



Briefing Note: Meeting with members of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	20 August 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1268981
Drafter:	Jackie Plummer	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key Contact:	Pauline Cleaver	DDI:	
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

- **Note** the background information to support your meeting with members of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation on Monday 23 August.

Noted

- **Note** that Pauline Cleaver, Associate Deputy Secretary Early Learning and Student Achievement, is available to attend this meeting if needed.

Noted

Summary

- Te Rito Toi is an online resource aimed at providing arts and research-based classroom support for teachers. It was developed as a way to support teachers as they returned to school following the March 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. The site provides resources for teachers to use so they are able to provide creative and safe ways to explore the anxieties and issues that children might return to school with.
- The *Seeding Possibilities with the Arts: Te Rito Toi In Schools During Covid-19* report examines the use of Te Rito Toi in New Zealand schools following the lockdown. The report was launched, along with the updated Te Rito Toi, at an event at Sylvia Park School on 2 July 2021.

- You are meeting with the members of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation on Monday 23 August at 8.30-9.00am in the Beehive. They wish to discuss the following recommendations from the report:
 - Ministry of Education endorsement of Te Rito Toi approach
 - Developing a strand of Te Rito Toi to support ECE
 - Providing professional development for teachers and principals in post-crisis curricular and pedagogical support.
- Professor Peter O'Connor, Director of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation, University of Auckland (UoA), has been vocal in his views that arts education needs more/new investment.
- You have had several interactions with Professor Peter O'Connor, including attending and speaking at the launch event for the report and updated Te Rito Toi [METIS 1262918 refers].

Proactive Release

- a **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you.

Agree / Disagree.

Release

Pauline Cleaver
**Associate Deputy Secretary
Early Learning and Student Achievement**



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

20/08/2021

20/08/2021

Background

1. Te Rito Toi is an online resource aimed at providing arts- and research-based classroom support for teachers in their return to school. It was created in response to the March 2020 COVID-19 lockdown by a group of academics, artists and educational practitioners.
2. The intent of the site was to share resources for teachers to use, in order that they could have creative and safe ways to explore the anxieties and issues that children might return to school with. This is both for the return to school after COVID-19 lockdowns, and other traumatic events. Central to this project was an understanding that arts-informed curricular approaches provide powerful methods for individual and community recovery during and after disaster and that participatory arts-based methods strengthen social support and help people to build critical hope¹.
3. Statistics provided by Professor O'Connor's team indicate that the resources on Te Rito Toi were welcomed by teachers and widely used, both in Aotearoa and internationally. We understand that 30,000 teachers attended webinars and there were over 300,000 visits to the site.
4. Te Rito Toi was promoted by the Ministry of Education on the Learning from Home (www.learningfromhome.govt.nz) website and has been featured in the Education Gazette [article included as Annex 3 of METIS 1262918 refers].

Te Rito Toi partners

5. Organisations that have supported and promoted Te Rito Toi include NZEI, NZPF, and PPTA. This reflects the strong connections Professor O'Connor has in the sector. Alongside this, the NZ National Commission for UNESCO, the University of Auckland, and charitable trusts including the Chartwell Trust and the John Kirwan Foundation have supported the project.

Seeding Possibilities with the Arts: Te Rito Toi In Schools During Covid-19

6. The *Seeding Possibilities with the Arts: Te Rito Toi In Schools During Covid-19* report examines the use of Te Rito Toi in New Zealand schools following the lockdown. The report was launched, along with the updated Te Rito Toi, at an event at Sylvia Park School on 2 July 2021, which you attended and spoke at. You were provided with a draft of the report as part of the briefing for that event [METIS 1262918 refers].
7. The report's key findings were:
 - a. "Te Rito Toi offered the educators involved in the study the possibility to put student wellbeing at the centre of school life after lockdown, filling a gap in the New Zealand educational response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - b. The social consensus around wellbeing through the arts gave teachers the necessary confidence to prioritise student wellbeing over other academic goals.
 - c. Te Rito Toi provided ways for children to build relationships, explore emotions, have fun, make sense of the world and renew hope in the future.
 - d. Teachers creatively adapted the resources to the interests of their students and, in many cases, students took the leading role in such adaptations.

