ERO has produced education evaluation reports on how effectively schools use particular aspects of their funding such as for students with special needs, and how they make decisions on the use of their operational funding.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See: *Assessment in Primary Schools: A Guide* June, 2006; *The Collection and Use of Assessment Information in Schools*, March 2007; *The Collection and Use of Assessment Information: Good Practice in Primary Schools*, June 2007; *The Collection and Use of Assessment Information in Schools: Good Practice in Secondary Schools*, June 2007.

<sup>2</sup> See: *Schools' Use of Operational Funding*, December 2006; *Schools' Use of Operational Funding: Case Studies*, June 2007; *The Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes: Good Practice*, March 2007; *The Special Education Grant: Examples of Good Practice*, June 2006; *An Evaluation of the Special Education Grant*, June 2005

## **External Relations**

### **ERO and the Ministry of Education**

A formal protocol underpins the ongoing relationship between the ERO and the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the specific activities of mutual interest to them both.

Of particular importance is the close relationship between their field managers. At regular meetings, and at other times when necessary, ERO alerts the Ministry of Education to immediate or long-term concerns raised in reviews of local schools and early childhood services so that the Ministry can consider any necessary action. At the same time, the Ministry of Education raises concerns from its information base that ERO can take into account when scheduling reviews.

ERO also works with the Ministry of Education and other agencies to identify topics for national evaluation reports, and engages with them during the evaluation stages to ensure evaluations are used to inform policy development.

### **Education Sector Alignment**

ERO's role and the services it provides fit in the context of the education sector and in the broader setting of the public sector at large. Effective relationships between ERO and its target audience strengthen ERO's ability to contribute to the raising of educational standards and achievement and children's learning outcomes.

ERO participates in a forum of the six education agency chief executives, convened by the Secretary for Education, to develop and align education sector strategy and guide the delivery of priorities for the sector.

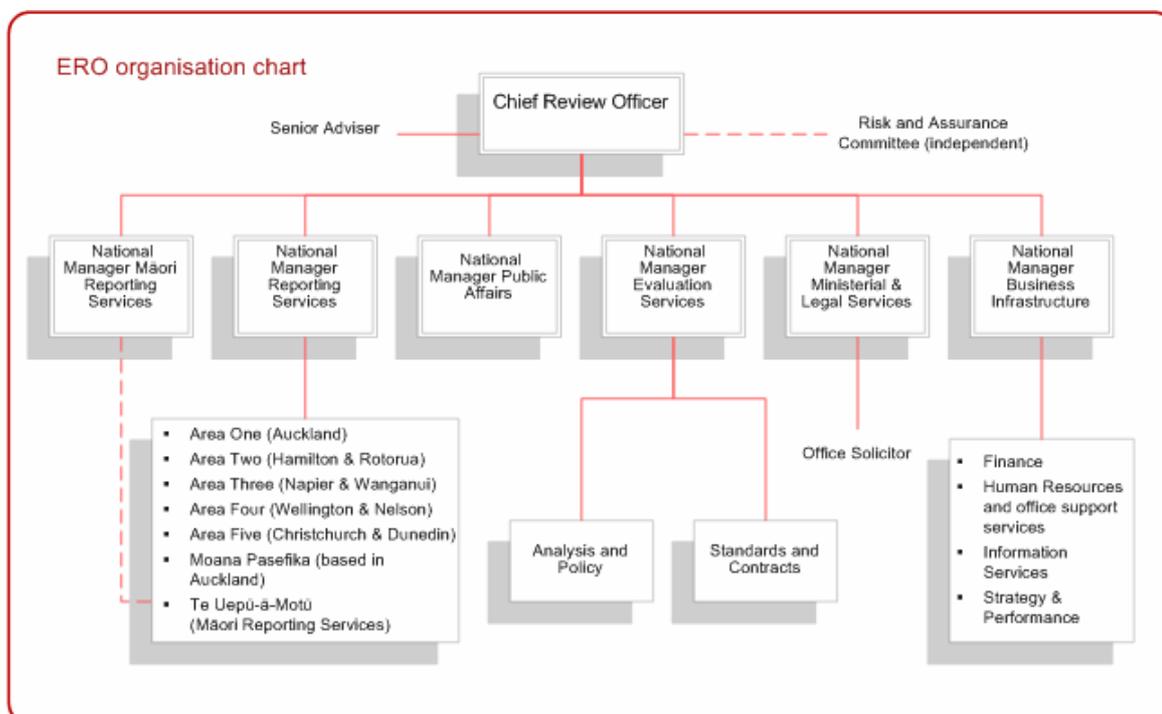
The executive management group regularly engages with the education sector for cross-sector planning, policy development, public communications and ICT (information and communications technology).

