

**Wellington Girls' College**  
**Wellington**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report:**  
**Arotake Paehiranga**

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

# Education Review Report: Arotake Paehiranga Wellington Girls' College

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. An ERO school report answers the question "How effectively is this school's curriculum promoting student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?" Under that overarching question ERO reports on the quality of education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Māori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school's systems, especially self review for sustaining and continuing improvements.

Arotake Paehiranga is an evaluation of a school that was found, in its previous ERO review, to have the capability to effectively use self review to sustain its high performance to improve outcomes for students.

## Findings

### 1 Context

#### **What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?**

Wellington Girls' College, based in central Wellington, caters for 1322 girls, 8% of whom are Māori. The roll continues to grow; however, the number of Pacific students is decreasing. The school, established 130 years ago, has a positive reporting history with ERO.

Since the previous ERO review in 2009, a multi-story administration and teaching facility has been built. There has been considerable development to improve staff and students' access to, and use of information technologies (IT).

Recent board elections have resulted in three new trustees. The board chair and two other trustees have been re-elected providing the board with useful continuity. The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team have been reviewed and re-allocated.

The school's motto "Handing Light On" underpins a culture of supporting students and staff to step into leadership roles and in turn assisting others to develop.

### 2 Learning

#### **How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?**

High levels of student achievement continue to be a feature of the school. Growth in the number of students achieving merit or excellence endorsements at NCEA Levels 1 and 2 is evident in the 2011 and 2012 results. School personnel identify relevant annual goals to improve aspects of NCEA achievement, with improving the rate of excellence endorsements in Level 3 NCEA being this year's target. Achievement of Māori and Pacific students is comparable with that of other students.

The school successfully retains high numbers of students to Year 13, with 96% of school leavers achieving NCEA Level 2 or above.

Extensive achievement information relating to Years 9 and 10 students is well used to make plans at department and classroom levels to meet their needs. A schoolwide focus to improve writing skills has resulted in very favourable outcomes for students. Heads of departments and senior leaders should take the opportunity to use Years 9 and 10 achievement data further to show progress and evaluate the impact of teaching.

A well coordinated and comprehensive range of support is available for students with special needs.

### **3 Curriculum**

#### **How effectively does this school's curriculum promote and support student learning?**

The school's curriculum is matched to the aspirations of students and their families. It provides a broad range of choices and opportunities that suitably support girls' learning and opens up pathways for them beyond school. Options for senior students are well considered and students are assisted with high quality advice and guidance to make good decisions.

The members of the senior leadership team have clear expectations for high quality teaching that are widely evident in practice. The senior leadership team and board are committed to, and appropriately focused on, using professional learning and development and appraisal to achieve consistently high quality teaching. The introduction of a co-teaching initiative is producing interesting and positive results.

The school's strategic approach to promoting success for Pacific students includes an achievement plan and the appointment of a Pacific achievement advisor. Their learning and achievement is supported by individual monitoring, encouragement and liaison with families.

#### **How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?**

A comprehensive plan to promote success for Māori, as Māori, is in place. It is important that the senior leadership team continues to prioritise the collaborative implementation of this plan and monitor progress.

Māori students are well supported by staff including a Māori achievement advisor. Individual academic monitoring and goal setting assists students to achieve highly in all aspects of school life. Student leadership and input into decision making is encouraged through the formation of the student group, Te rōpū a Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa.

Whānau are represented on the board and links with mana whenua are strengthened by close liaison with the Port Nicholson Settlement Trust.

### **4 Sustainable Performance**

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

A tradition of high expectations for achievement, participation, behaviour and belonging is strongly supported by students, teachers, leaders, trustees and the community.

The board provides a clear vision and strategic direction. Its governance of the school is enhanced by the inclusion of members of the senior leadership team on board committees.

School leaders are a purposeful, cohesive group with clearly delegated responsibilities. They skilfully and knowledgeably ensure that the school vision is reflected and enacted throughout school operations and interactions.

Since the previous review, engagement with parents and whānau has strengthened. Providing clear and useful information to parents and receiving their opinion and feedback is a valued feature of partnership between families and the school.

A culture of critical reflection and review consistently supports school improvement. School leaders successfully use research, the opinions of students, teachers and families, and consideration of current practice to identify and implement changes designed to extend and increase performance. ERO identifies that more emphasis on evaluating impacts of initiatives and student progress is likely to enhance some areas of self review. Further opportunities to use student voice in review could also be explored.

At all levels, school personnel participate in and contribute to the wider educational community through involvement in cluster and other schools' support and development.

### **Provision for international students**

The school is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. At the time of this review there were 51 international students attending the school.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

### **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.

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

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.



Joyce Gebbie  
National Manager Review Services  
Central Region (Acting)

11 September 2013

## About the School

|                                      |                           |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Location                             | Wellington                |               |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 272                       |               |
| School type                          | Secondary (Years 9 to 15) |               |
| School roll                          | 1322                      |               |
| Number of international students     | 51                        |               |
| Gender composition                   | Female 100%               |               |
| Ethnic composition                   | Māori                     | 8%            |
|                                      | NZ European/Pākehā        | 65%           |
|                                      | Pacific                   | 4%            |
|                                      | Asian                     | 13%           |
|                                      | Indian                    | 3%            |
|                                      | Other ethnic groups       | 7%            |
| Review team on site                  | July 2013                 |               |
| Date of this report                  | 11 September 2013         |               |
| Most recent ERO report(s)            | Education Review          | May 2009      |
|                                      | Education Review          | November 2005 |
|                                      | Education Review          | July 2002     |