¹ O'Connor, P. (2013). Pedagogy of love and care: shaken schools respond. *Disaster Prevention and Management*, 22(5), 425-433.

- e. Teachers and principals had a very positive view of the pedagogical value of Te Rito Toi, but also identified some important limitations. In particular, they suggested including more culturally and socially diverse resources.
 - f. The teachers who had, at least, some professional development in the arts and/or mental health education were able to make better use of Te Rito Toi following the Covid-19 lockdown.”
8. The report’s key recommendations for schools and policy makers were:
- a. “To replace the ‘going back to normal’ approach with a focus on wellbeing for schools in post crisis recovery.
 - b. To endorse initiatives like Te Rito Toi to guarantee that the arts and wellbeing become the focus of schools in future crises.
 - c. To provide culturally and socially diverse resources for classroom teachers to help students cope with major events.
 - d. To invest in professional development in arts education and wellbeing post crisis.
 - e. To include education on the possibility of unexpected events in pre-service teacher programmes and to provide support on appropriate pedagogical responses.
 - f. To actively involve teachers and principals in emergency planning and training.”
9. The report notes that the consensus through Te Rito Toi to prioritise student wellbeing through the arts over other academic goals more closely aligned with the Ministry of Education’s response to COVID-19 than the Ministry’s response to earlier disasters.

Your meeting on 23 August

10. You are meeting with the members of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation on Monday 23 August at 8.30-9.00am in the Beehive. Attendees are:
- a. Professor Peter O’Connor, Director of the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation, UoA
 - b. Dr Jacoba Matapo, Associate Dean Pasifika, Faculty of Education and Social Work, UoA
 - c. Professor Carol Mutch, Education Commissioner for UNESCO New Zealand and Associate Dean (Research) at the Faculty of Education and Social Work, UoA
 - d. Perry Rush, President, New Zealand Principals’ Federation
 - e. Liam Rutherford or a representative from NZEI.
11. Pauline Cleaver, Associate Deputy Secretary Early Learning and Student Achievement, is available to attend this meeting.
12. They wish to discuss the following next steps in implementing the recommendations outlined in the [latest Te Rito Toi report](#):
- a. Ministry of Education endorsement of Te Rito Toi approach
 - b. Developing a strand of Te Rito Toi to support ECE
 - c. Providing professional development for teachers and principals in post-crisis curricular and pedagogical support.

Endorsement of Te Rito Toi approach

13. The Ministry has not to date endorsed the Te Rito Toi approach, and given work on refreshing the national curriculum and developing the Online Curriculum Hub we are focused elsewhere. We have promoted and advertised Te Rito Toi on the [Learning from Home website](#).

Early Learning

14. We consider the recommendation to “develop a strand of Te Rito Toi to support ECE” aligns to the curriculum framework which comprises two pathways: *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa Early childhood curriculum* and *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo (Te Whāriki)*. This curriculum framework sets the direction for children’s learning from birth to school age, with a strong bi-cultural foundation and focus on promoting the wellbeing of all learners.
15. *Te Whāriki* is a holistic, play-based curriculum framework that includes five strands to support children to develop the capabilities they need as confident and competent learners healthy in mind, body and spirit:
- d. Well-being (Mana atua)
 - e. Belonging (Mana whenua)
 - f. Contribution (Mana tangata)
 - g. Communication (Mana reo)
 - h. Exploration (Mana aotūroa).
16. Using this framework, early learning services are expected to collaborate with their children, parents and communities to create a local curriculum appropriate to their setting.
17. The pathway, *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa Early childhood curriculum* includes 20 learning outcomes that are “broad statements” of learning with the intent of focusing on “what matters here”. These 20 learning outcomes incorporate aspects of the learning dispositions (“ready, willing, and able”) and working theories that children need to be competent and confident lifelong learners. For example, outcomes include children becoming increasingly capable of:
- a. “managing themselves and expressing their feelings and needs.” (Strand 1: Wellbeing | Mana atua).
 - b. “expressing their feelings and ideas using a range of materials and modes | he korero auaha.” (Strand 14: Communication | Mana reo).
18. Meeting delegates could be advised that when developing the “Te Rito Toi ECE strand”, that it aligns to *Te Whāriki* and is developed in collaboration with early learning kaiako to ensure it is of most benefit and use in supporting children’s wellbeing through the arts.

