



**Te Tāhuhu o  
te Mātauranga**  
Ministry of Education

# Attendance webinar series

## ERO's Raising Attendance: Five Good Practices

26 November 2025



**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# Nau mai, haere mai!

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.  
Nga mihi nui ki a koutou katoa

We look forward to speaking with you shortly.

Please note we will be providing you with a  
copy of the slides and a recording of the  
session.

Please pop any pātai in the chat.

Ngā mihi nui 😊

# Agenda

- Welcome and opening karakia
- Presentation on Raising Attendance: Five Good Practices
- Pātai/Q+A session
- Next steps
- Closing remarks and karakia

# Ka Hikitia Karakia tīmanga (opening)

**Ka Hikitia! Ka Hikitia!**

**Hiki, Hik itia!**

**Whakarewa ki runga rawa**

**Herea kia kore e hoki whakamuri mai**

**Poua atu Te Pūmanawa Māori**

**He Mana Tikanga**

**Me Te Uri o Māia**

**Poipoia ngā mokopuna**

**Ngā Rangatira mo āpōpō**

**Ka tihei! Tihei mauriora!**

Encourage and support!

And raise it to its highest level!

Ensure that high achievement is maintained

Hold fast to our Māori potential

Our cultural advantage

And our inherent capability

Nurture our young generation

The leaders of the future

Behold, we move onwards

and upwards!



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## Back to class: How are attitudes to attendance changing?



## Changing attitudes to attendance: Five good practices

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE



## Raising attendance: Five good practices

ERO looked at practices that shift student attendance. This framework tool sets out five evidence-based practices that make a big difference – and the extra boost that comes from making attendance a schoolwide priority.

Key to student attendance is...

### 1 Student belonging

Promote student belonging by:

**Assigning roles and responsibilities**

→ Consider positions and duties that students need to be at school to do.

**Supporting students to feel connected to their teachers**

→ Show students that teachers are people they can talk to.

**Supporting students to feel connected to their peers**

→ Find ways to use groups, activities, and events to build social connections.

**Tackling bullying**

→ Use proven whole-school strategies to prevent bullying – not just respond to it.

### 2 Clear expectations

Set clear expectations by:

**Communicating clear and consistent expectations with students**

→ Explain to students why their attendance matters and how absences can impact their futures.

**Communicating clear and consistent expectations with parents and whānau**

→ Show parents and whānau how every day matters for their child's achievement.

**Keeping parents and whānau informed of their child's attendance**

→ Share ongoing attendance information so parents and whānau can support their child proactively – not only once it's a problem.

### 3 Practical supports

Provide effective practical supports by:

**Deciding on practical supports based on school-specific data and evidence**

→ Find out about specific barriers to attendance and focus on those.

**Monitoring the impacts of practical supports**

→ This helps school leaders understand whether their support is working.

### 5 Patterns of closures

Minimise the impacts of school closures on attendance by:

**Selecting days and times that minimise disruption to students' routines**

→ Tuesdays and Thursdays aren't best, as they lead to extended weekends. Half-day closures can also result in full-day absences.

**Communicating information about closures to parents and whānau as early as possible**

→ This helps ensure transport, childcare arrangements, etc., can be put in place.

### 4 Rewards

Use rewards effectively by:

**Setting realistic and increasing targets**

→ Reachable targets are more motivating than ones that feel too aspirational too soon.

**Rewarding students collectively**

→ Recognise classes or year groups to help build a collective sense of ownership.

Also! An end-to-end approach

We can sustain improvements to attendance by taking an end-to-end approach.

→ This is about prioritising attendance relentlessly across the school, every day. Great attendance is everybody's business!

More info:

Want more detail, including evidence-based strategies and stories? Check out our full good practice guide here at [evidence.ero.govt.nz](https://evidence.ero.govt.nz)



## What we'll cover

1. Each of the **five good practice areas** from ERO's recent research on attendance
2. A few **practical strategies** that schools shared with us during our fieldwork
3. **Where to download** ERO's resources
4. **Q&A**

# 1

## *Student belonging*

- 1) assign roles and responsibilities
- 2) support students to feel connected to their teachers
- 3) support students to feel connected to their peers
- 4) tackle bullying.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Students in New Zealand are almost twice as likely to think daily attendance is important if they have a role or responsibility at school. Students are also more likely to report that their attitudes to daily attendance have improved in the last year if they have a role or responsibility.

# 1

## ***Student belonging***

### **Strategies from the sector:**

- ✓ Assign a leader, or dedicate a staff meeting, to deliberately scan across individual students – do they have connections to teachers? Peers?
- ✓ Morning form or whānau class for chronically late students – first hour of school, provides breakfast, teacher who takes pastoral interest
- ✓ Encourage peer connections for isolated students through group learning tasks, extracurriculars, leadership responsibilities
- ✓ Roles that involve being at school and/or connecting with peers: attendance groups, kit reminder texts, cultural leader, house rep, library monitor, lego tutor, lunchtime games set-up, coffee club, physical activity leaders (PAWS)

## 2 *Clear expectations*

- 1) communicate clear and consistent expectations with students
- 2) communicate clear and consistent expectations with parents and whānau
- 3) keep parents informed of their child's attendance.

### DID YOU KNOW?

When schools set clear expectations about regular attendance, **parents** are twice as likely to view daily attendance as important for their child's future.

### DID YOU KNOW?

When schools set clear expectations about regular attendance, **students** are more than twice as likely to view daily attendance as important, and to see school as important for their future.

