



Current issues in Maori schooling

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Maori education

Maori are currently over-represented amongst those who are under-achieving at school. New Zealand needs an education system which creates more opportunities and allows a greater role for parents and one where schools have the freedom to respond to the needs of their community. It is this kind of education system that will give Maori greater opportunity to succeed.

1.2. Structure of this policy paper

This policy paper is in six substantive parts:

- **Section two** examines current achievement of Maori in education, analysing data from the NCEA results and international benchmarking tests.
- **Section three** considers issues facing Maori in education, such as enrolment, participation, truancy, bullying, alcohol and drugs.
- **Section four** moves on to consider different vehicles for Maori education such as bilingual education, Kura Kaupapa and mainstream schools.
- **Section five** highlights a number of pilot programmes and policy initiatives that have been operating in the last decade to improve Maori education.
- **Section six** sets out a number of policy recommendations drawing on current research, designed to improve education for Maori in Aotearoa.
- **Section seven** concludes by summarising the key strengths and challenges for Maori education in New Zealand.

1.3. Population trends

Maori education will become increasingly important as the population of Maori children in New Zealand grows over the next twenty years.

According to projections from the 2001 Census, by 2021:¹

- The number of Maori children aged under 4 is expected to grow by 8.5 percent, increasing their proportion of the national population from 26.5 percent in 2002 to 30.4 percent in 2021.
- The number of Maori children aged 5–12 is expected to grow 1.4 percent, increasing their proportion of the national population from 24 percent in 2001 to 28.1 percent in 2021.
- The number of Maori aged 13–17 is expected to grow 10 percent, increasing their proportion of the national population from 21.4 percent to 24.1 percent in 2021.²

It is essential to bear in mind in any discussion of Maori education that the proportion of the population that is Maori is projected to increase, while the non-Maori population is set to decrease in some age groups, making education for Maori increasingly important.

2. ACHIEVEMENT OF MAORI IN EDUCATION

2.1. Educational achievement

Educational achievement, for example in literacy and numeracy (as witnessed in examination results), is perhaps the most important indicator of the success of an education system. In general, many Maori pupils are high-achievers. Evidence of this can be found in NCEA results and international benchmarking tests.



However, there is growing evidence to suggest that Maori are a group of the population most at risk of under-achieving and that Maori are over-represented in the bottom 20 percent of achievers (known as the "tail-end" of achievers).³

2.2. International benchmarking tests

The Programme for International Student Achievement ("PISA") is an international survey of 15 and 16 year olds from 28 different countries, and provides an accurate picture of achievement in New Zealand. In 2000, reading literacy was the primary focus of the survey. The Maori cohort tested in the survey began schooling in the late 1980s. A number of these would have attended a Te Kohanga Reo, and 2 percent of those tested were enrolled in Maori medium education.⁴ Key findings of PISA 2000 are set out below.

Maori achievement in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy is poorer than for Pakeha and Asian pupils.

- The PISA findings indicate that on average Maori achievement in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy is poorer than for Pakeha and Asian pupils.⁵

Maori are over-represented in the "tail-end" of achievers.

- The "tail-end" describes the bottom 20 percent of achievers. It is one of the greatest issues of concern in New Zealand education because the bottom 20 percent of achievers in this country is systematically falling behind more than anywhere else in the Western world except for Belgium.⁶
- Pupils from lower-income backgrounds comprise the tail-end, as well as a large proportion of Maori and Pasifika pupils.⁷

PISA shows there is a wide variation in the achievement of Maori.

- PISA 2000 showed that there was wide variation in the achievement levels within the Maori pupil population.⁸
- In reading literacy, 26 percent of pupils achieved

a high level of proficiency,⁹ but there is a concentration of Maori at the lower end of the literacy scale.

- The difference in scale scores from the fifth to the ninety-fifth percentile is also several times wider than the difference between Maori and non-Maori. This suggests that the disparity in achievement is higher among Maori than other ethnic groups.¹⁰

International surveys from the past 25 years indicate that the performance of the bottom 20 percent of pupils is getting worse.¹¹

- In UNICEF's League Table of Educational Disadvantage in Rich Nations, New Zealand had the second to worst ranking for bottom end inequality. This is a measure of relative educational disadvantage between the lowest achieving pupils in the fifth percentile and those achieving in the fiftieth percentile.¹²
- Large differences have been seen between Maori and Pakeha by looking at the scale scores of Year 9 mathematics pupils in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study ("TIMSS").¹³ In 1994, Pakeha scored 514 and Maori scored 463, compared to a national average of 501. In 1999, the situation had gotten worse, with Pakeha scoring 508 and Maori 454, compared to an average of 491 for New Zealand.
- The International Adult Literacy Survey in the mid-1990s showed 69 percent of Maori adults performed at the two lowest literary levels. Performance at these levels of literacy is inadequate to get by in a developed country.¹⁴

Socio-economic status and the home environment are achievement indicators for Maori.

- Large differences were found between Maori pupils who were high achievers and Maori pupils who were low achievers in factors associated with the pupils or schools. The largest difference between Maori pupils who were high achievers and those who were low achievers related to the availability of educational resources in the home.
- Evidence from PISA also showed no statistical



difference between high achieving Maori pupils, whether they attended a school in an urban area or a rural area, or whether they came from a single-parent or nuclear family.

- Similarly, there was no statistical difference between the mothers of Maori high achievers with only secondary school qualifications and those who had tertiary qualifications.¹⁵
- What was significant was socio-economic status. 36 percent of Maori pupils who were high achievers came from high socio-economic families, compared to 19 percent from low socio-economic families. High socio-economic families were able to help their children by providing adequate resources for them, such as a desk, text-books or a dictionary.
- However, low socio-economic status cannot account for all the differences between high and low achieving Maori pupils. If low socio-economic status was the sole cause of low achievers falling behind, it would be reasonable to expect that Maori and Pakeha pupils from similar socio-economic backgrounds would perform the same. Even when socio-economic background is held constant, research indicates that there is still a difference between the achievement of Pakeha and Maori pupils.¹⁶

Attending a good school makes a difference to the achievement of Maori pupils.