Supporting wellbeing through the arts

19. A child’s wellbeing is at the heart of all teaching and learning. Teachers who are effective in promoting learning are thoughtful and intentional in the way they design the learning environment. Visual arts, storytelling, music, dance and movement opportunities can contribute to children’s wellbeing, learning and development.

Existing early learning resources

20. Resources to support children's wellbeing across a range of areas are available on our website Te Whāriki Online. For instance:
- The arts page acknowledges the arts as a powerful form of communication and cultural expression and provides advice on supporting children's learning through the arts with links to useful resources.
 - Te Kotare Songbook, is a collection of waiata (songs) for children, teachers and families in early learning and primary school settings.
 - He Māpuna te Tamaiti* is a resource developed by the Ministry that promotes proactive, intentional approaches to supporting the development of children's social and emotional competence. The book comes with a set of cards for use in daily practice and during professional learning conversations.

Resources in the pipeline

21. *He taonga te Tamaiti, The Early Learning Action Plan 2019-2029* sets out a broad vision which has the wellbeing of learners at the centre to provide all New Zealanders with the opportunity to achieve their potential, engage in society and lead fulfilling lives.
22. The 25 actions take a staged approach to achieve systemic change in line with the National Education Learning Priorities. Of relevance to this meeting's focus on children's wellbeing is action 4.2 "to co-construct a range of valid, reliable, culturally and linguistically appropriate tools to support formative assessment and teaching practice".
23. In June 2020 work began on developing draft practice and progress tools (Kōwhiri Whakapae) in the area of social and emotional learning (SEL), the first in a suite of tools. We are now preparing to trial these tools in a PLD supported trial (October 2021 to June 2022) with up to 140 early learning services. Kōwhiri Whakapae will help kaiako identify ways to deepen or strengthen children's learning through effective teaching practices. When used effectively, we expect that children will be better supported along positive social and emotional learning trajectories including at challenging times in their lives.

Professional development

24. The current Professional Learning and Development (PLD) model, which puts a significant degree of choice in the hands of schools, enables schools to receive centrally funded PLD in areas that would support arts education and its use in recovering from traumatic incidents. This could be a focus for a school under the Local Curriculum Design priority.

Key Risks and Benefits

25. Professor O'Connor has strongly promoted the message that arts education requires more support. For example:
- In June 2019, Peter wrote an opinion piece titled "*Why are we not resourcing all teachers to be creatives?*"² in which he was critical of the Creatives in Schools programme. His concerns included that this initiative did not focus on developing teachers' abilities in the arts and in implementing the arts learning area of *The*

²<https://educationcentral.co.nz/opinion-peter-oconnor-why-are-we-not-resourcing-all-teachers-to-be-creatives/>

New Zealand Curriculum. Here is the link to the article: [Opinion: Peter O'Connor - Why are we not resourcing all teachers to be creatives? | Education Central](#) .

