Ensuring Māori youth are present, engaged and achieving in their first years at secondary school (years 9 and 10) is a vital factor to ensure they remain engaged and achieving through secondary school.

This is important if young Māori are to gain essential qualifications and move on to tertiary education or training that will enable them to contribute to New Zealand’s economy, society, and the communities of which they are a part.

**Highlights**

The achievement of Māori students in secondary school and progression to tertiary education are improving.

- In 2009, 45.8% of Māori students stayed at school until at least 17½ years, up from 40.3% in 2008. This compares with 72.2% for non-Māori students in 2009.
- In 2009, 53.4% of Māori students gained NCEA Level 3 by year 13, up from 49.9% in 2002.
- More Māori are now entering tertiary education at diploma and degree level.

**Alternative pathways to worthwhile qualifications have been established.**

- Trades Academies are being established to provide students with a pathway into a trade while still at school. This will provide alternative...
pathways that might better engage some young people in learning.

» The Youth Guarantee will provide 2000 fee-free places annually in tertiary education providers for 16- and 17-year-olds who have left school before achieving the essential learning required for further education and work.

**Work to improve the effectiveness of teaching for Māori students has progressed.**

» Professional development providers have been actively using Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success to inform their planning and training. A number of professional development programmes have directly incorporated evidence about what works from the successful professional development programmes Te Kauhua and Te Kotahitanga.

» The New Zealand Teachers Council has focused on ensuring teachers can use culturally-responsive practice through new requirements for entry to initial teacher training, followed by support at provisional registration and again at full registration.

» Kiwi Leadership for Principals was launched in August 2008 and contains a number of resources to support a focus on Māori student engagement and achievement. He Kākano is a new professional development programme for up to 100 area and secondary school leaders and focuses on improving their performance and raising achievement for and with Māori students.

**Support is increasing for Māori students and their families to make decisions about future education options.**

» The Ministry of Education, Career Services and Te Pūnī Kōkiri have developed, piloted and evaluated the Whānau Career Decision-making Pilot Programme. Pouwhakataki from South Auckland have been holding presentations, workshops and forums with students, parents, families and whānau about NCEA in most secondary schools in the Auckland region. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) has also held hui with schools and whānau about the opportunities available for Māori students from the National Qualifications Framework and NCEA.

**The Tertiary Education Strategy 2010–2015 was launched.**

» The strategy has ‘Māori enjoying education success as Māori’ as a key principle. It has a focus on increasing success for Māori students in tertiary education and promotes the role of tertiary sector research, particularly by wānanga, in supporting the development of the knowledge needed to manage cultural and economic assets and to maintain strong and prospering whānau, hapū and iwi.

**Challenges**

While there has been some progress, there are also some key challenges ahead:

**Secondary schools are not enabling enough Māori students to gain the foundations for worthwhile qualifications.**

» In 2008, 43% of all boys and 34% of all girls who left school in year 10 (aged 14) were Māori.

**Case study: With a little help from your MATES**

MATES, the Mentoring and Tutoring Education Scheme run by Great Potentials and the University of Auckland, targets promising school students who are at risk of falling short of their potential and provides them with a mentor currently studying at university. In 2006, over 90% of students in MATES had improved academic achievement and higher NCEA results than other students from the same schools. Around three-quarters of MATES students go on to university.2,3

» In 2008, 60% of Māori students achieved the literacy and numeracy requirements necessary to achieve NCEA Level 1 by the end of year 11 (compared with 73% of all students).

» In 2008, only 53.2% of year 11 Māori students achieved NCEA Level 1.

Māori students are still not taking subjects that open up opportunities for higher-level tertiary education.

» Of the students who studied for NCEA in year 13, Māori students were less likely than Pākehā and Asian students to achieve the requirements to enter university.

**Achieving successful completions in tertiary education is still a major challenge.**

» Of those Māori students who did go on to tertiary education from school in 2008, most enrolled in Level 1–3 certificates. They had the lowest rates of progression from Levels 1 to 3, and the lowest first-year retention and five-year completion rates.

**Looking Ahead**

Key priorities will be to ensure Māori students attain worthwhile qualifications, with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Actions will include:

» a further 17 schools joining Te Kotahitanga from 2010, involving around 7000 more students and 900 more teachers. The programme will include a stronger emphasis on leadership and evidence-based practice. A review, due in mid-2010, will inform Ministry decisions about the direction of Te Kotahitanga and possible improvements.

» developing a revised model for the professional development programme Te Kauhua based on the knowledge about partnerships with whānau and communities gained from the Te Kauhua schools.

» providing support for Māori-medium secondary wharekura teachers in 2010 through Ako Panuku, based on a ‘visiting teacher – host school’ model, and supporting schools to work in partnership with iwi.

» adding information to the Education Leaders website on leadership practices that support ‘Māori enjoying education success as Māori’.

2. Read more about MATES in the Young People Engaged in Learning section of the report at www.educationcounts.govt.nz

3. For more information about MATES, see http://www.greatpotentials.org.nz