EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
TE TARI AROTAKE MATAURANGA

TEACHER

Supporting school improvement through effective teacher appraisal

May 2014

Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter

Foreword

The Education Review Office (ERO) is an independent government department that reviews the performance of New Zealand's schools and early childhood services, and reports publicly on what it finds.

The whakataukī of ERO demonstrates the importance we place on the educational achievement of our children and young people:

Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter

In our daily work we have the privilege of going into early childhood services and schools, giving us a current picture of what is happening throughout the country. We collate and analyse this information so that it can be used to benefit the education sector and, therefore, the children in our education system. ERO's reports contribute sound information for work undertaken to support the Government's policies.

This report presents the findings of ERO's evaluation of schools' approaches to teacher appraisal. Using online surveys of principals and information which we gathered from 200 school reviews, we evaluated the quality of teacher appraisal systems in schools.

The report highlights the characteristics of schools with high quality appraisal systems. Our findings show that many schools are yet to introduce appraisal systems that contribute to improving teacher capability and student outcomes. Based on our findings, we make several recommendations for the Ministry of Education, school leaders and boards of trustees. The report can also inform the workshops on teacher appraisal which the New Zealand Teachers Council has recently been undertaking.

Students' success in education relies on many people and organisations across the community working together for the benefit of children and young people. We trust the information in ERO's evaluations will help them in their work.

Rob McIntosh
Chief Review Officer (Acting)
Education Review Office

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Overview

This report presents the findings of ERO's evaluation of schools' approaches to teacher appraisal. ERO gathered data for this evaluation in Term 1, 2013. Information was gathered from online surveys completed by principals, investigations during scheduled education reviews of 173 schools with Years 1 to 8 students, and focused reviews on employment related matters in 27 schools with Years 9 to 13 students.

Key findings

Research has recognised the importance of building professional capability to improve outcomes for all students. It is not enough to develop an appraisal system that focuses on professional accountability alone. Schools, and the agencies that support them, need to focus on improvement as well. Effective appraisal should be experienced as a component within a self-review framework that focuses on improving achievement for all students in the school.

ERO found that the schools in this study with highly robust appraisal processes balanced a professional accountability focus with a strong desire to make improvements for their students. They looked deeply into student achievement results to determine the impacts of changes in teaching practice and to decide what aspects of their teaching they needed to improve. Necessary teaching improvements identified through *Teaching as Inquiry* often contributed to their appraisal goals. Teachers recognised the relationship between effective appraisal, strengthened professional practice and the ongoing processes used in the school to identify and support improvement.

High quality teacher appraisal was implemented as part of the planning and reporting cycle in the most successful schools. It was linked to the goals of the strategic plan, to the annual plan, to the principal's performance management system, and to decisions about teacher professional learning and development (PLD). ERO found a strong relationship between the rigour of teacher attestation and registration, and the quality of the appraisal process in these schools.[1] These schools had leaders who knew how to embed appraisal into an improvement-focused self-review system that was implemented consistently well across the school.

The system-wide challenge identified through ERO's evaluation is that, although we found models of the good practice described above, appraisal systems in the majority of schools in this study did not contribute sufficiently to improving teacher capability and student outcomes. Although most of the schools reviewed had **compliant** appraisal systems that included all the accountability aspects required, there was limited evidence of appraisal systems as an integral component of overall school **improvement.**

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1   This relationship is discussed further in the ERO report *Student Safety in Schools: Recruiting and Managing Staff* (2014).

In some large schools pockets of robust appraisal were found in parts of the school but not consistently across the school. This was particularly evident in secondary schools where the quality and robustness of appraisal often varied considerably between subject departments.

In some schools or departments, the appraisal systems' limited focus on improvement reflected wider issues, such as leaders' poor understanding of curriculum management, assessment, or self review.

ERO's findings highlight the need for schools to move from the prevalent compliance approach to realise the potential of appraisal as a tool for both individual teachers and the whole school. The examples of good practice in this report confirm that when appraisal is firmly linked with other school self-review components there is a synergy and an urgency that can strengthen professional capability and improve outcomes for all students.

Next steps

ERO recommends that the **Ministry of Education** supports schools to extend the focus of appraisal to include both accountability and improvement by:

- providing learning opportunities for school leaders to build the expertise needed for effective teacher appraisal, including the use of appraisal as a professional tool within an improvement culture
- ensuring policy coherence – so that the cycle of school planning and reporting, including goal-setting, is informed by the cycle of appraisal, and data about student achievement informs PLD decisions for both individual teachers and the whole school
- providing resources and guidelines that explain, for example, how the links between assessment, planning, evaluation, appraisal, and setting targets and goals, work together to inform robust self review and development and to improve outcomes for students
- providing opportunities for leaders to build the expertise needed for effective teacher appraisal, including the use of appraisal as a professional tool within an improvement culture
- using the expertise within and across schools to develop consistently effective appraisal practices.

ERO recommends that **school leaders**:

- align teacher appraisal with other school self-review components to improve professional accountability and outcomes for all students
- implement an appraisal process that focuses on professional accountability, teacher improvement and raising achievement for students.

When improving design and implementation of the appraisal component of self review, ERO recommends that school leaders should:

- design the appraisal system with teachers so they have opportunities to gain a full understanding of the purpose and usefulness of appraisal

- access or provide PLD about effective appraisal for appraisers and appraisees using available resources, for example, expertise in the school, *Ruia,* and New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) and New Zealand Teachers Council resources (see Appendix 5 for a list of resources)
- ensure teacher appraisal goals connect to both school targets and teacher PLD
- include a deep analysis of student achievement information and the impact of teaching practice in conversations with teachers about setting appraisal goals and the impact of their practice
- be vigilant about the focus on improvement while not losing the requirements for accountability
- model the development of school goals and charter targets by using a range of evidence, reflections about the impact of practice, and coherence with other school self-review components
- involve the board of trustees in the process by discussing appraisal outcomes and review findings, and aligning these with annual and strategic plans and resourcing decisions.

ERO recommends that the **board of trustees** should:

- review the use of its self-review components to identify how they align and interact and how appraisal can contribute to school self review and development, and support improved outcomes for students
- use the ERO survey and indicators to review appraisal practices (see Appendices 2 and 3 for these)
- expect to receive and use reports about appraisal goals and impacts to assist with decisions about necessary professional learning and development
- where necessary, resource teacher professional learning and development for self-review practices such as data analysis, setting clear and measurable goals, and managing robust appraisal processes.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This national evaluation report focuses on the implementation of teacher appraisal within the wider context of improving teacher capability and student outcomes. It explores the relationships between schools' appraisal practices and:

• improved teaching practice and student outcomes
• cohesion with other self-review components
• professional learning and development (PLD)
• organisational support for appraisal processes
• school culture.

This report is part of a suite of ERO reports on board of trustees' employer responsibilities to improve outcomes for students.[2]

Why was this review undertaken?

The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) asked ERO to evaluate teacher appraisal and report on the quality of current practice, in particular how appraisal supports the improvement of teacher practices and student outcomes.

This request was in response to the 2011 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation of New Zealand's evaluation and assessment framework to improve school outcomes.[3] The OECD concluded the following:

• Annual principal and teacher appraisal has been a requirement for many years, but its implementation across and within schools is variable. The alignment of appraisal with other assessment and evaluation processes within schools is also variable.
• New Zealand has a commendable, highly collaborative and improvement-focused emphasis within each evaluation and assessment component, such as school-based appraisal, but it needs high levels of knowledge and expertise to be effective.
• While New Zealand has well designed evaluation and assessment components, policy does not articulate an overall plan, therefore schools could not always see how evaluation and assessment at student, teacher, school, and education system levels are intended to link together and complement each other.

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2   See ERO's reports *Student Safety in Schools: Recruiting and Managing Staff* and *Supporting school improvement through effective principal appraisal.*

3   Nusche, D., Laveault, D., MacBeath, J., & Santiago, P. (2012), *OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: New Zealand 2011*, OECD Publishing.

In New Zealand the key self-review components are within the school planning and reporting cycle that includes the strategic plan, the annual plan, principal performance management, teacher performance management (of which teacher appraisal is part), and a focus on student achievement data and information about valued student outcomes (this includes student retention and engagement information).

This report focuses on teacher appraisal and its link to school planning, student targets, and teacher PLD.

Other 2013 ERO reports related to employment and appraisal are:

• *Board Employment Responsibilities: Linking Charter Targets to Appraisal in Primary Schools* which highlights the link of charter goals and annual targets to both teacher and principal appraisal
• *Student Safety in Schools: Recruiting and Managing Staff* which focuses on the recruiting, appointing and managing aspects of teacher performance management.