- b. Professor O'Connor has claimed that arts education has been neglected in New Zealand schools and that this was deliberate, based on another of his research reports, *The Creative Schools Index*. This report was based on surveys of learners conducted in New Zealand and Australian schools, in an international collaboration led by the Centre for Arts and Social Transformation. The survey data does not support the claim that arts education has been neglected, showing that for young learners most dimensions of creativity are present to a relatively high extent in their school-based learning, however the degree of creativity in learning that students experience declines as they get older.
26. It is likely that in your meeting Professor O'Connor will promote the issues he has raised previously about creativity in New Zealand schools, and to encourage greater investment in, and focus on, arts education.
27. If you wished to respond, you could point out:
- a. The **New Zealand Curriculum** encourages and promotes schools to develop a local curriculum that is rich in arts and creativity education.
 - b. We have invested significantly in specific creativity and arts education initiatives over the last four years.
 - c. **Creatives in Schools:** Budget 2019 provided \$7.16 million to enable the *Creatives in Schools* programme to be delivered to schools and kura, where professional artists partner with schools to share specialist artistic knowledge and creative practice. Budget 2020 provided additional funding of \$4 million over three years to expand this programme.
 - The Ministry of Education is leading this programme, partnering with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Creative New Zealand. The programme involves partnering of schools and kura with professional artists to share specialist artistic knowledge and creative practice.
 - According to the *Creatives in Schools Evaluation Report, Round 1* in November 2020 (not yet published), projects showed the following outcomes:
 - Strengthens student mental well-being through building key learning competencies and helping students build confidence and connect better with others
 - Increases creative experiences in schools
 - Helps build relationships between creative practitioners and schools
 - Encourages teachers to design and plan lessons that include creative approaches
 - Supports creative practitioners to develop career portfolios
 - Gives parents and whānau another way to connect with schools.
 - d. **Networks of Expertise (around \$800,000 per year):** Four associations with arts curriculum foci have been funded for 3-5 years, starting in 2021, to support teacher led peer-to-peer professional learning in the areas of visual arts, dance, drama

and music. Alongside this, we are funding a network focused on use of the dramatic inquiry pedagogical approach across curriculum areas.

- e. **Learning Education Outside the Classroom (LEOTC):** a limited and contestable funding pool supporting community-based organisations to provide students with learning experiences that complement and enhance student learning, in alignment with the national curriculum. In 2021 LEOTC is being redesigned and will align with the refresh of the national curriculum and reflect a more integrated focus on learning area connections (including for some providers, the arts). It is intended to develop more meaningful relationships with key mana whenua knowledge holders.
- f. **Out-Of-Hours (OOH) (\$2.1M p.a.):** The OOH music scheme provides professional instrumental tuition for Years 1 to 8 students that is additional to any that the school staff might provide.
- g. **Secondary Vacation Music Grant (\$18,000 per year):** The purpose of this fund is to support recognised national music education events and courses to provide over 300 secondary school students with opportunities to participate at a national level.
- h. **Arts Online website (\$178,000 per year):** The Ministry's Arts Online website provides a single point of access for the four arts disciplines where expertise and assistance can be shared among teachers.
- i. Furthermore, the Government provided funding following the COVID-19 situation to support New Zealand's creative sector, and this information is available at beehive.govt.nz/release/support-arts-and-music-sector-recovery. The Government established the Urgent Response Fund to provide immediate support to centre-based early learning services, schools and kura. The Fund aims to improve student attendance and re-engagement with learning, and to help support students with social, emotional and mental wellbeing needs resulting from the COVID-19 lockdowns. You can read more about this at education.govt.nz/covid-19/urgent-response-fund/.

Meeting attendees

- 28. Professor O'Connor is the Director of the Centre of Arts and Social Transformation, in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. He is a high-profile arts education practitioner and advocate. His work with learners in Christchurch post-quake was picked up by UNESCO and has been used as a model world-wide for post-disaster education recovery. He comments regularly in the media on education issues, including arts education, charter schools, and national standards.
- 29. Dr Jacoba Matapo is the Associate Dean (Pasifika) in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. Dr Matapo's love for learning and community engagement has supported her work in research through arts-based practices in early childhood education and Pasifika leadership and pedagogy.
- 30. Professor Carol Mutch is the Education Commissioner for UNESCO New Zealand and Associate Dean (Research) in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. Dr Mutch has extensive experience as a primary teacher, teacher educator and policy advisor. Following the Canterbury earthquakes, she has focused on the role of schools in disaster response and recovery. Her disaster-related research has taken her to Australia, Japan, Samoa, Vanuatu, Nepal and China.

31. Perry Rush is the President of the NZ Principals' Federation.
32. Liam Rutherford is the President of NZEI Te Riu Roa. If Liam does not attend, he will be sending a delegate.

Proactively Released