- Attending a high decile school made a difference to Maori achievers. 45 percent of Maori pupils at decile 8-10 schools were high achievers, compared to 18 percent at decile 1-3 schools.¹⁷
- The quality of teacher-pupil relationships was important, as well as strong teacher morale and discipline at the school.
- Maori pupils in PISA reported a greater engagement with school than other ethnic groups,¹⁸ as they felt at home in their school, which might indicate Maori are not as marginalised by schools as some scholars have suggested.¹⁹

2.3. National benchmarking tests

The National Education Monitoring Project ("NEMP"), administered by the Education Assessment Research Unit at Otago University, tests 1440 pupils in Year 4 and Year 8 in all areas of the curriculum over a four year cycle, to see what they know and can do, which helps identify patterns of performance.

National benchmarking tests indicate that there are achievement disparities between Maori and non-Maori.

- Overall, NEMP results reveal that Maori pupils in both Year 4 and 8 do not perform as well as non-Maori, with marked achievement disparities in reading and mathematics, where 83 percent and 75 percent of tasks favoured non-Maori in each subject, respectively.

2.4 Achievement under School Certificate and Bursary

Participation in Bursary and School Certificate has historically been quite low for Maori pupils.

- In 1998, 55 percent of Maori 15 year olds enrolled in secondary school qualifications participated in School Certificate, compared to 74 percent of non-Maori.
- In the same year, 33 percent of Maori 17 year olds were enrolled in University Bursary Entrance examinations, compared to 56 percent of non-Maori.²⁰
- In 2001 the trend continued, as 33 percent of Maori pupils left school without a qualification, compared to 17 percent of the population as a whole.²¹
- This meant that few Maori pupils attained senior secondary school qualifications or gained exit qualifications.²²

This is problematic for Maori as lower participation in senior school qualifications has led to reduced access to employment, and the level of income which can



be obtained. In turn, lower educational attainment influences the likelihood of criminal offending and family instability.²³

Historically, there has been an achievement gap between Maori and non-Maori in these examinations.

- The achievement gap between Maori and non-Maori can be illustrated by the difference in the attainment of leaving qualifications.
- In 2000, 68 percent of Maori girls gained School Certificate or better upon leaving school, compared to 87 percent of non-Maori girls. In the same year, 61 percent of Maori boys gained School Certificate or better upon leaving school, compared to 83 percent of non-Maori boys. This was around the same proportion as in 1999.²⁴
- For School Certificate in 2000, 43 percent of Maori girls and 38 percent of Maori boys who sat the exam were awarded A, B or C grades. For non-Maori the percentages were 71 percent for girls and 64 percent for boys.

2.5. Achievement under the NCEA

The implementation of the NCEA from 2002 has helped address some of the problems of the previous qualification system, such as the small number of Maori leaving school with a qualification. However, the new qualification system faces challenges such as ensuring that Maori leave not just with a qualification, but with a useful, credible qualification that has worth.

It appears the NCEA has had a positive effect on completion rates, because of the flexibility of the qualification.

- Between 2002 and 2003, the proportion of Year 11 Maori pupils gaining an NCEA qualification grew from 36 percent to 41 percent.²⁵
- Between 2002 and 2003, 62 percent of Year 12 Maori pupils gained an NCEA qualification (compared to 72 percent of non-Maori).²⁶
- Maori have utilised the flexibility of the qualification and are more likely to earn credits at multiple levels.²⁷

- However, only 2 percent of Maori were able to achieve a qualification with excellence, gaining the qualification with 25 percent of the credits as excellence passes.

Comparisons of results between examinations like School Certificate and University Bursary and the NCEA should be treated with care, however, because the former are norm-referenced qualifications, which rank candidates, while the latter is a standards-based qualification, which tests whether each pupil has met an achievement standard for the qualification.

Concerns over the usefulness of the NCEA.

Whilst it is important to note that more Maori are leaving school with a qualification, it is also important to consider the worth and validity of that qualification.

- The validity of the NCEA as a qualification has been questioned as a result of inconsistent NCEA examination results and also because of doubts over the validity of using a standards-based assessment system across all subjects.²⁸
- The inconsistency of NCEA qualifications appears to have led some employers to judge applicants for jobs based on the school that they went to, rather than their NCEA qualifications. As many Maori are shut out from good schools because of zoning this may disproportionately affect them.

Fewer Maori meet literacy and numeracy requirements of the NCEA.

Achieving literacy and numeracy requirements is another major milestone in Level 1 NCEA. Eight credits in specific standards are required in each area.

- Only 58 percent of Maori met the literacy and numeracy requirements, compared to 75 percent of non-Maori candidates.²⁹
- Overall, 32 percent failed the literacy standards and 25 percent failed the numeracy standards, while some candidates gained one but not the other.³⁰



Little difference between mathematics and English.

- In the years 2002–2003 there was little difference between the proportion of Maori and non-Maori achieving credits in most learning areas. In mathematics and English, for example, the proportions were almost the same.³¹

Maori more successful in physical education and Te Reo Maori.

- In the years 2002–2003, 15 percent more Maori gained credits in physical education, compared to non-Maori.
- In Te Reo Maori, Maori candidates were convincingly superior, with only 1 percent of non-Maori in Year 11 and 0 percent in year 12 achieving credits, against 23 percent and 16 percent of Maori, respectively.³²

Maori less successful in science and art.

- In 2002–2003, around 15 percent more non-Maori pupils gained credits in science and art than Maori pupils in Years 11 and 12.

3. ISSUES FACED IN MAORI EDUCATION

Current research indicates that there are a number of issues faced by Maori in their education. These include enrolment, participation, truancy, suspension, bullying, alcohol and the risk of “falling through the cracks”.

3.1. Enrolment

A lower proportion of Maori are enrolled in schooling, compared to non-Maori.

- 86 percent of Maori are enrolled in some form of schooling, compared to 95 percent of non-Maori.³³ The absence of the remaining 14 percent is explained by early leaving exemptions.