What are the teacher appraisal requirements?

Performance management systems were first introduced in schools in 1987. Annual appraisal of principals and teachers became mandatory in 1997. The Ministry published a series of guidelines[4] in 1997, which provided boards, principals and teachers with an overview of performance management. The guidelines described the mandated requirements and provided information to help schools develop and implement an appraisal system. The guidelines outlined how appraisal can meet two purposes:

• improvement – appraisal supports personal development and school capability to meet student outcome goals
• professional accountability – appraisal provides assurances to the wider community that teaching standards are rigorously applied.

The guidelines explain that effective appraisal involves observation of teaching, self-appraisal, and opportunities for discussion.[5] Boards of trustees appraise the principal and most delegate responsibility to principals to ensure teachers are appraised annually. Principals must then report the appraisal outcomes to boards.

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4   Ministry of Education, (1997), *Performance Management Systems in New Zealand Schools. A series of Guidelines on Performance Management systems.*

5   Full details of requirements are found in the section *Policy and procedure guidelines.*

The mandatory appraisal requirements consist of two sets of teaching standards.

a. The **Professional Standards** set out the Government's expectations of professional performance. The standards are included in the various industrial agreements as a teacher's progression on the salary scale is linked to their achievement of the standards. In 1998 the Ministry published the professional standards for primary school teachers, and in 1999 a similar set of **professional standards and criteria** was published for secondary school and area school teachers.

b. The **Registered Teacher Criteria** (RTC) sets out mandatory criteria for teachers seeking to gain full registration or renew their practising certificates. The criteria describe elements of professional knowledge in practice and the relationships and values successful teaching requires. These elements are common to all teaching, regardless of the context or teachers' experience.

In 2011 the New Zealand Teachers Council (Teachers Council) developed *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners* as a guide to developing cultural competence for teachers, for their employers, and for providers of initial teacher education and ongoing teacher professional learning. These cultural competencies align closely with the Registered Teacher Criteria.

How does appraisal support system improvement?

School leaders have a pivotal role in ensuring appraisal processes are working well and result in improved teaching and outcomes for students. They need to develop processes that balance the focus on improvement with the requirements for accountability.[6] A summary of the research (for example, Fullan 2011, Sinnema 2005[7]) highlights that appraisal must:

• not be the lead driver to improve culture
• be experienced as part of a systemic focus on improvement for all
• focus on improving teaching practices and outcomes for students by using evidence to understand the impact of practice on outcomes
• have goals that focus on student learning and outcomes, and are clear, specific and measurable
• build personal and collective knowledge, skills and practices
• ensure all practice and results are discussed.

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6 Appraisal is also used to guide salary progression, and inform recommendations for full registration and for renewing teachers' practising certificates. ERO reported the quality of these practices in the report *Student safety in schools: Recruiting and managing staff* (2014).

7 Sinnema, C. E. L. (2005). *Teacher appraisal: Missed opportunities for learning.* Unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Auckland, Auckland [https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/71] see BES casestudy 27: *Treat appraisal as a co-constructed inquiry into the teaching-learning relationship* www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES/bess-and-cases/bes-cases-overview-and-list

This same research was used to develop *Ruia: Teacher Appraisal for Māori learners' success*.[8] *Ruia* guides schools through a robust process to use appraisal as a tool to improve Māori student outcomes. The research and work in schools shaped the following principles highlighting how appraisal:

• focuses on the learning of Māori students
• is inquiry-based, interrogating the relationship between teaching and learning
• is informed by data
• builds knowledge that links to teachers' professional learning needs
• is improvement-oriented (for both the appraisee and the appraisal process)
• emphasises individual responsibility and accountability
• recognises the importance of school-wide collaboration and collective responsibility
• is rigorous, providing real opportunities for change and for exploring what works and what does not work
• is embedded and ongoing.[9]

Sources of information for this report

Information for this report was drawn from three sources:

• an online survey of a random sample of principals about teacher appraisal (204 principals, 69 percent response rate)
• an investigation of a range of performance management practices in 173 primary schools in Term 1, 2013
• an investigation of a range of performance management practices in 27 secondary schools in Term 1, 2013.

What did the online survey ask?

The online survey gathered detailed information from principals about the schools' documented policies and procedures, monitoring processes, training, sources of information and advice, and appraisal practices. It also asked them to report how effective they thought their appraisal system was in improving teacher practices and outcomes for all students.

The demographic characteristics of responding schools were generally similar to those of all schools nationally.

Further information about the methodology can be found in Appendix 1.

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8   Ministry of Education (2011), *Ruia: Teacher appraisal for Māori learners' success* is a comprehensive set of appraisal guidelines, tools and exemplars for improving Māori student outcomes based on research and confirmed through exploratory work with schools that had made a difference for Māori students. http://appraisal.ruia.educationalleaders.govt.nz/

9   The elaboration and application of these principles can be found on http://appraisal.ruia.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Appraisal-for-learning/Principles

FINDINGS

Findings

ERO evaluated whether a school's appraisal system was effectively contributing to improvements in teacher capability and student outcomes by investigating:

- how well the appraisal policies and procedures emphasised the focus on improving teacher practices and student learning and achievement
- how closely the appraisal goals reflected both school and personal goals
- how deliberately and thoroughly the appraisal processes linked teacher practice with student outcomes
- how rigorous the attestation processes were for both sets of teaching standards (Registered Teacher Criteria and professional standards)
- how the principal and teachers talked about the alignment of appraisal with other school practices to improve teaching and student outcomes.

The online survey also asked principals to rate how effective they considered their school's appraisal process was, for improving a range of teacher and student outcomes and for meeting the accountability requirements.

Key findings: Overall effectiveness of appraisal

Findings from the onsite reviews

- Just over 20 percent of primary schools and four percent of secondary schools in the sample had **high quality** appraisal systems that supported schools to improve teacher capability and student outcomes.
- Another 35 percent of primary and 37 percent of secondary schools had **compliant** appraisal systems.
- Forty-five percent of primary schools and 59 percent of secondary schools had **limited** appraisal systems.

Findings from the surveys

- Thirty percent of the principals surveyed reported their appraisal systems were either **very effective or effective** at improving the quality of the full range of key teaching and student outcomes. Another 30 percent said their appraisal systems were either **very effective or effective** at improving the quality of most of the key teaching and student outcomes. (See Appendix 2 for this range.)

What appraisal aspects made the difference?

ERO identified factors associated with an appraisal system's effectiveness. The factors were grouped into four inter-related dimensions:

• school culture focused on improvement
• coherence across school self-review components
• guidance in policy and procedures
• organisational support for appraisal.

Table 1 shows the relationship between the factors within these four dimensions and the three categories of effectiveness. Most schools had factors that were necessary but not sufficient to make a high quality appraisal system. These factors were **the foundation** for compliant appraisal. Other factors were only observed in schools with **high quality** appraisal systems and were what made the difference.

If schools had a **coherent** system with all the self-review components, and a **culture** focused on **improvement,** then both the **organisational** support, and **guidance** in documents, for appraisal were strong. The **high quality appraisal** process supported the focus on improvement and accountability. These schools were focused on and improved outcomes for students.

Table 1: A description of factors of school practices associated with the three categories of appraisal effectiveness

Dimensions of appraisal	Foundation factors Necessary but not sufficient	Factors that made the difference
A school culture focused on improvement	Collaborative practices	Principals had high expectations for all students and all teachers The analysis of teacher practice included discussions about the impact on learning and achievement of all students
Coherence across school self-review practices	Alignment of charter goals, student targets and teacher professional learning and development (PLD) A range of evidence used in discussion about practice	Leaders knew how to embed appraisal into an improvement-focused, self-review system Teacher goals were the connection between student targets and teacher PLD Leaders had a deep understanding of self-review processes such as evaluation and *Teaching as Inquiry*
Guidance in policy and procedures	Guidance in appraisal policy and documentation	Guidance in appraisal policy and documentation included details about using a range of data, setting goals and using *Tātaiako*
Organisational support for appraisal	Organisational support such as: • training for appraisers • someone with responsibility for the quality and completion of tasks across the school • time • templates for particular tasks	Leaders understood the organisational support needed to implement robust appraisal across the school Timely, high quality feedback was a feature of the process School systems ensured every teacher's appraisal focused on improved practice

- Schools with **limited** appraisal systems had some of the foundation factors.
- Schools with **compliant** appraisal systems had the foundation factors and some of the factors that made the difference.
- Schools with **high quality** appraisal systems had all factors.