ERO also holds meetings each year with representatives of over 30 education sector organisations, giving a regular opportunity for each group to raise issues of particular concern and for ERO to brief them on current projects and reports.

### **International links**

The design and practice of education evaluation by ERO has received a great deal of favourable attention in recent years. The department is recognised internationally as a leader in the evaluation of education, and regularly hosts international visitors who want to learn more about external education evaluation. This year we have had particular interest from Chile, Timor Leste, Samoa and Thailand and have offered to support school review in the Solomon Islands as part of New Zealand's overseas aid to that country.

## Organisation Structure and People



### Executive Management Group

The Executive Management Group is made up of the Chief Review Officer, Dr Graham Stoop, and six national managers. The group is responsible for oversight of ERO's strategic direction and all major policy developments. It also considers business development and quality assurance and control. The national managers and their portfolios are:

- *Frances Salt, National Manager Reporting Services* – overall responsibility for managing the delivery of ERO's core institutional reviews;
- *Makere Smith, National Manager Māori Reporting Services* – responsible for managing the delivery of reviews in kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori;
- *Diana Anderson, National Manager Evaluation Services* – responsible for delivering ERO's national evaluation reports as well as policy, advisory and contract services;
- *Jenny Clark, National Manager Public Affairs* – responsible for strategic communications planning, external and international liaison, iwi liaison, and media, website and publication management;
- *Jeremy France, National Manager Business Infrastructure* – responsible for providing corporate support, including financial management services, human resources, information services, and strategic planning and reporting processes; and
- *Mark Canning, National Manager Ministerial and Legal Services* – responsible for the preparation of Ministerial briefings, correspondence, and provision of legal advice.

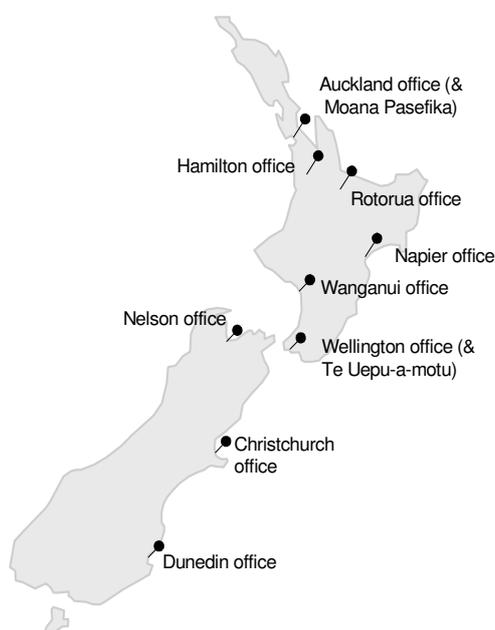
## Office Kaumatua and Matai

The Education Review Office has two kaumatua and one matai.

### Regional Structure

Review services, other than for kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori, are managed by five Area Managers, each supported by two or more Senior Review Officers. Area Managers report to the National Manager Reporting Services and manage site offices in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Napier, Wanganui, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Reporting services for kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori are managed by the National Manager Māori Reporting Services and carried out by Te Uepū-ā-Motu, a team of review officers with specific knowledge and skills in tīkanga and te reo Māori. Reviews of Pacific Children's early childhood education are managed by the Senior Review Officer for Moana Pasefika (the Pacific Education Unit), based in Auckland.



