



Briefing Note: Update on using networks and collaboration to support system transformation, including work on Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Kelvin Davis; Hon Aupito William Sio; Hon Jan Tinetti Associate Ministers of Education		
Date:	15 December 2020	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1245237
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	N/A	Round robin:	No

Purpose of paper

This paper provides an update on work to investigate how networks and collaboration can enable a more networked, responsive and supported system, with a particular focus on Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako.

Summary

- As part of the Government's response to the Tomorrow's Schools Review, Cabinet has asked for advice on strengthening networks and collaboration, including potential changes to Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako.
- Networks drive the evolution of complex systems and are key to transformation in our education system. Understanding the connections and dynamics in our networks enables more effective practice and collaboration to occur.
- Kāhui Ako are our single biggest investment in supporting networks within the New Zealand education system. We have identified that this investment can play a greater role in delivering the intent of the Tomorrow's Schools reform and the 30 year vision. Achieving this will require Government, the Ministry of Education, the sector, and our Iwi partners to work deliberately and with sustained effort to deepen and share improvements in teaching and leadership practice to strengthen outcomes for *all* learners.
- The Ministry has conducted in-depth interviews with 119 people in 13 Kāhui Ako, showing:
 - where Kāhui Ako are working well, participants reported a variety of positive changes in teaching practice;
 - leadership style is critical for collaboration and the success of the Kāhui Ako;
 - taking care of 'how' the collaborative work happens is critical; and
 - Kāhui Ako interact with the wider systemic challenges in our education system, particularly competition between schools, separation across the system, and workforce issues.

5. A survey of the recipients of the Iwi partnering with Kāhui Ako grants has also been conducted. This found positive gains in relationships, Iwi involvement in Kāhui Ako governance, extended reach and a useful scale for Iwi to engage and reported changes in cultural awareness and mindsets of Kāhui Ako members.
6. From the Ministry's assessment of the evidence, the key areas to address to ensure collaboration through Kāhui Ako creates the best outcomes for learners are;
 - a. providing clarity on the longevity and purpose of Kāhui Ako;
 - b. sharpening our focus on building and sharing teaching and leadership capability;
 - c. enabling better relationships with iwi, early learning, and across the learner pathway; and
 - d. removing barriers for mahi tahi in Māori medium education.
7. The Ministry is working with our Accord partners and with SPANZ to identify improvements to Kāhui Ako that will increase their flexibility so they can best support learners and grow teaching and leadership practice. This will involve wider engagement in February and March 2021. We will report back to you with recommendations for improvement once this work is complete.

Proactive Release Recommendation

Agree that this Briefing will **not** be proactively released at this time because the process and scope for the upcoming work is still being discussed with sector representatives and decisions on the financial implications identified in this paper have not yet been made.

Agree / Disagree



Dr Andrea Schollmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy

15/12/2020

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

___/___/___

Introduction

1. The Government's response to the Tomorrow's Schools Review focuses on building a more networked, responsive and supported education system. As part of this commitment, Cabinet invited the Minister of Education to report to Cabinet in December 2020 on reform options to strengthen collaborative networks across the system, including any recommended changes to Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako [SWC-19-MIN-0153 refers].
2. This report provides you with advice about how networks in the education system can be used to greater focus energy and momentum directly on improvement in the education system. It then outlines how Kāhui Ako could be improved to broaden its ability for system transformation. Finally, the report provides you with what our next steps will be and when we intend to report back to you about this work.

Networks drive the evolution of all complex systems

3. Our education system is complex, made up of many actors, entities, and investments. Maximising the connections and information flows between these elements is where the potential for system transformation lies.

*"Given our interest in whole system change let us be clear where we think we should be heading. Our strong belief is that all schools, 100%, should be involved in focused, productive networks within which leaders, teachers and students challenge, support, innovate and learn from one another in ways that measurably improve outcomes."*¹

4. Research² shows that networks can provide six main functions;
 - a. **community building** – promoting and sustaining members' values;
 - b. **filtering** – organising and managing relevant information;
 - c. **amplifying** – helping make public and widespread new ideas and practice;
 - d. **facilitating and learning** – helping members learn and grow new knowledge;
 - e. **investing and providing** – offering members resources to achieve goals; and
 - f. **convening** – bringing together people or groups and supporting them.