The dimensions, and the relationships between them, are explored in the following sections:

- Section A: School culture focused on improvement
- Section B: Coherence across school self-review components
- Section C: Guidance in policy and procedures
- Section D: Organisational support for appraisal.

Each dimension's context is introduced by referring to relevant research and what ERO investigated. Key findings are bulleted. Practices of schools with high quality appraisal systems that supported improved teacher capability and student learning are discussed.

SECTION A: SCHOOL CULTURE FOCUSED ON IMPROVEMENT

Background

Teachers working together to solve education problems is more professionally gratifying and motivating than trying to solve problems individually. Such work also leads to better outcomes for students (Mourshed 2010, Fullan 2011, and Levin 2012).[10] The conclusion from one large study's focus on increasing the frequency and quality of teacher professional conversations along with increasing the quality of teacher knowledge and practices, was that of the two foci the emphasis on professional conversations was the most powerful for improving student outcomes. In particular, if these conversations include teachers:

- seeking evidence where students are not doing well
- review the impact of teaching on all students, to improve teaching
- be open to new practices that make a difference.[11]

Appraisal interactions provide leaders with the opportunity to model the way conversations about teacher practice would incorporate these three aspects.

Fullan (2011, p10) cautions 'Culture is the driver; good appraisal is the reinforcer, not the other way round. Throw a good appraisal system in a bad culture and you get nothing but increased alienation.'

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10 Mourshed, M., Chijioke, C., & Barber, M. (2010) *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better.* London: McKinsey & Company. Retrieved from www.mckinsey.com/insights/social_sector/how_does_a_school_system_improve

Fullan, M. (2011) *Choosing the wrong drivers for whole system reform.* CSE seminar series 204. Retrieved from http://www.michaelfullan.com/media/13396088160.pdf

Levin, B. (2012) *System-wide improvement in education.* Education Policy Series 13. Brussels: International Academy of Education (IAE) UNESCO. Retrieved from www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2012/EdPol_13.pdf

11 Fullan, M. (2011) See earlier footnote.

What did ERO investigate?

ERO investigated how the appraisal system worked when a school had a culture of improvement and high expectations for all students, by exploring:

- aspects of the school culture that hindered or supported appraisal processes that focused on improvements in student outcomes
- how teachers and school leaders talked about improving practice and student outcomes.

Key findings: School culture focused on improvement

- Collaborative practices were necessary but not sufficient for appraisal to contribute to improved teaching and student outcomes. What made a difference was where conversations about teacher practice included frank and open discussions about the impact on learning and achievement of all students.
- Many of the schools where appraisal had limited effectiveness to contribute to improving student outcomes, had collaborative practices but did not expect appraisal processes to contribute to improved student outcomes. These schools had little purpose or rigour in their appraisal processes.

Schools with **high quality** appraisal systems had transparent classrooms, where what happened in classrooms in terms of teacher practice and outcomes for students was openly shared and discussed. They were very deliberate in using a range of information about learning and wellbeing of all students and expected success for all students. They had high-trust purposeful collaborations. The focus was on *improving* practice, rather than *proving* that practice had a positive impact. Three features of purposeful collaboration were:

- talk was based on evidence
- next steps were clearly described
- the purpose for collaboration was to have a shared responsibility for student outcomes.

Examples of the three features ERO found are illustrated below.

Evidence-based teaching
Teaching as inquiry is the school focus and is articulated within the appraisal system. Appraisal processes involve gathering evidence along with observations and reflections on practice. Staff are moving from a culture of reflecting on teaching to a culture of evidence-based teaching.

The principal has weekly spots in staff meetings to discuss evidence – what it is, how one piece can be used many times, and staff are now bringing their own evidence to these meetings as confidence and capability increases to determine what constitutes useful evidence. (Primary school)

Describing next steps
Self reflection is highly evident in all appraisals. Staff are not afraid to acknowledge and undertake next steps and challenges. This helps with developing a learning community. (Secondary school)

Shared responsibility for student outcomes ensures collaboration is purposeful
Staff demonstrate a genuine commitment to make a difference for all students. Collegiality inspires individuals and teams to aim higher. They have created a shared responsibility for professional learning. The principal and deputy principal drive teaching and learning and have planning interviews with teachers to monitor each teacher's personal and professional development. (Primary school)

Can schools be improvement focused but not link this to appraisal?
Appraisal was just one tool schools used to improve teaching practice and outcomes for students. Although not the focus of this evaluation, it was clear that many schools used *Teaching as Inquiry* for improvement. Goals, driven by the evidence from student outcomes, underpinned high quality improvement models in many schools. However, these models did not always include appraisal goals, as shown below.

At the end of 2012 teachers reflected on writing programmes and student attitudes to writing in light of poor achievement results. They identified strategies to improve learning in 2013, resources, and direction for PLD to build teacher capacity to teach writing effectively. Although the school was improvement-focused, teacher appraisal goals were not linked to school goals. (Primary school)

The risk in such schools is that teachers may find it difficult to focus on school improvement goals while at the same time attempting to focus on quite separate appraisal goals.

Why does appraisal get separated from improvement?

When appraisal was separate to the improvement focus it was seen as quite a different process to *Teaching as Inquiry.* For example, the leader's role was seen as supervisory in appraisal, whereas in inquiry the leader's role was seen as one of coaching.[12] Appraisal was compliance based and lacked rigour as a process for improvement.

In some cases leaders delayed establishing appraisal goals as they felt practice needed to be embedded before impact could be assessed. Such practice does not allow for the monitoring of implementing new teaching approaches or support the teacher to focus on the changes expected as part of the development.

The main advantages of connecting improvement with accountability in appraisal are coherence of actions, synergy of tasks, and use of time. These are explored in the *Coherence across school self-review components* and *Organisational support* sections of this report.

SECTION B: COHERENCE ACROSS SCHOOL SELF-REVIEW COMPONENTS

Background

A range of self-review practices promote evidence-based decision-making to improve the impact of teacher and leader practice on student outcomes. Examples of some of the individual components of self review include:

• assessment for and of learning (see Hattie 2009,[13] Wiliam 2011,[14] Ministry of Education 2011[15])
• *Teaching as Inquiry* in the *NZ Curriculum* (Ministry of Education[16])
• inquiry and knowledge building for improved student outcomes (see Timperley et al 2007[17] and BES overview 2012[18])
• school-wide planning and reporting (Ministry of Education[19]).

12 This separation of appraisal from learning is reflected in some of the resources for schools on http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-in-the-classroom/Teaching-as-inquiry/Teaching-as-inquiry-practical-tools-for-teachers/Appraisal-and-Teaching-as-Inquiry

13 Hattie, J. (2009) *Visible Learning: A synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement.* London: Routledge.

14 Wiliam, D. (2011) *Embedded Formative Assessment.* Bloomington: Solution Tree Press.

15 Ministry of Education. (2011) *Ministry of Education Position Paper: Assessment (schooling sector).* Retrieved from www.minedu.govt.nz/~/media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/MOEAssessmentPositionPaper_October11.pdf

16 Retrieved from nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories/Case-studies/Teachers-as-learners-Inquiry/Teaching-as-inquiry

17 Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H.,.and Fung, I. (2007) *Teacher Professional Learning and Development BES* Retrieved from www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES

18 Ministry of Education (2012) *BES / Hei Kete Raukura A3 Overview.* Retrieved from www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES

19 Information for Boards of Trustees www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/SchoolPlanningAndReporting.aspx

ERO has previously evaluated the quality of various aspects of self review. In the 2009 reports on *Managing Professional Learning and Development in Schools* ERO found that the most effective primary schools[20] and secondary schools[21] had:

• aligned their PLD with well-informed school priorities
• a supportive professional culture where practice was shared and critiqued
• self-review systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of their PLD investment
• significant improvements in student outcomes as a result of the PLD.

In 2011 ERO evaluated schools' *Teaching as Inquiry* practices. In some very effective schools ERO highlighted the following:

Occasionally, inquiry was applied to the self-review process carried out by leaders. For example, leaders made decisions about future PLD opportunities on the basis of information collected through the performance management system (PMS). Such practices indicated the strength and coherence of inquiry in these schools. (p.28)[22]

The 2011 ERO report recommended that schools incorporate *Teaching as Inquiry* into their performance management systems.

