



Briefing Note: Te Kura Centenary

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	25 February 2022	Priority:	Medium
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Purpose of Paper

This paper provides you with advice and speech notes for the Te Kura Centenary and launch of the Te Kura Centenary website on Thursday 3 March at 10am.

Summary

- You have agreed to attend the Launch of Te Kura Centenary and to launch the Te Kura Centenary website on Thursday 3 March at 10am.
- Due to COVID-19 the event will be held as a virtual event. You will join Te Kura Chief Executive Mike Hollings and Te Kura Board Chair Barbara Ala'alatoa for the event with a virtual audience.
- You have been asked to give a five minute speech and then following a video waiata you will launch Te Kura's Centenary website. Speech notes are included as Annex 1.

Proactive Release recommendation

Agree that this briefing is released in full once the event has taken place.

☒ **Agree** / ☐ **Disagree**



Ben O'Meara
Group Manager
Te Puna Kaupapahere - Policy

25/02/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

26/02/2022

The Launch

1. The Launch of Te Kura Centenary and the Te Kura Centenary website will take place on Thursday 3 March at 10am.
2. The launch will be a combination of live speakers and pre-recorded videos.
3. The event will be attended virtually by Te Kura staff and students from around the country.

Runsheets

4. The event will start at 10 am and run for approximately 30 minutes.
5. There will be three people online for the launch who will speak - Mike Hollings, Barbara Ala'alatoa and yourself.
6. You will speak towards the end of the event. Mike Hollings will introduce you.
7. You have been asked to speak for five minutes and you will not be expected to answer any questions.
8. Following your speech there will be a video waiata. At the conclusion of the waiata you will launch the Centenary website.

Other Relevant Information

Te Kura

9. Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (Te Kura) is New Zealand's state funded distance education school. They support learners through a range of programmes from early childhood through to NCEA Level 3.
10. Te Kura provides a range of learning options, from full time programmes for learners who cannot access face to face learning options, through to dual tuition for learners enrolled with other education providers.
11. A large proportion of students enrolled with Te Kura have complex social circumstances, disengagement issues or have not been able to succeed at their local school. Many students have a history of low engagement with education prior to enrolment. Te Kura supports over 20,000 enrolments a year.

Te Kura's role in the COVID response

12. Te Kura has provided support to at-risk learners as part of the education response to COVID-19 disruptions to schooling through programmes such as TK400, which was evaluated by ERO and demonstrated good results in relation to re-engaging at-risk learners.
13. Te Kura also made some of its resources available to the Ministry in 2020, to support the development and distribution of learning packs hard packs for the COVID-19 response.

Te Kura's Centenary Book

14. Te Kura are releasing a book to celebrate their centenary. The Prime Minister has written the forward for this book.

ERO review

15. ERO's 2021 report on Te Kura found that at the centre of Te Kura's provision for its learners is personalised learning and a curriculum that is tailored to their pace, interests and readiness to learn. It has sound pedagogy and digital teaching capability. Te Kura has continued to diversify and improve its curriculum, its digital platforms and learner support capacity and capability. Its delivery systems are agile and respond quickly to rapid shifts in enrolments. It is an improvement-focused organisation and is self-aware.
16. Te Kura is playing a significant role in the education system enrolling learners who have disengaged from face-to-face schools.
17. The Ministry agrees with ERO's findings that there are:
 - a. opportunities for Te Kura to continue supporting the resilience and capacity of the education system and its learners in times of crisis; and
 - b. opportunities to share Te Kura's experience in digitised curriculum and pedagogy more widely within the system.
18. ERO has recommended the Ministry:
 - a. review Te Kura's funding model in the context of the redevelopment of equity funding for the school system;
 - b. formalise and strengthen the relationships with Te Kura within the Ministry's response and delivery systems;
 - c. consider how Te Kura can play a greater role in the education system; and
 - d. provide greater clarity on Te Kura's role in the wider education system in the long term.
19. The Ministry accepts ERO's recommendations and work already underway will address some of the issues raised. For example, we have started talking with our regional staff about how to achieve greater consistency of referral practices across the country. Other work already underway includes:
 - a. Reviewing support for children and young people with the highest level of learning support needs. The review is looking at how children and young people can access supports, regardless of where they are learning (including students enrolled with Te Kura).
 - b. Redesigning alternative education to improve education for learners at risk of disengagement. This includes considering how learners can be best supported while they attend an alternative education setting (including Te Kura).
 - c. Working with Te Kura (and the Virtual Learning Networks) on a review of blended and distance learning, through which we will address the recommendation regarding the longer-term role of Te Kura as part of the wider education system.

Annex 1: Speech notes – Te Kura Centenary – Thurs 3 March 10am

Thank you Mike, and greetings Te Kura Board members, teachers, students and distinguished guests on this grand occasion.

I am so delighted to be here to help launch the Te Kura Centenary website and to join your celebrations at turning 100 years young.

First, I bring congratulations to you all, and all your learners, from Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, as well as from Education Minister Chris Hipkins and Associate Education Ministers, Kelvin Davis, and William Sio.

I know that The Prime Minister has written the forward for your centenary publication. That reflects the high esteem in which we all hold the work that you have done, and are doing, for so many of our learners. We look forward to working with you all as you embark on the next 100 years of your exciting education journey.

Your beginnings were humble.

You started, as the Correspondence School, with 100 isolated primary school students and your first teacher, the redoubtable Miss Janet MacKenzie. A second teacher joined the school in 1923, when the roll hit more than 340 students.

Now I am pleased to say that, clearly, teacher pupil ratios have improved somewhat since then – at Te Kura and elsewhere! That aside however, as the Correspondence School, and as Te Kura, you have a history of which you can be proud.

You have always pioneered distance learning and education innovation. As you say - from paper and post, right the way through to the digital age.

In 1931, for example, you made your first radio broadcast to students, a service that continued until 1990. And, with some relevance to current times, I was impressed to learn that, in 1948, during the polio epidemic, and when all New Zealand Schools were closed, the Correspondence School prepared lessons for every home in the country.

You launched your first course in te reo Māori as far back as 1949, and your work for rural children with special needs was praised as long ago as 1960. And, in 2001, you established your first e-learning pilot, involving 300 students.

In 2009, you became Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (Te Kura for short). Now, you are New Zealand's largest provider of public education, providing services, in 2021, to over 23,000 learners from early childhood through to NCEA Level 3, and you employ over 600 people across the motu.

In 2014, you began providing face to face support for at-risk full-time students. And, in 2021, the Education Review Office noted the significant role you play in working with some of our most vulnerable and alienated students. It noted that you continue to diversify and improve curriculum and to improve your digital platforms and learner support capacity and capability

That is high praise. And rightly so. Because it is well deserved.

And, as you are aware, ERO also made recommendations to the Ministry of Education including to formalise and strengthen the relationships between you and the Ministry's response and delivery systems, and how you can play a greater role in the education system. The Ministry accepts ERO's recommendations and thinks that making progress in these areas will improve the quality of your full-time distance provision.

The government is looking at how we can improve education for learners who become disconnected from the education system, and how we can better support ākonga with high learning support needs.

I can assure you Te Kura will continue to be central to our plans to deliver these services to learners in the future.

In conclusion, I know you have a range of exciting activities planned for your centenary involving past and present teachers and students. I wish you all the best for those activities and for your celebrations.

So, congratulations and happy anniversary Te Kura on turning 100 years young!