



## Education Report: Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards 2021 — Announcement of Finalists

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	15 June 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1261903
<b>Drafter:</b>	Alicia Worrall	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Alicia Worrall	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	Yes	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

**Note** the finalists selected by the Judging Panel for the 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards.

### Recommended Actions

#### We recommend that you

- a. **note** the finalists selected by the Judging Panel for the 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards;

**Noted**

- b. **note** the due diligence checks undertaken by Regional Directors, the Evidence, Data and Knowledge team, and SPG communications;

**Noted**

- c. **note** following consultation with your Office the Ministry will announce the finalists; and

**Noted**

- d. **agree** the information in this report is proactively released once the finalists are announced.

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree



Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Early Learning and Student Achievement**

15/06/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister of Education**

28/6/2021

Proactively Released

## Background

1. The Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards celebrates the great work happening in schools, kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo across Aotearoa to support tamariki and rangatahi to succeed.
2. Attached as Annex 1 is further background information on the Awards.

## Comments

3. The Judging Panel met on 31 May and 1 June to select the finalists for the 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards. Nancy Bell, Director Early Learning and Acting Associate Deputy Secretary – Resourcing and Early Learning Delivery, convened the meeting and was supported by members of the Awards project team.
4. The Panel reviewed a total of 51 entries across five categories:
  - Excellence in Engaging –29 entries
  - Excellence in Leading –13 entries
  - Excellence in Teaching & Learning –23 entries
  - Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education – 26 entries
  - Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize) – 9 entries.
5. The Panel applied the same evaluation standard to all entries. Panel members considered that putting forward any entries that did not show the level of excellence required of the Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards would compromise the integrity and reputation of the Awards. The Convenor ensured a rigorous, independent process and panel members were unanimous in all their decisions.
6. The Panel selected a total of 19 finalists from across the sector, as shown in the table below (note that some entities are finalists in more than one category — making 17 schools and kura across all categories).

Category	Entity	Sector
Excellence in Engaging	Frimley Primary (Hastings)	Primary
	Te Kura Taumata o Panguru (Northland)	Area
	Avondale College (Auckland)	Secondary
	Wesley College (South of Auckland)	Secondary
Excellence in Leading	Redoubt North School (Auckland)	Primary
	Achieving @ Waitakere (Auckland)	Primary & Secondary
	Hastings Girls' High (Hastings)	Secondary
Excellence in Teaching & Learning	Frimley Primary (Hastings)	Primary
	Whakarongo School (Palmerston North)	Primary
	Northland College Teen Parent Unit (Northland)	Secondary
	Sylvia Park School (Auckland)	Primary
Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education	Morrinsville College (Hamilton/Waikato)	Secondary
	Henry Hill School (Napier)	Primary
	Wesley College (South Auckland)	Secondary
	Nelson College for Girls (Nelson)	Secondary
Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)	Kadimah School (Auckland)	Primary
	Manurewa Intermediate School (Auckland)	Primary
	Ngunguru School (Northland)	Primary
	Oruaiti School (Northland)	Primary

7. A map is attached as Annex 2 which shows the locations of each finalist.
8. The Ministry has checked the case study data in all finalists' entries, and finalists have been checked with the Directors of Education in each of the finalists' regions.
9. Attached as Annex 3 are the judges' comments on all entries. These comments will be relayed back to each entrant for their information.
10. We have been informed by your Office that the Ministry should approve the finalists. We will work with your Office to organise the sharing of complimentary communications such as social media posts, if required.

### Next Steps

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11. The 2021 finalists will be announced by the Ministry on Thursday 17 June.
12. The team is in the process of organising:
  - information to advise finalists and unsuccessful entrants of the outcome of their entries, including comments from the Judging Panel
  - visits to finalists by members of the Judging Panel for further assessment
  - filming of finalists' case studies
  - the promotion of the finalists through press, digital media and social media commencing on 17 June; and
  - the Awards ceremony.
13. The Judging Panel will meet again on 16 August to select the winners.

