

CHAPTER FOUR

New Zealand Today

How can it be expected that these two cases, so dissimilar in every respect, could be dealt with under an Act and with an organisation designed to meet the needs of only one of them?

James Pope, Inspector of Maori Schools, 1891.

Although the number of kohanga reo is declining, more than 10,000 children attended 513 kohanga reo in 2004. This is slightly fewer than those attending licensed education and care services. There were sixty-two kura kaupapa Maori in 2004 (compared to fifty-nine in 2000). Of those sixty-two, twenty were also wharekura, i.e. able to teach some or all of the secondary school curriculum (Ministry of Education 2005).

Students enrolled at Maori immersion secondary schools, whether kura kaupapa or designated character schools established under Section 156 of the Education Act 1989, achieve well academically. *Nga Haeata Matauranga* (Ministry of Education 2005) records that:

In 2002 results showed that Maori students in Maori immersion schools achieved significantly better in School Certificate and sixth form level English, science, mathematics and te reo Maori than Maori students participating in mainstream schools' immersion programmes. In 2003, a high proportion of Year 11 and 12 candidates at immersion schools achieved qualifications at levels about the typical National Qualification Framework level for their year of schooling. Nine per cent of Year 11 immersion school

candidates achieved an NCEA Level Two or Level Three qualification, while a quarter of Year 12 immersion school candidates achieved NCEA Level 3 in 2003. School-leaver 2003 data also showed a higher percentage of wharekura students leaving school with Level 2 National Certificate of Educational Attainment (NCEA).

The numbers involved are small. Kura kaupapa are small schools and only twenty of them provide secondary education.

The concern of this chapter is Maori achievement in education today. As mentioned previously, the key issues are:

- The 40 per cent of Maori students who will not achieve the compulsory requirements of NCEA Level One after eleven years of state schooling, when the national curriculum has these requirements achieved in Years 6 to 8.
- The 60 per cent of Maori Year 11 students who failed NCEA Level One in 2003 (although about a third of these students gained NCEA Level One in Year 12).
- The 30 per cent of Maori students who leave school without any formal qualification and are condemned to a life of low earnings and financial dependence on the Crown.
- The 28 per cent of Maori fifteen-year-olds who are not at school on any one day.
- The 6–7 per cent of Maori students who will be suspended or stood down in any year, and will miss an average ten weeks of school as a result.
- The 5 per cent of Maori students who leave school in Year 9 or 10.
- Only 9 per cent of Maori students who gained a qualification in 2003 that allowed them to attend university.

Our approach in this chapter is to look at how these figures arise through the lens of Papakura pre-schools, primary schools and Papakura High School. First, though, we look at the Education Act of 1989 which

dumped responsibility for the management of all schools, including our worst schools, onto local communities. This devolution has been a disaster for school communities without the required skills.

By the late 1980s the administration of education in New Zealand had become horrendously complicated. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Education Act of 1877, which established ten education boards to run primary schools in their area, followed the abolition of the provincial governments in 1875. These boards made decisions on hiring, firing, capital works and building maintenance, and interacted with the Department of Education. In 1879 the Department of Education took over responsibility for the operation of the Native schools.

The first intermediate schools were established in the 1920s and these came under the control of the education boards. By the late 1980s there were no more Native schools (a simplification) but the Department of Education had established departmental regional offices as a decision-making structure between itself and the boards. State primary schools had elected school committees which were responsible for some day-to-day matters such as the cleaning, heating and maintenance of the buildings and grounds and the purchasing of textbooks and library books. They were also responsible for the after-hours use of the school grounds. They did not hire and fire staff.

So, in 1987, ten education boards governed primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand. These interacted with regional offices of the Department of Education that in turn reported to the Department of Education in Wellington. Each primary school had an elected school committee with some responsibilities in the day-to-day management of the school.

In 1877 there had been very few secondary schools, and although their numbers greatly increased in the twentieth century they remained outside the education board system. Secondary schools had boards of governors that dealt directly with the Department of Education for funding, including capital works and maintenance.

Early childhood education centres were also outside board control. However, unlike secondary schools these tended to belong to a national

grouping and developed links with the Department of Education through those national organisations.

Then there were integrated schools, whose land and buildings were not owned by the government, but which received state funding for staffing, operating and maintenance costs. There were also the private schools as well as a number of special schools run directly by the Department of Education.

This whole system was badly in need of review by the mid-1980s. It had developed in a piecemeal fashion rather than according to an overall plan, and it was clearly cumbersome with approval required from some bureaucrat somewhere to fix a broken window. In 1987 the Taskforce to Review Education Administration was announced. Its report, the Picot Report, was presented to the Ministers of Education, Finance and State Services in April 1988. In 1989 the Education Act was passed by Parliament and Tomorrow's Schools were upon us.

