



**EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:  
KELSTON GIRLS COLLEGE  
DECEMBER 2007**

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This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

## **1. About the School**

Location	New Lynn, Waitakere City
Ministry of Education profile number	84
School type	Secondary (Years 9-15)
Decile rating <sup>[1]</sup>	4
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	65.83
Other	2.50
Number of teachers	69
School roll	967
Number of international students	14
Gender composition	Girls 100%
Ethnic composition	Māori 17%, New Zealand European/Pākehā 11%,

	Samoan 29%, Tongan 7%, Asian 5%, Fijian 5%, Indian 5%, other Pacific 4%, Chinese 3%, Niuean 2%, Cook Island 1%, other ethnicities 11%
Special feature	Kelston Deaf Unit Adult and Community Education funding
Review team on site	August 2007
Date of this report	5 December 2007
Previous ERO reports	Education Review, October 2004 Education Review, June 2002 Accountability Review, December 1997 Assurance Audit, August 1994 Review, August 1992

## 2. The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Kelston Girls' College in New Lynn, a suburb of Waitakere City, serves a diverse multicultural community. The board is working to achieve its vision of being 'the preferred college for young women in West Auckland' by providing students with an environment that is dedicated to success in learning.

The school continues to provide a highly inclusive environment in which students are encouraged to succeed through a diverse range of academic and qualification pathways. The school's lead role in the A@W (Achievement at Waitakere) initiative is having a positive impact in addressing student underachievement in literacy and numeracy. School-wide professional development has focused on identifying effective teaching strategies to improve student outcomes.

Collated and analysed literacy and numeracy data indicate that, while students arriving at Kelston Girls in Year 9 are below national curriculum levels, their achievement improves by the end of Year 10. Senior managers have been tracking and monitoring the school's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) student achievement data since 2003. Student achievement in literacy and numeracy in National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) has improved and the numbers gaining Level 1 and 2 qualifications has increased over time. However, these results are still below national averages and the averages for decile 4 schools, although the margin of difference is reducing over time. School data analysis shows that students who are transient, and those whose attendance is disrupted, generally perform less well than other students.

The young women of Kelston Girls' College are confident, articulate and friendly. Students' strong sense of belonging is nurtured and developed through the provision of a caring and stimulating learning environment. Most students are highly motivated and focused on learning, are proud of their school and participate in a range of leadership opportunities across all levels of the school.

Teachers come from a diverse range of cultures and are reflective of the student population. They are active participants in school-wide professional development programmes. Teachers' increased use of achievement information has informed programme planning and classroom delivery so that it is more responsive to student interests, strengths and needs. The recent Te Kotahitanga initiative to improve the achievement of Māori students and the work of the specialist classroom teacher to support the implementation of the initiative are contributing to raising the levels of professional dialogue amongst staff and beginning to make a positive impact on professional practice. Strong collegial relationships underpin the professionalism of staff and affirm their commitment to raising the achievement of students.

The proactive strategic leadership of the principal has been instrumental in driving school and community initiatives that focus on improving student achievement. The principal works closely with the board to keep trustees well informed about school activities and student successes. The new

senior management group, established in 2006, has defined its roles and responsibilities. Senior managers work collaboratively to ensure the smooth operation of the school.

The recently elected board is representative of the school community. Trustees bring a range of skills and experiences to the board. Training is seen as an important aspect in upskilling trustees in their governance roles. The board's clearly defined charter values and associated principles underpin the strategic direction of the school to improve learning outcomes for students and to develop a culture that prepares young women to become valued members of the global community.

As agreed with the board, ERO evaluated the impact of pastoral care services on outcomes for students. The report also comments on student progress and achievement overall, particularly in NCEA. Māori and Pacific student achievement are examined as areas of national interest, as is provision for international students and planning for a pandemic. This report also includes evaluations of the school's provision for gifted and talented students and quality assurance arrangements for adult and community education.

ERO acknowledges the continued commitment of the board, principal and staff to focus on raising student achievement, particularly that of Māori and Pacific students. The next phase of school development will be for the principal and senior managers to further develop the school's professional culture by consolidating and extending the good practices that are now in place.