What did ERO investigate?
ERO explored:

• how well the school goals, student targets, teacher and leader goals, and professional learning were aligned in the policies, procedures and other documents
• how school leaders and teachers talked about particular self-review components (including appraisal)
• if, and how well, particular practices reflected a deliberate focus on cohesion.

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20 ERO (2009) *Managing Professional Learning and Development in Primary Schools.* Wellington: Education Review Office.

21 ERO (2009) *Managing Professional Learning and Development in Secondary Schools.* Wellington: Education Review Office.

22 ERO (2011) *Directions for Learning: The New Zealand Curriculum Principles, and Teaching as Inquiry.* Wellington: Education Review Office.

Key findings: Coherence across self-review components
- Aligning charter goals, student targets, and teacher professional learning and development (PLD) is necessary but not sufficient to ensure that the appraisal system was likely to contribute to improved teaching and student outcomes. Having teacher goals connect school targets with teacher PLD made the difference to the effectiveness of appraisal.
- Although over one-third of schools had all aspects of self review well aligned along with their appraisal goals and process, not all undertook rigorous appraisal across the whole school.
- Just over half of primary and secondary schools had a good alignment between the charter goals, student targets and teacher PLD. However they generally did not align teacher appraisal goals with student goals and teacher PLD.
- The remaining schools had little coherence across all self-review elements.
- Schools used a wide range of evidence for appraisal discussions. Primary schools surveyed were more likely than secondary schools to use an analysis of achievement data in their conversations about the links between teaching and student outcomes. Secondary schools surveyed were more likely to use feedback from students in these conversations.

Just over half the schools had aligned teacher PLD with school targets. Schools with **high quality** appraisal systems were deliberately developing teacher goals that were the accountability factor between the two. Below is an example of such practices in one school.

The teachers have had PLD on developing goals based on analysis of class data. They now feel their goals are far more focused and measurable than before. The template for goals had prompts for school goals, teacher goals and Registered Teacher Criteria. For example, an English teacher shared her goal: to identify class texts that engage students and use in ways that raise achievement. She wanted to increase student engagement so that her Year 9 students were interested in critically analysing the meaning and thinking about how it relates to their lives. She linked this goal to the school target around increasing the literacy achievement of Year 9 and 10 students and the Registered Teacher Criteria 'using critical inquiry and problem-solving effectively in their professional practice'. (Secondary school)

Schools that were deliberate with this alignment shared advantages for individual teachers and for the school as a whole. Examples of the advantages are provided here.

Individual teachers improve their capability to inquire
The appraisal process is ongoing and fully integrated with Teaching as Inquiry, and encourages teachers to develop their capacity to reflect critically on their own practice and improve their responsiveness to student learning needs. Monitoring meetings provide useful forums for teachers to focus on identified learners. (Primary school)

Appraisal is a formative process used to build teacher capability. During the year, teachers receive useful feedback from appraisers following observations of teaching, and conversations about Teaching as Inquiry, based on documented evidence. The appraisal system is part of the annual monitoring, assessment and reporting schedule. (Primary school)

Individual teachers are motivated to improve practice
Since 2012, Teaching as Inquiry has formed the basis for appraisal. Inquiries are linked to school and department goals. School leaders feel that appraisal has increased enthusiasm among staff members; increased teacher and student motivation and engagement; encouraged greater ownership of professional practice and development; improved teacher student relationships; and raised student achievement. (Secondary school)

Individual appraisal involves purposeful collaboration with groups of peers
Appraisal and PLD are clearly linked. Once staff goals and actions are decided, appropriate PLD and support are identified. Each teacher chooses a professional learning group where they regularly discuss what they are doing and the impact on students. The PLD team of eight, including two Specialist Classroom Teachers, has overview of PLD needs and identifies in-school expertise to meet these. (Secondary school)

Individual teachers' improvements contributed to meeting school goals and targets
There is clear alignment between professional development, teachers' goals and overall school goals. For example, there is currently an overall strategic target in writing which data indicates is an area in which students are not achieving as well as in other areas. All teachers have a development goal in their appraisal that is related to this and the board has funded PLD with an external advisor in the teaching of writing. (Primary school)

School improvement is cumulative
Appraisal is strongly and very effectively linked to PLD. Priority focus in both appraisal and PLD has over the last four years seen a shift in focus from reading, English as a second or other Language (ESOL) literacy, to maths, Ka Hikitia and now writing. (Primary school)

ERO found a clear link between effectiveness of appraisal and effectiveness of school self review and development. Almost all of the 16 primary schools in the sample that ERO will review again in one to two years had appraisal processes that had limited effectiveness for improving teaching and student learning.

SECTION C: POLICY AND PROCEDURE GUIDANCE

Background

The performance management requirements,[23] as mandated by the Secretary of Education in 1996, provide the framework and minimum statements for schools to document in their policies and procedures. For example:

- schools need to specify who is responsible for appraisal, the appraisal process, and statements about confidentiality and dealing with disputes
- the process needs to be in consultation with the teacher and include identification of the appraiser, written performance expectations, written development goals and specific assistance to reach each goal, observation, self-appraisal, an opportunity to discuss practice and an appraisal report.

It is the board's responsibility to ensure school policy and procedures are clear. The Ministry's guide for boards of trustees advises:[24]

Experience shows that clear board policy is critical, with well defined procedures for staff appointments, principal appraisal and complaints. As the principal is likely to handle the day-to-day employment matters, you must establish clear expectations with your principal for recruitment and staff management and ensure these are met. (p.5)

What did ERO investigate?

ERO investigated whether a school's appraisal policies and procedures supported appraisal by exploring:

- how well the policy and procedures balanced a focus on improved teaching and student outcomes with the accountability requirements
- how well the documents guided appraisal practices.

ERO also included questions about appraisal policies and practices in the surveys to a sample of principals (see Appendix 2).

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23 The mandated performance management requirements can be found as a downloaded PDF on
      www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SchoolEmployment/Employers/PerformanceManagement.aspx

24 Ministry of Education (2012) *Effective governance – Recruiting and managing school staff.* Page 12.
      www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/EffectiveGovernance/PublicationsAndResources/RecruitingAndManagingSchoolStaff.aspx

Key findings: Policy and procedure
- The surveys showed that principals of schools with detailed documentation were more likely to report their appraisal processes were effective and that appraisal contributed positively to improving teacher practices and student outcomes.
- Although most schools provide guidance for most aspects of appraisal in their documents, the on-site investigation showed that these guidelines were more likely to be followed in a compliant manner.

What mandated requirements were in school appraisal policies and procedures?

Almost all schools surveyed reported they had documented the mandated requirements. These schools described who was responsible for appraisal, and its purposes. Purposes outlined included promoting professional development and growth, assuring the board that the relevant professional standards were being met, improving student learning, and supporting school goals and values.

The schools surveyed reported their documented appraisal policies and procedures made it clear that appraisal goals and objectives should relate to student learning or outcomes, to the Registered Teacher Criteria, and be aligned with school and department/syndicate goals. The documents also detailed the following mandated processes:

- discussions with appraiser to set goals and achievement of performance expectations
- identification of individual PLD and support needed to reach goals
- classroom observations.

Just over half of the schools surveyed had a statement about confidentiality and details of a process for dealing with disputes.

What guidance was provided in policies and procedures about appraisal?

In the survey of schools, principals were asked about aspects they included in their appraisal policies, procedures and/or guidelines. ERO identified these aspects from research about effective teacher appraisal and from the guidance to schools by education agencies. See Appendix 2 for the full list of aspects and the survey responses.

Very few schools surveyed reported they had all the listed aspects in their documentation. Half of the schools had most aspects in their documentation. However, they were most likely to be missing statements about:

- using *Tātaiako Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*
- what types of information to use in an appraisal discussion (e.g. how to talk about evidence, and what counts as evidence of effectiveness)
- how to develop teacher goals that were focused on improving outcomes for all students and were measurable.

A quarter of the schools surveyed had little guidance in their documentation. These were also the schools with mandated requirements missing from their documentation. About two-thirds of primary and half of the secondary schools surveyed included guidance on reporting to the board about appraisal.

This lack of documented guidance about developing appraisal goals was reflected during ERO's on-site investigations in schools. Many schools visited were struggling to develop clear and measurable goals that focused on student outcomes.

Only some boards received reports about appraisal. These reports to the board occasionally summarised appraisal goals or explained the outcomes from appraisal. Reports to the board more often explained:

- that the appraisal process had been followed and completed in a timely manner
- that teachers were meeting the professional standards or Registered Teacher Criteria
- the provision, content or outcomes of school-wide PLD.