Schools became the basic unit of administration in education, with local control of local resources. School governance is now via the Board of Trustees, idealised by the Picot report as 'a partnership between the professionals and the particular community in which it is located'. Each school sets its own objectives, within the overall education objectives set by the government.

The Picot report also recommended the establishment of a Parent Advocacy Council 'to promote the interests of parents and . . . assist parents of compulsory-age children who are unable to obtain satisfaction within existing arrangements', and bulk funding of both teacher salaries and operational activities so that schools could decide not only how many teachers to employ but also how much to pay each one.

With regard to Maori education and the wish of Maori to be involved in their children's education in a system which respected their language, culture and values, the authors of the Picot report said, 'Our key recommendation in this respect is the requirement that institutions operate according to a charter to be drawn up in consultation with local groups and to be approved by central government.' Perhaps realising the difficulties of enforcing charters, they go on to say:

It must be recognised, however, that Maori educational interests are often overlooked or subordinated to the interests of the majority. To guard against this happening in the future and to ensure that Maori interests are given due weight in the educational decision-making process, we have recommended a measure which we believe will serve to protect Maori people, and indeed all minorities, against undue pressure and influence from the dominant community. Under the system which we propose, groups whose needs are not being met adequately within the existing educational framework will have the right to opt out of the existing school system and to create their own institutions. This measure will give education institutions the incentive required to provide for the needs of all minorities in their local community.

The recommended measure was that a group of parents representing at least twenty-one children could set up their own learning institution which would receive state funding and operate under its own charter, possibly as a school within a school.

This recommendation survives in the Education Act 1989 as Section 156, which gives the Minister absolute discretion to establish a designated character school if the parents of at least twenty-one children want this and if the school would offer an education that differs significantly from that available at an ordinary state school and which is not available at any other state school that the children could conveniently attend.

Section 156 is a very watered-down version of the original Picot Report recommendation, but the recommendation was problematic. The obvious problem was how to prevent schools fragmenting into multiple micro-schools, possibly sharing buildings and grounds, but suffering the disadvantages of small size, such as a narrow range of specialist teaching and limited resources. If the threshold is too low, there is no incentive for parents to work with schools. If the threshold is too high, there is no incentive for schools to accommodate difficult groups.

Today, the Minister approves the establishment of very few designated character schools (most of those are Maori-language immersion schools) and our impression is that his 'absolute discretion' is used to reward

services to the Labour party rather than to foster innovation, diversity and achievement. For example, former Christchurch mayor and long-time Labour party stalwart Vicki Buck's 'Discovery 1' school opened in 2001 as a designated character school with full state funding. Buck has now opened a secondary school, 'Unlimited', also with full state funding. John and Fran Stevens opened Aorangi School in Tokoroa in 2001. This school operated on Satnya Sai principles and was attended by children from forty-seven families. It received an excellent ERO report but was turned down for designated character status, and was not allowed to become an integrated school. The money ran out and the school closed in 2003.

Section 156 could operate as a very effective balance for Maori in the education system, which was one of the intentions of the original Picot Report recommendation.

The Education Act 1989 is described in its title as an Act to reform the administration of education. It was never intended as an Act that would raise Maori educational achievement directly. The idea was that the improvement in school administration would be analogous to a rising tide – it would lift all boats. However, the question for many Maori parents in Papakura and elsewhere is, what happens when Maori are not achieving in a school or schools?

The system before 1989 contained a number of checks and balances that persist today. These include the Minister of Education, and the general checks on Crown authority – the Courts, Members of Parliament including the Opposition, the press, and the Ombudsmen. There are also the pressure groups in education, especially the teacher unions, the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) and the Post-Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA). There are the bodies responsible for teacher quality – the teacher training institutions and the Teachers' Council. Finally there are the new creations of the 1989 Act – boards of trustees, the ERO, the NZQA and the revamped Ministry of Education.

The courts have a role in reviewing the decisions of principals and of boards of trustees. However, as Justice Williams articulated in his judgement (*Maddaver v Umawera School Board of Trustees*, 1992), the

court's jurisdiction under the Judicature Amendment Act 1972 is limited to reviewing decisions made pursuant to a statutory power of decision. The obvious example of such a decision in the Education Act 1989 is the power to exclude a pupil. The court does have wide inherent powers to review decisions but Justice Williams thought 'that except in rare cases it would be wrong for the court to intervene too readily in cases brought against boards of trustees in relation to purely managerial or administrative matters not seriously affecting the rights of students', as sections 75 and 76 of the Education Act 1989 give principals and boards 'complete discretion as to control and management'. Justice Williams indicated that the Ombudsmen and Human Rights Commission were better avenues for parents to pursue.

