

Raising student achievement through targeted actions

The Education Review Office (ERO) evaluated how well schools set targets for raising student achievement, and took actions that made a difference for learners who were at risk of underachieving. The report summarises the national picture for targeted actions in our schools, and provides examples from the schools that were doing best in setting targets and taking actions that raised student achievement.

ERO found that two thirds of schools set effective targets, and about half took effective actions to raise achievement. ERO found that the most important factors for school success were:

- schools clearly identifying the target students who needed to make the desired lift
- schools resourcing the required actions to lift achievement
- staff translating goals and targets into focused actions
- teachers and leaders collaborating, and involving parents and whānau, in designing and implementing a solution to underachievement.

ERO's *School Evaluation Indicators* highlight targeted actions to raise student achievement, in particular indicators from three domains:

- Stewardship
- Leadership
- Professional capability and collective capacity.



The report includes some powerful quotes from school leaders, trustees and teaching teams. School leaders:

"We have very thorough systems to monitor the progress and achievement of all students. Senior managers, team leaders, the class teacher and support teachers were all involved in the process of identifying students needing support, deciding on the most appropriate supports, and monitoring outcomes of the intervention."

Trustees:

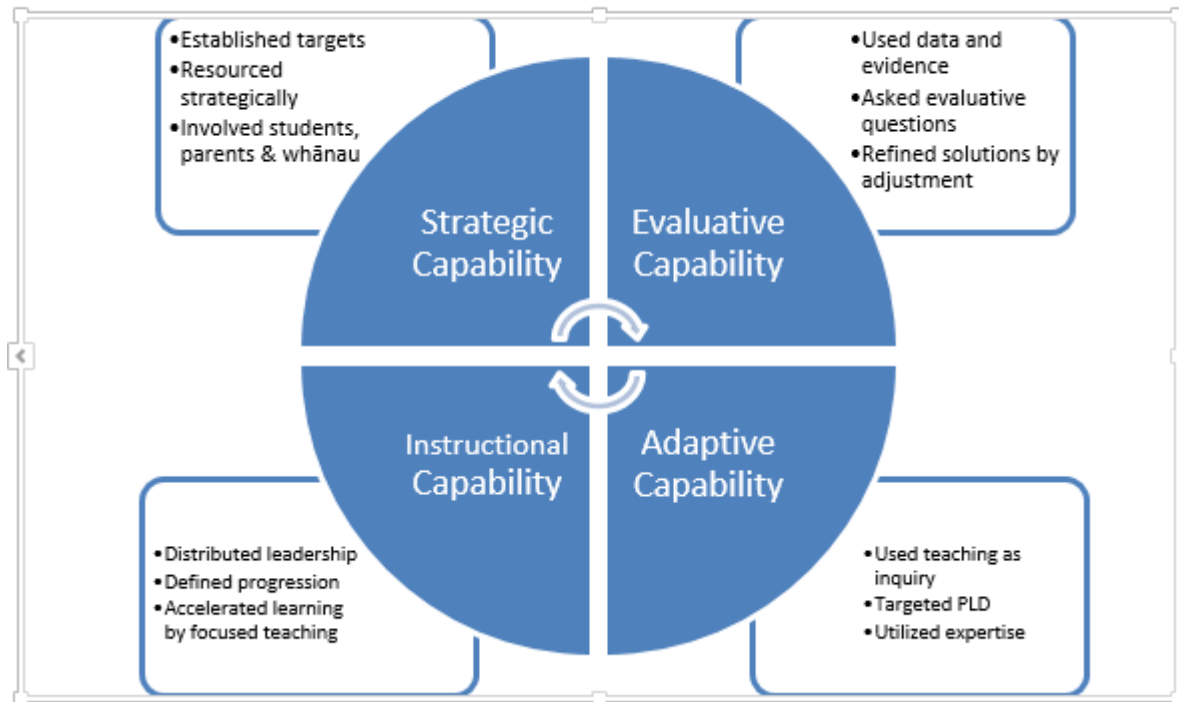
"We have doubled the budget for literacy teaching and learning resources after a workshop with teachers, trustees and leaders, where student information was looked into and targets set."

Teaching teams:

"We act as a number of professional learning groups. Teaching teams have created action plans for target students showing specific support strategies for named individuals, which are shared with parents and whānau."

Building school capacity for raising achievement through targeted actions

Leadership in the most successful schools applied four key capabilities in twelve areas:



Discussion starters for schools

1. How effective is our board in using achievement information about disparity patterns, and seeking to meet the needs and interest of underachieving students, when setting annual achievement targets? Do we have sufficient *strategic capability*?
2. Do our school leaders clearly identify those groups of students who most need to improve, when planning the actions needed to make the necessary shifts in student achievement, and do they refine actions in practice? Do we have sufficient *evaluative capability*?
3. Do our middle leaders and teachers seek and use information to identify the strengths, needs and interests of each targeted student, to customise or personalise the interventions they plan? Do we have sufficient *instructional capability*?
4. How aligned and coherent are the planned actions of teachers, students, parents and whānau, and what might we do to strengthen the *adaptive expertise and capacity for continuous improvement* across our school community?