Non-enrolled Students

Rates of non-enrolment continue to decrease, however Māori students are more likely than any other ethnic group to become non-enrolled.

Indicator Description
The number of non-enrolled students investigated and closed by the Ministry of Education.

Why This Is Important
The Ministry of Education is responsible for upholding the Education Act 1989 which states attendance at school is compulsory for New Zealand citizens and residents from age 6 until they turn 16.

When a student of compulsory school age has left a school and has not enrolled in another school within 20 consecutive school days, the school is required to notify the Ministry via the school student enrolment register (ENROL). The local Attendance Service Provider then works to locate these students, and, where necessary, assist their return to education. The Attendance Advisor works alongside the students, their families/whānau, schools and if needed, iwi, Pasifika groups, community, and other agencies to discuss and facilitate a return to education.

There is strong evidence to suggest that regular attendance at school is one of the most significant factors influencing student achievement. Chronic truancy is also a strong predictor of negative outcomes in later life including violence, delinquency, substance abuse, unemployment and early parenting.

How We Are Going
The non-enrolled incidents reported on in this indicator include only those incidents where the Ministry assisted in enrolling the student at school, alternative education or assisted with an early leaving exemption.

In 2012, there were 3,209 cases of non-enrolment investigated and closed by the Ministry. These cases
were caused by 3,051 students, with 148 students having two episodes and five students having three episodes. Of the 3,209 cases, 2,483 were resolved with students returning to school, 620 by enrolling students at an alternative education centre and 106 by granting students an early leaving exemption.

The age-standardised rate was the highest for Māori students (14.3 non-enrolments per 1,000 students), however Māori students also displayed the largest decrease in non-enrolment rates between 2011 (16.5 non-enrolments per 1,000 students) and 2012. The age-standardised rate for Pasifika students (8.8 per 1,000 students) was lower than for Māori students but higher than for European/Pākehā students (2.1 per 1,000 students). The age-standardised rate for Asian students was 1.1 non-enrolments per 1,000 students.

The data show that non-enrolment notifications are more common in secondary school-aged students. While the non-enrolment rate for 11 year-olds was 2.4 per 1,000 students in 2011, it increases sharply to a rate of 16.5 per 1,000 students for 14 year-olds. This age disparity necessitates the use of age-standardised rates.

For the first time since 2006, there was no difference in rates between male and female students. The age-standardised rate was 5.5 non-enrolments per 1,000 students for both genders. Historically, males have tended to have a slightly higher rate than females.

The length of time it took to re-engage students in education varied greatly. In 2012, 664 cases took less than 20 days, 1,025 cases took 20 to 39 days and 586 cases took 40 to 59 days. The remaining 934 took at least 60 days.

Schools in the lowest quintile (deciles 1 and 2) draw their learners from communities with the highest degree of socio-economic disadvantage. In 2012, students in quintile 1 schools were 16 times more likely to be reported non-enrolled than students from quintile 5 schools. In 2012, 66% of non-enrolment notifications were for students from schools of quintile 1 or 2.
Achievement
For the first time in 2012, attainment of NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy was analysed by the age of the student as at 1st May, rather than by year level. Achievement results for 2012 show that 15 and 16-year-old students with a non-enrolment notification between 2010 and 2012 were less likely to meet the NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy requirements.

Out of the 4,334 15-year-old students with a non-enrolment history whose achievement data could be obtained, 88% did not meet the NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy requirements compared to 26% of 15-year-old students who maintained school presence during that period. A similar gap in performance can be observed in the 16-year-old students.

Where to Find Out More
To obtain information about other forms of student disengagement consider indicators:
- Truancy from school
- Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions from school
- Early leaving exemptions.

The Ministry of Education has established an Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme to systematically identify, evaluate, analyse, synthesise and make accessible, relevant evidence linked to a range of learner outcomes. Evidence about what works for this indicator can be found in:
- Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis
- The Complexity of Community and Family Influences on Children’s Achievement in New Zealand: Best Evidence Synthesis.

References