The Ombudsmen have considerable powers to investigate, but in the end can only issue a report and commentary that is not binding on the school or the system. The underlying problem, Maori underachievement in the compulsory education sector, is a national problem and one that the Ombudsmen, and the Human Rights Commission, might identify. But it is not a problem that either can be expected to solve.

The National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) impose specific obligations on schools. NAG 1 is set out in Table 4, 'National Administration Guideline 1'.

What happens when a school ignores NAG 1, or parts of it, particularly those parts relevant to Maori? This is a quality issue and falls squarely at the door of the Education Review Office. The ERO has produced two reports (Education Review Office 2003 and 2004) on Maori students in mainstream schools and on Maori student achievement in mainstream schools. As the 2003 report concluded (and the 2004 report reinforced):

While a wide range of initiatives was being implemented by schools, the majority were cultural programmes and often did not have strong links with identified educational issues or underachievement. In addition, most schools were not able to determine or report if the initiatives they had implemented led to improved educational achievement of Maori students.

Table 4: *National Administration Guideline 1*

NAG 1
Each Board of Trustees is required to foster student achievement by providing teaching and learning programmes that incorporate the New Zealand Curriculum (essential learning areas, essential skills and attitudes and values) as expressed in National Curriculum Statements.
Each Board, through the principal and staff, is required to:
(i) develop and implement teaching and learning programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to provide all students in Years 1–10 with opportunities to achieve for success in all the essential learning and skill areas of the New Zealand curriculum; (b) giving priority to student achievement in literacy and numeracy, especially in Years 1–4;
(ii) through a range of assessment practices, gather information that is sufficiently comprehensive to enable the progress and achievement of students to be evaluated; giving priority first to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) student achievement in literacy and numeracy, especially in Years 1–4; and then to: (b) breadth and depth of learning related to the needs, abilities and interests of students, the nature of the school's curriculum, and the scope of the New Zealand curriculum (as expressed in the National Curriculum Statements);
(iii) on the basis of good quality assessment information, identify students and groups of students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) who are not achieving; (b) who are at risk of not achieving; (c) who have special needs; and (d) aspects of the curriculum which require particular attention;
(iv) develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to address the needs of students and aspects of the curriculum identified in (iii) above;
(v) in consultation with the school's Maori community, develop and make known to the school's community policies, plans and targets for improving the achievement of Maori students;
(vi) provide appropriate career education and guidance for all students in Year 7 and above, with a particular emphasis on specific career guidance for those students who have been identified by the school as being at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education/training.

The ERO report seems clear, and echoes our sentiment that there is no connection between schools' initiatives to include Maori and the educational needs of Maori, the most important of which is academic achievement.

The 2003 report also found that 5 per cent of schools with fifty or more Maori students did not analyse achievement data for Maori students separately, while only 21 per cent of these schools reported on Maori student achievement in all areas. Schools with fifty or more Maori students were more likely to report that Maori students were achieving at a lower level than non-Maori. Only 25 per cent of schools with fifty or more Maori students had a focus on improving literacy and numeracy for Maori.

The 2004 report noted that 'schools still appear to be under-reporting disparities in Maori student achievement and participation'.

These two ERO reports provide some information but not at a level of detail that allows readers to reach conclusions different from or additional to those that ERO has approved. For example, primary and secondary schools are generally quite different, so the data should have been reported separately for secondary and primary schools. The data should also have been reported by the proportion of Maori students on the school roll. Many secondary schools have fifty or more Maori students, but in many very good secondary schools Maori are a small minority comprising less than 10 per cent of the roll. As primary schools tend to be smaller than secondary schools, when there are more than fifty Maori kids at a primary school Maori are normally a significant proportion of the roll.

The reports generate two key questions – where are these underachieving Maori students, and what happens to these Maori students at secondary school?

To answer the first, it is important to know where the 60 per cent of Maori students who fail NCEA Level One in Year 11 come from. Are they 60 per cent of Maori students at all primary schools, or are they concentrated in some primary schools? Why doesn't the ERO tell us?

To answer the second, consider the three things that can happen to a student who commences secondary school behind his or her peers: the

gap can remain, it can widen, or it can close. What happens, in general, at secondary schools? How are those secondary schools where the gap closes different from those where it widens?

In its October 2005 Ministerial Briefing (Education Review Office 2005), the ERO says:

For Maori students in schools the focus still needs to be on improving the quality of teaching because this will have the greatest influence on their achievement . . . During reviews ERO asks questions about the achievement of Maori students in every school where Maori students are enrolled . . . [W]hile schools are now evaluating the programmes they have put in place to improve the educational outcomes, most have yet to link these initiatives to student assessment and achievement information . . . Schools still seem to be under-reporting disparities in the achievement and participation rates of Maori students. Furthermore most schools reported that there were few or no issues about their Maori students' . . . attendance, truancy, suspension and stand-downs and retention rates. This pattern is of concern, given the evidence of variable levels of achievement and the high levels of suspensions and stand-downs of Maori students.

