



1 September 2006

To the Parents and Community of Lynfield College

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Lynfield College**.

Lynfield College is a well established, student-focused, multi-cultural secondary school located in west-central Auckland. School-wide, faculty and departmental goals are all strongly aligned to the school's strategic plan. These are supported by the school's performance management system which is focused on teaching and learning. Students are encouraged to pursue excellence through high quality education programmes. Senior managers and staff are strongly focused on student achievement and are well supported by the board of trustees to provide challenging learning opportunities for students. The 2003 ERO report identified Lynfield College as a high performing school; this position has been maintained and consolidated.

Achievement results in the NQF (National Qualifications Framework) show that students achieve above national averages in Levels 1 to 3. At Level 1, student achievement is higher than in schools of a similar type, while at Level 2 and 3 results are comparable with schools of a similar type. There has been a gradual improvement in achievement from 2003 to 2005, with literacy and numeracy results above national averages and above schools of a similar type. Detailed reporting and in-depth analysis of NQF results and achievement have provided the school with specific information to further improve programme planning and development. The school has been part of an external literacy contract and has undertaken a number of initiatives that are supporting students' literacy achievement.

Lynfield College has a history of good performance. Senior managers and staff responded positively to the 2003 ERO report and developed a set of milestones against which they could monitor progress in relation to identified areas for improvement. The senior management team demonstrates focused and high performing leadership, and there is good communication between leadership levels in the school. Senior managers constantly review programmes and policies to improve outcomes for all students.

Students are proud of their school and are appreciative of and enthusiastic about the academic and extra-curricular learning opportunities that are provided. Student leadership is encouraged and individual achievements are acknowledged and celebrated across all year levels. The appointment of an academic advisor has ensured that students make informed choices about course selection and that the necessary entry requirements for tertiary study are closely monitored. The school has a high student retention rate and most students gain useful qualifications by the end of Year 13

Teachers provide purposeful learning environments where lessons are well structured and the pace of learning is appropriate for students. Students participate positively in classes and during lessons. Examples of good teaching practice include the use of specific learning outcomes, the provision of inclusive learning environments where there are positive relationships between teachers and students, and teachers catering for students with different levels of ability. Students are well supported both academically and pastorally. This results in a settled learning environment where respect and tolerance are an integral part of the school culture and student engagement and achievement are actively promoted. Students and staff share common high expectations for learning in a friendly, focused atmosphere.

The board is well informed, reflective and skilful. It capitalises on its wide range of internal expertise and has a well-considered succession plan to ensure that this expertise is utilised and sustained. Careful decision-making is based on the school's strategic goals and reported achievement information. The annual self-review programme has been refined in response to recommendations in the 2003 ERO report. A sound policy base continues to guide the board and senior managers in the best interests of the school, students and staff. The board meets Ministry of Education planning and reporting requirements.

The high levels of resourcing that departments receive, and the significant investment in property developments in areas such as learning support, technology, information and communications technology and hospitality, are evidence of the board's commitment to student achievement. Of particular note is the board's sound financial management. Trustees have effectively managed challenges and appropriately sought the advice of external agencies as needed.

This report focuses on the effectiveness of recent strategic initiatives in raising student achievement, including the school's flexible use of NQF pathways, literacy initiatives and an increased focus on achievement in Years 9 and 10. Other topics reported on in this report include the collection and use of achievement information, student underachievement, Maori and Pacific student achievement, and quality assurance arrangements for Adult and Community Education (ACE). The pastoral care of international students is also included. This report finds that the provision for international students at Lynfield College continues to be highly effective. The extent to which the school meets legislative requirements, including health and safety, is also evaluated.

The report identifies many areas of good performance, makes some suggestions for continued improvement and contains recommendations related to further developing aspects of teaching and learning and the use of achievement information.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide useful information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to the school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Charlene Scotti
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For Chief Review Officer