### ***Future Action***

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

## **3. The Focus of the Review**

### ***Student Achievement Overall***

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

The board, through the principal and staff, endeavours to provide a holistic education for students. The diverse school community values the ongoing partnership between home and school. The school provides a balanced curriculum and opportunities for students to learn in a range of academic and vocational pathways. Students' learning abilities are accurately identified in Year 9 and class placements are made carefully on the basis of staff knowledge about students' specific learning needs.

As part of the A@W initiative, the school has, since 2004, collated standardised asTTle data in literacy and numeracy for students in Years 9 and 10. Analysed data indicate that, while students arriving in Year 9 are achieving at curriculum levels that are below national expectations, their achievement improves by at least two sub-levels for literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 10. Nevertheless, these results are still below national expectations. Māori and Pacific students are underachieving in comparison to other groups of students. The school has explicit strategic and annual targets to address this underachievement and staff are focused on ensuring that Year 9 and 10 students are better prepared for NCEA Level 1 in Year 11.

Senior managers have been tracking and monitoring the school's student achievement in NQF since 2003. They have collated data over time on NCEA results. Students' achievement in Level 1 NCEA literacy and numeracy, and in gaining Level 1 and 2 qualifications is improving over time. While the school's results in all of these areas are below both national and decile 4 averages, the margin of difference is reducing over time. In NCEA Level 3 results, the College is below both the national and decile 4 averages. Senior managers are aware of these results and a range of long-term strategies are in place to help to improve student achievement.

In other curriculum areas, students have opportunities to participate in a range of activities that showcase and celebrate their strengths and talents. Major productions, performed in conjunction with the local boys' school, are an annual event. Visual and performing arts, sports and cultural activities involve an increasing number of students each year. The school's Māori and Samoan groups compete successfully in the annual secondary schools Māori and Pacific Island festival. Students compete in a variety of sports teams throughout the year and have represented the school at local and national levels.

Student achievements are celebrated in weekly school assemblies, top scholars' assemblies, the school newsletter and the local newspaper. These avenues ensure ongoing communication between the home and the wider community. As a result, the school has an increasingly positive profile in the community.

### ***School Specific Priorities***

Before the review, the board of Kelston Girls College was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Kelston Girls College.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus areas for the review:

- impact of pastoral care services on learning outcomes for students.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

### ***The impact of pastoral care services on learning outcomes for students***

#### **Background**

The 2004 ERO report acknowledged the board's continued focus on raising student achievement overall. The report identified specific areas of good practice, including provision for the identified needs of students, and recommended some areas for improvement particularly in the learning experiences for students, feedback on students' work, assessment and the overall quality of curriculum monitoring. Since 2004, teachers have maintained their focus on literacy and numeracy through the A@W initiative.

The focus of this review is the impact of pastoral care services on learning outcomes for students. This report acknowledges the holistic approach that the school is taking to address and improve the achievement of students by providing an environment that is safe, supportive of students and staff and conducive to learning and teaching.

#### **Student progress and achievement**

School targets since 2004 have continually focused on raising student achievement levels. The board and senior managers have prioritised resources, particularly in teacher development and additional learning resources in order to improve outcomes for students. Senior managers and staff are aware that students entering at Year 9 are achieving below national levels in literacy and numeracy. However, comparisons made between diagnostic testing at Years 9 and 10, and the outcomes at Years 11 and 12, indicate that students are generally making good progress, particularly those who have regular patterns of attendance and who have been at the school for the whole of their secondary education.

Student achievement in NCEA is well analysed and reported on by some heads of faculty. The curriculum manager examines data closely to reveal patterns of achievement within cohorts, and

from year to year. NQF data analysis has been used effectively by staff to:

- give Year 10 students a head start with literacy, numeracy and science standards at Level 1 of NQF;
- inform decision making about school-wide professional development with Te Kotahitanga to foster the achievement Māori and other students; and
- inform decisions that support the board's goal of every student leaving the college with a qualification.

Teachers have begun to use standards based assessment in NQF to enhance course flexibility, introduce some modular programmes, adapt courses and to offer some multi-level programmes. In Years 9 and 10 teachers are using processes for recording standards based assessment. In some curriculum areas staff have developed criteria for assessing students' work and share these with students. It would be beneficial to extend the use of these good practices throughout the junior school.