The overall impression is that the ERO is well aware of the problems with Maori student achievement, and of the friction between Maori and schools evidenced by lower attendance and higher rates of exclusion, and that it expects schools to collect data on these things and use that data to inform policies and processes. However, the ERO is an auditor of schools, not a manager. Schools may or may not develop an action plan in response to an adverse ERO report and they may or may not implement any action plan.

The Ministry of Education will often get involved with schools that have had a negative review and are facing a supplementary review. One example of a joint Ministry/iwi attempt to raise Maori student achievement was Te Putahitanga Matauranga (TPM), a partnership between five Far North iwi and the Ministry of Education (Else 2004; there is a summary at the Ministry's website www.minedu.govt.nz). This arose out of two ERO reports (Education Review Office 1999 and 1998)

that were strongly critical of the quality of education in the Far North. In 1999 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the iwi (operating as Te Reo o Te Taitokerau, TRoTT) and the Ministry of Education. This did not mention specific strategic goals but the ERO reports were clear that Maori student achievement in Te Taitokerau was unacceptably low.

In the absence of clear goals for the partnership it is difficult to say that the partnership has been successful or unsuccessful. The Else review identifies eight specific initiatives or projects that had been going for at least a year as at the end of 2002 and a further four that were being implemented. All these aimed to support and develop existing schools and their boards. What is clear from the evaluation is that there was always a power disparity in the so-called partnership between TRoTT and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry had the money and the experts; TRoTT had the dream. What has resulted is the Crown organising a Maori community to endorse and deliver Crown initiatives. These phrases in Else's descriptions of 'new initiatives' suggest that all that has happened is the transplantation of a selection of Ministry-approved programmes from other areas of the country into the Far North in an effort to: 'raise levels of written language achievement by providing professional development in strategies', 'enhance the professional leadership provided by principals', 'one-to-one tutoring of almost 250 slow progress readers, helping them to develop self-correcting and problem-solving strategies', 'parent mentoring' and 'analysis and use of student achievement data'.

It is disappointing that the people of Te Taitokerau have no genuine local solutions to their local problems, especially given the proud record of the area in Maori education both before European settlement and in the era of mission schools.

It may well be that the iwi partners were presented with a range of possible interventions by the Ministry of Education and that they selected from these the half dozen or so that they thought were most likely to succeed in the Far North. This would be a demonstration of real partnership. However, it is more likely that the Ministry chose the programmes, persuaded local Maori that they were likely to be beneficial,

and then organised the Maori to support their implementation. This scenario is one of colonisation, and its continuing success requires the continuing input of Ministry-controlled resources.

Yet, once the ERO has left, once the Ministry has left, it is the school board and the principal who have the responsibility of managing the school. Section 75 says that 'a school's board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit', while Section 76 says that 'the principal . . . has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the school's day-to-day administration', subject to the board's general policy directions.

Section 75 is the key section of the Education Act 1989 with respect to the compulsory education sector. It is the major administrative change and was driven by the belief that decisions should be made locally rather than centrally. For many Pakeha schools this has been a liberation, and the school has flown. For many brown schools, the removal of the Ministry from decision-making and planning has cast the school adrift. The board does not have the skills to carry out its duties, and is captured by the principal or by whichever confident or domineering persons sit on it.

By way of example, the Education Act 1989 has been a disaster for Edmund Hillary School. Over the last fifteen years the school roll has halved. The board continues to operate like the school committees of a previous era – raising funds for library books, agonising over who should be allowed to use the grounds after hours, and waiting for budgets and plans to drop into their laps. The principal now fills the various roles previously filled by the Ministry of Education, and Edmund Hillary School has not recruited principals with the required diverse skill set.

This is the great failure of Tomorrow's Schools. Decision-making was devolved to communities regardless of their capacity to manage a school. The tragedy is that an incompetent board in combination with an incompetent principal and inadequate resources make it very difficult for teachers to remain competent. This point is not appreciated by the education sector.

Teachers are central to a school. There is good evidence from the

Ministry of Education-funded Kotahitanga research project that a key determinant of academic success for Maori students is their perception of the quality of the relationship between student and teacher. Kids who think their teacher likes them do better at school.

There are many concepts of what makes a good teacher. Peachey (2005) identifies four criteria he used as principal of Rangitoto College when recruiting teachers. They were: command of the curriculum; the ability to communicate well with students; personal qualities; and contribution to extra-curricular activities. The Ministry of Education (2005) describes four characteristics of effective teachers: high achievement expectations of all learners; thorough subject knowledge; an ability to teach well, adopting flexible strategies in the light of new information such as assessment data; and a caring attitude towards students.

What is clear from all this is that officialdom regards teaching as a very complicated business, requiring a wide range of knowledge and skills.