The number of early leaving exemptions granted to Maori pupils has increased hugely.

- When a child turns 15, parents may apply for an early leaving exemption if their child is experiencing educational problems, under section

22(1) of the Education Act 1989.

- The reason the exemption is given is so that the child can be put in alternative training or employment that will give them greater benefit than staying in the mainstream education system.
- In 1998, 298 early exemptions were granted to Maori pupils, but in 2004 this had increased to 1,424 pupils.
- The total number of exemptions in 2004 was 3,832, meaning Maori made up 37 percent of all early leaving exemptions, whilst only making up 21 percent of the total schooling population.

3.2. Participation

Maori are still more likely than Pakeha to leave school before they finish their senior secondary schooling.

- Historically, Maori 16 and 17 year olds are less likely than non-Maori to stay on in secondary school, which reduces their opportunities for learning beyond secondary school and their job prospects in the labour market.³⁴
- Data shows that the retention rate of 16 year old Maori has declined from a high of 72 percent in 1999 to 64 percent in 2004.³⁵
- At no stage has the retention rate of 16 and 17 year old Maori ever achieved parity with the rate of non-Maori 16 and 17 year olds. The disparity has always been in the order of a 20 percent difference.³⁶

The implications of this are not positive for Maori, as research shows that achievement and participation are linked. The more time pupils spend in the class, the more likely there will be positive educational outcomes.³⁷

3.3. Truancy

Maori have much higher rates of truancy than non-Maori.

- A survey released by the Ministry of Education in 2002 found that Maori pupils had almost double the truancy rate of Pakeha and Asian pupils.³⁸



- On a typical day, 5 percent of Maori pupils are likely to be truant for the whole day, compared to 3 percent of non-Maori pupils.
- Maori are also more likely to be classified as frequently truant, which means they are unjustifiably absent for three or more days a week.
- Maori girls have a slightly higher truancy rate than Maori boys.³⁹

3.4. Suspension and expulsion

Maori are more likely to be suspended from school than non-Maori, meaning Maori pupils who need to be in class are being excluded.

- In 2004, the number of Maori suspended or stood-down was 65 per 1,000.⁴⁰
- In 2003, 703 Maori pupils were excluded, comprising 47 percent of total exclusions. Slightly fewer, 675 (48 percent), were excluded in 2004.⁴¹
- Even if the numbers are small, the rate for stand-downs and suspensions for Maori pupils by region is nearly three times the rate for non-Maori.⁴²
- The disruption to learning caused by the time away from class is difficult to make up. On average, it takes 74 calendar days to return an excluded pupil of any ethnicity to an educational environment.⁴³

The consequences of suspensions and expulsions are significant as they have been linked to poor educational achievement and youth offending.⁴⁴

Suspension reduction initiatives have had encouraging results.

- A Suspension Reduction Initiative was introduced in 2001, with 86 schools with a history of high Maori suspension rates involved. The schools cooperated together, sharing information and practice on how to manage pupil behaviour and the needs of at-risk pupils.⁴⁵
- This has seen encouraging results, as figures show there has been a drop in suspension rates from 76 per 1,000 in 2000, to 39 per 1000 in 2004.⁴⁶

3.5. Bullying and alcohol

It appears that Maori children are more likely to encounter bullying at school, compared to their European counterparts.

- In a survey of 1001 parents, conducted by Colmar Brunton in July–August 2004, 61 percent of Maori parents said that their child had encountered the specific problem of bullying at school, compared to only 48 percent of European parents, 35 percent of Pasifika parents and 38 percent of Asian parents.⁴⁷
- In this same survey, a slightly higher proportion of Maori parents said their child had encountered the specific problem of drug-taking and drunkenness at school, compared to European parents.⁴⁸

3.6. Parental concern

It appears that Maori parents are more worried about their children “falling through the cracks” at school, compared to European parents.

- In a survey of 1001 parents, conducted by Colmar Brunton in July–August 2004, 36 percent of Maori parents said that they were worried that their child was “falling through the cracks” at school. 28 percent of European parents, 31 percent of Asian parents and 51 percent of Pasifika parents were similarly worried.

4. VEHICLES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN MAORI EDUCATION

There are a number of vehicles that can be considered in order to improve Maori education. These include bilingual education, immersion, Kura Kaupapa and mainstream education.

4.1. Immersion and bilingual education

In 2004, there were 62 Kura Kaupapa Maori immersion schools in New Zealand, teaching 6,832 pupils, while there were 91 bilingual schools, teaching 8,868 pupils. Besides these schools, there were 93 schools with immersion classes, and 164 schools with bilingual classes, teaching 3,837 and



10,042 pupils, respectively.⁴⁹

Immersion education and bilingual education can have a positive effect on the performance of Maori pupils.

- Ministry of Education research has found Maori pupils report far more positive evaluations of schooling in immersion programmes than in mainstream programmes,⁵⁰ which is important for building pupil engagement in school.
- In 2002, Maori pupils in Maori immersion schools achieved significantly better in School Certificate and Sixth Form English, science, mathematics and Te Reo Maori than pupils in the English medium classes or immersion classes of mainstream schools, or in bilingual settings.⁵¹
- Because the sector is relatively new and still very small, results should be read with care, as a handful of pupils or one school achieving highly can skew results. This is a problem associated with samples from small populations.

Pupils in immersion and bilingual education perform well under the NCEA.

- The Ministry of Education has also looked at the achievement of immersion and bilingual pupils in NCEA. There were 19 immersion schools with 194 pupils in Years 11 and 12, and 9 bilingual schools with 216 pupils sitting National Qualifications Framework qualifications.⁵²
- A high proportion of the candidates at immersion schools achieved qualifications consistent with the pattern of achievement for their year level.
- 84 percent of Maori students within immersion schools achieved the literacy and numeracy requirements, while 69 percent achieved Level 1 NCEA at Year 11 and 67 percent achieved Level 2 at Year 12.
- Altogether, 74 percent achieved an NCEA qualification at Year 11, and 79 percent at Year 12.
- These early NCEA results should not be treated

as definitive of achievement at immersion or bilingual schools, however.⁵³ Time will tell if these levels of achievement are the norm.