### Risks

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14. There is a risk that some entrants could contest the decisions of the Judging Panel in selecting the finalists. This has not occurred to date. Our response to any such query would be that the independent Judging Panel selected the finalists based on rigorous criteria. The project team recorded each judge's comments for every entry to show why some entries were selected as finalists and others were not successful.
15. There is a risk that kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo could be upset with the lack of kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo selected as finalists this year. We have no early learning finalists or kōhanga reo finalists this year and only one kura. In 2019 we had 2 kōhanga reo finalists, 3 early learning finalists and 3 finalists from kura. In 2018 we had no kōhanga reo or kura finalists, but 3 early learning finalists. In 2017 we had 1 kōhanga reo finalists, no kura finalists and 2 early learning services.
16. Our response would be that the independent Judging Panel was only able to select finalists from the entries received for the 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards, and all finalists must display excellence in their entry. Through our marketing campaign during the entries open phase, we encouraged all kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo to enter the Awards and will continue to do so in 2022.
17. There is a risk that schools, kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo located in the South Island could be upset with the lack of finalists from the South Island (there is only one this year, from Nelson). In 2019 we had 3 finalists from the South Island, in 2018 we had 1 finalist from the South Island and in 2017 we had 2 finalists from the South Island.

18. Our response would be that the independent Judging Panel was only able to select finalists from the entries received for the 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards — we encourage all schools, kura, early learning services and kōhanga reo to enter the Awards and will continue to do so in 2022.

### Proactive Release

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19. We recommend that the information in this Education Report is proactively released once the finalists are announced.

I'd like to see more pro-activity around ECE, Kura, Kohanga Reo etc to ensure we get a more balanced list of award recipients in future rounds please.  
Thanks, Chris

## Annexes

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Annex 1: Background to the Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards

Annex 2: Map of the Finalists

Annex 3: Judge's Comments on Finalists

Annex 4: Due Diligence Checks on Finalists

Proactively Released

## Annex 1: Background to the Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards

1. The Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards were introduced in 2014 with the intention of reinforcing, illustrating, and publicly recognising and celebrating excellence in education. The Awards are also instrumental in strengthening the value and raising the status of the teaching profession.
2. The Awards are the responsibility of the Deputy Secretary – Early Learning and Student Achievement.
3. The Award categories are drawn from the Ministry of Education's Best Evidence Synthesis research series, supported by the New Zealand schools and early childhood education curriculum documents and education strategies.
4. They are part of a broader programme of work that includes lifting public perceptions of the value of teaching as a career.
5. The Awards acknowledge people and practices that are improving learning outcomes for our tamariki and rangatahi, and help raise the bar for the profession by identifying and showcasing quality teaching.
6. The Awards recognise educators, whānau, iwi, hāpu and communities working together to support our tamariki and rangatahi – academically, socially and culturally.
7. Entries are judged on the extent to which they show improved and sustained outcomes for all tamariki and rangatahi that have been achieved through a change in practice.
8. There are four Award categories, with the additional Focus prize also being awarded. From the four categories, a Supreme Award is given to the entry that has demonstrated the greatest sustained improvement. The categories are:
  - **Excellence in Engaging**  
This award celebrates working together as a community to transform relationships and strengthen achievement, leading to improved and sustained outcomes for all tamariki and rangatahi.
  - **Excellence in Leading**  
This award celebrates leadership and its influence on strengthening professional capability and creating a change in conditions, leading to improved and sustained outcomes for all tamariki and rangatahi.
  - **Excellence in Teaching & Learning**  
This award celebrates teaching that transforms the learning of all tamariki and rangatahi, and achieves improved and sustained outcomes.
  - **Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education**  
This award celebrates practices that enhance the health and wellbeing of all tamariki and rangatahi, and achieves improved and sustained outcomes.
  - **Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)**  
The Focus Prize theme changes each year in line with Government and Ministry priorities. The 2021 Focus prize celebrates teaching and learning that empowers children and young people to develop critical thinking skills, as they explore the

impact that people have on the environment, and to take action for a sustainable future.

- **The Prime Minister's Supreme Award**

This award is selected from the winners in the four Award categories and is determined by the extent of improvement and impact on education outcomes.

9. Winners of the four categories and focus prize will each receive a package that includes a trophy, certificate, a financial award (\$20,000), and \$10,000 for professional development.
10. The winner of the Prime Minister's Supreme Award will receive a package that includes the Supreme Award trophy, a certificate, an additional financial award (\$30,000), and an opportunity to represent New Zealand education.
11. The 2021 Awards ceremony will be held in Parliament Buildings on 7 September.