A striking feature of the New Zealand education system is that the worst teachers, those most in need of intensive support and guidance, end up at the low-decile schools where they are least likely to receive the administrative support and academic leadership they need to function as effective teachers. Good teachers have a choice of schools, and choose to teach in the suburbs they would like to live and bring up their families in. Other good teachers have already chosen to work in schools in these areas, and the schools have been able to choose their principals from a number of applicants, so they have chosen a better principal. Teachers in these schools have an easy ride – they have good collegial support, good learning and teaching resources, access to proven systems, and senior staff who have won their positions through a truly competitive process. Yet these are the teachers least in need of the easy ride.

Teachers who are not selected for jobs in good schools, those in the shallow end of the talent pool, find their way to low-decile areas. There are many exceptions, and perhaps the majority of teachers in many low-decile schools are good teachers. However, the odds are stacked against low-decile schools. They get fewer applicants for teaching and management positions and the applicants are, on average, of lower quality.

Consider a Papakura primary school. Two of its five parent representatives have resigned from the board since the 2004 election, as has its co-opted chairman. A third elected parent representative is on leave from the board because of illness. The school is facing an ERO visit mid-year, its third in three years. The school has not set an adequate budget for classroom resources. The principal is a wonderful and committed person but does not have mastery of the curriculum – her written English is poor, and she cannot reliably calculate percentages, even with a calculator. Staff turnover is high. The principal is very reluctant to report on student achievement because it is low, and does not report on Maori achievement or attendance separately. The school is small, but has a Maori immersion unit and is planning a Pacific immersion unit. There is a kohanga reo in an unused classroom.

One teacher describes her initial contact with the school in 2003: 'When I came for my interview . . . I was hired on the spot. I popped in to check out my class at the end of the year and walked into a classroom with nothing on the walls, watched children wandering in and out when they felt like it and working principally on a diet of colouring-in worksheets. There wasn't a discipline problem because the children were allowed to do what they liked.'

How many teachers competent in another context could walk into this school and this classroom of predominantly Maori students and get them to achieve? Not many, if any. The New Zealand school system can be visualised as a series of factories. Raw material (children) is fed into one set of factories – the preschools and primary schools, sometime between ages three and six. Each factory adds knowledge and skills to its raw material. Maori raw material changes factories more often, and takes itself off the production line more frequently than other types of raw material. Having passed through no or one or more pre-schools, Maori children enter primary school. Having passed through at least one, often more, primary and intermediate school, Maori children enter secondary school and their first quality inspection is at NCEA Level One in Year 11. Sixty per cent of Maori fail this inspection. After re-working in Year 12, about one third of that failed product does achieve NCEA Level One. In the end, 30 per

cent of Maori leave the series of education factories as defective product, i.e. without any formal qualification. They have failed the first fitness to standard testing, in many cases after substantial reworking.

Earlier in this chapter we posed two questions. Which primary schools do the 60 per cent of Maori students who fail NCEA Level One come from, and, what happens to them at secondary school? We propose to address these questions by looking at Papakura schools and pre-schools. National census data show that 25 per cent of Papakura residents are Maori. Maori families have lower incomes than non-Maori families. Maori children are more likely to be raised in single-parent homes. Police statistics reveal that Maori in Papakura are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of crime than non-Maori. WINZ figures show that Maori in Papakura are more likely than non-Maori to be on the dole, on the DPB, or on the sickness or invalid's benefit. The area has a high Maori teenage pregnancy rate and a high Maori teenage suicide rate.

Primary schools have a known tendency to delude themselves about the achievement of their students, including Maori students. If one believed what primary and intermediate schools say, the conclusion would be that 10–20 per cent of Maori students enter secondary school achieving below expectations for their age. That is, according to primary schools, the problem lies within secondary schools. However, according to secondary schools, they receive substandard material to work on from primary schools and in many cases can do little or nothing with it.

We believe the problem is system-wide. No sub-sector performs well (although we don't have adequate data on the achievement of Maori students in Papakura's licensed early childhood education and care centres to extend this conclusion to them). The global incompetence of Papakura kohanga reo, the global and cultural incompetence of Papakura primary schools with a predominantly Maori roll, and the global and cultural incompetence of Papakura High School are the local causes of these figures.

In Chapter Two we defined a culturally competent school/teacher as one who achieved the same outcomes for Maori and non-Maori, and

a globally incompetent school as one that did not achieve acceptable outcomes for any group.

The claim that poor performance is endemic in Papakura schools and pre-schools with a predominantly Maori student roll requires justification. We will use ERO reports. According to the Ministry of Education's figures (Ministry of Education 2005), just under a third of Maori pre-schoolers are enrolled in a kohanga reo and a slightly greater number are enrolled in licensed early childhood education or care. By the time they enrol at school, 89 per cent of Maori children have been enrolled in pre-school education. These figures suggest that there is substantial movement in and out of education at this level.