4.2. Kura Kaupapa Maori schools

The Education Review Office (ERO) gave favourable reviews to most of the of 52 Kura Kaupapa Maori schools it reviewed in 2002.⁵⁴

- In around half of the schools, ERO found schools were affirming Maori in their cultural identity and were teaching Te Reo Maori in a fashion that would lead to fluency.
- ERO also praised community involvement and support as strengths of many Kura Kaupapa Maori schools, noting that the communities were often involved in governance matters, whereas most other schools rely on their school boards.
- All whanau were represented on one or more school sub-committees. Effective schools also had strong leadership, where elders were active in the school and provided strong role models.

ERO noted too that Kura Kaupapa Maori schools have also been successful at engaging parents in school.

- ERO describes two factors that account for higher parental engagement in Kura Kaupapa Maori schools:
 - the governance structure of Kura Kaupapa Maori schools, which is based on whanau management; and
 - parents who send their children to Kura Kaupapa Maori schools have actively chosen this educational option as the best for their child, and so they are interested in it. Parents share responsibility for the child's learning with the class teacher.
- Kura Kaupapa Maori schools provide a good example of the opportunities for specialist schooling and greater family involvement that can be created for particular pupils and families



when education policy allows families access to the school they want to send their children to.

Effective teachers and teaching programmes were also found at some Kura Kaupapa Maori schools.

- Features of effective teachers and programmes included:
 - attention to the learning needs of the pupils;
 - creating an environment where pupils were challenged and treated with dignity; and
 - systematic monitoring, assessing, recording and reporting of pupil achievement.

However, ERO also noted teacher training and retention are problems for Kura Kaupapa Maori schools.

- A common issue was a lack of skilled and experienced staff. Teachers need to be fluent in Maori and often have to prepare more of their own resources, as there are fewer for Maori education (even with the Ministry of Education spending \$8 million in 2004 on Te Reo Maori learning materials). There is often a demand to tailor teaching to suit the needs of the local iwi, too.
- Many immersion teachers are new and miss out on proper mentoring in Kura Kaupapa schools.
- At 18 schools, fewer than half of teachers were fully registered. These problems have led to high staff turnover.

Maori immersion schools do not always have strong governance and management structures.

- Whanau involvement has led to confusion in decision-making and some whanau were uncertain about how a school board should function. There are related issues here, such as a lack of critical self-review.
- There was also evidence at 56 percent of schools that they lacked basic mechanisms to assess the progress and needs of children attending their school, and around half could not cover or deliver the curriculum.

Overall, ERO found there are a number of Kura Kaupapa Maori schools which have developed successful immersion schooling practices and provide a sound learning environment for their pupils.

- Their major strengths "include the ability to involve whanau and the community in their operations and decision-making", and their ability to make links to the family background of pupils, and they have begun to help Maori pupils achieve more highly.
- The Ministry of Education also comments that bilingual and immersion programmes in mainstream schools have been successful where the wider school is supportive of the programmes and committed to pupil achievement.⁵⁵
- These shortcomings in their operations, and the relative novelty of the schools, mean it is still too early to draw hard conclusions about how much difference they make to Maori education, compared to education in mainstream schools.

4.3. Mainstream schools

It is important that mainstream schools provide for the needs of Maori learners at their schools. ERO has evaluated how well mainstream schools are doing for Maori annually since 2001.⁵⁶

ERO has found mainstream schools have made significant progress since 2001 in collecting, analysing and using information about the achievement of Maori pupils.

- Schools are doing more to enhance Maori pupils' participation at school, centred on providing a more supportive environment.
- Strategies include the use of Te Reo Maori throughout the school, incorporating Tikanga into the curriculum and developing sports and cultural programmes that include kapa haka.
- Attendance and disciplinary problems had been dealt with through pastoral care, building links with pupils' families and behaviour management programmes that promote whakawhanaungatanga



(the process of establishing relationships in a Maori context).

- 88 percent of primary and secondary schools have developed relationships with whanau in fulfilment of each school's obligation to consult with the Maori community over the development of the school's plan to improve Maori achievement under the National Administration Guidelines.⁵⁷

Schools are also making changes to teaching practice to improve Maori pupil achievement.

- These changes include putting teachers through professional development, based on Russell Bishop's research that produced the Effective Teacher Profile, Te Kotahitanga, as well as Te Mana Korero, Te Kahua and Te Hirianga i te Mahara for secondary school teachers.
- ERO has noted that more professional development needs to be provided by schools that addresses the teacher-pupil relationship and helps teachers develop assessment and teaching practice that is tailored to the needs of Maori pupils.
- ERO believes mainstream schools also have to do more to monitor how effective the strategies they employ are for raising Maori achievement. Strategies need to be linked to Maori achievement to make this task easier.
- ERO concludes that mainstream schools are doing better at creating an environment that accommodates the needs of Maori, compared to 2001, when schools had no comprehensive plans for improving education for Maori pupils.

5. RECENT RESEARCH INTO PILOT PROGRAMMES AND POLICY INITIATIVES

The Ministry of Education has undertaken a number of research and policy initiatives over the past 10 years to uncover what kind of education practices might benefit Maori pupils. The research findings have implications for policies concerning whanau involvement in education, teacher retention and development, and the way schools are run.

The AIMHI Project.⁵⁸

- The AIMHI Project was set up by the Ministry of Education as a school development project to raise the achievement of Maori and Pasifika pupils in eight low decile secondary schools. The project began in 1996.
- The first report produced by the project specified the factors that influenced the achievement of pupils in these schools, including the effects of school organisation and governance, parental and community involvement and any other issues that might be relevant to pupil achievement in these schools.
- The report found that access to resources was a big problem, noting that pupils do not receive enough access to support they need in health and welfare. Furthermore, because of falling rolls, pupils in the low decile schools in the AIMHI project were disproportionately disadvantaged compared to pupils in other schools. Five schools that had a history of conflict, poor leadership, poor reputation and poor resourcing were least preferred by parents.