#### 2021 Awards

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12. The 2021 Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards opened for entry on Monday, 22 February 2021. Entries closed on Friday, 16 April 2021.
13. We have strategic partners who support and help promote the Awards. Our partners are: the Education Council; the Education Review Office; and the New Zealand School Trustees Association. Their names or logos are included on the Awards website.
14. The convenor for the 2021 Awards judging process is Nancy Bell, Acting Associate Deputy Secretary – Resourcing and Early Learning Delivery.



## Annex 2: Map of the Finalists

### 2021 Finalists

#### AUCKLAND

**Avondale College**  
Excellence in Engaging  
**Wesley College**  
Excellence in Engaging & Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education  
**Redoubt North School**  
Excellence in Leading  
**Achieving @ Waitakere**  
Excellence in Leading  
**Sylvia Park School**  
Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
**Kadimah School**  
Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)  
**Manurewa Intermediate School**  
Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)

#### NORTHLAND

**Te Kura Taumata o Panguru**  
Excellence in Engaging  
**Northland College Teen Parent Unit**  
Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
**Ngunguru School**  
Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)  
**Oruaiti School**  
Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education (2021 Focus Prize)

#### WAIKATO

**Morrinsville College**  
Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education

#### NELSON

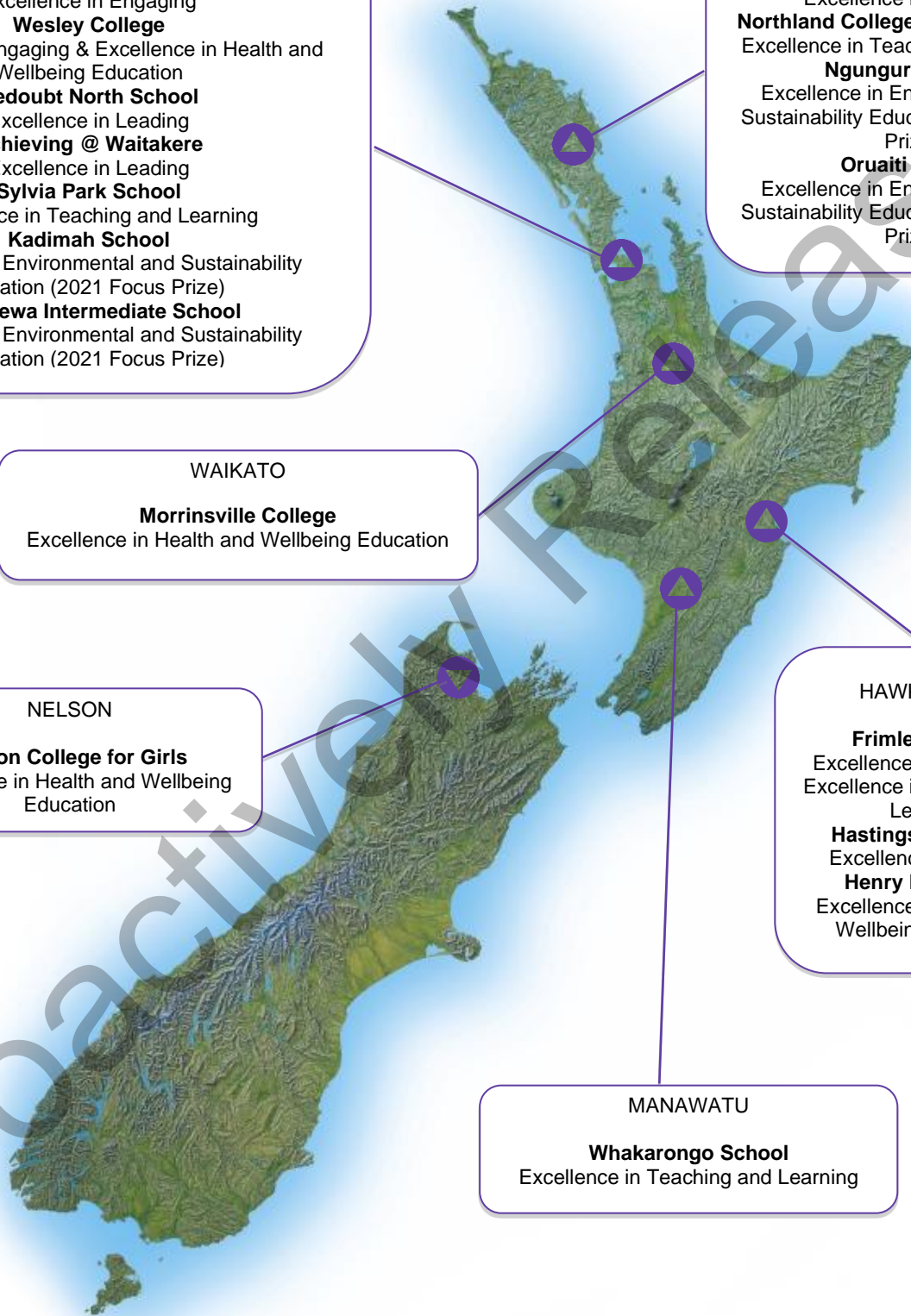
**Nelson College for Girls**  
Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education