5. However, the practice within networks matters;

*"the mere adoption and widespread dissemination of networks as a strategy for change is likely to produce superficial and even harmful practices if not accompanied with clarity and precision about the patterns of interaction that distinguish effective from inconsequential or even harmful networks."*³

6. Successful networks have a clear sense of direction, credibility, scale and impact. They can create new knowledge and encourage innovation while creating strong relationships. Networks can focus energy and momentum directly on improvement. Unlike other types of organisations, they provide a neutral environment where different groups can connect and collaborate on equal footing.
7. Other networks can replicate non-desirable behaviours and distribute misinformation that has the potential to impact people and organisations in an adverse manner or reinforce the status quo.

¹ Munby, S. & Fullan, M. (2016) *Inside-out and downside-up How leading from the middle has the power to transform education systems. A think/action piece*

² Mendizabal E. (2006) *Understanding networks: the functions of research policy networks*, Working Paper 271. London: Overseas Development Institute

³ Rincón-Gallardo, S. & Fullan, M. (2016) *Essential features of effective networks in education*.

8. In either case the need for effective feedback loops in the system that the networks reside in are essential. The ability to be able to see behaviours, knowledge and practice emerging from key networks is critical for the Ministry. This way it can provide feedback through these loops and amplify or dampen particular emergent behaviour.
9. Collaboration is a specific type of network behaviour. It differs from co-operation or co-ordination. It is time and energy intensive, and it is not something that should be done all the time. So, from a system perspective, collaboration needs to focus on what makes the most difference for learners and their whānau.
10. Education collaborations are most effective when focused on building teaching and leadership capability to improve learner wellbeing and achievement.⁴ In high performing education systems, collaboration grows collective responsibility, provides educators frequent opportunities to share what works and enables mahi at new scales to tackle previously unmoveable challenges.⁵
11. Collaboration also builds collective teacher efficacy⁶, which is three times more powerful a predictor of learner achievement than socio-economic status, concentration / persistence / engagement, and parental involvement; and more than double that of prior achievement.⁷
12. For education collaborations to be effective, specific conditions need to be in place:
 - a. a shared moral purpose;
 - b. giving priority to whakawhanaungatanga, whanaungatanga and reciprocity;
 - c. distributed and enabling leadership;
 - d. clear communication, systems and processes to enable the work;
 - e. ability to maintain the organisation's unique identity but see their priorities within the collaborative work;
 - f. agreed actions, reflective practice, rigorous professional relationships and the ability to understand progress / impact – including frequent internal and external feedback;
 - g. people with dedicated time and resourcing to drive the work; and
 - h. secure sustainable funding.⁸

Using Kāhui Ako as a driver for system transformation

13. Kāhui Ako are a form of deliberate system-wide collaboration that enable educators and communities to build shared responsibility for *all* the learners in their community. Kāhui Ako use the new teaching and leadership roles to enable the profession and communities to work collaboratively and share expertise to improve practice.
14. An example of how Kāhui Ako are strengthening the connections between teachers and learners and their whānau is seen in Northcote Kāhui Ako. Here, all teachers and leaders are conducting annual, year-long in-depth case studies with a learner and their whānau to discover '*what success means to them*'. This involves meeting whānau in their homes, building

⁴ McKinsey & Company (2010) *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better*

⁵ Armstrong, P. (2015) *Effective school partnerships and collaboration for school improvement: a review of the evidence*; Bentley, T. & Cazaly, C. (2015) *The shared work of learning: Lifting educational achievement through collaboration*; Chapman, C. & Mujs, D. (2014) Does school to school collaboration promote school improvement? A study of the impact of School Federations on student outcomes. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 25 (3), pp 351-393. McKinsey & Company (2010) *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better*

⁶ The beliefs teachers hold about their ability to work together to improve learner outcomes.