Papakura has six kohanga reo (although one has folded, at least temporarily). Table 5, 'ERO data: Papakura kohanga reo', provides summary information from the most recent ERO reports. Kiwiriki closed after receiving its ERO report. The future of Te Maunga is uncertain.

Most children who attend a kohanga reo progress to an immersion unit within a Papakura primary school rather than a kura kaupapa Maori. The nearest kura kaupapa are in Takanini and Manurewa.

The problems with pre-school education for Maori in Papakura, both in terms of its quality and the number of children neither participating nor receiving adequate preparation for primary school, mean that many, perhaps most, Maori five-year-olds start primary school with low levels of literacy and numeracy and with little experience of the discipline required for success in a mainstream school environment.

In this context it is surprising that the Ministry of Education has decided to further reduce the number of early childhood education places available for Maori in Papakura by converting the purpose-built Redhill Playcentre into a facility for pregnant girls or mums of school age.

Table 6, 'ERO data: Papakura primary schools', summarises ERO report data for Papakura primary schools.

There are six striking things about this table. First, in four of the six primary schools where the majority of the students are Maori, either the last ERO report was a supplementary report or the next one will be. These are not good schools.

Table 5: *ERO data: Papakura Kohanga Reo*

Kohanga reo	Roll	Under- twos	ERO comments
Te Maunga Kohungahunga	16	4	July 2005. Supplementary Review. ERO will return within 12 months: 'The whanau has made no progress in addressing any of the issues raised in the last report. Furthermore, the education and care provided to children has deteriorated to such an extent that the children's emotional and physical safety are at risk.'
Kiwiriki	18	5	July 2004. ERO will return within twelve months. Kohanga located on Papakura Marae grounds: 'poor-quality learning experiences'; 'a number of potential hazards were identified. These pose a risk to the health and safety of children in the kohanga'; 'personnel management and finance need to be reviewed and strengthened'.
Kiwitoa	27	4	April 2005. Regular review cycle: 'Reporting on children's progress is at the early stages of development.'
Nga Puawai o Wikitoria	22	4	October 2005. Regular review cycle: 'Over the past years, the kohanga has not had adequate leadership and a lack of whanau participation has had a negative [impact] on kohanga operations . . . There is now a more focused approach to managing the kohanga and more whanau members are assisting . . .'
Tumatauenga	19	0	November 2002. Regular review cycle: excellent ERO report.
Pukeroihi	22	5	February 2002. Regular review cycle: 'Children receive high-quality education'; 'Personnel management is inadequate'; 'There is a lack of financial management policies'.

Table 6: *ERO data: Papakura Primary Schools*

School	Roll	Maori (%)	ERO Comments
Papakura South	141	134 (95)	Supplementary Report June 2004: 'children are not performing highly in aspects of literacy'.
Kelvin Rd	490	367 (75)	November 2004. ERO will return within twelve months: 'The school is beginning to gather useful information on student achievement in reading and writing. It would now be useful to establish achievement expectations.'
Mansell Senior	302	214 (71)	December 2005. Regular review cycle. Intermediate school: 'The school has not had systems in place to track the progress of cohorts of students. This year, in Term 1, senior managers collected information about Maori student achievement in literacy and mathematics. This provides the school with baseline data to compare with end of year achievement information. Maori students in Year 7 showed a 10 per cent improvement in addition and subtraction, while Year 8 Maori students increased 10 per cent in numeracy, focused on multiplication and division.'
Edmund Hillary	151	104 (69)	Supplementary Report September 2005. ERO will return within twelve months: 'low achievement levels of students in reading across all year levels of the school'; 'no conclusive analysis of Maori student achievement'.
Redhill	251	166 (66)	February 2005. Regular review cycle: 'Achievement results indicate that Maori students are achieving at levels below those of Pakeha students.'
Park Estate	169	84 (50)	Jan 2005. ERO will return within twelve months: 'Very few Maori students are achieving above reading expectations for their age'; 'In mathematics a significant proportion of Maori students are achieving below expectations for their age'.

Table 6: *ERO data: Papakura Primary Schools (cont'd)*

School	Roll	Maori (%)	ERO Comments
Papakura Normal	577	271 (47)	December 2004. 'High performing school'. The ERO report makes no meaningful comment on how well Maori are achieving relative to expectations for their age.
Cosgrove	598	245 (41)	February 2004. History of positive ERO reports. This report makes no meaningful comment on how well Maori are achieving relative to expectations for their age beyond saying, 'Maori achieve similarly to non-Maori in some of the above assessments'.
Rosehill Intermediate	308	86 (28)	October 2005. ERO will return within twelve months: 'The school has limited information about Maori achievement'; 'the quality of teaching ranges widely'.
Opaheke	621	105 (17)	February 2005. Regular review cycle: 'the overall achievement of Maori boys is below expectations and these students are over-represented in literacy and numeracy support programmes'.
Drury	400	60 (15)	June 2004. Regular review cycle: 'most Maori students are achieving at levels appropriate for their age'.
Papakura Central	356	46 (13)	November 2002. 'The school has not yet begun to look at Maori student achievement information separately.'
St Mary's	436	44 (10)	June 2002. Roman Catholic integrated school. Regular review cycle: 'The school has not yet collected comprehensive information about Maori student achievement in all major learning areas'.