	ERO staff at 15/01/08	schools/centres at 20/07/08
<b>Area 1</b>		
Auckland	49	2058 (30%)
<b>Area 2</b>		
Hamilton	20	1009 (15%)
Rotorua	8	
<b>Area 3</b>		
Napier	11	975 (14%)
Wanganui	15	
<b>Area 4</b>		
Wellington	17	876 (13%)
Nelson	6	
<b>Area 5</b>		
Christchurch	18	1227 (18%)
Dunedin	15	
<b>Te Uepū-ā-Motu</b>	12	667 (10%)
<b>Corporate</b>	42	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>6812 (100%)</b>

### ERO's Evaluators

To be effective, ERO requires skilled education evaluators - its review officers - supported by competent management and support staff. Specialist skills and knowledge for review officers include expertise in effective pedagogical practice; up-to-date curriculum knowledge; expertise in the field of evaluation; and an informed understanding of the needs and expectations of communities and ethnic groups. Ongoing professional development is delivered through a national training programme.

ERO's links with overseas evaluation bodies help maintain its knowledge of evaluation theory and practice. ERO's value to national and international education and evaluation communities is affirmed through regular invitations to present evaluation and school improvement material at seminars and to academic journals for publication.

## How Does ERO Evaluate?

The current ERO methodology is not a one-size-fits-all model. Education reviews are responsive to school needs and interests and there is considerable flexibility inherent in the current methodology. ERO therefore aims to maximise responsiveness while maintaining its role as an independent and external evaluator.

### *The Review Cycle*

ERO undertakes a three-yearly cycle of education reviews in both early childhood services and schools. Where ERO has concerns about the performance of an institution reviews are likely to be more frequent.

### **What happens in the review?**

The process ERO follows when a school or early childhood education service is scheduled for a review is set out in ERO's publications: *Framework for Reviews: Education Reviews in Schools*, and *Framework and Resources for Early Childhood Education Reviews*. These documents are attached, along with copies of the relevant *Evaluation Indicators*.

Although it is difficult to measure its specific impact on the achievement of students in the long term, ERO has continued to investigate the relationship between its reviews and the intermediate outcomes that can be shown to contribute to educational achievement. This has led ERO to develop evaluation indicators for use in its review of schools, early childhood services and kōhanga reo.

The indicators are designed so that review officers seek evidence of both the outcomes and the processes most likely to have influenced those outcomes. ERO believes that evaluation of outcomes or processes in isolation has limitations, whereas an evaluation process that examines both outcomes and processes together, and the links between them, provides a more valid and reliable measure of school and early childhood service performance.

The evaluation indicators are intended to encourage education evaluators and providers to think more deeply about what constitutes quality in a range of different contexts and circumstances. As an independent evaluator, ERO's function is to determine the extent to which particular educational approaches are successful, within legal, ethical, policy and educational frameworks.

### **Reviews in schools**

An Education Review carried out by ERO is an external evaluation of the education received by school students. ERO review reports go to school boards of trustees and to the Ministry of Education and are available on ERO's website. A separate page specifically for parents and the community is included.

The Education Review approach involves participation and dialogue with schools. It is ERO's assumption that more participation by schools in the process of review will lead to better engagement, provide better access to data and establish a basis for the development of constructive recommendations for improvement.

Education Reviews evaluate what is happening in schools in terms of three strands: school-specific priorities, areas of national interest and compliance issues. The focus of these reviews is on educational improvement, and the reports are designed to make it easier for schools to see what they are doing well, where they need to improve and what they should do next.

#### *School Specific Priorities*

- This strand of the review evaluates one or more topics that ERO and the school discuss before reviewers come on site.
- Schools are asked to select topics that are related to student achievement and about which they have some self-review information.
- ERO may suggest other topics as well after reading the ERO file and current background information on the school.
- While ERO makes the final decisions about the topics to be investigated there is usually mutual agreement about these.

#### *Areas of National Interest*

- In this strand of the review ERO investigates two or three areas of school operation that either are or will be of interest to the individual school as well as being of national interest. A curriculum area is likely to be included.
- The strand adds breadth to the review, and enables general questions about student achievement and the quality of teaching in the school to be addressed.
- ERO investigates these areas in every school across the country for a set period of time, then aggregates the information and uses it to inform its national education evaluation reports.

ERO has been collecting this kind of information during reviews for the past 10 years and publishing it as national reports. The individual findings are usually included in each school report to provide a richer evaluation of the school as a whole.