⁷ Donohoo, J. Hattie, J. & Eells, R. (2018) *The power of collective efficacy*. Educational Leadership

⁸ Developed from the Kāhui Ako implementation and the evidence on effective education collaborations; Armstrong, R. (2015) *Effective school partnerships and collaboration for school improvement: a review of the evidence*; ERO (2017) *Collective capacity for improvement framework*; Ministry of Education (2018) *Kāhui Ako Development Maps*; Rincón-Gallardo, S. & Fullan, M. (2016) *Essential features of effective networks in education*.

meaningful relationships and is translating into improved outcomes for learners and wider improvements in teaching practice.

15. Working at the cluster scale has unlocked broader opportunities for system transformation. An example of this is the roll out of Learning Support Co-ordinators (LSC), primarily through Kāhui Ako.⁹ Established relationships, and systems and processes for working collaboratively have meant that fully functioning Kāhui Ako have been able to deploy these resources quickly, effectively and often in innovative ways. In Palmerston North East, resourcing has been shared so each of the ten schools can employ a full-time LSC. One of their Kāhui Ako co-leaders reports they are working as a team and are already making a big difference for learners and teachers.
16. However, in less developed Kāhui Ako, it has been challenging to agree how to share and use the roles, often resulting in further entrenchment of competitive behaviour and the continued erosion of trust between schools and with the Ministry.¹⁰
17. Kāhui Ako have the potential to be an even greater driver of system transformation as;
 - a. they are beginning to change the competition created by our 30-year legacy of self-managing schools, and the divides between early learning, primary, secondary, tertiary, iwi and the wider community. They are doing this by embedding deliberate connections between educators in different parts of the system and within communities;
 - b. they enable the profession to lead improvements in teaching capability;
 - c. they provide a relational middle layer¹¹ that dissipates some of the transactional costs for individual schools, leaders, early learning providers, and iwi;
 - d. as we deliver the intent of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms, they provide new scale for innovation, connections and a platform for delivering more responsive support to the sector (through the Education Service Agency (ESA), the Leadership Advisors and centre, and the Curriculum Centre and Wellbeing Curriculum Advisors);
 - e. they offer the scale needed for meaningful iwi partnerships; and
 - f. they present a responsible and potentially high-impact way of driving education system transformation during the fiscal constraints of Covid-19.
18. From all the evidence that has been collected, including feedback on implementation, there are compelling reasons why we would want to build on the social and human capital created by Kāhui Ako over the last six years.¹² Making iterative improvements is also important in our context, as historically the New Zealand public sector has struggled to deepen or realise the potential from collaborative and partnership efforts, tending to *"...generally waste the social and collaborative capital projects have generated in favour of starting on a fresh quest for the perfect solution."*¹³

Insights from the in-depth interviews with Kāhui Ako and the iwi survey

19. To ensure that stakeholder experience informs our work the Ministry has conducted in-depth interviews with 119 people, in a range of roles, in 13 Kāhui Ako across the country (Kāhui Ako were chosen from a representative sample). Interviews were conducted between February and August this year.

⁹ LSCs were placed in functioning clusters, of these, Kāhui Ako make up over 90% of the clusters with Tranche One LSCs

¹⁰ These strengths and challenges are reflected more widely in the preliminary findings of the LSC evaluation.

¹¹ Kāhui Ako are part of the system architecture, but as they are not legal entities and do not have any contractual relationship with the Ministry, so the role they play is based on the relationships they form rather than being hardwired entities in the system.

¹² Advice is informed by the evidence developed by NZCER, ERO, the peak bodies organisations, from submission and responses to Kōrero Mātauranga and the Tomorrow's Schools Review, advice from the New Appointments National Panel (NANP), and from Ministry data, feedback, media scans and research. This also includes the international evidence on complex systems and effective education system reform.

¹³ Eppel, E; Karacaoglu, G and Provoost, D. (2018) *From Complexity to collaboration: Creating the New Zealand we want for ourselves and enabling future generations to do the same for themselves*, Wellington: School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington.