Second, in five of the ten state primary or intermediate schools either the last ERO report was a supplementary one or the next one will be. Papakura has too many bad schools.

Third, in no case is a school receiving a fail grade from ERO because of poor student achievement, or poor Maori student achievement, despite obvious poor performance in this area. The clear message is that student achievement is less important than other things.

Fourth, ERO reporting on student achievement is qualitative. Numbers are avoided.

Fifth, in almost all cases Maori student achievement is reported relative to non-Maori performance, as though non-Maori set the standard to which Maori should aspire.

Sixth, there is no evidence that Maori students achieve in line with expectations for their age at any Papakura school other than Drury School.

We have additional achievement information for Redhill and Edmund Hillary schools.

Redhill Primary School is acknowledged by the ERO as a good school. Comments in the February 2005 report include: 'Students are motivated and confident'; 'Respectful, positive relationships between pupils and staff are evident'; 'The high-quality teaching practices identified in the 2001 ERO report continue'; 'Programme planning is of a high standard'; 'The principal and senior staff are well informed educational leaders'; 'The governance of the school continues to be effective'; and 'ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of students and the Crown.'

The March 2005 test results showed that 59 per cent of Year 5 students and 83 per cent of Year 6 students were performing at below the levels expected for their age in numeracy.

In reading comprehension, the March 2005 test results showed that 72 per cent of Year 2 students were reading at levels below national norms, but by Year 5 pupils had almost caught up to national norms. Unfortunately the catch-up did not continue into Years 6 to 8. These numeracy and reading results were not reported to the board by ethnicity.

Redhill School collects good-quality data, and although there may be quibbles about its presentation, the information produced guides improvement. Appropriate achievement targets are set. However, although student achievement is improving, the school remains below average and Maori students do worse than their European peers. The lack of quality early childhood education in the area means that Redhill School teachers have to work hard with their new entrants in Year 1 and 2.

Table 7: *Edmund Hillary School students reading at below their chronological age, February 2004*

	Number in year	Number (%) reading at below chronological age
Year 1	20	9 (45)
Year 2	17	17 (100)
Year 3	18	11 (61)
Year 4	22	13 (59)
Year 5	13	3 (13)
Year 6	21	10 (48)
Year 7	22	18 (22)
Year 8	11	9 (82)
TOTAL	144	90 (63)

Edmund Hillary School is a marked contrast to Redhill. It is a dreadful school, and is recognised as such by the local community. Its roll has declined from more than 300 at the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools to 151 at the time of the supplementary ERO review in June 2005. Sixty-nine per cent of students are Maori.

The new principal appointed in April 2004 reported to the board in October 2004 on the results of February testing of reading levels (see Table 7). There was no reporting to the board on student numeracy in 2004, and no reporting to the board on student achievement in any area before the annual ERO visit in 2005.

With respect to Maori student achievement, the 2005 supplementary ERO report notes, 'there remains no conclusive analysis of Maori student achievement. Student attendance, suspensions, and stand-downs continue to be monitored. However, trends and patters are still not reported to the board.'

As we noted earlier, the changes in school administration made by the 1989 Education Act and Tomorrow's Schools, which devolved power over spending and staff appointments from the Department of Education to the principal and an elected board, has been a disaster for Edmund Hillary School.

The 2000 ERO report commented, 'In the period from 1994 to 1996, major areas of concern were identified in the operation of Edmund Hillary School. These included the poor quality of governance and administration, the tension among staff members and the negative impact of poor-quality communication strategies between senior management and staff. Curriculum management was also a concern, particularly in regard to the lack of whole-school curriculum development, poor-quality assessment systems, and the extremely varied quality of programme delivery across the school. Student behaviour was poor.' In respect of the state of the school in 2000, the report went on to say:

Variability in the quality of teaching programmes and learning activities, the continued lack of quality assurance and rigorous performance management systems, and the level of verbal aggression and confrontation visible in the behaviour of some students still remain serious concerns. A number of teachers have difficulty managing the students and providing an effective environment for learning. The root of the problem lies in the fact that many children do not have their educational needs properly met and become either bored or frustrated. As a result there are high levels of off-task behaviour, verbal and even physical aggression, rudeness, inattention and inappropriately loud classroom behaviour. There is a subculture within the school of disaffected children who, although they constitute a minority, have a noticeably negative impact on the emotional climate. There is a lack of regular, ongoing student assessment in each essential learning area and inadequate programme evaluation. There is little consistency in assessment records or practices to provide useful achievement information across the school.

