

# Top marks in ERO review

■ Andrew Bonallack

Wainuiomata Intermediate School principal Pearl Murti's message to teachers is: We've got two years to make a difference — let's get out there and do it.

The school has been strongly praised in an Education Review Office report just released, which cites high levels of student engagement, strong achievement and a focused leadership team.

The report says the values of respect and being responsible are "clearly evident" in a school where cultural diversity is celebrated.

Mrs Murti and her management team "provide strong, improvement focused leadership", espousing high expectations for both student achievement and teaching practice.

It notes the school values

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— PEARL MURTI

interactions with other schools, ensuring transitions for pupils entering the intermediate are managed well.

The school's environment is "safe, welcoming and inclusive".

Student interest and engagement is described as high in most cases, with celebration of success reinforcing the school's positive culture.

The report notes there is significant underachievement when students arrive at the intermediate, but most then make good progress. The school reports back to parents

via National Standards.

The report concludes that Wainuiomata Intermediate School is "well placed" to sustain its current performance.

"The focus on student progress is evident . . . a multi-layered approach and strong commitment to continuous improvement informs decisions about direction at all levels," it says.

Mrs Murti says they are a school which puts a huge emphasis on positive behaviour for learning.

"Our biggest plus is the focus on student achievement; we are constantly improving

the achievement levels of our students."

The school has just completed an Arts and Cultural Festival week, and she says a big focus is acknowledging diversity.

"We are all different, we learn at different rates.

"We have set some targets against National Standards, but we emphasise the value added [to students' achievements]."

Mrs Murti says the school provides parent education, giving literacy and maths programmes four times a year so that parents can help their children at home.

"We invite parents to come to our classrooms and observe, it really opens their eyes."

And professional development is strong at the school. "We are constantly developing new leaders, so when people leave, there's a few people who can put their hand up and say, I'm ready."