This report recommended that low decile schools needed to be properly resourced in order to support Maori pupils and to reduce the pressures of life for pupils from lower socio-economic areas who attend these schools in the following ways:

- Providing staff development programmes for teachers to help Maori to learn the language, knowledge, traditions and beliefs of their culture.
- Ensuring that staff who teach in these schools can teach language as well as their specialist subjects.
- Providing these schools with the administrative support they need to help them become better governed schools; to ease the leadership burden on principals; and to help schools give attention to achieving high quality teaching throughout the school.
- Encouraging parents to be more involved with



their children's education, so that parents can support their children to learn the skills they will need to become confident learners, such as time management, communication and study skills and how to deal with peer pressure.

- Finding ways to attract teachers and leaders to these difficult schools, and to find ways to make sure they have the time to teach by providing better for the pastoral, health and welfare needs of pupils.

In 1999, researchers on the AIMHI project looked specifically at teaching practices in the AIMHI schools to see what teaching and learning strategies work best to meet the learning needs of pupils in these schools.

- Over a six month period, the researchers observed 100 lessons involving 89 teachers across a range of subjects in Years 9–13. Around 12 teachers considered effective by their colleagues and pupils for the quality of their instruction and personal skills were also selected from each school to analyse the characteristics of quality teaching in low decile schools. Some remarkable teaching was observed in the classrooms, and the approaches and strategies used were considered applicable to other subjects or learning areas by the researchers.
- The data showed that the relationship formed between a teacher and their pupils is a prerequisite for learning for the pupils in the AIMHI schools. The pupils were motivated to learn because the teachers treated them with respect, and were fair and patient.
- The teachers worked hard at making learning understandable for the pupils. For instance, teachers would teach in small steps and check to see that their pupils had understood what they had shown them.

Like the first report, this research on what makes a good teacher in low decile schools has a number of implications for teachers, and, in particular, for teacher recruitment and development.

- Low decile schools need to have recruitment processes to identify the teachers who have the

right attitudes, qualities and skills to teach pupils in these schools. Furthermore, new teachers should have access to an induction programme which offers intensive support, as well as access to an expert teacher.

- Feedback from pupils also identified that a number of teachers were not performing to meet their needs. Based on these findings, a number of performance standards should be developed for teachers who work in low decile schools.
- The research also suggests professional development for teachers in low decile schools should focus on the strategies that work for pupils in these schools.

Te Kotahitanga (The experiences of Year 9 and 10 Maori pupils in mainstream classrooms).⁵⁹

This research project, begun in 2002, sought to investigate ways to improve the educational achievement of Maori pupils by talking to them about what influenced their achievement. The project had three phases:

- The first phase collected stories from a range of Maori pupils in four mainstream schools.
- The second phase of the project involved the construction of a teacher development profile using the stories to help teachers to change their teaching style and the way they managed their relationship with pupils in the classroom.
- The third phase of the project measured the change in pupil achievement where the teacher profile was used.

The findings of the research have important implications for teacher training and development, as it has shown that for the Maori pupils, the most important influence on their educational achievement was the quality of the in-class relationships between the teachers and Maori pupils.

Maori in Mainstream – Te Kauhua Maori Mainstream Pilot.⁶⁰

Initiated in 2001, the Te Kauhua Maori Mainstream Pilot provided 17 schools around New Zealand with the



opportunity to trial and develop models of professional development for teachers to help them become more effective. The aim of the project was to find ways of addressing the underachievement of Maori pupils in mainstream schools.

- An important finding from the Te Kauhua pilot programme is that Maori pupils achieved better when teachers reflected on the approaches they were using in the classroom as a consequence of self-reflection in the professional development scheme.
- Similarly to the Te Kotahitanga research, the importance of caring relationships between pupils and teachers was critical to pupil success.
- The research also found teachers are most receptive to modifying their teaching practice when it is learned in context.
- The pilot programme also concluded that continuing support from the school management is a critical success factor for on-going teacher development programmes.

*The Parent Mentoring Initiative ("PMI")*⁶¹

The Parent Mentoring Initiative ("PMI") was funded by the Ministry of Education between 2002-2005, with the aim of strengthening the relationship between parents and teachers; parents and children; and families, communities and schools, to support educational achievement of pupils and to stress the mutual responsibility of each partner for strengthening these relationships.

A review of the literature on parent mentoring defined parent mentoring as "the forming of relationships between parents and school that enables both parties to contribute more effectively to the education and achievement of students".

- This evaluation looked at the effectiveness of initiatives run in 29 schools that give parents information on such matters as their children's learning, progress at school or school programmes.
- Estimates indicate that up to 600 families were involved in the PMI in any one year. Data was

collected from 123 respondents.

- Analysis of the data uncovered that all schools had made progress in improving the home-school partnership, and brought about considerable parent involvement, collaboration and team work.
- Furthermore, PMI data showed enhanced parent-child relationships, home-school relationships and parent-parent relationships across a range of schemes tailored to each location.

Please see Appendix One for a further list of recent pilot research and policy initiatives on Maori education.

6. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Bearing in mind the above data on Maori achievement, the issues faced by Maori in education and the above research findings, the following policy recommendations are made:

1. **Increase access for Maori to suitable schools** by removing barriers and relaxing rigid zoning regulations.
2. **Address the problem of teacher retention and supply** in immersion schools and in Maori education generally by extending successful professional development programmes and by introducing some form of performance pay to address the problem in full.
3. **Provide better information for parents** to allow greater whanau involvement; make parents better informed; and ensure that current information programmes targeted at Maori are better utilised.
4. **Increase the freedom that schools have over their operations** to enable schools to easily choose to become an immersion or bilingual school or to offer alternative curriculum and examinations to best suit their pupils.

These four key policy recommendations are expanded upon below.

6.1. Increased access to suitable schools

Research indicates that providing increased secondary



school access is another key to improving education for indigenous peoples.