While faculties report on their NQF results, this reporting is diverse in approach. Reporting could be streamlined by the provision of clear guidelines from senior managers on the information that they require in curriculum and assessment reports. Requirements for reporting on the achievement of Year 9 and 10 students should be included in these guidelines. The senior managers are developing a new template for use in 2008 to standardise reporting on curriculum and assessment.

### **Areas of good performance**

*Action research- process for change.* In 2006 the principal and senior managers identified the need for significant changes in the pastoral system, and in particular, in the role of the deans. To ensure that the well being of the students was not jeopardised, the school sought the advice of an external professional to ascertain the extent of the issues related to pastoral care. An action research model was adopted as the appropriate methodology for this work. The process of change is ongoing and has had a significant positive impact to date through:

- teachers' increased ownership of the discipline/pastoral system at all levels of the school;
- review of the school discipline policies and procedures;
- the expansion of the senior managers' group to provide increased support for each dean at Years 9-13;
- clarification and review of deans' and form teachers' job descriptions;
- regular meetings at all levels of the school to provide an ongoing forum to discuss and address discipline issues more effectively; and
- changes made to school strategies that were deemed not to be working effectively for students.

*Teaching and learning practices.* Students' pastoral care needs are well met in most classrooms. Classroom management techniques are culturally valuing, respectful and inclusive. The positive regard of teachers for students' well being is a foundation for the promotion and improvement of student achievement.

*Student engagement.* Students are cooperative in class and respond positively to teachers' efforts to increase their engagement in learning. Most teachers have consistent expectations and manage classroom learning programmes effectively. They endeavour to ensure that lessons are relevant, interesting and well paced in order to engage students in focused and meaningful ways.

*Te Kotahitanga.* It is too early to know whether the Te Kotahitanga initiative is having a positive impact on raising the achievement of Māori students. However, annotated data from classroom and teacher observations and discussions with staff indicate that this initiative is beginning to have a positive impact on changing teachers' thinking about teaching and learning. Teachers are enthusiastic about being part of the Te Kotahitanga programme and improving their teaching practice.

*Hauora Centre.* The Hauora/Health centre provides an effective 'one stop shop' for students' emotional and physical needs. It represents a designated safe zone where students can access a range of services to meet their specific needs, including health care, educational and pastoral needs. In addition to these onsite services, staff have an extensive network of external agencies that they can contact when necessary. Most of the services operating under the school's pastoral umbrella provide clearly documented reporting to the board. Internal meetings take place informally and formally on a daily and weekly basis. This year has seen the inclusion of deans, form teachers and the attendance officer as part of the pastoral care network in order to strengthen pastoral services to students.

*Attendance systems.* The school's monitoring and collation of student attendance data is increasingly robust. Data are separated so that staff can monitor the attendance of different ethnic groups. Improving student attendance has been an identified school target for a number of years and is seen as an important aspect of supporting student achievement. School managers have looked at various strategies to improve attendance. A new electronic system has been introduced in 2007 to make processes for collating attendance data each day more efficient. The attendance officer works closely with senior managers, deans and the truancy officer in order to address student attendance issues promptly and efficiently.

*High motivation classes.* Students' special abilities in the High Motivation classes are identified through a range of diagnostic testing and analysis as well as through cultural and sporting indicators. These classes are inclusive of gifted and talented students and assist students to become self-directed learners. Most teachers of these classes provide challenging and stimulating programmes across the curriculum. Senior managers could consider providing professional development and the sharing of effective teaching strategies to build staff skills in teaching these specialist classes.

*Other strategies to support students' pastoral care needs.* The variety and scope of support for students' academic and pastoral needs is very well catered for in the school. Students have opportunities to be involved in a variety of leadership roles at all levels of the school. These opportunities provide students with valuable leadership training, which assists them to develop personal confidence, learn new skills and fosters the value of supporting and helping their peers.

Alternative education pathways in the senior school support students with distinct learning needs and encourage them to stay at school and achieve learning and qualifications. An after school homework centre is available two days per week for all students and their siblings from local schools.

*Learning needs.* Learning support for students with literacy needs, behaviour issues, special abilities and those with additional English language requirements is available through a range of specialist staffing.

### **Areas for development**

*Strengthening formative assessment practices.* Many teachers use formative assessment and literacy strategies effectively. While the use of detailed written comments to students on what they have done well in their work and the next steps that they need to take to improve their work is becoming more widespread, these good practices are not implemented consistently across the school. Senior managers should work collaboratively with teachers to sustain the good progress that is being made in formative assessment and should further extend their expectations of best practice.