Despite this negative report, the ERO did not visit Edmund Hillary School again until 2004, when significant problems remained and the school was put on an annual review cycle. After the 2005 ERO visit, the school remains on an annual review cycle with ERO commenting, 'The board has accepted ERO's offer of post-review assistance to address the areas for improvement identified in this report'.

Edmund Hillary School is a cesspit school. Parents who care about

their children's education and can transport their kids to another school do so. It is a school of last resort for teachers (and as there is no teacher evaluation at Edmund Hillary, it is a safe school for an incompetent teacher). Even then, staff turnover is high. When will the Minister do something about this school? The Ministry and ERO have failed.

All this leaves Papakura High School in an unenviable position. A large proportion, probably the majority, of its Year 9 intake of Maori students are inadequately prepared for success at secondary school. The school is not capable of turning so many Maori children around. Its response is that of a disillusioned veteran. The least well-prepared and the worst-behaving Maori are placed in cabbage classes (home rooms) and left to serve out their time. The school is encircled by a large sharp-tipped stockade-type fence to narrow down the exit options for students leaving during the day. Security guards patrol the grounds to deter violence. Staff reassure themselves that nothing more can be done. The school is a testimony to the result of deficit theorising.

The global and cultural incompetence of Papakura High School is demonstrated by its achievement results. The National Qualifications Framework statistics for Papakura High School in 2003 have been published by the NZQA and are summarised in Table 8, 'National Qualifications Framework statistics for Papakura High School, 2003', for all subjects collectively; and for English, te reo, and mathematics individually.

Overall, and in every subject area, both European and Maori students at Papakura High School do worse than the national average. The school is globally incompetent.

Overall, the failure rate for European students at Papakura High School is 12.3 per cent greater in absolute terms than the national average. The overall failure rate for Maori students is 18.1 per cent greater than the national average. Maori students do worse than European students at Papakura High. The school is culturally incompetent.

In keeping with this factual position, the November 2003 ERO report on Papakura High School did not automatically maintain the school on a three-yearly review cycle. It said, 'ERO will determine the timing and

Table 8: *National Qualifications Framework statistics for Papakura High School, 2003*

	Standards not achieved (per cent)			
	NZ European		NZ Maori	
	School	National	School	National
All subjects	35.4	23.1	50	31.9
English	37.7	27.3	52.5	38.2
Other languages (excl Maori)	11.1	10.4	33.3	20.9
Mathematics	52.0	26.4	67.7	35.0
Science	42.5	26.0	57.5	41.0
Technology	24.2	19.6	34.9	26.0
Social Sciences	29.1	20.8	49.1	28.4
Arts	15.9	12.5	36.3	22.7
Health and physical education	21.3	13.4	26.5	21.4

nature of the next review on receipt of the action plan requested from the board of trustees'.

At that time 48 per cent of the school's 1333 pupils were Maori. The report included a valuable section on 'Improving Maori Student Achievement', and its evaluation included these comments: 'The board and staff are commended for the commitment they demonstrate to student learning'; 'dedicated and experienced principal'; 'challenges . . . include raising student achievement'. The report notes that in 2000 'the proportion of Maori students achieving qualifications was above the national average', although it goes on to say that 'Ministry of Education benchmark data for 2000 and 2001 indicate that Maori students leave the school with significantly fewer qualifications than students at other schools of the same decile type and rating'. The report noted high staff turnover, the employment of security guards, and commented, 'Reading levels remain low and the retention of students into the senior school is a concern. This is particularly the case for Maori students.' The cabbage (or home room) classes are described as assisting 'students who have difficulty adjusting to secondary education'.

Problems in the junior school are mentioned several times: the report notes that these students behave poorly and enter Papakura High School with low levels of achievement, and that there is high staff turnover.

The figures speak for themselves. Papakura High School is not a good school for either Maori or European. The presence of security guards on school grounds during school hours is a moving testimony to the principal's inability to provide a safe environment, and to the board's spending priorities. Papakura High School has been a bad school for a number of years. Its problems are ingrained.

Fifty per cent of achievement and unit standards sat by Maori students at Papakura High School receive a fail grade. Many Maori students enter Papakura High School with low reading levels. Although the evidence is limited (due to the failure of primary schools to perform standardised assessment, to analyse that assessment, and to make the subsequent reports available to communities with which they are required to consult), it seems that Maori do not achieve to age expectations at any Papakura primary school other than Drury school. Further, the problem is worst in those schools with a majority of Maori on their roll, despite the extra funding these schools receive.