ERO found that in the schools where the board received some type of report about teacher appraisal, trustees were more knowledgeable about appraisal purposes and the school was more likely to have aligned and coherent self-review processes.

Boards should establish clear expectations for school leaders about teacher appraisal processes and assurance that their expectations have been met. The board also needs to be clear about how they will use appraisal information in decisions about support for teachers' goals.

SECTION D: ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

Background

The well-considered provision of the necessary resources (people, time and tools) is fundamental to any improvement effort. For appraisal, these resources include:

- someone with responsibility for the quality and completion of appraisal
- time to develop appraisal expertise and undertake particular appraisal tasks
- having the appraisal expertise and opportunities to develop this expertise
- guidelines, including templates and indicators, to support teachers through particular appraisal tasks.

What did ERO investigate?

ERO investigated whether a school's processes and structures gave both clear messages about appraisal and practical support to teachers for appraisal by exploring:

- aspects of the appraisal processes, for example, time allocated for various appraisal tasks and how expertise in appraisal processes was developed, that hindered or supported appraisal contributing to improved teaching and outcomes for students.

ERO also included questions about appraisal practice and implementation in the survey.

Key findings: Organisational support

Findings from the on-site reviews

- High quality and timely feedback about teacher practice was identified as a key difference between schools with high quality appraisal systems and those that were compliant or had limited appraisal systems.

Findings from the surveys

- Seventy percent of schools surveyed had someone who monitored the completion of appraisal tasks.
- Approximately 70 percent of principals surveyed had templates for developing goals, classroom observations, self-appraisal and the final report. Only half had templates for all of these processes.
- Approximately 80 percent of schools surveyed provided time for goal setting meetings between appraisee and appraiser, observations and feedback discussions.
- Well over half of principals and/or senior leaders from the schools surveyed have had appraisal training. The training was mostly about using the Registered Teacher Criteria, goal setting, observations and providing effective feedback.

All schools with **high quality** appraisal systems had comprehensive support for the processes. This included time, training, and guidelines on: setting worthwhile goals, agreed indicators of effectiveness, and how to use a range of data. ERO found that in many of these schools the teachers commented positively on the comprehensive guidelines provided for appraisal, and the way in which senior leaders continually reminded them of what needed to be done and when. These schools had someone who actively led the appraisal process by being responsible for both the quality and completion of appraisal tasks.

The deputy principal with responsibility for appraisal has provided clear guidelines about what a good research project looks like and for reviewing and assessing the Registered Teacher Criteria. These guidelines include indications of 'What my evidence might look like' 'What evidence an appraiser/mentor might look for' for provisionally registered teachers (PRTs), assistant teachers and unit holders. (Secondary school)

How are appraisals monitored?
In three-quarters of the primary schools and one-third of secondary schools the principals were responsible for the appraisal process. In the other schools a senior leader was responsible. Whether the role was delegated to a senior leader or syndicate/department/faculty leader or the principal depended on the school's size.

Over 90 percent of principals surveyed reported that the person in charge of appraisal monitored whether all appraisals were completed annually and that the goals and objectives aligned with school targets and goals. ERO's on-site investigations found that the alignment of appraisal with school goals and targets was considerably less (see Key Findings in *Section B: Coherence across school self-review components*).

The principals' survey highlighted that the monitoring was focused on task completion, rather than being focused on aligning appraisal with school-wide planning, PLD and in-depth analysis of assessment information.

Lack of rigour and not completing the appraisal process were the two main reasons for principals determining that their school's appraisal systems had limited effectiveness.

The benefits from making time for appraisal processes
Schools with a high quality appraisal system enriched regular teacher work by making time to include appraisal tasks. This meant time for appraisal was made available in an ongoing way and not just for the one-off mandated appraisal tasks. For example, these schools took time in a range of meetings to look into the patterns of student achievement and learning behaviours. They used their analysis of teaching practices to identify the impacts of teaching on students' learning and next steps for teachers. Discussions were about teaching goals and indicators of success.

In one secondary school with a high quality appraisal system, the leaders deliberately aligned PLD with appraisal by providing time for teachers to talk about progress towards their appraisal goals at each PLD session.

Forty-six percent of principals surveyed identified time as the greatest hindrance to effective appraisal.[25] This included time for training all appraisers, time for ongoing observations and feedback, competing use of time for syndicate, faculty or staff meetings, and timeliness of observations and final reporting.

How do schools develop appraisal expertise?

Sixty-four percent of primary schools and 86 percent of the secondary schools surveyed, had undertaken PLD about appraisal. For most schools, the principals, senior leaders and middle managers were involved in this learning about appraisal. Seventeen percent of schools surveyed had provided appraisal PLD for all teachers.

The PLD was most often about:

• using Registered Teacher Criteria
• providing effective feedback
• having difficult conversations
• observations
• setting goals
• using professional standards.

PLD was least likely to include learning about building on last year's goals or using *Tātaiako* in the appraisal process or goal setting.

Appraisal expertise was most commonly developed through using resources provided by the Teachers Council. Fifteen percent of schools surveyed had used the Ministry's *Ruia* resource. Appendix 5 lists the appraisal resources for boards, leaders and teachers.

A quarter of the principals surveyed identified other sources of expertise. These included: private consultants; Ministry in-school professional learning and development; in-school expertise; Ministry funded professional learning for particular roles, for example, first time principals and aspiring principals; and expertise developed through personal qualifications to build school appraisal expertise. From Term 2, 2013 the Teachers Council has been undertaking PLD for schools. This is probably not reflected in this data.

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25 This was from an open-ended question.

In many of the schools reviewed teachers' opinions about the value of appraisal had improved after school leaders had undertaken some appraisal PLD. Principals told ERO that the quality of observation feedback and goal setting had improved after appraisal PLD. The valuing of appraisal further increased in schools where teachers had spent time building knowledge about *Teaching as Inquiry* and goal setting, as shown in the example below.

PLD has been provided for all teachers in Teaching as Inquiry and the setting of SMART goals. Appraisers learnt about the art of having difficult conversations. Middle management and classroom teachers spoken with were positive about their appraisal. They said that most staff saw its value and appreciated the strong support and guidance of senior staff. They thought it was helping them to reflect on and improve their performance. (Secondary school)

What tools are useful for robust appraisal processes?

Schools with high quality appraisal systems had developed a comprehensive wraparound set of guidelines, templates and indicators and adapted these specifically for the school. The appraisal resources were organised to avoid any ambiguity and allowed for adaptive use as appropriate for particular contexts (for example, in different faculties or syndicates). An example of the content of comprehensive guidelines from one school is described below.

The appraisal process and goals focus on improving teaching, learning and student outcomes. The appraisal document and templates show a highly organised and structured system which promotes consistency in this large school (2000+). Each teacher has a copy of the document and templates.

An introduction sets out the legal requirements, dispute procedures and the appraisal process. The next section outlines the school's goal setting requirements and gives advice about working towards the goals. The third section covers the annual appraisal report. The last section contains resources which will assist the appraisee with the reflection process and self evaluation.

Also included as part of the appraisal guidelines are:

- *an inquiry cycle document and an Registered Teacher Criteria evidence log*
- *information about the attainment of the appraisal goals*
- *a checklist for the Registered Teacher Criteria*
- *templates for the summary of the classroom observations that have occurred and an evaluation by the appraiser*
- *a detailed self evaluation for the Registered Teacher Criteria process*
- *appraisal reports for deans and unit holders*
- *a student survey that could be used*
- *a checklist of progress dates for appraisers.*

An emphasis is placed on discussion between the appraiser and the appraisee. Classroom observation documents include three useful templates that invite co-construction of the goals and the findings. The templates help to support the reflection and feedback for both appraiser and appraisee. Criteria provided for classroom observations outline expected teaching practices. Teachers are expected to include areas of good practice and areas for development as part of their self reflection.

A clear timeline is provided for staff that results in a process that is ongoing throughout the year.

Teachers said that they appreciated the structure along with the flexibility and can see that appraisal improves student outcomes.

(Secondary school)

Two features in particular that reduced complexity and ambiguity in schools were:

• indicators of effective teaching practice that had been developed collectively and shared an understanding of good practice. These indicators were often derived from research or PLD that the school had undertaken.
• an online system that linked to the student performance database that enabled easy access to, and analysis of, a range of student information by teachers for their inquiries.

Examples of these features are below.

