

# Education Review Office (ERO): Launch of ERO School Reports

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| <b>To:</b>             | Erica Stanford, Minister of Education                                                                                                                                                                                   |                         |               |
| <b>Date submitted:</b> | 5 March 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Deadline:</b>        | 13 March 2026 |
| <b>Security Level:</b> | In-Confidence                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Tracking Number:</b> | M26-15        |
| <b>From:</b>           | Shelley Booyesen                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Drafter:</b>         |               |
| <b>Attachments:</b>    | Appendix A: Example ERO School Reports<br>Appendix B: ERO School Reports – Explainer for Parents<br>Appendix C: ERO School Reports – Explainer for Schools<br>Appendix D: Summary of feedback on new ERO School Reports |                         |               |

## Actions Sought

### Addressee

Erica Stanford  
Minister of  
Education

### Action sought

It is recommended that you:

- a) **Note** that ERO has refreshed our School Reports to ensure they are clear, consistent, and useful for parents.
- b) **Note** that we have developed a parents' and a schools' explainer guide to accompany the new report format.
- c) **Note** that we are planning to work with your office to launch the new report format and one-page guides in the week of 16 March 2026.

## *Launch of new ERO School Reports*

### **Purpose**

1. This briefing provides you with an update on ERO's refreshed School Reports. Attached as draft are three anonymised example reports, a one-page explainer guide for parents, and a one-page explainer guide for schools. We will launch the new School Reports in the week commencing 16 March.

### **Background**

2. Smarter and consistent reporting to parents is a key Government priority for education. In support of this priority, ERO is making changes to our school reporting to ensure reports:
  - Are clear, useful, and accessible to parents.
  - Provide consistent, comparable judgments and actions.
  - Can explicitly be used as the legal basis for intervention in schools.
3. ERO School Reports are a key mechanism for assurance and accountability in New Zealand. Our reports are made publicly available following regular reviews in schools and are focused on improvement in priority areas.
4. Our School Report improvement has been heavily informed by parents' feedback. ERO's reports are an important resource for parents to understand and be assured of the quality of their child's education, to inform school choice and to hold school leadership to account. Parents told us that they don't find our reports consistently useful, that language is hard to understand, and that judgements are not comparable between 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. Last month, we updated you on our progress, including changes we had made to our approach following consultation with parents and schools (M26-7 refers). Since this update, we have undertaken further piloting and testing with parents, schools and the sector to further refine our report format.

### **ERO's new School Reports**

6. We have finalised our new school report format and intend to launch in the week of 16 March 2026.
7. We have developed three examples based on real school data, which are attached as **Appendix A**. These examples include:
  - A high performing secondary school.
  - A good performing intermediate school with a challenging intake.
  - A poor performing primary school.
8. The final report includes three sections: a Snapshot, Overview and Full School Report. This approach ensures that reports are clear, accessible, and credible, while meeting

the needs of parents and whānau, schools, and the wider public. Feedback showed strong support for the three-part report structure.

## School Report Snapshot

- The first part of our report provides a concise summary of key ERO judgements. It allows readers to quickly understand the overall picture of how a school is performing and what matters most. This supports accessibility and transparency, particularly for parents and whānau who may not read the full report.

**What the Snapshot will look like:**

| Judgement                 | Number of areas                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Excelling                 |                                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Doing well                |                                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Working towards           |                                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improvement required      |                                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Student Health and Safety | Meets expectation. This Intermediate School is taking reasonable steps to ensure student health and safety. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

- The snapshot aims to provide a clear, accessible view of school performance. Parents found the Snapshot helpful for quickly seeing where their school is at and for comparing across schools.

## School Report Overview

- The overview explains the judgements against 14 key domains. It provides a brief narrative context about strengths, challenges, and improvement priorities, helping readers understand why judgements have been reached and how different aspects of performance connect. This reduces the risk of headline judgements being misunderstood or read in isolation.