*Hauora Centre reporting.* To strengthen reporting in all areas operating under the Hauora centre umbrella, the senior manager responsible for pastoral care services should ensure that all personnel involved in the centre formally report on outcomes for students to identify the frequency of use of services, and trends and patterns over time in the care provided. These reports should enable senior managers to gain an holistic overview of the operation of the centre and should identify strengths and areas for development.

*Separating achievement data.* Senior managers should separate achievement information for students in the High Motivation class. This practice would enable staff to identify and monitor trends and patterns of achievement and would also provide evidence of the impact of specialist

teaching programmes for these students.

*Attendance.* Senior managers have identified that early problems associated with the introduction of the new electronic attendance programme have impeded the effective implementation of this programme for tracking, collating, and analysing valid data. Senior managers and teachers are working to address these issues and improve school-wide student attendance.

*Sustaining the quality of pastoral services.* To ensure that quality pastoral care services to students are not compromised; senior managers need to determine how the coordination of this vital area of school operations will be achieved. Better coordination of services would minimise the risks to students' well being and should have a positive impact on their learning.

## **4. Areas of National Interest**

### **Overview**

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Kelston Girls College ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

### ***The Achievement of Māori Students: Progress***

In this review, ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of Māori students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement.

### **Background**

Seventeen percent of students enrolled at Kelston Girls College identify as Māori. Many Māori students are leaders and high achievers, but a disproportionate number continue to under perform. The 2004 ERO report recommended that the board consult with the school's Māori community in developing policies, plans and targets to improve the achievement of Māori students. The board's strategic and annual plans are clearly focused on the improvement of Māori students. Te reo and tikanga Maori are affirmed and celebrated within the school. Pōwhiri have an important place in welcoming visitors to the school.

### **Areas of progress**

*New head of Māori faculty.* The school has made a strategic appointment of a new head of Māori. She has a long association with the school as a student, kapa haka tutor and teacher support in the Māori department. As a first year teacher she is well supported in her new role by the principal, senior managers and head of languages.

*Reporting Māori achievement.* Senior managers collate and analyse separate data for Māori student achievement in asTTle and NCEA results. The 2007 literacy data to date shows that Māori student achievement has exceeded both the school and national levels. This significant result indicates that the pattern of underachievement in literacy is beginning to be reversed. However, the most recent school data on achievement in numeracy show that Māori student achievement is below the school and national levels. The school's continued involvement in the A@W initiative is providing teachers with professional development strategies that have led to improvements in the achievement of Māori students over time.

*Kuia role.* The principal has been proactive in establishing the role of kuia to support and sustain

kaupapa Māori in the school. A long-serving Māori teacher who has just retired from the school has accepted this role, which provides pastoral support for the new head of Māori and Māori students as and when required. The long involvement of this teacher with the school, students and Māori whānau is a crucial element in the success of this distinguished position.

*Initiatives to support Māori student achievement.* The Te Kotahitanga programme, which is focused on improving Māori student engagement and achievement, has the potential to improve Māori student achievement across all levels of the school. Teachers are keen to participate in this initiative and acknowledge the positive impact that it has had on their approach to teaching and learning for Maori students in particular.

### **Areas for further improvement**

*Retention of Māori students.* Senior managers are aware of the need to put further strategies in place to support the retention of Māori students to Year 13. These strategies have the potential to assist in increasing the number of Māori students who leave school with academic qualifications and required minimum credits in literacy and numeracy.

*Attendance.* Māori students are disproportionately represented as the highest group of students that absent themselves from school. Senior managers are working on introducing a new strategy involving community input to assist in improving overall student attendance, including that of Maori students.

*Maori dean.* Senior managers need to consider further ways of providing ongoing pastoral and academic support for Māori students and of maintaining the profile of tikanga Maori throughout the school, since there has been no appointment to a Māori dean position in 2007.

### **The Achievement of Pacific Students**

During the review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of its Pacific students. A significant percentage of students attending Kelston Girls College are of Pacific Island descent. Forty-eight percent of students enrolled at Kelston Girls College identify as Pacific. Many of the school leaders and high achievers are Pacific students, but a disproportionate number continue to under perform. The board's strategic and annual plans are clearly focused on the improving the achievement of Pacific students. Pacific students are predominately Samoan, with smaller groups of Tongan, Fijian, Niuean, and Cook Island students.