When the appraisal was redeveloped two years ago the school deliberately included indicators of effective practice that the school had learnt about through the Literacy Professional Development Project professional development that teachers had undertaken. (Primary school)

The school has an easily accessible, comprehensive student performance information database that enables the school to develop 'a school-wide appraisal and goal setting process with teaching and learning and improving student progress and achievement as the prime purpose of the school'. The student-achievement database is providing useful and easily accessible student-achievement data in a variety of iterations (by teacher, class, subject, gender, ethnicity etc) for teachers. Most teachers readily accept the process because they see that it can help them to be the best they can. There is a belief that teachers can and do make a difference and a willingness to share concerns and get support and advice from other staff. (Secondary school)

Why it is important to understand change and implementation

Forty-four percent of secondary schools and 23 percent of primary schools investigated had recently reviewed their appraisal system, and were initiating a new system or changing major aspects of their old system. In three schools the changes were so extensive and recent that ERO could not yet judge their effectiveness.

Most of these schools' improvements were to appraisal policy and procedures and school organisation. Examples included schools developing new guidelines and templates, appointing new co-ordinators and undertaking PLD. Leaders in schools with effective appraisal systems understood the need for ongoing review and bringing all teachers with them. The example below shows that this is a long-term view on improvement.

There has been full consultation on the appraisal journey from 2003 to 2013. The pace of development has been carefully judged so that most teachers understand and support the system. The leadership team and the HODs are fully supportive of the appraisal process and the direction of the appraisal plan. Some teachers have reservations but the majority are supportive of the move to teacher inquiry through the selected goals. (Secondary school)

Reviewing and developing appraisal policy, guidelines and templates alone is not likely to impact on improved professional practice and raise student achievement. For schools to improve their appraisal systems they must also focus on a culture of improvement across the school.

How effective did principals surveyed think their appraisal processes were?

The survey showed that many principals were not confident that their appraisal process is very effective. Approximately 20 percent of principals surveyed thought their appraisal process was **very effective** in supporting teachers to identify their personal professional goals and receive high quality feedback. Thirty-eight percent of primary principals and 48 percent of secondary principals thought the process was **very effective** in supporting the school to obtain their annual targets and school goals.

One-third of principals surveyed thought the school appraisal was somewhat or not effective in promoting inquiry into student learning, progress and achievement.

The aspects, which principals felt were **somewhat or not effective** in the school appraisal process correlated with the appraisal documentation completeness. For example, the aspect most schools with very thorough documentation identified as being somewhat or not effective was linking appraisal with the school's professional learning communities. Schools with little documentation reported their appraisal process did not identify the PLD needed to improve student outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Teacher appraisal has two purposes:

- **improvement** – appraisal supports personal development and school capability to meet student outcome goals
- **professional accountability** – appraisal provides assurances to the wider community that teaching standards are rigorously applied.

Twenty percent of schools in the sample had high quality appraisal systems that contributed to both of these purposes. Many schools have all the mandated components of an appraisal system but haven't fully understood how to put appraisal within the wider self-review framework, in a way that supports targeted improvements for students' achievement and outcomes.

Schools need a model and support to develop a coherent self-review system in which appraisal is a tool for both improvement and accountability. Instead of focusing on one aspect of self review at a time, such as setting charter targets, an overall approach is needed. All school self-review components should link together and be targeted to raise achievement and improve outcomes for students.

The important role of school leaders

The role of the school leader is critical in developing an improvement-focused culture, and providing the organisational support and guidance to embed appraisal into robust self-review processes that bring about necessary changes for students.

Leaders in schools with high quality appraisal systems demonstrated a commitment to appraisal, and an expectation that teachers can make a difference and all students can be successful. They modelled these expectations whenever they could and used collaborative structures to support teachers to be accountable for the impact of their practices on students. In large schools, successful leaders had developed particular management structures to help all teachers have a direct line of sight from their practice to student targets.

Conversely, a lack of leadership knowledge about self review, appraisal, curriculum and assessment was linked to appraisal systems identified as having a limited impact on teacher practice and student outcomes. Although many large schools had pockets of effective practice the appraisal processes were not consistently rigorous across the whole school.

What can coherence look like in a school?

Coherent self-review is transparent in using high quality data as evidence in decision-making. Each self-review component uses a range of data in different ways to identify students' and teachers' strengths, needs and next steps in particular contexts.

A key process for each self-review component is the communication of action plans and impact statements to stakeholders. Sets of agreed standards of performance underpin all self review as they describe the expectations for the quality of performance.

For students, some standards are expressed formally in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) standards and National Standards for Years 1-8 students' achievement in literacy and mathematics. Expectations of quality are described in the curriculum documents and assessment tools.

For teachers there are the two sets of teaching standards, Registered Teacher Criteria and professional standards. The Best Evidence Synthesis outline the quality dimensions for what works and why.

Schools can use the expectations and dimensions to build their understanding of the standards for students and teachers.

Appraisal can help link the school planning and reporting processes and teachers' evaluation or reflections to the actual classrooms and inform the external ERO review in a coherent self-review system.

Table 2 identifies the aspects of appraisal that could deliberately link self-review components together.

High quality appraisal maintains a fine balance between the accountability requirements and the improvement focus. The actual practice depends on the school culture and on leadership knowledge and expertise to drive for professional accountability rather than technical compliance.

Table 2: Deliberately aligning teacher appraisal with other school self-review components and practices

Appraisal aspects	Examples of other school self-review components, and the development of subsequent plans and reports	Examples of standards and expectations available system-wide
Identify improvement goals for teachers (practice and learning) that are directly related to school goals and targets, and system-wide standards	Classroom self review *Teaching as Inquiry* Classroom assessment for and of learning information	NZ Curriculum School curriculum Classroom curriculum
Report to the board of trustees school-wide PLD needs to assist them to make resourcing decisions	Reports to parents	Assessment tools that link to curriculum
Develop and use agreed indicators of success based on evidence of 'what works' (short and long term)	Teacher self review (individual and school-wide) Aggregated and disaggregated teacher practice data	Progressions of learning National Standards NCEA standards
Identify learning steps and tasks to reach these goals	School PLD plan	
Design deliberate learning activities and access and provide relevant PLD and professional support	School inquiry and knowledge building for improved student outcomes Department and syndicate reports	Registered Teacher Criteria Professional Standards
Seek and provide evidence-informed feedback from people with expertise to support ongoing development (mentoring and monitoring)	School self review (strategic, regular and emerging) School charter and goals	Best Evidence Synthesis describing what works and why. For example, BES/Hei Kete Raukura A3 Overview
Evaluate progress towards and outcomes of reaching goals	Aggregated and disaggregated school assessment data including achievement and wellbeing	
Refocus priorities and identify the next steps for improvement	Annual targets	
Report to principal both the contribution of appraisal to improving individual practices, school goals and to meeting teaching standards	Ongoing reporting to the board of trustees Annual report and variation statements for boards and the Ministry	
Report successes and issues identified through appraisal to the board of trustees and how well board expectations for appraisal have been met	External review ERO external review – complementary to school self review School ERO report	

Next Steps

ERO recommends that the **Ministry of Education** supports schools to extend the focus of appraisal to include both accountability and improvement by:

- providing learning opportunities for school leaders to build the expertise needed for effective teacher appraisal, including the use of appraisal as a professional tool within an improvement culture
- ensuring policy coherence – so that the cycle of school planning and reporting, including goal-setting, is informed by the cycle of appraisal, and data about student achievement informs PLD decisions for both individual teachers and the whole school
- providing resources and guidelines that explain, for example, how the links between assessment, planning, evaluation, appraisal, and setting targets and goals, work together to inform robust self review and development and to improve outcomes for students
- providing opportunities for leaders to build the expertise needed for effective teacher appraisal, including the use of appraisal as a professional tool within an improvement culture
- using the expertise within and across schools to develop consistently effective appraisal practices.

ERO recommends that **school leaders**:

- align teacher appraisal with other school self-review components to improve professional accountability and outcomes for all students
- implement an appraisal process that focuses on professional accountability, teacher improvement and raising achievement for students.

When improving design and implementation of the appraisal component of self review, ERO recommends that school leaders should:

- design the appraisal system with teachers so they have opportunities to gain a full understanding of the purpose and usefulness of appraisal
- access or provide PLD about effective appraisal for appraisers and appraisees using available resources, for example, expertise in the school, *Ruia*, and NZSTA and Teachers Council resources (see Appendix 5 for a list of resources)
- ensure teacher appraisal goals connect to both school targets and teacher PLD
- include a deep analysis of student achievement information and the impact of teaching practice in conversations with teachers about setting appraisal goals and the impact of their practice
- be vigilant about the focus on improvement while not losing the requirements for accountability
- model the development of school goals and charter targets by using a range of evidence, reflections about the impact of practice, and coherence with other school self-review components
- involve the board of trustees in the process by discussing appraisal outcomes and review findings, and aligning these with annual and strategic plans and resourcing decisions.