#### HAWKE'S BAY

**Frimley Primary**  
Excellence in Engaging & Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
**Hastings Girls' High**  
Excellence in Leading  
**Henry Hill School**  
Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education

#### MANAWATU

**Whakarongo School**  
Excellence in Teaching and Learning



## Annex 3 – Judge’s Comments on Finalists

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### *Excellence in Engaging*

#### **Frimley Primary School**

The judges felt it was a very good application – engagement with the community was very strong and lots of good connections had been made.

The judges saw excellent engagement with iwi, good use of te reo and great cultural practice. The judges also said partnerships had been established and the data showed improvement over time.

#### **Te Kura Taumata O Panguru**

The judges said the two-year journey was inspiring and there was great optimism for client change. They felt it was an uplifting story of connecting community for the greater good.

The judges liked the collaborations with GWS, House of Science, REAP and iwi. They felt there were excellent outcomes in terms of resources shared.

The judges also liked the strong partnerships with iwi and the prominence of te ao Māori within teaching and learning despite the lack of resources.

#### **Avondale College**

The judges felt this was an engaging, stand-out application.

The judges thought there was a strong emphasis on pacific achievement and this was reflected both academically and culturally. The judges appreciated the acknowledgement of the previous principal for the part he had played in the journey.

The judges said the programme has been sustained over a good period of time and the change had been significant, while also meeting the college’s strategic goals. The judges also liked the focus on relationships.

#### **Wesley College**

The judges said the college started from a low NCEA base and has experienced a good lift. The judges also liked the focus on University Entrance.

The judges were impressed with how well the programme had been developed and how it had drawn on ex-students. They also liked the focus on Pasifika, the partnership with whānau to design educational activities, and focussing on where improvement was needed.

### *Excellence in Leading*

#### **Redoubt North School**

The judges said there was evidence of organic leadership growth and there was a strong cycle of implementation – creating a learning environment with the goals. There had also been significant investment in Professional Development.

The judges were impressed with the creativeness shown in areas that presented challenges.

### **Achieving @ Waitakere**

The judges said there was clear leadership shown with improved outcomes for children. The judges noted the strong collaborative effort and the level of difficulty collaborating across several schools.

The judges noted that the challenge of keeping children in school should not be underestimated. The judges liked the engagement with whānau and developing their leadership through a DP hui. The judges were also impressed with the impact data.

### **Hastings Girls' High**

The judges felt the school had shown transformative and courageous leadership. A high trust relationship had been developed with the Māori and Pacific communities.

The judges said it was a major achievement to build trust through the changes to structures and systems.

### *Excellence in Teaching and Learning*

#### **Frimley Primary School**

The judges noted excellent research, data, changes and action demonstrated.

#### **Whakarongo School**

The judges felt the school was very future-focussed, reflective, investigative and a growing learner agency – they were happy to see the stem and digital curriculum.

The judges said there was excellent use of data and they liked the professional learning groups for teachers and the grow module.

#### **Northland College Teen Parent Unit**

The judges thought it was a really interesting project and they loved the wrap-around services. The unit had a positive view of the students' long-term goals and the judges liked the baby stories.

The judges noted the use of the Te Whare Tapa Whā model and the lift in their own cultural identity. The judges acknowledged the definite strength base to how they talked about their students and how the programme linked young mothers into their education. It was also noted that keeping young mothers engaged in their learning produced better outcomes for their future.