### **Areas of good performance**

*Pacific student identity.* Pacific students are proud of their cultural heritage and many feature amongst the school's highest achievers. They represent the school in cultural, sporting and leadership programmes at all levels of the school.

*Pacific student achievement.* The school has collated and analysed data on the achievement of Pacific students at junior levels and in NCEA over the last three years. Results from the 2007 asTTle literacy data for Year 9 and 10 students show that Pacific students are achieving above the school and national expected levels of achievement. However, NCEA results indicate that the overall progress of Pacific students is still below both the school and national levels. Noteworthy are the consistently high achievement passes of the senior Samoan class in NCEA Level 1 over the last three years.

*Pacific Nations class.* The Pacific Nations class continues to provide a nurturing and positive environment in which Pacific students are well supported to succeed. Close monitoring of students' academic, behaviour, and attendance assists with tracking and monitoring the overall success of this class in comparison with mainstream classes. The Pacific Nations class is seen as a desirable class to be invited into and is another proactive initiative to raise the achievement of Pacific students.

*Pacific dean.* The position of Pacific dean provides an important pastoral and academic support for Pacific students. The dean is a positive role model for Pacific students and works closely with other

Pacific teachers, deans, senior managers and parents to improve outcomes for Pacific students across the school.

*Fono.* The school's annual fono is a positive initiative to strengthen Pacific parents engagement, understanding and partnership with the school. This focus of this year's meeting was on setting and achieving goals to gain success, and over 200 people attended. The timing of the fono, and the provision of opportunities for different groups to be addressed in their own languages, share food and pray together, illustrate the school's responsiveness and respect for the cultural perspectives of Pacific families.

### **Areas for improvement**

*Professional development.* In order to maintain the current high achievement in Pacific language learning, senior managers could consider targeted professional development for Pacific language teachers. This additional training should assist these teachers to become more fluent and competent in their teaching.

### **Providing for Gifted and Talented Students**

National Administration Guideline 1(iii)(c) requires schools to identify students with gifted and talented needs and to develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to meet their needs. ERO is currently evaluating how schools nationally are providing for gifted and talented students.

### **Areas of good performance**

*Identification of students.* Good processes are in place for identifying students who participate in the college's gifted and talented programmes. The college's assessment information, teacher and dean referrals, interviews with parents and students and student information from contributing schools are used to identify gifted and talented students. Multi-dimensional and multi-cultural concepts and values are considered so that programmes can be tailored to meet students' diverse needs.

*Planning and delivery of programmes.* The school delivers its gifted and talented programme well through highly motivated and high performing classes at Years 9 and 10. Teachers plan and deliver differentiated learning programmes across curriculum areas. Each term the Year 9 and 10 High Motivation classes participate in integrated topic-based extension days, facilitated by specialist subject teachers. Opportunities are also available for students to participate in activities beyond the classroom. The teacher responsible for the coordination of these programmes ensures that teachers provide students with challenges related to higher order thinking and questioning so that they develop the confidence to use their gifts and talents in a range of learning situations.

*Positive outcomes for students.* Students in the gifted and talented programme enjoy a variety of successful outcomes, which are recognised and celebrated by the school. They achieve through cultural and creative performance, leadership, academic, and sporting events. The engagement of students in these learning experiences has enabled them to develop their talents and skills in stimulating environments.

*Evaluation and review.* The school has good policies, procedures and plans for the delivery of gifted and talented education. The coordinator and senior managers are currently reviewing the effectiveness of the high motivation class programmes in consultation with students and subject teachers. Suggestions gained through this consultation process will be incorporated into planning for next year's gifted and talented learning programmes.

### **Areas for improvement**

Senior managers identified the following areas for improvement in their gifted and talented programmes:

- strengthening the coordination of differentiated learning programmes across all curriculum

areas; and

- developing teacher expertise in teaching gifted and talented students.

### ***Thinking about the Future***

ERO is currently discussing with secondary schools how they are thinking about the future and what it might mean for their students.