In Patrinos and Hall's 2004 research, another strategy recommended to provide more and better education for indigenous people was increased secondary school access.

- Access to secondary schooling is poor for Maori, due to the limited number of wharekura and because current zoning regulations mean Maori families cannot always access the most suitable school for their child.
- Maori on low incomes will find it difficult to have access to expensive houses in the zones of popular schools.
- In our current system, socio-economic status is the primary determinant of access to schools, which is inequitable.
- A way to encourage more whanau involvement overall is to relax rigid zoning requirements and allow Maori parents better access to the schools they most want to send their children to. As previously mentioned, allowing parents to choose the school most suitable for their child can help the family to be more informed about schooling and is also more likely to get parents involved as they are supportive of the school.

Maori parents took advantage of the opportunity to choose a different school.

- The greatest access to schools in recent years was provided by the Education Amendment Act 1991, which abolished school zoning. Boards at over-subscribed schools were able to determine their own enrolment scheme.
- While it is true that some disadvantaged pupils remained in declining schools under dezoning,⁶² by and large the evidence shows low socio-economic and minority pupils took the greatest advantage of the opportunity to choose a school different to the local school. Maori parents frustrated with poor schools wasted no time in putting their children

in better ones.

- The proportion of Maori families not using their local school doubled from 12 percent to 24 percent from 1990 to 1991. In 1993, it was 25 percent.⁶³
- The proportion of Maori attending a local school dropped from 82 percent to 69 percent between 1991 and 1993, whereas for Pakeha the figure remained more stable.⁶⁴ High income families continued to send their children to more distant schools, just as they had done prior to dezoning.⁶⁵
- The main result of dezoning was to increase the proportion of pupils attending adjacent schools, and, according to the Smithfield research, those who went to adjacent schools appeared to come from families with a lower socio-economic status than pupils attending their local school.⁶⁶

Dezoning enables greater choices of immersion schools or Maori language schools.

- Dezoning also enables Maori to choose immersion schools, or schools that emphasise Maori language and culture for their children.

Dezoning leads to a more diverse pupil roll and new programmes.

- A more diverse pupil roll meant schools could gain critical mass for specialised programmes and targeted teaching for minorities, and gave some principals an incentive to turn their failing schools around.

Policies which remove barriers to school choice will be positive for Maori families.

- It stands to reason that policies which remove barriers to school choice like zoning will be positive for Maori families, and help them to access better schools, or to express demand for specialist education.
- This is because schools are held to account for the education they provide far more when parents choose schools than when they are protected by



secure rolls and funding.

Parental choice reforms felt to provide partnership between Maori and Pakeha.

Qualitative research, which interviewed 37 people responsible for the implementation of New Zealand education reforms in the 1990s, such as government officials, professors, principals, teachers, parents and union officials, also included interviews with some Maori in these positions.⁶⁷

- While the sample was small, the Maori representatives felt the parental choice reforms were not a threat to the survival of their culture or language.
- On the contrary, they believed it was an opportunity to close the gap between Pakeha and Maori. They saw the reform process as an ideal context to implement the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi where Maori were respected as true partners.
- Overall, the Maori interviewed felt the reforms gave them a say in education that they had not experienced before, and offered new opportunities for cultural, linguistic and economic development.
- The research suggests the greater freedom brought about by education reform gave Maori an opportunity to fulfil their educational aspirations without necessarily having to rely on the state to design or implement them.⁶⁸

Research indicates great benefits arise where parents are given greater access to the school of their choice.

Current research on the general benefits of parents choosing schools is summarised in *The Parent Factor: Access to Education* and include the findings that:

- When parents choose schools, parental satisfaction with schooling increases.⁶⁹
- When parents choose schools, parental involvement also increases, which is very positive for pupils.⁷⁰
- When parents choose schools, pupil achievement can be raised.⁷¹
- When parents choose schools, the performance of

all schools improves, as school choice is a "tide that raises all boats".⁷²

- When parents choose schools it encourages diversity in schooling.⁷³

6.2. Quality teaching

A great teacher makes all the difference to pupils' achievement. As the ERO reviews have noted, it is important that teachers of Maori pupils consider those pupils' needs when designing lessons and thinking about how they teach.

- A Ministry of Education literature review on teaching for pupils of different backgrounds has also commented on the importance of quality teaching as an important factor in raising pupil achievement.⁷⁴
- Pupils benefit from being taught by teachers who know their subject well.⁷⁵
- Teachers account for about 30 percent of the variance in achievement, making the quality of the teacher a powerful influence on outcomes for pupils.⁷⁶

Immersion schools face problem of teacher retention and supply.

As ERO noted one of the greatest challenges for Maori teachers in immersion schools is teacher retention and supply.⁷⁷

An early Ministry of Education research project on the gap in educational achievement between Maori and non-Maori cited a survey that talked to Maori teachers who were leaving teaching.⁷⁸ They felt they were not treated the same as other teachers in their school. Their frustrations included:

- Little recognition for their effort and extra workload;
- Lack of recognition and support from the other teachers;
- Low levels of support for Maori language and culture programmes;
- Not getting promotion;



- Not being able to shape policy; and
- Lack of recognition for their culture in the way the school ran.

Many of the problems that faced Maori teachers, or teachers who teach Maori, are being partly addressed.

- In September 2004, a scholarship scheme was announced to support teachers training to become Maori medium teachers. Teaching in subjects Maori have performed poorly in, like the sciences, received particular attention.⁷⁹
- The programmes mentioned earlier, Te Kauhua and Te Kohitanga, help teachers in mainstream schools reflect on their teaching practice. Another, Te Hiringa i te Mahara, established in 1998, was instigated to reduce the stress of Maori secondary school teachers who were suffering from excessive workloads.
- In 2004, Te Hiringa i te Mahara aimed to boost teachers' understanding of how to teach Maori as a second language through trialling a Te Reo Maori programme in clusters of schools. One of the outcomes of the programme should be a stronger community of Maori teachers through the development of online professional learning communities and resources.
- The government is also continuing to develop a Te Reo Maori strategy for mainstream English schools to improve teaching of Te Reo as a second language, including a national curriculum, supporting materials and professional development.⁸⁰

Some form of performance-related pay needs to be introduced to address the problem in full.