20. High-level findings (attached as Annex One) show that:
- where Kāhui Ako are working well, participants reported a variety of positive changes in teaching practice;
 - all participants commented that leadership style was critical for collaboration and the success of the Kāhui Ako;
 - taking care of 'how' the collaborative work happens is critical – from the ongoing care of relationships, building and sustaining a shared vision, to creating the systems and processes that enable the collaboration to flourish; and
 - Kāhui Ako interact with the wider systemic challenges in our education system, particularly competition between schools, the separation across the education sector (ECE, schooling, tertiary) and workforce issues (teaching career pathway, supply and remuneration). Many are finding ways to counter these challenges, while for others, these issues continue to get in the way of collaborative behaviour.
21. In addition to this work, a survey with the 51 iwi organisations that accessed funding through the iwi partnering with Kāhui Ako grants has been completed. Response rate for the survey was 63 percent. Findings (attached as Annex 2) show:
- broad agreement that Kāhui Ako were partnering with iwi better now than before the collaboration grant project began;
 - many iwi specifically mentioned the ability to have a 'seat at the table' as a benefit of the collaboration. Iwi also described feeling that their work and insight was respected by Kāhui Ako, and valued the opportunity to communicate their priorities and aspirations, which were in many cases built into the strategic direction of Kāhui Ako;
 - iwi felt they now had the ability to reach into the education system and have a wider impact than they would have had alone. Curriculum or PLD resources produced enabled them to tell the stories of the whenua across the education system, including with schools that may not have previously engaged with iwi. Over 80% of iwi respondents reported that the Kāhui Ako were now better than before in terms of strengthening culturally responsive practices, embedding identity, language and culture in local curriculum, and 60% of iwi reported Kāhui Ako were now better than before with supporting whānau engagement in education;
 - experiences were not universally positive. Common challenges related to the complexities of relationships between different Kāhui Ako and different iwi in the same region, the turnover of key individuals critical to the collaborative relationship, a lack of resources available to effectively enable collaboration, and tensions with the mindsets of some education providers, including a lack of cultural competence; and
 - despite these challenges, without prompting, almost all respondents advocated for the collaboration work (and associated resource) to continue, with a dominant theme being that initial lessons have been learned by both sides of the collaborative relationship, and momentum was building.
22. Iwi told us any significant change to the Kāhui Ako model would be most unwelcome because they feel this is one way they are able to influence the system for the betterment of Māori to achieve as Māori. Many Iwi felt that the Kāhui Ako model was moving in the right direction in relation to enabling schools to give effect to te Tiriti | the Treaty and the Education and Training Act 2020. More time was needed for full success of this model. In future, Iwi want to be involved from the design phase of structural change.

Forward agenda: maximising the potential of Kāhui Ako

23. Insights from the in-depth interviews, surveys and the wider evidence about Kāhui Ako highlight challenges and opportunities for improvement. From the Ministry's perspective, these are the areas that will need to be addressed in our work with the sector and iwi to make improvements to the model.

We are seeing inertia in the system due to confusion about the longevity of Kāhui Ako

24. The profession leading improvements in quality teaching and learning are core objectives of this Government. However, as Kāhui Ako are an initiative introduced by the previous National Government, there has been a level of uncertainty about the future of Kāhui Ako over the last three years. For some, this combined with the Independent Review of Tomorrow's Schools and the moratorium on the establishment of new Kāhui Ako¹⁴ has led to caution about the future and whether to invest time and energy in a way of working that may no longer be required.
25. As work on improving Kāhui Ako is advanced, a decision on whether to remove the moratorium on the establishment of new Kāhui Ako will need to be made in the future. The moratorium means that approximately 24% of state and state-integrated schools cannot access the benefits of collaboration through Kāhui Ako.¹⁵
26. 9(2)(j)

Clarifying the purpose of Kāhui Ako

27. Based on the international evidence about transforming education systems and our experience of Kāhui Ako we think their fundamental intention and purpose is sound. At their core Kāhui Ako:
 - a. are a voluntary grouping of education and community providers/groups;
 - b. have a shared focus on learner wellbeing, progress and achievement, and equitable outcomes for *all* learners;
 - c. work together to lift teaching and leadership practice and create processes for ongoing learning (that include ways of measuring impact);
 - d. have access to secure resourcing; primarily through teaching and leadership roles, inquiry time, a small amount of operations grant funding, and, as a collaborative, can access other resourcing available through the education system and other government and community providers; and
 - e. enable connections across the learner pathway.
28. It is necessary to reconfirm that the purpose of Kāhui Ako is to build teaching and leadership capability to deliver equitable outcomes for *all* learners. Clarifying this as the purpose of Kāhui Ako is essential, as it shapes the type of improvements that would be made.