The school reports that it has thought about the future and what it might mean for their students in relation to:

- the impact of the increasing diversity of students and families attending the school in the future;
- implications of harmonising of cultures into the New Zealand education system;
- providing a curriculum that is responsive to the different learning styles of students from a variety of cultural backgrounds;
- acknowledging the prior learning, interests, needs and talents of multi-ethnic students by offering alternative learning pathways;
- using a variety of assessment tools to cater effectively for different ethnic groups;
- becoming flexible about timetabling to manage teaching and student needs; and
- employing teachers with an empathy for and understanding of multi-ethnic students and their families.

### ***Pandemic Planning***

In all school reviews ERO is currently evaluating the extent to which schools have planned for a potential influenza pandemic in terms of the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

In ERO's view Kelston Girls College has taken steps to prepare for such a pandemic.

### ***Provision for International Students***

#### ***Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the Provision of English Language Support***

Kelston Girls College 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

#### ***Background***

Kelston Girls' College has 14 international students, including two exchange students. The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

#### ***Areas of good performance***

*Welfare.* A team of staff provides effective care for international students. Students report that they are well supported at school and that they value the cultural diversity of international students and all other students at the college.

*Accommodation.* Students are carefully placed with caring host families. The home stay coordinator maintains regular contact with these students and should any concerns arise, the coordinator, in liaison with other school staff, attends promptly to any issues.

*English language support.* International students are offered a range of English language support

programmes to meet their various identified needs. They are assisted to understand and succeed in NQF literacy standards and to achieve university entrance. Systematic study of English vocabulary helps students both with academic school language and later tertiary study.

### **Areas for improvement**

*Documentation and reporting.* Documentation and reporting by the homestay coordinator and the international student coordinator needs to be strengthened. The international student coordinator has begun to refine self-review systems that will help to identify the improvements that should be made.

### **Provision of Adult and Community Education (ACE)**

#### **Progress with the Implementation of Provision of Quality Assurance Arrangements**

New funding and quality assurance arrangements for ACE providers are being progressively implemented over a three-year period 2005 to 2007. The quality assurance arrangements are set out in the NZQA publication *Quality Assurance Arrangements for Providers of Adult and Community Education* (March 2005). From 2008 these requirements will become a requirement of continued funding.

In this review ERO evaluated the progress of Kelston Girls College towards meeting these arrangements. The school has an established history of delivering ACE classes in West Auckland. Kelston Girls' College offers a small range of programmes for its community, including those with a particular focus on English for second language (ESOL) learners, recreation and health, and the development of creative and special interests. To ensure that the ACE programme is well placed to meet the 2008 requirements for continued funding, it would be timely for senior managers and the ACE coordinator to review the programme to determine the ways in which it should operate in the future.

### **Areas of good performance**

*Coordination of ACE delivery.* The community education co-ordinator has been in the role for a number of years and is experienced in the area of the community education. She demonstrates an adequate awareness and knowledge of the new funding and quality assurance arrangements that underpin the effective provision of ACE programmes. The ACE coordinator works in collaboration with a senior manager to develop reporting documentation and systems to meet the quality assurance arrangements. To keep up to date with ACE requirements and information the coordinator attends a range of professional development and meetings locally, regionally and nationally.

*ACE advisory committee.* The ACE co-ordinator has established a Kelston Girls' College Advisory committee this year, with representation from people from the community. The members seek input and feedback from the community on the development of policy and procedures, and monitoring of the ACE programme.

*The programme.* The ACE programme is clearly documented and well publicised. The coordinator liaises effectively with community groups and other ACE providers in the West Auckland area. Sound systems are in place to monitor and review the operation of the annual budget and the educational provision to community groups.

### **Areas for improvement**

*ACE statement.* The board as part of the development of the Kelston Girls' College strategic plan and annual statement should now include goals for the delivery of ACE programmes through the school.

*Board representation.* As part of fulfilling the requirements for ACE funding, the board should appoint a trustee with specific responsibilities for the ACE programme, including liaising between the school and board. This person could also be part of the ACE advisory committee. As part of

good practice, the board should receive reports on ACE activities at least twice each year.

*Sustainability of programme delivery.* In consultation with the ACE coordinator and senior managers, it would be advisable for the principal to review the administrative time allowance currently given to the ACE coordinator's role to enable the effective coordination of the ACE programme overall.