Like current scholarship programmes that encourage Maori training as teachers to specialise as immersion school teachers, performance-related pay could be a useful way to attract and retain teachers in immersion and bilingual settings, or mainstream schools that are hard to staff, but have a significant number of Maori pupils.

Current research on the general benefits of performance-related pay is summarised in *The Parent Factor: Valuing Teachers* and includes the findings that:

- Performance-related pay can help recruit and retain teachers by making teaching an attractive career option.⁸¹
- Performance-related pay schemes can help lift pupil achievement and teacher performance.⁸²
- Performance-related pay can increase teacher collegiality.⁸³
- The current pay scale does not recognise the qualities that make a good teacher.⁸⁴
- The quality of teachers can be assessed; it is not a barrier to implementing performance-related pay.⁸⁵
- The most effective performance-related pay schemes are the ones tailored to individual schools and the community each serves.⁸⁶

Schools and principals need more discretion to attract and retain the teachers that their pupils need the most.

- More discretion for principals would help schools to design remuneration packages to make immersion or bilingual teaching more attractive to prospective teachers and to help retain current teachers.

Government pilot programmes highlighted the need for teachers to be attracted, retained and provided with professional development.

- One of the recommendations of the AIMHI Project outlined above was that the low-decile secondary schools must have staff who can teach language as well as their specialist subject. As more and more graduates are choosing professions other than teaching, the ability to pay teachers more and tailor packages to attract teachers who can do this and are prepared to work in these low decile schools should be considered.
- The second report of the AIMHI Project, which looked specifically at what makes a good teacher in low decile schools, suggested that recruitment practices were critical to identify the right teachers for the school. Once again, if the remuneration of teachers is improved it will be easier for schools to recruit these teachers.



- The second report also recommended that performance standards be developed for teachers so that pupil learning needs are met.
- The Te Kauhua Maori Mainstream Pilot programme recommended that teacher development programmes that encourage self-reflection on teaching practice should be supported by schools with significant numbers of Maori pupils, to help reduce underachievement, once again highlighting the importance of teachers and teaching practice to Maori pupils.
- Instead of providing information about school performance or character, or even about schools that offer learning opportunities for Maori, such as Kura Kaupapa Maori schools, Te Mana only goes so far as to encourage its users to make "right educational choices that will change their lives".
- 22 pouwhakataki (Maori community liaison officers) are employed to work with whanau, hapu, iwi and schools, to reinforce the message of the Te Mana campaign.⁸⁸

6.3. Greater information for, and involvement of, parents

For Maori parents to be able to choose the right school for their children, they also need good sources of information. Right now, the government spends around \$52 million on information provision, but generally it is concerned with information about assessment and the education process. If parents have information, they will be more involved in their child's education and whanau involvement is one of the great strengths of Maori education that needs to be built upon and expanded.

Information is not currently readily available.

- Information is not readily available about school cultural programmes, teachers at the school or exam results, all of which are of interest to parents.
- Research shows that less well-off families have poorer information networks about education and schools,⁸⁷ so it is important that efforts are made to help less well-off Maori families to use information, so that they can make informed decisions about schools and education.

Current information programmes targeted at Maori could be better utilised

- There are a handful of information programmes targeted at Maori. Perhaps the most specific is Te Mana—Ki te taumata—Get There With Learning. Te Mana is a nationwide information campaign targeted at the Maori community.

- The scope of Te Mana and the role of pouwhakataki could be expanded to give Maori a resource that would help them access and understand which schools will offer them the best educational opportunities, as well as why it is good for them to have an education.

Research indicates great benefits arise where parents are given greater information on schools.

Current research on the general benefits of parents having access to good information on schools is summarised in *The Parent Factor: Information for Parents* and includes the findings that:

- Providing information about schools improves accountability between parents, teachers and schools.⁸⁹
- Better informed parents will raise the overall quality of schooling by the decisions they make.⁹⁰
- Parents who use information can place an incentive on schools to perform and pass on the benefits of their choices to others.⁹¹
- How parents are provided with information is just as important as schools disclosing information.⁹²

Government pilot programmes highlighted the need for parents to be more involved with their children's education.

- One of the recommendations of the AIMHI Project outlined above was that low decile schools need to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's education. Providing greater information



about the school and about the child is one way to involve parents in their child's education.

6.4. Increased freedom of school operation

Research indicates that functional bilingual and multicultural education programmes may improve education for indigenous peoples.

- Recent research on education for indigenous people in Latin America recommended several strategies to provide more and better education for indigenous people.⁹³
- These are highly applicable to Maori education, as the Maori population faces similar disparities. The first strategy recommended was the implementation of functional bilingual and multicultural education programmes.
- The successful model of Kura Kaupapa Maori schooling shows the value of indigenous approaches to learning and the progress made towards this strategy, although more can be done.

Schools require greater freedom over their operations to offer these programmes.

In order to successfully implement this strategy, schools need greater freedom to offer programmes and specialise. They also require greater freedom over the use of their funding.

- Schools with high populations of Maori pupils should have the flexibility to become immersion schools, if that is agreed by the school community.
- The state still has a lot of power over the establishment of Kura Kaupapa Maori schools. The Minister of Education currently has the power to create Kura Kaupapa Maori schools, or to designate schools to become Kura. Section 155F Section 155(7) of the Education Act also requires new Kura Kaupapa Maori schools to agree to Te Aho Matua.⁹⁴
- Schools are also required to teach the national

curriculum, which has not always been in harmony with Maori priorities for learning.⁹⁵

Schools should have more freedom over their operations, with a consequent reduction in state power over schools.

- This would enable a school to choose to specialise in Maori medium education, or to adopt curricula in particular subjects where this is desirable.
- More autonomy for schools is also consistent with the preferences for less state involvement and can provide an environment for collective whanau involvement, as the experience of Kura Kaupapa Maori schooling has shown.