ERO recommends that the **board of trustees** should:

• review the use of its self-review components to identify how they align and interact and how appraisal can contribute to school self review and development, and support improved outcomes for students

• use the ERO survey and indicators to review appraisal practices (see Appendices 2 and 3)

• expect to receive and use reports about appraisal goals and impacts to assist with decisions about necessary professional learning and development

• where necessary, resource teacher professional learning and development for self-review practices such as data analysis, setting clear and measurable goals, and managing robust appraisal processes.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Key evaluative question
The overarching question ERO sought to answer was *How effectively do schools' appraisal systems contribute to improvements in teacher capability and student outcomes?* This was explored by investigating factors that enhanced or hindered the implementation of a robust appraisal system.

Sources of information
Information for this report was drawn from three sources:

- an online survey of a random sample of principals about teacher appraisal (204 principals, 69 percent response rate)
- an investigation of a range of performance management practices in 173 primary schools in Term 1, 2013
- an investigation of a range of performance management practices in 27 secondary schools in Term 1, 2013.

What did the online survey ask?
The online survey gathered detailed information from principals about the schools' documented policies and procedures, monitoring processes, training, sources of information and advice, and appraisal practices. It also asked them to report how effective they thought their appraisal system was in improving teacher practices and outcomes for all students.

The demographic characteristics of responding schools were generally similar to those of all schools nationally.

What schools were involved in the investigations?
Appraisal process and outcomes in 173 primary schools were evaluated during their regular education reviews. The primary schools' investigations did not include any schools with an early return of one-to-two years stated in their previous ERO review report.[26] Schools where the previous ERO review stated a return time of four-to-five years were also not reviewed because they were not due for a review in 2013.

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26 Nationally, approximately 15 percent of schools will be reviewed within two years and 15 percent will be reviewed again in four-to-five years.

As only a few secondary schools were scheduled for review in Term 1, a sample of 27 secondary schools was selected for an on-site investigation by an ERO team who visited solely to review a range of employment responsibilities. Analysis of the most recent ERO review reports of these schools showed that their overall performance was more effective than secondary schools nationally. The next ERO review for one-third of these schools' was in four-to-five years compared with 15 percent nationally. No secondary school had an early ERO return. The secondary schools visited therefore are probably more effective than all secondary schools nationally, and the secondary school figures presented in this report may give a more positive picture than would be true for all secondary schools.

Reviewers interviewed principals and teachers and examined documentation to make judgements about appraisal effectiveness.

The investigated schools' demographic characteristics were generally similar to those of all schools nationally.

See the following appendices for more information:

• Appendix 2: Principals' survey – appraisal of teachers
• Appendix 3: Appraisals – evaluative questions and indicators
• Appendix 4: Demographics of the schools investigated and those that responded to the survey.

Appendix 2: Principals' Survey – Appraisal of Teachers

Documentation: policies, procedures and guidelines

Question	Percent Yes
Q1 **Are there documented policies, procedures and guidelines about appraising teachers?**	**97**
Q2 **If yes, indicate whether they provide statements about the following elements.**	
Statement that purposes of appraisal include:	
promoting professional development and growth	95
assuring the board that relevant Professional Standards are being met	90
improving student learning	84
Statement that appraisal goals and objectives should be:	
SMART, specific, measurable, achievable but challenging	50
relevant, i.e. support/align with school and department/syndicate goals	80
related to student learning or outcomes for students	81
related to Registered Teacher Criteria	83
related to the relevant Professional Standards	79
related to *Tātaiako Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*	29
Statement that the appraisal process will include:	
The timetable to be followed	80
A description of roles and responsibilities of the appraiser and appraisee	64
A written statement of performance expectations (eg teaching, school-wide responsibilities, management responsibilities)	76
Identifying PLD and support needed	82
Observation of teaching related to one or more specific goals	85
Identification of measurable indicators of progress and achievement of objectives	60
Some indicators that relate to student learning or outcomes for students	69
The evidence or documentation required	77

Question	Percent Yes
Q2 If yes, indicate whether they provide statements about the following elements. (cont.)	
An opportunity for teacher and appraiser to discuss achievement of performance expectations and development goals	89
Guidelines on the type of data to be used in appraisal discussion	41
Guidelines about confidentiality	64
The process to resolve disputes	62
Reporting to the board	61

Practice/implementation

Question	Percent Yes
Q3a Does someone have overall responsibility for monitoring appraisal across the school?	**94**
Q3b If yes, what position/s do they hold?	
Principal	86
Senior leader	27
Syndicate or department/faculty leader	10
Teacher with responsibility for professional learning	4
Q3c If yes, do they monitor whether each of the following occur?	
All appraisals are completed annually	93
Goals/objectives align to school goals and targets	90
Observation of teaching relates to objectives and indicators	80
Indicators relate to student learning and achievement and are measurable	69
Appraisal information collated to develop a PLD plan across the school	66
Goals/objectives align with department/faculty/syndicate goals	57

Question	Percent Yes
Q4 Have staff had training in effective appraisal?	**64**
Q4a If yes, which aspects were included?	
Using Registered Teacher Criteria	56
Providing effective feedback	54
Observation	50
Setting goals	48
Having difficult conversations	45
Using professional standards	45
Building on last year's objectives	35
Using *Tātaiako*	17
Q4b If yes, which staff participated?	
Principal	60
Senior leaders	47
Middle leaders	23
All teachers	17
Some teachers	10

Question	Percent Yes
Q5 Is time provided for the following appraisal processes?	
Observations of teaching	91
Final meeting	83
Discussion of progress	83
Initial meeting	81
Professional learning	77

Question	Percent Yes
Q6 Are templates provided to support elements of the appraisal process?	
Self-appraisal templates	77
Classroom observations	77
Developing goals and indicators	76
Final report	72
Identifying PLD needs	58
To guide discussion of observation	51
Feedback from students, parents	20

Question	Percent Yes
Q7 Which of the following sources of information contribute to the appraisal?	
Teacher reflection about the impact of their teaching on student learning	91
Observation of teaching related to objectives	90
Evidence of use of effective teaching practices	88
Evidence of use of practices related to professional development	82
Discussion of impact of teaching on student learning	80
Information about student learning outcomes, progress or achievement	79
Analysis of data to provide evidence of link between teaching and student learning	70
Records of study, courses, conferences	61
Feedback from colleagues	47
Feedback from students	40
Feedback from parents, whānau	14

Effectiveness

Q8 How effective is the school's appraisal process for each of the following? (%)				
	Very effective	**Effective**	**Somewhat effective**	**Not effective**
Appraisal processes				
Identifying development goals for teachers	24	65	11	0
Providing high quality feedback to teachers	19	63	18	1
Supporting and encouraging staff	34	55	11	1
Helping teachers plan their careers	6	37	49	8
Promoting inquiry into student learning, progress or achievement	33	43	23	1
Linking with the school's professional learning communities	22	56	20	2
Identifying PLD that will improve outcomes for students	32	51	17	0
Supporting goals in the school's strategic and annual plans	42	52	6	0
Supporting charter targets	41	50	9	0

Q8 How effective is the school's appraisal process for each of the following? (%) (cont.)	Very effective	Effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Outcomes				
Improving the quality of teaching	27	59	14	0
Improving curriculum design	5	52	39	3
Improving teachers' capacity to collect, analyse and use student achievement information for learning	14	54	31	2
Improving teachers' capacity to adapt teaching to meet the needs of Māori, Pacific, learners from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with special needs	11	47	39	3
Improving teachers meeting Tātaiako Cultural Competencies	3	27	56	13
Improving student achievement/outcomes for students	23	60	16	1
Improving outcomes for priority learners	22	60	17	2
Accelerating progress for students not achieving at curriculum expectations	14	51	33	3
Accountability				
Ensuring PRTs have satisfactorily met all the Registered Teacher Criteria for full registration	45	49	6	0
Ensuring meaningful assessment of fully registered teachers against the Registered Teacher Criteria to renew registration	35	55	10	0
Determining eligibility for salary progression	30	59	8	3
Renewing teacher practising certificate	32	61	6	1

Appendix 3: Appraisals – Evaluative Questions and Indicators

These questions were part of a wider investigation into school recruitment and management of staff. Further questions can be found in the following two reports.

