



## Briefing Note: Meeting Network for Learning (N4L)

<b>To:</b>	Hon Minister Tinetti - Associate Minister of Education		
<b>cc</b>	Hon Minister Hipkins – Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	13 April 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1256377
<b>Drafter:</b>	Angela Reid	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Rob Campbell	<b>DDI:</b>	
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide background for your meeting with the Network for Learning (N4L) on Monday 19 April 2021. A list of attendees has been provided to your office by N4L.

### Summary

- N4L provides services to 99.9% of state and state integrated schools and has a proven track record of delivering technology projects to schools. Schools consistently give high satisfaction ratings for the service provided by N4L.
- N4L receives a significant majority of its funding through contracts for services with the Ministry.

9(2)(b)(ii)

- As a Crown owned company, N4L collects large amounts of data on the web browsing history of students across New Zealand. Mindful of the privacy of the individuals, this data can provide useful insights across the Education sector and can be used by schools to support the welfare of their students.

## Proactive Release

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**Agree** that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Agree / Disagree



Kim Shannon  
**Head of Education Infrastructure Service**

13/04/2021



Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education**

15/4/2021

## Background

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1. The Network for Learning (N4L) is a Crown-owned company established in 2012 to provide state and state integrated schools with affordable internet services through a safe and secure, Managed Network.
2. In November 2021, N4L was recognised for its entrepreneurship and technical excellence at the Reseller News' 2020 Innovation Awards. In November 2018, N4L won the Best Specialist Broadband Provider and was voted the Telecommunications Users Association of New Zealand (TUANZ) New Zealand's Broadband Provider of the Year. Commenting on the win, the judges said "the Network for Learning stood out as being an exceptional offering servicing a vital need, driving real value for educational institutions and their surrounding communities."
3. The Treasury regularly reviews the performance of Crown Companies and Entities. In the report for the year ending 30 June 2020, N4L was assessed in the top performance category for all of the four measured dimensions of strategic alignment, leadership, organisation and results.<sup>1</sup>

### Coverage

- Around 2,445 schools
- Approx. 99.9% of state schools

### Satisfaction

- 95% of N4L service desk users are satisfied or very satisfied

## N4L Services

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4. N4L offers a free, secure, and filtered internet connection to all state, state-integrated and partnership schools in New Zealand. The Ministry contracts N4L to provide this service at a cost of approx. \$29m per annum.
5. Funding of approximately \$49m for the Ministry to support ICT in schools was announced on 10 August 2020 as part of the Budget 20 COVID Relief Fund. This funding is being used to extend support into schools through the Te Mana Tūhono programme.
6. This funding will also allow for the replacement of network hardware in all schools who choose to participate and N4L has been contracted to provide the project management services for this work.
7. 9(2)(j)

## Digital Equity

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8. 9(2)(g)(i)
9. The Ministry recommends that the approach to digital equity is led from an all-of-government perspective. 9(2)(i) This group is well placed to provide feedback on 9(2)(i) and lead the approach from a policy perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Crown Companies and Entities: Performance Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2020

10.

9(2)(i)

9(2)(i)

purchase decisions and enabling pre-installation of curated services on devices.

11.

9(2)(i)

## Data and Insights

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12. In December 2020, N4L provided a Data & Insights Report.

13. N4L collects and stores significant amounts of data on student internet browsing history. Within the bounds of privacy regulation, this data could provide useful insights across the Education sector, both at a summary level and at a detailed level for use by schools.

14. The Ministry is working with N4L on how this information may be presented to schools to help support the welfare of students while not breaching the privacy of an individual.