Maori parents appear more supportive of schools being given freedom to decide curriculum and content.

- In a survey of 1001 parents conducted by Colmar Brunton in 2004, Maori parents were less inclined to want the Ministry of Education to decide curriculum than their Pakeha counterparts. 30 percent of European parents agreed that the Ministry of Education should decide what children learn in school, compared to 20 percent of Maori parents.

Research indicates that many benefits arise when schools are given more freedom to specialise and offer alternative curriculum and examinations.

- Current research on the general benefits of giving schools more freedom to specialise and offer alternative curriculum and examinations is summarised in *The Parent Factor: Freedom for Schools* and includes the findings that:
 - Performance figures for 2004 show that 57 percent of pupils in specialist schools in England achieved five or more A*-C grades in the General Certificate of Secondary Education ("GCSE"), compared with 48 percent of pupils in non-specialist schools.⁹⁶ These higher achievement results do not appear to be due to more able groups of pupils.⁹⁷



- Specialist schools do better for children of all ability groups, but add most value for children of lower or average ability.⁹⁸

Evidence suggests that standardised national school curricula generally do not contribute to higher standards.

- PISA 2000 results show pupil performance was higher in schools that had control over curricula.⁹⁹
- Other international studies of pupil performance suggest there is no significant correlation between centralised curricula and high pupil performance in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy.¹⁰⁰
- According to a Ministry of Education official, a member of the Curriculum Stocktake Reference Group, the New Zealand curriculum did not raise achievement, according to all trend data in the nine years leading up to the stocktake.¹⁰¹

Pupils will benefit from schools being able to offer alternative examinations to the NCEA.

- PISA 2000 results again show pupil performance was higher in schools that have control over establishing assessment policies.¹⁰²
- There is also a big debate among educators and academics about the benefits of different types of qualifications systems and types of assessment; two important ones being standards-based versus external examinations, or national versus school-based assessment.
- It is a fact of life that different forms of assessment will be better suited for some subjects, and will suit schools and children more than others. In light of this issue, it makes sense that schools should have the freedom to offer the examination system they believe is best for the school and its pupils.

Recent pilot programmes support greater freedom over school operation.

- The first report in the AIMHI Project outlined above recommended that low decile schools needed to be properly resourced in order to support Maori

pupils and to reduce the pressure for pupils from lower socio-economic areas in a number of ways.

- For schools to effectively implement the suggestions of the first report of the AIMHI Project, schools and principals would need greater freedom over their operations and funding and over the way they recruit and remunerate their teachers.
- The Parent Mentoring Initiative found that home-school partnerships showed signs of improved achievement. Greater information for parents will enhance home-school partnerships and parental involvement.

7. CONCLUSION: STEPS FORWARD

7.1. Opportunities and challenges

Recent developments in Maori schooling have brought many benefits to Maori pupils. They also have the potential to benefit all New Zealand pupils. Strengths of Maori schooling such as greater community involvement and greater freedom for schools to reflect special character should be more fully integrated into the state schooling system in New Zealand.

Change is needed in the way we recruit, train, retain and remunerate our teachers. Schools should also have greater freedom over their operations. These two changes will have benefits for Maori pupils. Maxim Institute believes that greater whanau involvement and information for parents will be of great benefit to Maori pupils and indeed for all New Zealand pupils. We believe that increased access to suitable schools by examining restrictive zoning practices will benefit Maori pupils by providing them with access to the most appropriate school for them.

Maxim Institute is committed to helping build an education system which creates more opportunities and allows a greater role for parents, and where schools have the freedom to respond to the needs of their community. We believe that it is this kind of education system that will give Maori greater opportunity to succeed.



APPENDIX ONE – RECENT PILOT PROGRAMMES AND POLICY INITIATIVES IN MAORI EDUCATION

The projects detailed in this Policy Paper are:

- The AIMHI Project;
- Te Kotahitanga;
- Te Kauhua Maori Mainstream Pilot Programme; and
- The Parent Mentoring Initiative (“PMI”)

Other recent pilot research and policy initiatives on Maori education include:

Whaia te iti Kahurangi: New Zealand Council for Educational Research Evaluation (NZCER), Final Report

- NZCER was contracted to undertake an evaluation of the Whaia te iti Kahurangi initiative (“WTIK”). WTIK is aimed at improving pupil achievement in Ngati Porou East Coast schools, in response to concerns raised by ERO in 1997 about the quality of education received by pupils in these schools. The evaluation showed improvements in the operation of the schools concerned and in pupil achievement.

Te Toi Huarewa

- Te Toi Hauwera looks at teaching and learning strategies and material used by effective teachers to help improve reading and writing in Te Reo Maori, with five to nine year old pupils.

Whakaaro Matauranga

- Whakaaro Matauranga is an education promotion strategy, aimed at raising the expectations for achievement among Maori parents, the community and educators. It includes a media campaign, called Te Mana, with the key message “you can get where you want to be through learning”. This message underpins the work of the pouwhakataki who work throughout New Zealand to provide local support for Maori to be involved in education.

Pathways over the Transition to Schools: Studies in Family Literacy Practices and Effective Classroom Concepts for Maori

- This report identifies the outcomes of research and development on the production of a set of resources suitable for literacy education in the family, contributing to the “Feed the Mind” campaign featured on television. It also highlights a model of effective teaching to enhance the connection between Maori pupils and teachers during the transition to school.

Nga Taumatua – Research on Literacy Practices and Language Development (Te Reo) in Years 0–1 in Maori Medium Classrooms

- This report is an evaluation of the professional support programme in Maori medium education, Nga Taumatua, developed to resource teachers of Maori. The report finds the Nga Taumatua programme is a very effective vehicle for developing knowledgeable teachers, but there is still a need to develop professional and research knowledge in areas of early literacy teaching and learning in Te Reo Maori, particularly in writing.

More detailed information on all of this research is available from the Ministry of Education's website, <http://www.minedu.govt.nz>, and was accessible when this paper was written.



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