The maturity and context of Kāhui Ako needs to be factored into any proposed improvements

29. Collaboration is challenging. It requires significant time and capability to realise outcomes. Six years' experience of implementing Kāhui Ako has taught us a lot about the capability and capacity of both the Ministry, the sector, and Iwi in this area.
30. Kāhui Ako are at different stages of development. From our appraisal, the 220 Kāhui Ako in our system today fall into one of three categories;
 - a. **fully functioning** – leading innovative practice that is beginning to improve teaching and leadership and build educationally powerful connections with learners, whānau and iwi;

¹⁴ In 2019, to meet the terms of the Primary and Secondary Collective contract negotiations Government placed a moratorium on the establishment of new Kāhui Ako. This capped the number of Kāhui Ako at 221 [CAB-19-MIN-0276 refers]

¹⁵ While no new Kāhui Ako can be formed, schools or kura can join or leave existing Kāhui Ako and the resourcing entitlements for Kāhui Ako remain.

- b. **developing and embedding** – relationships have been built but additional support is required to realise the potential of collaboration; and
 - c. **stuck in establishing and developing** – broader system challenges and behaviours mean that progress is difficult or seemingly impossible within the current settings.
31. The ability of Kāhui Ako to support system transformation will be reliant on as many Kāhui Ako as possible being in the fully functioning category. This will require a clear understanding of context of Kāhui Ako, and targeted support and connections to accelerate the pace of their development.

There is untapped potential in the new teaching career pathway

32. Kāhui Ako are primarily enabled by the creation of the new teaching roles and the allowances, release time and backfill that enable these.¹⁶ This was a deliberate decision to systemically address the isolation between teachers and to allow ‘great’ teachers to remain in classrooms to share their skills to advance the profession and improve learner outcomes.
33. Embedding the new teaching pathway has been challenging, but these roles are an important mechanism for building teaching capability across the system. Observations from the Ministry of Education and the New Appointments National Panel (NANP) show that changes in the sharing of teaching practice and how the capability of individual practitioners is grown across the system are promising. Especially as we are only in the early stages of a long-term systemic change process that looks to influence both mindsets and behaviour across the profession.¹⁷
34. Where it is working well, Kāhui Ako have told us that the Across School Teacher (AST) and Within School Teacher (WST) roles are beneficial and are critical for building teaching capability and collaboration. Where it isn’t working, it is difficult to fill roles, and once employed people experience role confusion, and were sometimes challenged by their peers to justify what they did for their remuneration and release time from the classroom.

35. 9(2)(j)

36. 9(2)(j)

37. 9(2)(j)

¹⁶ Approximately 63% of the Kāhui Ako budget is spent on backfill for teacher and leader release time.

¹⁷ Embedding collaborative cultures and making changes in teaching practice is a long-term investment, experiences in comparable education systems suggest that you would only begin to see changes after three to five years of consistent investment and practice Chapman, C. Mujs, D. & MacAllister, J. (2011) *A study of the impact of school federation on student outcomes*. National College for School Leadership, United Kingdom; Earl, L. & Lee, LE (1998) *Evaluation of the Manitoba School Improvement Program*; Earl, L et. al, (2002) *Manitoba School Improvement Program: Final Evaluation Report*.