#### *Compliance Issues*

- In the set-up stage of the review ERO asks the board of trustees to attest to compliance with a range of legislation and regulation organised under the National Administration Guidelines.
- ERO investigates in depth the following areas of compliance: students' physical and emotional safety; stand-downs, suspensions and exclusions; teacher registration; and student attendance.
- ERO follows up on items where the school reports non-compliance or says that it is "unsure."

### **Reviews in early childhood education services**

Major differences in the regulatory framework, policy context, nature and scale of public expenditure and structure of the school and early childhood education sectors mean that procedures for Education Reviews in early childhood services are different from Education Reviews in schools.

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting on early childhood education is designed to make it easier for early childhood services to see what they are doing well, where they need to improve, and what they should do next.

The framework is based on four review strands: quality of education; additional review priorities; government interest areas; compliance issues.

#### *The Quality of Education*

- This strand focuses on the quality of the programme, the learning environment, interactions, and the extent to which these are contributing to children's learning and development.
- In this strand, ERO works with the service to determine its review priorities in the light of the different philosophies that exist in the early childhood sector.
- ERO takes into account information the service provides in the *Programme Philosophy* and *Self-Review Statement* about the particular philosophy of the service and how this impacts on the programme for children.
- ERO seeks from the service any suggestions about aspects of the programme that are a current focus of attention (for example the use of *learning stories* in assessment).

#### *Additional Review Priorities*

- This strand deals with aspects of the operation of the service (eg management, leadership and staffing).
- Associations, management bodies or the managers of individual services have the opportunity to suggest issues in this strand for inclusion in ERO reviews.
- ERO makes a decision to include these issues depending on whether or not they have a direct impact on children's learning and development, and the amount of time needed for other review strands.

#### *Areas of National Interest*

- This strand provides information to the service and ERO about how well specific policies are working in early childhood education services.
- ERO changes the topics from time to time to reflect current national interests.

#### *Compliance Issues*

- ERO's approach to compliance is designed to support services' management of compliance functions and places some reliance on services' own reporting on compliance.

- ERO has developed the *Guidelines for Centre Management Assurance Statement* and *Self-Audit Checklists* for services to use to provide assurance that the service has taken all reasonable steps to meet its legal requirements.
- During the course of all reviews, ERO checks performance in terms of compliance as attested in the *Assurance Statement*. In the event that the checking process indicates any significant problem areas, ERO may decide to investigate further.
- Compliance is not a major focus of reviews unless it appears to ERO that there are significant levels of risk to children.

## **Reviews in kura kaupapa Māori and kōhanga reo**

### *Reviews in kura kaupapa Māori*

Although kura kaupapa Māori are set up under a special section of the Education Act 1989 they are state schools and are reviewed by ERO. There are currently about 70 kura kaupapa Māori and in these kura te reo Māori is the principal language of instruction.

Most of these kura identify themselves as a unique group committed to a schooling system that follows principles laid down in *Te Aho Matua*. Te Kaitiaki o Te Aho Matua, commonly known as Te Rūnanganui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, is the body responsible for supporting kura that operate in accordance with Te Aho Matua.

In consultation with Te Rūnanganui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori and the Ministry of Education, ERO has developed standard procedures and evaluation indicators that reflect the principles of Te Aho Matua for the review of those kura kaupapa Māori that operate in accordance with these principles. These procedures are also intended to be used by the whānau of each kura to guide their self-review processes.

All ERO review reports on individual kura kaupapa Māori and kōhanga reo are written and published in te reo Māori.

### *Reviews in kōhanga reo*

ERO also has a separate framework for kōhanga reo reviews. The approach focuses on how whānau managers contribute to: the learning, development, safety and well being of tamariki; the learning and development of whānau; and incorporate the philosophies of kōhanga reo.

The kōhanga reo review process was developed in consultation with the National Kōhanga Reo Trust. It incorporates the kura kaupapa Māori review approach - to reflect the Māori context; and ERO's dual approach - focusing on accountability and improvement.

There are four strands to a kōhanga reo review: kōhanga reo priorities; planning and evaluation; areas of national interest; compliance issues.

Decisions about the balance between the four strands and where to focus reviews depends on ERO's assessment of risk and is informed by an analysis of the *Assurance Statement* and information provided by the whānau at the initial hui.

