

Education Review Office (ERO): School reporting update

To:	Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Date submitted:	4 February 2026	Deadline:	10 February 2026
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Attachments:	Appendix A: Examples of new School Report format		

Actions Sought

Addressee

Erica Stanford
Minister of
Education

Action sought

It is recommended that you:

- a) **Note** that ERO is reforming our School Reports to ensure that are clear, useful and accessible for parents.
- b) **Note** that this briefing provides you with an overview of the feedback on our new School Reports we have received through testing with schools and parents.
- c) **Note** that we have provided you with examples of our near final School Report format and intend to launch this new format at the start of Term 2 2026.

ERO's updated school reporting

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with an update on our new school reporting, following testing and feedback from schools and parents. We have provided you with examples of our updated School Reports as Appendix A.

Background

2. Smarter and consistent reporting forms part of the Government's six education priorities. ERO has prioritised updating our reporting, and improving school reporting is one of ERO's five key areas for our 2026 work programme, which we discussed with you earlier this year (M26-2 refers).
3. ERO's School Reports play a critical role in accountability and driving improvement in education:
 - They provide **parents** with information about the quality of education their children are receiving, to support choice and for them to support and challenge schools as needed.
 - They provide **schools** with visibility of how they are performing and tracking against other schools so they can take action to strengthen education quality.
 - They provide **Ministers and the Ministry of Education** (the Ministry) with the information they need to make decisions about interventions and additional support, and the effectiveness of those interventions.
4. ERO has received feedback over time that our reports could be improved. Feedback from parents has been that they don't find our reports consistently useful, that language is hard to understand, and that judgements are not comparable against other schools. In addition, the Ministry has told us that our reports don't always provide clear recommendations that enable the use of interventions where needed.
5. ERO is making changes to our school reporting to ensure reports:
 - a) Are clear, useful, and accessible to parents
 - b) Provide consistent, comparable judgments and actions
 - c) Can explicitly be used as the legal basis for intervention in schools
6. ERO has proposed a new School Report that has a **one-page summary** and a **full report**, providing evaluative detail and actions. We briefed you on our approach to reforming school reporting late last year (M25-97 refers). Since that meeting, we have tested our approach with parents to assess clarity, usability, and accessibility.
7. This briefing provides you with an update following testing with parents, including feedback themes. We have made updates to our reporting approach to reflect this feedback and provided you with examples of our updated School Reports (Appendix A).
8. Following further refinements, the full report and one-page summary will be introduced nationally **from Term 2 2026**.

Testing our new reports with schools and parents

9. We piloted the new School Report at a range of primary and secondary schools. We included representation from different school sizes, locations, and EQI in our sample.
10. We heard generally positive feedback from parents, caregivers and whānau, with some areas for further improvement. We have summarised the feedback we received into themes in the below table.

What parents liked	What needed improvement
- Improved readability - Clearer summaries - Plainer language - More explicit priorities for improvement - More family friendly - Updated language (including use of Te Reo terms)	- Clearer achievement data - More comparison of previous reports - More detail on school-wide progress over time - Some areas need further clarification and simplification

11. We also heard positive feedback from school leaders, notably that the new school reports were more comprehensive than previous versions in areas such as leadership, curriculum, and teaching practices.
12. Following this feedback, ERO refined our new report format. We simplified language further in some areas, strengthened the one-page summary, and clarified improvement actions and recommendations.

Our updated school reports

13. Our updated School Report format is near final. We will continue to refine our report over Term 1 2026, as we receive further feedback from schools and parents, caregivers, and whānau. Examples of our new School Report format are attached to this briefing as Appendix A.
14. Each report has a one-page summary that is comparable across schools, provides an overall statement on performance, and shows how the schools is scoring across 14 key domains. The full report provides more detail on each domain, steps needed for improvement, and further details about the school population, community and leadership.
15. Our School Reports will use a four-point scale for judgements:
 - a) Excelling – for high quality provision.
 - b) Doing well – for good provision (formerly 'Embedding').
 - c) Working Towards – when provision is progressing but not yet at the level required.
 - d) Improvement needed – when provision is not adequate.
16. Key feedback from parents was that our terminology 'Embedding' was not easy to understand, so we have replaced it with the 'Doing well'.

17. Our School Reports have a section on next steps for improvement include clear actions for school leaders and boards, including an expected timeframe for when those actions should be completed.
18. Our School Reports also explicitly recognise where a school is of concern or serious concern. To support intervention in these schools, ERO will include recommendations of action required from the Ministry, including statutory interventions. We are developing the language of these recommendations with the Ministry and will update you on this in March.

Next steps

19. We will discuss our updated School Report with you at the officials meeting on 10 February 2026.
20. While near final, we will continue refining our reporting so that our new School Reports are ready to be introduced in Term 2 2026. We will work with your office to provide support ahead of this launch of our new School Report.
21. Alongside our updated reporting, we are developing and a Parents' Guide to Schools to provide guidance on how parents can use School Reports to understand a school's performance, inform choice of their child's school, and what questions they can ask their school. Feedback we have received from schools and parents will help inform this guidance.

Recommendations

22. It is recommended that you:
 - a) **Note** that ERO is reforming our School Reports to ensure that they are clear, useful and accessible for parents. **Noted**
 - b) **Note** that this briefing provides you with an overview of the feedback on our new School Reports we have received through testing with schools and parents. **Noted**
 - c) **Note** that we have provided you with examples of our near final School Report format and intend to launch this new format at the start of Term 2 2026. **Noted**


Shelley Booyesen
Deputy Chief Executive

Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Education

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