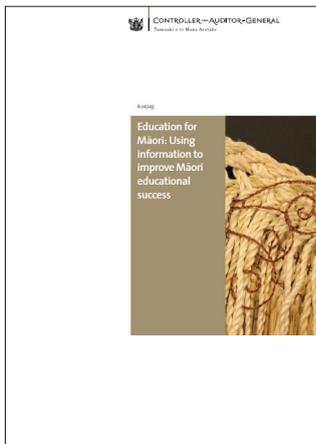




Summary of our report

Education for Māori: Using information to improve Māori educational success



In 2012, we started a five-year programme of work to find out how well the education system supports Māori students to achieve their full potential. This third report looks at whether the Ministry of Education, education agencies, and schools use and manage information effectively and efficiently to improve educational success for Māori.

We expected to see an education sector that collects, analyses, and shares information to improve Māori student success by targeting and using its resources to best effect.

We looked at what information is collected and how it is collected, analysed, and shared to support Māori students' success. We analysed data collected by the Ministry of Education and others,

including the Education Review Office, and visited some schools.

Our analysis raises several questions about how the education sector uses information. We do not answer those questions. We intended our analysis to show the sorts of questions and insights that can be explored using existing information.

When individual schools and agencies make good use of what they know about a student, it makes a difference to that student's success. However, there is a lot of room for the education sector to improve how it collects, shares, and uses information.

Using information well makes a difference

Māori educational achievement is improving over time in both absolute and relative terms. However, results vary enormously for individual Māori students in roughly similar settings and circumstances.

We found that better-performing schools tended to gather better-quality information and use it effectively, targeting resources to get the best result. These schools were committed to improvement, with a culture that valued asking questions and was open to change.

A basic start is to ensure that schools identify the performance of Māori students in particular, for example by including Māori achievement targets in school charters.

Vital statistics:

- 77 pages
- Presented to Parliament on Wednesday 8 June 2016
- Contact: reports@oag.govt.nz

Improving information quality and how information flows

The Ministry of Education has started taking stock of what information it has and how it can best use and share it, to better understand performance and target resources. Schools need to ensure that they collect good quality and accessible information, for example by applying Statistics New Zealand's approach to collecting ethnicity data.

There are also gaps, particularly in “softer” information about Māori achieving as Māori and the cultural aspects that are important to Māori students.

Knowing which approaches work best and offer the best value for money

Many policies and programmes support improving student achievement, including Māori student achievement. However, there is a lack of information about which approaches and practices are most effective. A better understanding of the effect of different initiatives would help the education sector to better target its resources.

We saw that there are inexperienced principals and teaching staff in schools that operate in the most challenging circumstances. Appropriate ongoing support and mentoring is needed to help them do their job well.

Getting the strongest resources to the schools with the greatest need and improving the capability of schools to effectively use information are essential for building sustainable improvements in Māori educational achievement.

Our recommendations

We made five recommendations. We recommend that the Ministry of Education work with schools on a framework for collecting cultural and other information about Māori students' educational success, with the Ministry providing guidance on measuring Māori educational success. We recommend that the Ministry uses available information to investigate variations in Māori educational achievement between schools. We recommend that the Ministry work with schools to ensure there is effective leadership and a common understanding of the purpose and use of information in improving outcomes for Māori students.

And finally, we recommend that the Ministry improve practices to collect, analyse, use, and share information about Māori educational achievement. Priority should be given to:

- sharing effective collection and analysis practices throughout the education system to improve Māori student achievement;
- sharing practices so that schools use information and enquiry effectively to improve Māori student achievement;
- improving the way schools collect student ethnicity data, which should include updating the Ministry of Education's ethnicity data collection guidance and examples; and
- improving the availability of important and relevant cost information to inform decisions about investing in initiatives to improve Māori student achievement.