# 2

## *Clear expectations*

### **Strategies from the sector:**

- ✓ Share graphs or percentages of attendance stats
- ✓ School apps (e.g. Hero, School Loop) to communicate about attendance in real time
- ✓ Regularly report on attendance alongside achievement – messaging that both are important
- ✓ Include themes like punctuality and participation in school culture frameworks, e.g. PB4L
- ✓ House tokens related to attendance – communicated on Facebook to parents. 'I've got to be at school before 8:30 to get my token'



## ***Practical supports***

- 1) decide on practical supports based on school-specific data and evidence
- 2) monitor the impacts of practical supports.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Students are more than twice as likely to think daily attendance is important if the school is providing practical supports. Parents are nearly one and a half times more likely to report their attitudes to daily attendance have improved in the last year if the school is providing practical supports.



## ***Practical supports***

### **Strategies from the sector**

- ✓ Start with the barriers
- ✓ Assign a leader to examine barriers, and lead a staff discussion
- ✓ Meet with (or call) parents and whānau to ask about barriers and explore options (careful about *who* has these conversations – avoiding blame or shame)
- ✓ Uniform swaps and donations – a page on the school social platform, or organised by the board
- ✓ Walking buses – parent-run where possible
- ✓ Approaching local businesses or charities for donations e.g. bread to keep in the freezer, funding for transport
- ✓ Focus any monitoring of impact on the students and families – not just the whole school

# 4 Rewards

- 1) set realistic and increasing targets
- 2) reward collectively.

## Using consequences

Consequences need to be used carefully. We found they have a positive impact on *parents'* attitudes towards attendance, but a negative impact on *students'* attitudes.

We heard that consequences such as missing out on extra-curricular activities like the school ball or sport's events can lead students to skip more school. These consequences are perceived as unfair have a de-motivating effect. It's important to remember that involvement in these activities is sometimes a student's main motivation to attend school.

# 4 Rewards

## Strategies from the sector

- ✓ Start with a very small increase as a target, for a quick shared win
- ✓ Use a points or token system that can build up over time
- ✓ Reward year levels, house groups, or classes
- ✓ Reward punctuality as well as whole-day attendance
- ✓ Check whether the process and rewards are motivating for students – by asking them, as well as through the data
- ✓ Use communication platforms to get parents and whānau on board
- ✓ Use assemblies to weave in messages about the pay-offs of attendance on learning, wellbeing, etc, so the rewards aren't the *only* positive.

# 5

## *Patterns of closures*

- 1) selecting days and times that minimise disruption
- 2) communicating information about closures as early as possible.

“A lot of students stay home on half days... driving to school and back home, it’s not really worth it for them because it’s not a full day... it would only be a couple hours being there, and then it would take two hours longer getting there and back.”

STUDENT



# 5

## *Patterns of closures*

### Strategies from the sector

- ✓ Avoid Tuesdays and Thursdays where possible
- ✓ Avoid half-days, especially late starts
- ✓ When lots of notice isn't possible, acknowledge that to parents and whānau and (where appropriate) share the reason
- ✓ When lots of notice isn't possible, check in personally with families who struggle with childcare, transport, other issues
- ✓ Reinforce being 'back to the routine' after a closure – e.g.:
  - ✓ ask teachers to remember to follow up quickly with absent or late students; demonstrating that they notice when students aren't there
  - ✓ extra 'points' for the first morning back



# Where to find our resources

<b>ERO's evidence website</b>	<a href="https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/">https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/</a>
<b>Good Practice Guide – Attendance</b>	<a href="https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/media/cljoxf0x/changing-attitudes-to-attendance-five-good-practices-good-practice-guide.pdf">https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/media/cljoxf0x/changing-attitudes-to-attendance-five-good-practices-good-practice-guide.pdf</a>
<b>Poster – Attendance Good Practice</b>	<a href="https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/raising-attendance-five-good-practices-poster">https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/raising-attendance-five-good-practices-poster</a>
<b>Full report – Back to class: How are attitudes to attendance changing?</b>	<a href="https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/back-to-class-how-are-attitudes-to-attendance-changing-research-report">https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/back-to-class-how-are-attitudes-to-attendance-changing-research-report</a>
<b>ERO's Facebook Page</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/people/ERO-Evidence-and-Insights-Centre-Te-Ihuwaka/100090727646946/">https://www.facebook.com/people/ERO-Evidence-and-Insights-Centre-Te-Ihuwaka/100090727646946/</a>
<b>ERO's LinkedIn Page</b>	<a href="https://nz.linkedin.com/company/te-ihuwaka-education-evaluation-centre">https://nz.linkedin.com/company/te-ihuwaka-education-evaluation-centre</a>



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# Pātai | Questions and Answers

# Ka Hikitia Karakia Mutunga (closing)

**Kua hikitia te kaupapa**

**Kua takoto te wero**

**Me hoe tahi i runga i te whakaaro kotahi**

**Tiaki tō tāua oranga**

**Kia kaha ai mo te tuku taonga**

**Kia tutuki ngā hiahia mō Ka Hikitia**

**Tihei mauriora!**

**Ki te whai ao!**

**Ki te whai oranga e!**

**Mauriora!**

We have come to an awareness

The challenge lies before us

Let us work together as one

Stay well so that we have the ability

to manage success

Behold, here is the pathway

to enlightenment and well-being

What a positive feeling!



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He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga  
kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga.

We shape an education system that delivers  
equitable and excellent outcomes.

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For more information  
about the 5 Best  
Practices for Raising  
Attendance



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