

3 May 2010

To the Parents and Community of Colwill School

This review evaluates the extent and effectiveness of actions the school has taken towards addressing issues specified in the previous review and/or any additional areas identified since that review.

The Education Review Office [ERO] evaluation of Colwill School follows.

Colwill School, in the Waitakere suburb of Massey, is a full primary school catering for students in Years 1 to 8. Recent growth and change in the community, and the enrolment of many refugee children, have brought a rich diversity to the ethnic and cultural composition of the school.

Over the last four years, the school has been governed by a commissioner appointed by the Ministry of Education. In 2009, ERO recommended that this intervention continue to ensure that the principal and senior staff were supported to improve student achievement and the analysis and use of achievement data, and that they further develop quality assurance systems to ensure that all students received effective teaching that supported their learning and achievement.

In 2009, ERO recognised that teachers' professional development in literacy and numeracy had been a school priority for several years. Teachers' focus on literacy and numeracy continued in 2009 and has had positive outcomes for a number of the students. Analysed achievement information for writing indicates that about half of the students in Years 4 to 8 made accelerated rates of progress during this time. Professional development planned for 2010 focuses appropriately on successful teaching strategies to help students for whom English is an additional language.

Literacy and numeracy leaders, through external support, have made good progress in analysing school-wide data to identify student progress and achievement, teachers' skills, and their further professional development needs. The deputy principals continue to research and trial successful methods for raising student achievement.

Most teachers are now using some effective literacy and numeracy teaching strategies to engage students in their learning. As a result, classrooms are settled and students are generally on-task. Teachers now need to analyse achievement information more rigorously, identify their students' prior knowledge, and use this information when planning their teaching practice. Self-review processes are currently not sufficiently robust to ensure that the school's vision for delivering the curriculum is reflected in school practices.

It is also critical that the principal, senior managers and teachers review teaching practices, programmes and resources, and seek feedback from the school community to ensure that teaching in the school reflects the experiences and needs of their students.

The commissioner and principal are making good progress in informing the community about governance matters and are working to ensure that a board of trustees is in place by August 2010. Staff and the community have welcomed the commissioner's attendance at school and community events.

ERO recommends that the Secretary for Education consider continuing intervention currently in place under Part 7A of the Education Act 1989 in order to support the principal and senior staff to sustain and further embed improvements made in teaching, student achievement, curriculum management, school management and self review, and to support the new board of trustees in providing management support for the principal.

Future Action

ERO is not confident that the proposed board of trustees can make improvements without seeking external support. ERO intends to carry out another review within one year to evaluate the progress made over this time.

Review Coverage

When ERO has reviewed a school we encourage boards to inform their community of any follow-up action they plan to do. You should talk to the board or principal if you have any questions about this evaluation, the full ERO report or their future intentions.

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



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