¹⁸ 9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(j)

Kāhui Ako provide an opportunity to strengthen and share leadership capability

38. Highly skilled collaborative leadership is crucial to the functioning of Kāhui Ako as a whole. There are some elements of the leadership model within Kāhui Ako that could benefit from further refinement;
 - a. the national criteria for the Kāhui Ako leader role; and
 - b. making the process of establishing alternative leadership arrangements simpler.
39. Where it works well, Kāhui Ako leadership teams have created new, more robust relationships between education leaders, with a greater focus on pedagogy, curriculum and professional challenge. Early appointments to the new Leadership Advisor roles (envisioned as part of the Education Service Agency) are likely to work with schools that are struggling the most. Where these schools are members of a Kāhui Ako, the Leadership Advisors will have the opportunity to use the relationships and share the leadership and teaching practice in the Kāhui Ako to support improvement.¹⁹

Enable sustainable partnerships with iwi to change the way the system performs for Māori

40. From the outset of Kāhui Ako, iwi have told the Ministry that partnering at the cluster level is much more beneficial for them than working on a school by school basis. They also tell us that they want to sit equally at the governance table of Kāhui Ako and need resourcing to enable this.
41. As we embark on enabling stronger partnerships with Māori across all work programmes in the Ministry, strengthening Kāhui Ako provides an opportunity to build on the successes iwi have articulated through the survey. In the interim, there is a strong argument for extending the current time-limited grants for iwi to partner with Kāhui Ako (\$3.2 million over three years, concluding this year). While this funding enabled 51 iwi to receive grants, there are approximately 140 iwi nationally.
42. The Ministry can work with iwi representatives and Kāhui Ako on how to best enable iwi participation, and what resources might be needed to do this in the future. This could be enabled by repurposing existing Vote Education funding that is aligned to this type of initiative or this may require additional funding.

Kāhui Ako need to work better for Māori medium education provision

43. Uptake of Kāhui Ako by Māori medium education (MME) has been consistently lower than English medium. There are a range of complex reasons why overlaying the Kāhui Ako model on the MME system has been more challenging for some, these reasons include;
 - a. Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa (TRN)²⁰, Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa, and Te Kōhanga Reo already having an established history of mahi tahi (collaboration);
 - b. teacher supply issues are greater for MME;
 - c. the pathway requirement into wharekura is more challenging in MME;
 - d. the model can be seen as a Pakeha construct; and
 - e. geographic spread and isolation of MME providers heighten the challenges of mahi tahi.

¹⁹ Peer-led approaches have been successful internationally, ie. through the London Challenge 2003-2011.

²⁰ TRN have told the Ministry that they would like their clusters to reflect own rohe rather than geographic proximity or the Ministry's regions.

44. There appear to be two main options to address these challenges. Firstly, working with MME organisations to look at how the model can be adjusted to better meet their needs, or if not, working together to develop a new model that better supports mahi tahi in MME. There are limitations in pursuing the second option within the current fiscal envelope. This is because the majority of funding for Kāhui Ako is protected by the terms and conditions in collective agreements, which MME teachers are party to. This may mean that unions are not prepared to release roles that may be available to their members.
45. Further challenges for MME are seen in the wider issues in how rumaki education is funded and staffed (without guaranteed access to leadership roles and the release time this brings). In some cases, this has caused rumaki staff to feel like they cannot participate in Kāhui Ako as equal partners under Te Tiriti o Waitangi | the Treaty of Waitangi.

There are on-going challenges and opportunities in the learner pathway approach

46. A 0-18 learner pathway is a requirement for forming a Kāhui Ako. The pathway works well in towns and some urban areas where there are clear and established learner pathways. In other areas, like central Wellington, pathways are quite fragmented, making formation and meaningful collaboration more challenging. Some also believe that collaboration to lift teaching capability would be easier if primary could collaborate with primary, and secondary with secondary.
47. The learning pathway is also useful for children and young people with disabilities and learning support needs as they transition between early learning services and schools in their communities. This is supported by the Learning Support Delivery Model (LSDM) where early learning services, schools and kura come together to identify and respond to learning support needs in a planned, collaborative way. The majority of LSDM clusters are Kāhui Ako.
48. We think the gains made in addressing the separation across the learner pathway, between early learning, primary and secondary are beneficial for all learners and should be retained as a core component of the Kāhui Ako model.²¹
49. However, if we agree that building teaching and leadership capability to provide equitable outcomes for all learners is the key purpose of Kāhui Ako, then we need to address the barriers that seem to get in the way of secondary schools collaborating with one another. Particularly as most Kāhui Ako only have one secondary school in them.

