Pacific parent representation on school boards

Proportional Pacific representative on school boards increased between 2019 and 2020. Decile 1 schools and secondary schools had the highest level of proportional Pacific representation on school boards.

Indicator Description

The percentage of schools with proportional Pacific parent representation on the school board of as at 1 December.

Why this is important

Active participation by Pacific parents in planning, development and delivery of education services will help to ensure that those services are appropriate and effective for Pacific students. Pacific representation on school boards is one key mechanism for participation.

Increasing the representation and collaboration of school boards was a key recommendation of the Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce. In 2019, the Government released its response document Supporting all Schools to Succeed: Reform of the Tomorrow’s Schools.

In this response, the Government set out commitments to strengthening schools/kura boards by providing support and encouraging them to be more representative of the communities they serve. The Ministry is now making progress in the area of board capability, including work to make boards more representative of their communities.

School boards of state schools must hold elections for parent representatives every three years. A board may also decide to adopt a mid-term election cycle where half of its parent representatives are elected at a mid-term election (18 months after the triennial election) and the remainder are elected at the triennial election.

Triennial elections have been held every three years since 1998. A by-election can occur at any stage in the election cycle if an elected parent representative leaves the board and creates vacancy. Although the major changes in board membership occur in triennial election years, there is still some fluctuation in intervening years due to by-elections and mid-term elections.
How are we going

In 2020, 80.5% of the schools (1,939 schools) had at least 1 Pacific student (Figure 1). Of the schools with Pacific students, 60% had at least one Pacific representative on the school board. 0.4% of the schools without Pacific students have a Pacific representative on the school board.

Figure 1. In 2020, around 80% of the schools had at least one Pacific student, and 60% of those schools had at least one Pacific representative in the school board.

Proportional representation

Representation on a school board is considered to be “proportional” when the proportion of board seats held by Māori parents is at least equivalent to the proportion of Pacific students in the school. This is restricted to those schools with enough Pacific students to expect at least one Pacific parent representative on the board.

The percentage of schools with proportional Pacific representation on school board increased from 33% in 2010 to 41% in 2020 with highest representation in 2017 (42%) and 2018 (43%). (Figure 2). In 2020, 41% of the schools had proportional Pacific representation on the school board. This is an increase of 1.8 percentage points between 2019 and 2020. The number of Pacific parent representatives in the remaining schools does not reflect proportional representation of Pacific students in these schools.

In 2020, there were 524 schools with sufficient number of Pacific students to expect at least one Pacific parent representative on the school board. This expectation is based both on the number of Pacific students in a school and the number of positions on the board.
Figure 2. The proportion of schools with proportional Pacific representation increased between 2019 and 2020.

Decile

In 2020, Decile 1 schools had the highest percentages of schools with proportional Pacific representation on the board (49%, Figure 3). Decile 6 schools had the lowest representation (31%).

Figure 3. In 2020, proportional Pacific representation was variable amongst deciles.
School

In 2020, secondary schools had the highest proportional Pacific representation on the board (48%) followed by special schools1 (44%, Figure 4). Representation was lower in composite (33%) and primary schools (40%). The percentage of schools with proportional Pacific representation was higher in single-sex Girls schools (53%), followed by single-sex Boys schools (50%). Co-educational schools had the lowest percentage of schools with proportional Pacific representation with 41% from a total of 491 schools.

Figure 4. Secondary schools had the highest Pacific representation in 2020 on the school board

Where to Find Out More

To obtain further information about school boards try:

- School boards statistics
- Māori parent representation on school boards

References

The Ministry of Education has established an Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Program to systematically identify, evaluate, analyses, synthesis and make accessible, relevant evidence linked to a range of learner outcomes. Evidence about what works for this indicator can be found in:

- Statistics New Zealand. 2018 Census, Population and migration (Age and sex by ethnic group (grouped total responses), for census usually resident population counts, 2006, 2013 and 2018 Census (RC, TA, SA2, DHB)).

1Special schools are those schools that support high needs students, either in day schools or residential schools across New Zealand.