

# **Why Boys' Schools are Best: Research from “The Association of Boys' Schools” in New Zealand.**

Presentation for the IBSC Annual Conference,  
2014.

Roger Moses and Susan Hassall, on behalf of ABSNZ.

# **Why Boys' Schools are Best: Research from “The Association of Boys' Schools” in New Zealand.**

Roger Moses and Susan Hassall, on behalf of ABSNZ.

# The Association of Boys' Schools New Zealand

“The real value is not so much in its formalised structures, but rather the wonderful sense of camaraderie and support that has developed, and which is enriched over the years.”

Roger Moses, Chairman's Report, 2013

# The Research Project

## Project Purpose

“... aims to provide Association members with robust data on how well they are doing, and here schools in the association could learn from each other, through the analysis of student achievement both in NZ Boys’ Schools, and for boys in co-educational schools in NZ.”

“ to interview school leaders in high performing boys’ Schools to gain insights into effective approaches and strategies.”

**Table 1 Boys' qualification achievement at the national level**

Qualification	Median of school leaver proportions across schools		
	Year	Boys schools ( <i>N</i> = 43)	Co-educational schools ( <i>N</i> = 225)
University entrance	2010	39	20
	2011	41	22
	2012	42	23
At least NCEA Level 2 (or equivalent)	2010	78	63
	2011	80	65
	2012	83	69
No qualification	2010	10	22
	2011	10	20
	2012	8	17

**Table 3 Boys' University Entrance achievement at the national level**

Decile Group	Median percentage of male school leavers per school	
	Boys schools (N = 43)	Co-educational schools (N = 225)
1-4	25.4	15.2
5, 6	35.8	23.7
7, 8	47.4	36.5
9, 10	71.0	41.4

6

**Table 4 Boys' achievement of at least NCEA Level 2 or equivalent**

Decile Group	Median percentage of school leavers per school	
	Boys schools ( <i>N</i> = 43)	Co-educational schools ( <i>N</i> = 225)
1–4	69.9	61.1
5, 6	76.7	69.4
7, 8	85.7	78.7
9, 10	93.0	80.7

□

**Table 5 Boys leaving with no qualification achievement at the national level**

Decile Group	Median percentage of school leavers per school	
	Boys schools (N = 43)	Co-educational schools (N = 225)
1-4	18.5	24.4
5, 6	10.3	17.5
7, 8	5.8	10.9
9, 10	2.7	9.4



Table 8 At least NCEA Level 2 or equivalent – 2012 school leavers

Decile (grouped)	Ethnicity	Boys' school leavers		Co-educational school male leavers	
		n	%	n	%
1-4	Māori	211	60.1	1,072	48.3
	Pasifika	226	72.0	772	55.8
	Asian	49	94.2	566	80.7
	NZ European	156	79.2	1,420	65.4
5, 6	Māori	208	63.4	514	50.7
	Pasifika	91	73.4	136	61.3
	Asian	106	86.9	168	73.4
	NZ European	973	78.7	2,245	70.1
7, 8	Māori	170	76.2	290	62.1
	Pasifika	136	86.1	141	66.5
	Asian	146	94.2	366	86.1
	NZ European	1,229	84.9	2,420	78.3
9, 10	Māori	154	77.7	156	68.1
	Pasifika	81	84.4	53	62.4
	Asian	411	91.5	482	86.4
	NZ European	1,684	92.7	1,693	82.0

□

Table 9 No qualification - 2012 school leavers

Decile (grouped)	Ethnicity	Boys' school leavers		Co-educational school male leavers	
		n	%	n	%
1-4	Māori	87	24.8	755	34.0
	Pasifika	50	15.9	410	29.6
	Asian	2	3.8	80	11.4
	NZ European	25	12.7	430	19.8
5, 6	Māori	55	16.8	325	32.1
	Pasifika	20	16.1	56	25.2
	Asian	13	10.7	43	18.8
	NZ European	113	9.1	495	15.5
7, 8	Māori	28	12.6	113	24.2
	Pasifika	13	8.2	42	19.8
	Asian	7	4.5	35	8.2
	NZ European	98	6.8	309	10.0
9, 10	Māori	17	8.6	36	15.7
	Pasifika	12	12.5	15	17.6
	Asian	25	5.6	39	7.0
	NZ European	53	2.9	178	8.6

# Why Boys in Boys' Schools 'Do Best'

“What was really interesting was how the high-performing schools stressed the importance of a student-centred approach, offering co-curricular activities alongside academic programmes for holistic development, and developing self-managing students who set high goals for themselves.

Other strategies mentioned by the high-performing schools included: Providing leadership opportunities for senior students; identifying student need early on, particularly with targeted literacy and numeracy strategies; close tracking of student achievement in relation to student goals; and threading core school values through the school day.”

Cathy Wylie, NZCER Chief Researcher.

“Create and perpetuate an intentional culture, shaped by adults, rooted in universal values, and relentlessly oriented toward achievement.”

No 1 of 25 Factors Great Schools Have in Common,  
Patrick F. Bassett, NAIS

When asked what schools should teach, Aristippus of  
Cyrene, in 435 BC, responded

*“Those things which they should know as men.”*

# The Qualitative Data

8 Strategies and Approaches Which Make the  
Difference in Boys' Schools.

1. Consistent focus on academic achievement as the key goal.

2. Strong, consistent emphasis on effective staff Professional Development, focussed on the learning needs of boys.



3. High engagement with, and involvement of, parents and the wider community in all aspects of school life.

4. Dedication to a strong co-curricular programme.

5. Provision of a robust pastoral support structure.

6. Clarity of, and belief in, the central vision.

7. Deliberate, focussed crafting of the culture of the school.

8. Recognition of the significance of the spiritual, values base of educating the whole man.