Early learning are valuable partners in Kāhui Ako, but the lack of access to roles and resources needs to be addressed

50. Kāhui Ako consistently tell us that early learning is a critical partner, and key to building strong outcomes for learners and their whānau. Involvement supports the transition of children to primary school, the sharing of pedagogy, participation in PLD and leadership opportunities.
51. While early learning can be partners in Kāhui Ako, they are not able to access any of the ongoing roles or resources available to schools. Time-limited grants for early learning participation in Kāhui Ako, totalling \$3.12 million over two years, have now ceased. There has been no further consideration as to what would be needed to support continued and more equitable early learning involvement.

²¹ This is because the power of sharing practice and building relationships to support learner transitions brings a sharp focus on the learner themselves, what they bring, their strengths and challenges, and how this can be better supported by teachers working together. This extends to data collection and sharing, testing and assessment practice, changing curriculum and pedagogy, what PLD choices are made, and so forth. We have also seen how this influences education leaders, changing the nature of their conversations about teaching and learning, and providing new peer challenge and support for learner wellbeing, attendance and achievement.

52. To increase involvement and address the inequity in the way the model is resourced we can work with early learning representatives and Kāhui Ako on how to best enable their participation, and what resources might be needed to do this. This is likely to require additional funding.²²

The Ministry can work differently to build stronger feedback loops and learn from practice

53. Ascertaining the progress that Kāhui Ako have been making and the shifts in teaching practice is challenging in our system. Where frontline relationships are strong, Kāhui Ako tell us Ministry staff have been key enablers of their development. Frontline staff also play a key role in connecting and sharing emergent practice across the system.
54. As we on-ramp a new way of working for the Ministry (as part of the Tomorrow's Schools response and responsibilities under the Education and Training Act 2020) we will need to ensure that this frontline capability, sits close and is responsive to, what it takes to grow collaboration. This may also include better tailoring and targeting of baseline supports and PLD (ie. learning from previous funding for expert partners and change managers), particularly for the Kāhui Ako we are looking to strengthen.
55. ERO could also play a strong role in this frontline capability. Their evaluative expertise can be used to guide Kāhui Ako progress. For example, ERO have recently signalled their new approach to working more closely with schools to support improvement. Understanding how this approach coheres with the goals of Kāhui Ako could strengthen our collective work across the system.

Key Risks and Benefits

56. 9(2)(j)
- [Redacted text]

Managing cost pressures for 2020/21 and outyears

57. 9(2)(j)
- [Redacted text]

58. 9(2)
(j)
- [Redacted text]

²² It is difficult to know what kind of resource would best enable early learning involvement. Many Kāhui Ako however, are willing to share their role resourcing with their early learning partners. However, enabling this would require the agreement from all teacher and principal unions (meaning their members may have less access to roles).

Next Steps

59. The Ministry will continue to consider and use networks and collaboration as mechanisms to help realise the intent of the Tomorrow's Schools reform, the 30 year vision, Ka Hikitia, Tau Mai te Reo, and give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi | the Treaty of Waitangi.
60. The Ministry is working with our Accord partners (NZEI Te Riu Roa and PPTA Te Wehengarua) and Secondary Principals Association New Zealand to explore and agree where greater flexibility could be made to improve the Kāhui Ako model. The next stage of work will involve a wider engagement process with the sector, likely to occur in February and March 2021. They have agreed to use the insights from the Ministry's in-depth interviews with Kāhui Ako (a summary attached as Annex One) to inform this work. The Accord have also agreed to identify opportunities to pilot new, locally responsive ways of using the Kāhui Ako resourcing that may extend beyond the current terms and conditions of the collective agreements.
61. We will report back to you with recommendations from the work with the Accord once this engagement stage is complete. This report will also provide options to help strengthen partnership with iwi, the participation of early learning in Kāhui Ako, and make the Kāhui Ako model work better for Māori medium. This engagement process means pushing back the December 2020 Cabinet timeframes [SWC-19-MIN-0153 refers], as there are no decisions on Kāhui Ako for Cabinet to make this month.

Annexes

Annex One: A3 - Insights from the Kāhui Ako in-depth interviews

Annex Two: Iwi partnering with Kāhui Ako survey findings