• ERO (2014) *Student safety in schools: Recruiting and managing staff*
• ERO (2014) *Principal appraisal to support improved teaching and learning.*

1. How effective is the school's appraisal system and processes in:

a. improving teaching
b. improving student achievement
c. linking with PLD?

3-point scale: very effective, effective, limited effect

• Development goals support strategic directions and are intended to promote improved teaching and learning
• Development goals support meeting targets for priority learners
• Goals are specific, based on robust data and can be verified by objective measures
• Appropriate balance between school and personal goals
• Robust process based on Registered Teacher Criteria to assess suitability for full registration
• Robust process based on Registered Teacher Criteria to assess suitability for renewal of registration
• Appraisal and attestation based on relevant professional standards or Registered Teacher Criteria
• Appraisal documents (eg guidelines, templates, observation schedules) include specific reference to student learning
• Indicators include evidence about student learning, for example, school expectations for learning and teaching based on good researched practices
• Robust appraisal process including observation of teaching
• Observations of teaching provide information about student learning
• Observations provide information about use of effective teaching practices
• Observations are linked to use of practices promoted through professional development
• Process includes ongoing self reflection on progress towards goals
• Appraisal process includes discussion between teachers and leaders about student learning and its relationship to teaching based on analysed information about student progress and achievement
• Guidelines include the type of data that will be used as a basis for appraisal discussion
• Process includes self appraisal
• Use of a range of robust information gathered from multiple sources eg robust achievement information, student feedback, other staff, parents
• High quality feedback provided to teachers
• Middle leaders have goals related to improving teaching and learning

2. What factors enhance the implementation of robust appraisal that supports improving student learning? These are examples – please add any others relevant to the school

- Principal's leadership of/commitment to high expectations for all students
- Principal's expectation that all students will achieve
- School culture of collegial discussion about teaching practices and connections to student learning based on data
- Shared responsibility for student learning
- Leaders' capacity to analyse and use data to explore links with teaching
- Leaders' knowledge and competency in appraisal
- Time made available for discussing teaching and links with student achievement
- PLD on appraisal, constructive feedback, and coaching provided for leaders and teachers
- Teachers recognise their responsibility to improve practice
- Teachers have strong sense of self efficacy
- Other factors specific to the school

3. What factors hinder the implementation of robust appraisal that supports improving student learning? These are examples – please add any others relevant to the school

- Goals not connected to student learning
- Goals that do not identify specific measurable outcomes
- Vague goals that do not provide challenge for teachers
- Limited use of data on student achievement
- Low trust
- Leaders' lack of knowledge and competency to carry out appraisal effectively
- Other factors specific to the school

4. How coherent [well-aligned] are the school's charter, strategic plan, targets, appointments, appraisal and PLD in supporting high quality teaching, ongoing improvement and raised student achievement?

3-point scale: all elements aligned, some elements aligned, little alignment

- Strategic plan and targets informed by self review and information about student achievement
- Appraisal goals support the school's strategic directions
- PLD based on school's strategic direction and goals and likely to lead to improved student outcomes
- Appraisal goals used to develop school-wide PLD plan
- Actions from PLD agreed and monitored as part of appraisal
- Leaders have PLD related to appraisal, providing constructive feedback and coaching
- PLD includes analysing student achievement data and using for strategic planning, resource allocation and teaching
- Board provided with information to inform resourcing decisions, including PLD
- Time allocated for PLD and professional learning communities
- PLD outcomes for principal and staff evaluated and reported to board
- Induction programme for PRTs based on appraisal and school priorities

APPENDIX 4

Appendix 4: Demographics of the Schools Investigated and those that Responded to the Survey

The table below shows the demographics of the schools that this report is based on.

Table 3: Schools visited and schools responding to the surveys[27]

	Primary schools visited	Secondary schools visited	Percentage of principals surveyed	National percentage
	N=173	N=27	204 responses	N=2430
School type				
Full primary	99		44	44
Contributing	48		39	32
Intermediate, middle school	14		5	5
Special	2			2
Composite (Years 1-15, Years 1-10)	7	1	1	5
Secondary (Years 7-15)	3	7	4	4
Secondary (Years 9-15, Years 11-15)	0	19	6	9
Location of school				
Main urban	80	19	54	53
Secondary urban	13	1	5	7
Minor urban	18	5	12	12
Rural	62	2	28	29
Size of school				

27 Characteristics of schools tend to be linked. For example, most rural schools are small and secondary schools tend to be larger and in main urban areas.

	Primary schools visited	Secondary schools visited	Percentage of principals surveyed	National percentage
	N=173	N=27	204 responses	N=2430
Very small	17	0	5	10
Small	43	2	22	25
Medium	72	12	39	37
Large	28	9	25	19
Very large	13	4	8	9
Decile grouping				
Low decile (deciles 1-3)	40	6	24	31
Medium decile (deciles 4-7)	83	10	47	40
High decile (deciles 8-10)	50	11	29	29

Differences between the responding schools and the national distribution of schools were tested using chi square tests. Differences that were statistically significant (P<0.05) are described below.[28]

The primary school evaluation included seven composite schools, three Years 7 to 15 secondary schools, and two special schools. More of the primary schools included were full primary schools (Years 1 to 8) than nationally (61 percent compared with 54 percent), and fewer were contributing schools (Years 1 to 6) – 30 percent compared with 39 percent. The sample also included slightly fewer low decile and more medium decile schools than nationally. This is consistent with the exclusion of longitudinal reviews which occur more often in low decile schools. The principals responding to the principal's survey slightly under-represented small schools.

Appendix 5: Support for Effective Appraisal Systems

Guidelines, advice and support for schools can be found in a range of places. Many of these resources are disconnected from each other and/or provide incomplete or conflicting information.

The main resources for board of trustees and principals are:

• http://appraisal.ruia.educationalleaders.govt.nz/
Ruia has been specifically designed to support schools to use appraisal within an inquiry and improvement culture that leads to improved outcomes for Māori students. It is based on five principles of appraisal derived from research and schools that have improved outcomes for students. There is an interactive appraisal tool and an interactive self-review tool along with background information and examples of effective practice.
• www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/content/professional-learning-and-development
The Teachers Council provides resources, workshops and webinars for schools and early childhood centres about the use of the Registered Teaching Criteria and *Tātaiako* within appraisal, induction and mentoring programmes.

Other information is found on the Ministry's official website:

www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/EffectiveGovernance/Overview.aspx

www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/ManagingResources/PerformanceManagement.aspx

www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SchoolEmployment/Employers/PerformanceManagement.aspx

The Professional Standards are found here. At the bottom of the page you can download *Performance management in schools*.

For more information boards should seek guidance and advice on performance management from the New Zealand School Trustees Association. (NZSTA)

On the NZSTA site in the board as employer section there is a section on principal appraisals:

www.nzsta.org.nz/board-as-employers/principal/principals-appraisal/

It has the following resources:

• Framework for Managing Principal Appraisal
• Primary Principals Performance Review Guidelines
• Guidelines Managing Principal Appraisal (Secondary and Area)

Principals can also find information on performance employment in the Managing Your School section of the Educational Leaders website.

There is a section in the Educational Leaders website – www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Managing-your-school/Guides-for-managing-your-school/Understanding-school-employment called *Performance management: Ministry of Education resources*. This has three Ministry resources and two UK resources (non-government).

The Ministry resources listed are:

• Performance management
• *Ruia*: teacher appraisal for Māori education success
• A Matter of Performance (Leadership Dilemma)

Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI):

Te Kete Ipurangi – the online knowledge basket – is New Zealand's bilingual education portal. An initiative of the Ministry of Education, it provides New Zealand schools and students with a wealth of information, resources, and curriculum materials to enhance teaching and learning, raise student achievement, and advance professional development for teaching staff and school managers. TKI has grown to become an essential part of the teaching and learning landscape, and now supports over 60 online communities and collections. **www.tki.org.nz/**

Appraisal support is found in two places:

• Te Maungaroa – linked directly to *Ruia*
• Assessment online – one page diagram that states that appraisal and inquiry are quite different processes. There are a number of inquiry templates on the *Teaching as Inquiry* page.

PPTA:

The PPTA has collated resources to help schools design systems that:

• are meaningful and developmental
• meet regulatory and employment requirements
• show accountability.

See www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/resources/publication-list/2432-teacher-appraisal-resources

Education Review Offices

www.ero.govt.nz

New Zealand Government