The judges felt case studies have had a positive impact and there was a good range of relevant pedagogy and wellbeing initiatives.

#### **Sylvia Park School**

The judges said it was a very strongly written application and they noted the school's longer-term success appeared to be embedded and sustainable.

The judges liked the example of student driven decision making and could see the increase in outcomes and equity. They noted the story of sustained spiral of enquiry and the good use of data. The judges also liked the collective approach of it being everyone's responsibility.

The judges noted the introduction of the bilingual pathway and clear partnership with parents. They felt that the curriculum was authentic and liked the setup of the units.

### *Excellence in Health and Wellbeing Education*

#### **Morrinsville College**

The judges liked the strong connection with iwi and hapū and the use of awa. They also liked the Māori concepts, including the awatapu to the maunga, and the story of success for Māori.

The judges noted the good NCEA data.

#### **Henry Hill School**

The judges said there was a lot of great data and explained kaupapa. The school had developed modules and there was a responsibility to the literary wellbeing process.

The judges said the needs of disabled students had been activity accommodated – there was low exclusion data and sensitivity to the needs of students. The judges liked that the school was actively looking to share their insights with other schools.

The judges noted that every aspect had been worked through and a solution found. They also noted that the principal had trained in neurosequential modelling, which showed real leadership.

The judges said the school had a trauma-informed response, the school was culturally responsive and showed a really good example of a coordinated approach with agencies and whānau.

#### **Wesley School**

The judges liked the strong wrap-around support and noted the good evidence of student wellbeing, which were being looked after in a range of initiatives.

The judges said the wellbeing data was implicit, but other data on achievement was explicit.

#### **Nelson College for Girls**

The judges liked the fact that the college had identified the issue, formalised a plan and resourced it. They had then let evolution and constant review push the programme forward.

The judges noted that the college had improved attendance, good data and have developed the curriculum to allow a shift in Māori achievement.

### **Kadimah School**

The judges were impressed with the strong cross-curriculum linkages. They noted that the programme had been going for six years and was a nice melding of Judaism and Māori concepts. The judges liked the long-term engagement and development of a wide range of rich programmes, which seemed to be integrated.

The judges felt it was a strong entry with great mahi, given the barren concrete environment. There was authentic learning interwoven with a special charter. They felt the school was using up-to-date pedagogy and got children critically thinking about making good choices for the environment and community.

The school had integrated Māori concepts well and were aware of student needs. The judges also noted that children initiated a lot of the activities.

### **Manurewa Intermediate**

The judges said the school had a comprehensive plan and a wide range of resources. The school had changed their physical environment and made savings outcomes.

The judges said it was a very strong application and the school had lots of initiatives. They noted that progress had been shown over the years and the school had strengthened the provision of various initiatives.

### **Ngunguru School**

The judges said the school had a sustained level of excellence over a few years, with positive links to outside organisations. They acknowledged that the original programme had failed but the school had pivoted and moved a new programme.

The judges liked that the children were learning kaitiakitanga from primary and strong iwi community connections, which had benefitted the students and the community.

### **Oruaiti School**

The judges liked its wholistic underpinning and felt the school's five-year journey was still in progress, but was becoming more effective. The judges also noted that the school was honouring their past and building on it.

The judges said it was a stand-out application in this category and liked the way the enquiries continue and how engaging the enquiries are. They also noted the links to Elwyn Richardson and the place-based, local curriculum. They also liked the quote "students are experts and leaders of their own learning".

The judges liked the whole kaupapa and that the programme involved, more or less, the whole school, with sustainability embedded. They also felt there were great examples of experiential learning and developing skills across the curriculum – the school had also provided examples of critical thinking.

