

# Evaluation Report Summary

Ngā Huarau o Te Tāmata Huaroa

ERO publishes evaluation reports on education issues of national importance. This summary of a recent national report captures the key points and highlights findings which you may find useful. The full report is available on [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz).

## Te Tāmata Huaroa – Te Reo Māori in English-medium Schooling

This ERO report gives a snapshot of the current provision of te reo Māori teaching and learning in a representative sample of English-medium primary and secondary schools. The education sector is seen as an important lever in the Government's [Maihi Karauna](#) strategy for language revitalisation.

ERO found that many leaders saw the value in teaching te reo Māori and wanted to improve their schools' provision. This is encouraging, but it is also clear that substantial challenges remain. The number of fluent speakers of te reo Māori in the teaching workforce is low, and consequently, many schools struggle to implement a progressive curriculum such as is suggested in [Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori](#), the curriculum guidelines for English-medium schools.

ERO spoke to teachers and school leaders in 102 primary and secondary schools across Aotearoa to inform this report.

### ***Leaders were positive about te reo Māori***

Leaders have an important role in championing te reo Māori in their communities. Some leaders told ERO that they had needed to challenge ignorant or negative attitudes towards te reo Māori, but in many places there was an increasing sense of positivity around the language. In the best cases, leaders articulated a strong sense of moral purpose about the goal of revitalising te reo Māori. There were examples of teachers learning te reo Māori in their own time, another signal of enthusiasm.

Improving te reo Māori provision was a specific strategic goal in around half of the schools in the sample. Actions included recruiting staff with capability and confidence in te reo Māori, or developing existing capability through professional development.

There was also widespread evidence of an effort to integrate te reo Māori into classroom routines, and to familiarise learners with waiata and karakia.

### ***Most learners do not experience enough explicit teaching***

While the majority of learners often had opportunities to engage in the kinds of learning experiences mentioned above, they were less likely to explicitly learn new grammatical forms, speak and write in te reo Māori, or translate between te reo Māori and English. This was particularly true in primary schools, where te reo Māori tended to be the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Learners therefore often did not experience a progressive curriculum which builds from simpler to more complex forms of the language. It is likely that current provision will not be sufficient to produce conversational speakers of te reo Māori.

Related to this, ERO found a lack of formal assessment in te reo Māori. This meant that schools often did not have evidence of progress towards strategic goals, and that the curriculum was not as responsive as it could be. In many cases, what was reported to parents focused on participation and engagement, rather than achievement of te reo Māori learning goals.

## Capability needs improving

The main factor limiting te reo Māori provision was that the level of te reo Māori knowledge within the teaching workforce was itself relatively low. This was especially true of primary schools with forty percent reporting having no staff fluent in te reo Māori. We also found that knowledge and expertise in second-language learning pedagogy was not widespread.

This obviously limits the range of learning experiences that teachers can offer, and has flow-on effects to secondary schools, which may need to cover a lot of ground to prepare learners who wish to take NCEA in te reo Māori.

Leaders and teachers were aware of these issues, and many had accessed recent professional learning and development in te reo Māori. Learning a language is not a trivial undertaking, and the challenge is to embed and extend PLD to support classroom teaching and learning.

## Unmet potential in community partnerships

ERO's previous work on te reo Māori provision in English-medium schools found that whānau demand and engagement can be a powerful influence on schools' decision making. Whānau, hapū and iwi are also sources of knowledge of te reo Māori.

However, for this report, ERO only found some schools where engagement with whānau was focused on the provision of te reo Māori. Based on our previous findings, there is unmet potential in partnerships with whānau, hapū and iwi which could help to improve provision.

Some schools could use more support to fruitfully engage with iwi.

## Short, medium and long-term needs

There is now widespread recognition within English-medium schools of the value and importance of te reo Māori as a taonga for Māori, and a component of a bicultural Aotearoa New Zealand identity for Māori and non-Māori alike.

However, significant challenges remain. In the long term, there is a clear need to improve the supply of teachers who are fluent in te reo Māori in English-medium schools. Workforce planning, and Teaching Council standards already reflect this understanding.

In the medium term, greater community engagement and the expansion of the [Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori](#) professional learning and development programme have the potential to improve provision.

In the short term, school leaders should consider the curriculum guidelines in their curriculum review and design, improve assessment practices and, where possible, mobilise existing staff expertise in second-language learning pedagogy and te reo Māori through internal professional learning and development.

The challenge for the English-medium schooling system as a whole is to seize on the evident enthusiasm and interest in te reo Māori as a starting point for improving provision.

## Further information

[Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori](#) – curriculum guidelines for English-medium schools

[Whakanuia te reo kia ora](#) – an evaluation of te reo Māori provision in English-medium schools from Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori, the Māori Language Commission

[Maihi Karauna](#) – the Government's strategic approach to te reo Māori revitalisation

[Te Ahu o te reo Māori](#) – professional learning and development for teachers

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