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PRINCIPAL'S  
COPY

**Whangaroa College  
Kaeo, Northland**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report:  
Arotake Paetawhiti**

*Kumēa te paetawhiti kia tata  
Whakamaua te paerewa kia tīna  
Tukuna te paehiranga kia topa!*



# Education Review Report: Arotake Paetawhiti Whangaroa College

ERO's review process takes into account each school's context, performance and self-review capacity. ERO differentiates between schools that are having difficulties, schools that are performing well, and schools that are high performing and have well-developed self review. Arotake Paetawhiti reviews are designed to support schools that are experiencing difficulties. These reviews involve ERO providing 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 Arotake Paetawhiti 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 Arotake Paetawhiti review?**

Whangaroa College is situated in the valley and community centre of Kaeo, in Northland. The school has had a history of supplementary, special reviews and early returns by ERO over the last 10 years.

In 2010 ERO recommended that, in order to improve the quality of education and the safety of students and staff, the Secretary of Education consider continuing intervention under *Part 7A of the Education Act 1989*. Further improvements were required to the quality of teaching and learning, student engagement, particularly at Years 7 to 10, and the governance and management of the school, including personnel management and communication with the school community.

In February 2011 all of the board of trustees members resigned and the Secretary for Education appointed a commissioner to fulfil the governance role for the school. The school had an acting principal at this time following the resignation of the previous principal.

Subsequently a new principal was appointed and the commissioner has supported the new principal and senior leadership team over the last two years to make significant progress in addressing the issues identified in 2010. Improvements have come about by effective leadership, curriculum review and building positive relationships within the school and in the wider community. This has helped restore trust, respect for school values, and the confidence of the community in the school.

### 2 Review and Development

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

**Priorities identified for review and development**

During the initial phase of this Arotake Paetawhiti review, that followed ERO's 2010 review of the school, the priorities agreed by ERO, the commissioner and the principal were to improve:

- safety of students and staff in the school

- the quality of the school's curriculum
- the quality of teaching and learning
- student engagement and achievement
- communication and partnership with the school community.

## **Progress**

*Positive tone.* The school tone is more positive as senior managers, students, staff and parents develop confidence from the school's new leadership and direction. This tone has revitalised an enthusiasm for, and a culture of, learning. Staff have a renewed sense of pride and a commitment to student learning and achievement. Students are more engaged. They are proud of their cultural identity and appreciate their learning opportunities.

*Teaching and learning.* Teachers' focus on using an inquiry model, based on assessment evidence informing decisions, has improved the learning opportunities for students. Improved pedagogical leadership, better analysis of assessment information and mentoring of students has raised teaching and learning expectations. A stronger emphasis on engaging students in learning is now evident.

*Curriculum development.* A redeveloped curriculum for Years 11 to 13 has provided greater choice of vocational and academic pathways. The more structured programme enables better monitoring of student progress and achievement, and supports students to define their learning and pathways for the future. Students are becoming more responsive to learning and focused around career pathways.

*Professional learning and development.* Teacher professional development, initiated by the principal, is aligned to the school goals. Introducing the Te Kotahitanga strategy and involving staff in professional learning groups to refocus the curriculum vision and direction has improved staff morale and students' learning.

*The impact of change.* Successful strategies and initiatives implemented over the last two years have resulted in:

- clear expectations of staff and students
- staff who are supportive of change
- increased student retention
- improvements in student success as Māori
- increased confidence in school leadership.

## **3 Sustainable performance and self review**

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

### **Priorities identified for review and development**

Whangaroa College is becoming well placed to sustain and continue to improve and review its performance.

*School leadership.* The principal has introduced a new model of leadership in the school. He has established a new leadership team and distributed leadership within it. He has successfully lifted expectations and gained the support of staff. The principal has also increased community engagement through meetings, community surveys, reporting on school progress and being involved in community events.

The principal, senior managers and staff are progressing the school in a direction that focuses on improving learning and achievement for students. The school leadership team is aware that there is still work to be done to consolidate the progress they are now beginning to make in the school. The principal and senior leadership team show the ability to continue to evaluate new curriculum pathways and embed these initiatives for students.

There are now many aspects of the school's management where good self-review processes are evident. The principal intends continuing to build the capacity of the senior management team and staff to further develop self review in all areas of school operations.

*Governance.* The Secretary of Education has approved the reinstatement of the board of trustees. The commissioner has begun the process for establishing a board. Four trustees will be appointed by the Minister of Education, two will be elected and one trustee will be co-opted by the commissioner. The commissioner will relinquish his commissioner position once the board is in place.

Although the school is in a positive stage of development, the new board would benefit from some external formalised support as improvements are extended and embedded.

### **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.

## **4 Recommendations**

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

ERO recommends that the Secretary for Education considers reviewing the level of intervention under *Part 7A of the Education Act 1989* following the establishment of a newly constituted board of trustees.

**When is ERO likely to review the school again?**

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

Dale Bailey

Dale Bailey  
National Manager Review Services  
Northern Region

24 May 2013

## About the School

Location	Kaeo, Northland	
Ministry of Education profile number	4	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 15)	
School roll	124	
Gender composition	Boys 54% Girls 46%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Niue Other European Other	83% 11% 2% 2% 2%
Review team on site	April 2013	
Date of this report	24 May 2013	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Special Review Education Review	December 2010 September 2009 February 2008