**What Overview judgements will look like:**

|                     |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Student Achievement | Working towards | A small majority (50% to 64%) of all students at the school achieve well across the curriculum with less than half of students at expected levels in core areas.                      |
| Student Progress    | Excelling       | A large majority of students enter the school not yet working at expected curriculum levels. Many students make significant and accelerated progress in their learning at the school. |
| Reading & Writing   | Working towards | Overall achievement outcomes show less than half of students meeting or exceeding the expected curriculum level in reading, and writing                                               |
| Mathematics         | Working towards | Overall achievement outcomes show less than half of students meeting or exceeding the expected curriculum level in mathematics                                                        |
| Attendance          | Doing well      | A large majority of students attend school regularly. Attendance is improving overtime.                                                                                               |

12. The Overview provides a next level of detail, aimed at helping readers interpret the Snapshot. Parents we spoke to liked the Overview because it explained the reasons behind the judgements and how the report sections connect.

## Full School Report

13. The Full Report section provides the detailed narrative, evidence, and context that underpin ERO's judgements. It explains how findings align with the School Improvement Framework, reflects each school's unique context and equity challenges, and supports schools and boards to plan and monitor improvement. This level of detail is essential for transparency, accountability, and credibility.
14. Both schools and parents agreed the Full Report is needed to show each school's unique schools' situation and to help with planning improvements.

### What the Full Report will look like:

#### The Intermediate School: Full Report

Tēnā koutou e mau manawa rahi ki te kaupapa e aro ake nei, ko te tamaiti te pūtake o te kaupapa. Mā wai rā e kawē, mā tātau katoa. We acknowledge the collective effort, responsibility and commitment by all to ensure that the child remains at the heart of the matter.

#### Outcomes for students

##### Achievement

A small majority (50% to 64%) of all students at the school achieve well across the curriculum. A large majority of students enter the school at Year 7 well below expected curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

##### Progress

Students at The Intermediate School make meaningful progress in their learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 8, almost all (over 90%) of students demonstrate significant progress across all learning areas.

School information shows the school supports students to make positive shifts in their achievement overtime with outcomes becoming more equitable across all student groups. The school tracks student progress and this shows that students who remain at the school from Year 7 to Year 8 make accelerated progress and are well prepared to move to the next steps in their learning.

#### Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics

Students benefit from high-quality instruction that supports them to make accelerated progress at the

## Explainer guides

15. We have also developed two one-page explainer guides for release on March 16<sup>th</sup>, one for parents and the other for schools (**Appendix B** and **C**). We will develop a fuller "Parents' Guide to Schools" for the start of Term 2.
16. These explainer guides are important to the sector, who want to ensure parents know how they can constructively engage with schools on any concerns raised from the school report.

## Engagement and Consultation

17. Our new report format is informed by extensive consultation with parents and schools. Over the first 5 weeks of Term 1 2026 we piloted the refined School Reports at a range of primary and secondary schools and met with school leaders to gather feedback. We also met with 68 parents, caregivers, and whānau.

18. The new report format was received positively by parents and school leaders. We have responded to feedback on where improvement can be made and integrated it into the final proposed report design. Some of the feedback from parents will be addressed in the guide for parents.
19. We have engaged with many key sector bodies on the new reporting format and will continue to do so ahead of the launch. Feedback has been mostly positive and constructive, but not universally so.
20. A summary of the feedback we received is attached as **Appendix D** to this briefing.
21. This new report format is for English medium schools. We are intending to develop a format for Māori medium schools later, which leverages what we have learned through this process and is bespoke to kaupapa Māori.
22. Where schools have a Rūmaki or bilingual Māori immersion unit we will include statements about achievement in Panui, Tuhituhi and Pāngarau. We will share an example with your office next week, prior to the launch of our new reports.

## Next steps

23. We are working to have the reports and the explainer guides designed and available in print by Friday 13 March.
24. We will work with your office ahead of the launch of our reports to align messaging and provide any support required.
25. Following the launch, we plan to begin using the new report format in all English medium schools from Term 2 2026. This will be supported by targeted PLD internally and clear communication with schools externally. The “Parents’ Guide to Schools” will also be available at this time.

## Recommendations

26. It is recommended that you:
  - a) **Note** that ERO has refreshed our School Reports to ensure they are effective, consistent, and useful for parents. **Noted**

- b) **Note** that we have developed a parents' and a schools' guide to accompany the new report format. **Noted**
- c) **Note** we are planning to work with your office to launch the new report format and in the week of 16 March 2026. **Noted**

*Booyesen*

Shelley Booyesen  
**Deputy Chief Executive**

Hon Erica Stanford  
**Minister of Education**

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