

'PISA Confirms New Zealand's quality for international education'

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"In the highly competitive international education market, the latest PISA findings are a major coup for New Zealand in terms of our positioning as a high quality destination for school age international students" says Stuart Boag, Communications Director for Education New Zealand. "Basically, the PISA findings are an independent and expert report card on our secondary education system, and as such are a trusted source of comparative information for intending students and their parents. We know that we have a lot to offer students – PISA confirms it".

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report was released earlier this week by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The survey, conducted every three years, compares the knowledge and skills of 15 year olds globally. The survey (over more than 500,000 pupils) gauges students' performance in science, representing 90% of the global economy.

New Zealand did extremely well in all three categories ranking third, fourth and eighth overall in science, reading and mathematics, respectively. When considering New Zealand against the 30 OECD countries, the rankings rise to second, third and fifth. In all three areas, New Zealand ranked at least two places higher than Australia. New Zealand also fares better than other traditional English speaking competitors UK and USA. Canada was also a significant performer in the PISA study.

"From an international marketing perspective, some of the more specific results are even more impressive for New Zealand" says Stuart Boag. "For example, New Zealand had a higher percentage of science students in the overall study at Level 6 than any other country in the world. When Level 5 achievers were added in, only Finland did better. International students at the school level are invariably high achievers. The fact that New Zealand is a top performer at the academically elite end of the scale is exactly what parents of those students need to know, and want to know."

"While the differences in performance between the leading countries are small, it is nice to know that at a time when our sporting prowess has been shown up by the likes of Australia, France, Switzerland and England this year, our academic laurels are shining brightly" says Stuart Boag. "What we are losing on the sports field we are winning in the classroom – and from an international education perspective that success is worth gold".

The full report is available at <http://www.pisa.oecd.org> or from Education New Zealand.

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