## **National Evaluation Reports**

Since 1994 ERO has produced and published a wide range of national reports. The purpose of these reports is to assist key change agents in education to improve the quality of education and the level of student achievement. Many are designed to also inform policy.

The reports are on specific national education issues such as curriculum and assessment, school governance and management, and the quality of teaching, as well as the implementation of education policies on matters such as teacher training, use of targeted resources, and special education. They take account of current New Zealand and international research and may include examples of good practice.

Report topics are discussed with the Minister, the Secretary for Education, other relevant government departments and education sector groups. On most occasions evaluative information is gathered by review officers as part of an education review.

National reports are available on ERO's website and some are published as booklets and distributed to interested audiences. (*See Appendix 2 for a list of reports.*)

### *Cluster reports*

Cluster reports are undertaken to study in depth the educational experience of populations of students as a result of issues raised in ERO reports on individual schools or early childhood services.

ERO has produced 'cluster reports' evaluating the quality of educational experiences for:

- particular groups of students such as international students, or students in boarding schools;
- students in particular geographical areas such as the West Coast;
- students in a particular type of early childhood education service, such as playcentres.

### *Issues reports*

From time to time systemic or structural issues are identified through institutional reports. National reports can then be prepared.

### *Advice to parents*

ERO's experience in reviewing schools and early childhood education services can be aggregated and published in a form that is useful to parents, for example *Choosing a School for a Five Year Old* and *Going to Secondary School*.

### *Reports of good practice*

Most reports include examples of good practice taken from ERO reports on individual schools or early childhood services. This is in response to requests from the education sector for such examples. Some reports explicitly promulgate good practice, such as *The Teaching of Writing: Good Practice in Years 4 and 8*.

## Output Classes and Expenses

### Expenses and Revenue

	2007/08		2008/09
	Budgeted \$000	Estimated Actual \$000	Budget \$000
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<u>28,752</u>	<u>28,527</u>	<u>28,662</u>
Early Childhood Education Services	8,805	8,710	9,435
Schools and Other Education Service Providers	17,205	17,105	16,551
Quality of Education Reports and Services	2,742	2,712	2,676
<b>Revenue from the Crown</b>	<u>27,859</u>	<u>27,859</u>	<u>27,769</u>
Early Childhood Education Services	8,689	8,689	9,319
Schools and Other Education Service Providers	16,909	16,909	16,255
Quality of Education Reports and Services	2,261	2,261	2,195
<b>Revenue from Others</b>	<u>893</u>	<u>668</u>	<u>893</u>
Early Childhood Education Services	116	21	116
Schools and Other Education Service Providers	296	196	296
Quality of Education Reports and Services	481	451	481

In addition to Crown revenue, ERO provides contract-based services to third parties on a fee-for-service basis and generates a small amount of revenue from the sale of publications and rent recoveries. ERO also receives funding for the state sector retirement and KiwiSaver schemes.

### Summary of Outputs

	2007/08		2008/09
	Budgeted Standard	Estimated Actual Standard	Budget Standard
<b>Early Childhood Education Services output class</b>			
Number of early childhood education services education reviews	1,170-1,330	1,170-1,330	1,045-1,245
Number of post-review assistance workshops to early childhood education services	80-120	70-110	80-120
<b>Schools and Other Education Service Providers output class</b>			
Number of state schools education reviews	870-980	870-980	715-850
Number of homeschooling education reviews	600-640	600-640	600-640
Number of private school education reviews	35-45	35-45	35-45
Number of post-review assistance workshops to schools	80-100	50-90	80-100

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: ERO's Statutory Powers and Duties

Under Part 28 of the Education Act 1989 it is a function of the Chief Review Officer to administer reviews of general or particular matters about the performance of pre-tertiary education providers in relation to the educational services they provide.