## Annex 4 – Due Diligence Checks on Finalists

Education service	Application summary	Regional Director feedback	EDK summary
Frimley Primary (Hastings)	Created authentic partnerships with whānau and iwi to transform school culture.	No issues.	Some incorrect data but broadly similar to Ministry data.  Other data unverifiable — comes from other sources or uses the school's own metric.
Te Kura Taumata o Panguru (Northland)	Connecting students with ancestors and the environment through broad climate change movements.	No issues.	No data content to check.
Avondale College (Auckland)	Significant increase of Pasifika students achieving their year-level appropriate qualifications.	No issues.	Avondale College had noted "Level 1 at 85 percent was nine percent below the national rate for Pasifika of 95 percent." It should be 83 percent, not 85 percent, if we want to be exact.  The national Pasifika rate in 2011 was 78 percent, not 95 percent.  Avondale also noted their "Level 1 literacy rate of 82 percent for Pasifika students was fourteen percent below the national figure for Pasifika of 96 percent."  However, the national rate was 73.4 percent for Pasifika
Wesley College (South of Auckland)	Successfully lifted University Entrance Pass rates through specially developed programme.	No issues.	Noted school leaver rates for achieving Level 3 were perhaps not "very low" — however, the writer may have been using a different denominator.  Qualified school leaver statistics do not seem to apply to the entire cohort

			<p>of leavers from Wesley College.</p> <p>Noted their roll-based measure versus the Ministry's standard appears to be different. Noted they don't agree with the Level 3 University Entrance achievement figures they noted.</p>
Redoubt North School ( <i>Auckland</i> )	Used LEGO to spark children's imagination and ignite their desire to discover and learn.	No issues.	<p>School roll data seems slightly inconsistent with Ministry data.</p> <p>A number of claims regarding ESOL students at the school, students who have attended more than one primary school, and students who have commenced school behind their national cohort in literacy and mathematics cannot be verified.</p>
Achieving @ Waitakere ( <i>Auckland</i> )	Created a preventative model that is responsive to the needs of the most-at-risk and vulnerable young people, to improve learning outcomes.	No issues.	Noted their answers to question 6 (page 17) cannot be verified, as they are discussing a distinct subset of schools.
Hastings Girls' High ( <i>Hastings</i> )	Worked to counteract outdated colonial ideas and systemic racism to understand what ideas best suit a predominantly Māori and Pasifika roll.	No issues.	Quite a few statistics slightly incorrect on this application. For example, an incorrect ethnicity mix on page 4, but a correct one on page 6.
Whakarongo School ( <i>Palmerston North</i> )	On a journey to continue developing its future-focused STEM learning — improving learning outcomes for both students and staff.	No issues.	No Ministry statistics. Rubrics used to assess student/teachers appear to be designed by the school.
Northland College Teen Parent Unit ( <i>Northland</i> )	Using the power of personalised learning and local curriculum to re-engage, inspire and motivate young māmā.	No issues.	Noted the limited achievement statistics in this application seem fine.
Sylvia Park School ( <i>Auckland</i> )	Relentless focus on teaching and learning has created a culture of aspiration — using	No issues.	Ethnic breakdown cannot be 100 percent confirmed but looks mostly correct

	the power of teacher practice to bring out the best learning for their students.		<p>compared to Ministry data.</p> <p>Improvements in writing noted on page 8 cannot be verified by the Ministry, as these measures have been defined by the school.</p>
Morrinsville College (Hamilton/Waikato)	Developed a cross-curricular programme, drawing on its Māori cultural knowledge base to promote the self-esteem and positive hauora needed to create resilient students.	<p>9(2)(ba)(i). 9(2)(a) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</p> <p>Also noted the Ministry received two complaints from parents relating to bullying. Noted Ministry staff believe the school's response to these was effective and appropriate.</p>	<p>Evidence, Data and Knowledge team noted some slightly misleading achievement statistics for Year 11 Māori boys compared to European/Pākehā boys.</p> <p>Some information cannot be verified.</p>
Henry Hill School (Napier)	They have implemented a responsive trauma-informed programme that is making a difference to the lives of their students, staff, and whānau.	No issues.	No issues other than some granular data relating to transience rates that the Ministry can't verify.
Nelson College for Girls (Nelson)	School has shifted from mainly focusing on academic achievement to now putting students and their wellbeing at the centre.	There has been an ongoing dispute for a number of years from a former student's mother which spawned a number of Stuff.co.nz articles, the most recent in 2019, regarding the number of students leaving the	<p>Refugee figures can't be confirmed.</p> <p>Roll percentages generally align with Ministry data.</p>





	environmental improvements at their school.		The school noted a 177 percent increase in roll growth since 2016 — however, Ministry data says 86.4 percent.
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