

HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

KIA MAU KI TE WHAKAAKO

Trial National Standards, Not Our Kids

NZEI TE RIU ROA



THE TRUTH ABOUT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

At Tuesday's press conference to announce a National Standards "marketing" campaign, the Minister of Education Anne Tolley cited four pieces of research which she claims underpin the need for National Standards in primary schools.

Here are the real facts – minus the political spin.

ERO REPORT 2009; IN YEARS 1 AND 2 ONLY

Minister of Education Anne Tolley said

- two thirds of school leaders are not properly monitoring how well young people are achieving
- around 30% teachers not doing a good job
- principals not sharing achievement information

Facts

- ERO report showed the majority of the 212 schools in the review evaluated and taught to a high or good standard
- ERO reviewers did not provide evidence of what the students could do and acknowledged in the report "*ERO reviewers recognised they were not able to see the eventual outcomes resulting from the lesson*" (p6).
- ERO rated teachers' effectiveness (on its own criteria not a test) as high 26%, good 43%, adequate 21%, limited 10% (p8). The Minister's 30% covers "adequate" as well as "limited."
- ERO's statement that one in three teachers "*had little sense of how critical it was for years 1 and 2 students to develop confidence in reading and writing...had minimal understanding of effective reading and writing and set inappropriately low expectations*" is unsubstantiated in the report.
- ERO's claim that principals are not sharing achievement information is unsubstantiated.
- No definition is provided of what ERO considers "*effective*" or "*ineffective*" and therefore the findings are merely the subjective views of reviewers.

ERO REPORT 2007; ON COLLECTION AND USE OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

undertaken in terms 1-2 in 314 schools both primary and secondary

Minister of Education Anne Tolley said

- half the schools were not using assessment data well to inform better teaching

Facts

- ERO found that 93% of primary schools were able to demonstrate effectively their students' achievements in the curriculum areas of English and 91% in mathematics (p20).
- The ERO 2009 reports on years 1 and 2 found that "*the majority of teachers were good at using assessment to reflect on and improve their teaching of reading and writing*" (p1).

INTERNATIONAL SURVEYS

PISA¹: Literacy, mathematics, science assessments of 15 year olds

Minister of Education Anne Tolley quoted findings from PISA

- the gap between top and lowest performing students was wide and increasing
- unique situation in New Zealand as the gap is within schools not between schools

Facts

- Literacy results in 2000 and 2003 showed Finland was the only country that performed statistically better than New Zealand in literacy
- The achievement gap between highest and lowest 15-year old students in New Zealand is still very large reflecting New Zealand's economic policies and socio economic picture
- What is "unique" is not that there is a gap (as every country has one) but that New Zealand's is so wide. Our brightest performing student group is very large and this makes the gap appear even wider when the data is aggregated
- New Zealand was top of the IEA study in Reading Literacy in 1990-91 which was prior to the Tomorrow's Schools reform. The number of countries participating has increased with each study.

PIRLS² 2005-2006; Literacy assessment of year 5

Education Minister Anne Tolley said that PIRLS 2005-06 showed

- no progress in reading achievement
- New Zealand fallen in country rankings from 1st to 24th
- there were more countries outperforming New Zealand

Facts

- The New Zealand mean was significantly higher than the international PIRLS scale mean (532 c.f. 500)
- There was a relatively large group of year 5 students who demonstrated they were very good readers and notably sized group who were weaker readers. Our wide range of performance is persistent and mirrors our society profile of 'haves' and 'have-nots'.
- Compared with PIRLS 2001, there was no change in mean achievement but when contextual issues are considered, New Zealand holding its own was an achievement.

¹ Programme for International Student Assessment

² Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

- Contextual issues from 2001-2006: *growth of students numbers in schools* Maori 6.14%, Pasifika 11.58%; Special Education 11.6%; International students 17.5%; *schools dependent upon community funding raising for ICT*, changes in employment patterns from permanent to fixed term, 4.3% students in homes earning less than 50% of OECD median income.

IN SUMMARY

New Zealand's top students are the best in the world, our middle and upper students are doing well, our low students are doing poorly. Language presents a particular challenge.

The gap between high and low achievers is evident in every assessment and has been for decades. It has got worse along with the change in our economic policies. Every country has a band of low achievers but in NZ our Maori and Pasifika students are disproportionately represented.

Our gap is large compared to most other high performing countries although England and Singapore had a similar large spread.