The Chief Review Officer may designate any suitably qualified person as a review officer. Review officers may enter certain premises in order to carry out reviews of educational services. The Chief Review Officer is also required to:

- administer the preparation of reports to the Minister on the undertaking and results of reviews of educational services;  
*[section 325, Education Act 1989]*
- give the Minister such other assistance and advice on the performance of educational service providers as the Minister from time to time requires;  
*[section 325, Education Act 1989]*
- carry out reviews, either general or relating to particular matters, of educational services provided to persons exempted from enrolment at school;  
*[section 328A, Education Act 1989]*
- report on any application for an exemption from enrolment at school where such exemption has been refused by an officer designated by the Secretary for Education;  
*[section 21, Education Act 1989]*
- report on any application for an exemption from enrolment at school where the Secretary of Education seeks to revoke an exemption from enrolment at school;  
*[section 21, Education Act 1989]*
- report on any application for an exemption of a student from attending school where such exemption has been refused by an officer designated by the Secretary for Education;  
*[section 26, Education Act 1989]*
- report on provisionally registered private schools within six to 12 months of the grant of provisional registration;  
*[section 35A, Education Act 1989]*
- report on registered private schools at least once every three years;  
*[section 35A, Education Act 1989]*
- carry out reviews, either general or relating to particular matters, of the provision of a safe physical and emotional environment that supports learning for students accommodated in hostels;  
*[section 328E, Education Act 1989]*
- report on proposals to approve alternative constitutions for board of trustees;  
*[section 105A, Education Act 1989]*
- report on proposals for splitting a joint board of trustees;  
*[section 112, Education Act 1989]*
- report on the performance of the management of an early childhood education service in situations where the Secretary for Education is seeking to enforce a charter; and  
*[section 313, Education Act 1989]*
- manage the activities of the Office efficiently, effectively and economically.  
*[section 32, State Sector Act 1988]*

## **Appendix 2: ERO National Education Evaluation Reports 2006-2008**

### *2008 (to date)*

- Māori Children in Early Childhood: Pilot Study
- Schools' Provision for Students at Risk of Not Achieving
- Boys' Education: Good Practice in Secondary Schools
- Good Practice in Supporting and Engaging Senior Secondary School Students
- Partners in Learning: Schools Engagement With Parents, Whānau and Communities
- Schools' Provision for Gifted and Talented Students (and Good Practice)
- Pandemic Planning In Schools
- Schools' Progress Towards Meeting National Administration Guideline 5, Food and Nutrition
- Evaluation of The Quality of Māori Language Teaching in Secondary Schools: Manukau City

### *2007*

- The Quality of Education and Care in Montessori, Catholic, Steiner, Pacific Early Childhood Services
- The Quality of Assessment in Early Childhood Education
- Review of Curriculum Materials to Support the Teaching and Learning of Te Reo Māori
- The Teaching of Writing: Good Practice
- Good Practice in Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori, Engaging and Supporting Senior Students
- School Governance: An Overview
- Schools' Use of Operational Funding: Case Studies
- Review of Curriculum Materials to Support the Teaching and Learning of Te Reo Māori
- The Teaching of Sexuality Education in Years 7 to 13 (and Good Practice), Health and Physical Education in Years 4 and 8 (and Good Practice), Social Studies Good Practice, Mathematics Good Practice
- Education Evaluation Reports in Brief: 2005/06
- Safe Schools: Strategies to prevent bullying
- The Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes: Good Practice
- Managing Transience: Good Practice in Primary Schools
- Invercargill Schools: Cluster Report April 2007
- The Collection and Use of Assessment Information in Schools
- Teen Parent Units: An Evaluation

### *2006*

- Schools' Use of Operational Funding
- Going to Secondary School
- The Quality of Career Education and Guidance in Schools
- Early Childhood Services: Readiness for 2007 Qualification Requirements
- Evaluation of the Quality of Māori Language Teaching in Secondary Schools
- The Achievement of Māori Students, Pacific Students
- The Quality of Teaching in Years 4 and 8 for Diverse Groups of Students, in Years 4 & 8: Social Studies, in Years 4 & 8: Mathematics
- Student Learning in the Information Landscape: Good Practice
- The Quality of Teaching: Good Practice Music, Reading and Speaking, and Technology
- The Special Education Grant: Examples of Good Practice
- Resource Teachers: Literacy - Examples of Good Practice
- Assessment in Primary Schools: A Guide for Parents
- Early Childhood Education: A Guide for Parents
- Education Evaluation Reports in Brief 2005: School Sector
- Self-review in Early Childhood Education Services