

20 September 2010

To the Parents and Community of Knighton Normal School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Knighton Normal School.

Knighton Normal is a large primary school, located in the eastern suburbs of Hamilton, catering for students in Years 1 to 6. The roll is currently 617, 37% of whom identify as Māori, 9% Pacific and 29% European. The overall student population is culturally diverse with students from over 50 nationalities attending the school. A key aspect of the school is the Te Hihiri immersion classrooms, which provide a strong Māori learning environment for students and whānau/families. The school has a close liaison with the neighbouring University of Waikato School of Education to fulfil its role as a normal school, catering for teacher pre-service training in both mainstream and Māori immersion education.

Student achievement information in 2009/2010 shows that a significant percentage of students are achieving above school-based and/or national expectations in aspects of literacy and mathematics. There is also a significant percentage of students achieving below expectations in these curriculum areas. Māori and Pacific students have a similar achievement pattern to all students. Students at risk in their learning have their needs met through an appropriate range of intervention programmes, including English Language Learning (ELL). Students who have been at the school for two years or more generally make expected progress in mathematics and reading as they move through the school. Writing results school wide in 2008 and 2009 indicate that a significant proportion of students are not meeting national expectations. The leadership team has identified this need and is planning to focus future professional development for staff in this area.

A notable feature of the school is the inclusive and supportive culture among staff, students, families and whānau. Ngā Tikanga a Knighton (The Knighton Way) is the foundation document that promotes values, principles and expectations in all school activities. Students have a strong sense of belonging and identity within the school where they are valued for who they are, and for their contributions and effort.

Teachers are experienced, highly skilled and successfully use a range of strategies to engage students in learning. More consistent use of these strategies to empower students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, and increasing differentiation of learning experiences, is likely to fully realise the school's vision of 'every student reaching their fullest potential'.

The principal is well respected by staff, parents and the wider community, and has successfully developed a collaborative team culture within the school. He is a

knowledgeable and highly effective professional leader. The senior leadership team ably supports the principal and provide effective role models for staff in teaching and learning. Seniors leaders work well together to provide clear direction and a sense of purpose for ongoing school development.

The board of trustees, led by an experienced chairperson, has a strategic approach to governing the school. Trustees are well-informed, understand their governance role and contribute complementary knowledge and skills. Significant property development since the last review includes an astro turf area for sporting and recreational activities, and some renovation of teaching spaces.

The school enjoys positive relationships with its community and appreciates the contributions parents make to the daily life of the school. Parents and children value the school's unique cultural diversity and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to this learning community.

Future Action

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


Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's previous reporting history and is based on:

- what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;
- decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and self-review information; and
- teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

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



Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region