## **5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas**

### **Overview**

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Kelston Girls College completed an ERO *Board Assurance Statement* and *Self-Audit Checklist*. 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; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

During the course of the review ERO did not find any identified areas of non-compliance.

## **6. Recommendations**

ERO and board of trustees agree that in order to sustain initiatives to raise student achievement the principal and senior managers should:

- 6.1 finalise clear guidelines for heads of faculty about the required extent and depth of reporting on analysed achievement data for individual students, specific groups and cohorts of students from Years 9-13; and
- 6.2 provide heads of faculty with continued professional support in the analysis and use of achievement data for all students.

## **7. Future Action**

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Elizabeth Ellis  
Area Manager

**for Chief Review Officer**5 December 2007

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5 December 2007

**To the Parents and Community of Kelston Girls College**

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Kelston Girls College**.

Kelston Girls' College in New Lynn, a suburb of Waitakere City, serves a diverse multicultural community. The board is working to achieve its vision of being 'the preferred college for young women in West Auckland' by providing students with an environment that is dedicated to success in learning.

The school continues to provide a highly inclusive environment in which students are encouraged to succeed through a diverse range of academic and qualification pathways. The school's lead role in the A@W (Achievement at Waitakere) initiative is having a positive impact in addressing student underachievement in literacy and numeracy. School-wide professional development has focused on identifying effective teaching strategies to improve student outcomes.

Collated and analysed literacy and numeracy data indicate that, while students arriving at Kelston Girls in Year 9 are below national curriculum levels, their achievement improves by the end of Year 10. Senior managers have been tracking and monitoring the school's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) student achievement data since 2003. Student achievement in literacy and numeracy in National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) has improved and the numbers gaining Level 1 and 2 qualifications has increased over time. However, these results are still below national averages and the averages for decile 4 schools, although the margin of difference is reducing over time. School data analysis shows that students who are transient, and those whose attendance is disrupted, generally perform less well than other students.

The young women of Kelston Girls' College are confident, articulate and friendly. Students' strong sense of belonging is nurtured and developed through the provision of a caring and stimulating learning environment. Most students are highly motivated and focused on learning, are proud of their school and participate in a range of leadership opportunities across all levels of the school.

Teachers come from a diverse range of cultures and are reflective of the student population. They are active participants in school-wide professional development programmes. Teachers' increased use of achievement information has informed programme planning and classroom delivery so that it is more responsive to student interests, strengths and needs. The recent Te Kotahitanga initiative to improve the achievement of Māori students and the work of the specialist classroom teacher to support the implementation of the initiative are contributing to raising the levels of professional dialogue amongst staff and beginning to make a positive impact on professional practice. Strong collegial relationships underpin the professionalism of staff and affirm their commitment to raising the achievement of students.

The proactive strategic leadership of the principal has been instrumental in driving school and community initiatives that focus on improving student achievement. The principal works closely with the board to keep trustees well informed about school activities and student successes. The new senior management group, established in 2006, has defined its roles and responsibilities. Senior managers work collaboratively to ensure the smooth operation of the school.

The recently elected board is representative of the school community. Trustees bring a range of skills and experiences to the board. Training is seen as an important aspect in upskilling trustees in their governance roles. The board's clearly defined charter values and associated principles underpin the strategic direction of the school to improve learning outcomes for students and to develop a culture that prepares young women to become valued members of the global community.

As agreed with the board, ERO evaluated the impact of pastoral care services on outcomes for students. The report also comments on student progress and achievement overall, particularly in NCEA. Māori and Pacific student achievement are examined as areas of national interest, as is provision for international students and planning for a pandemic. This report also includes evaluations of the school's provision for gifted and talented students and quality assurance arrangements for adult and community education.

ERO acknowledges the continued commitment of the board, principal and staff to focus on raising student achievement, particularly that of Māori and Pacific students. The next phase of school development will be for the principal and senior managers to further develop the school's professional culture by consolidating and extending the good practices that are now in place.

### ***Future Action***

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

### ***Review Coverage***

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Elizabeth Ellis  
Area Manager  
**for Chief Review Officer**

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## ***GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS***

### ***About ERO***

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

### ***About ERO Reviews***

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and

- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

### ***Review Focus***

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- **Areas of National Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

### ***Review Coverage***

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

### ***Review Recommendations***

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

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[1] Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.