



Briefing Note: Global Cities Education Network – New Zealand Study Tour Proposal


To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	4 March 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of a proposed study tour to New Zealand from the Global Cities Education Network (GCEN).

- Note** GCEN have written to the Ministry proposing a two-week study tour including their annual symposium be held in New Zealand in April 2022.
- Note** the study tour would be focused on improving equity/dismantling racism and social and emotional learning.
- Note** we have asked GCEN to consider moving the study tour to 2024 and holding a virtual conference.
- Agree** that this Briefing is proactively released as part of the next publication

Agree / Disagree



Iona Holsted
Secretary for Education

04/03/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

22/3/21

Background

1. The Asia Society Centre for Global Education is an international not-for-profit organisation with a mission to help school systems prepare youth for the 21st century.
2. A focus of their education work is the *Global Cities Education Network* (GCEN). GCEN is an international learning community that seeks to share promising practices to systemic education problems.
3. There are 11 cities in their network – Burien, WA; Denver, CO; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Lexington, KY; Surrey, BC; Toronto; Melbourne; Hangzhou; Hong Kong; Shanghai; and Singapore.

Study Tour Proposal

4. GCEN wrote to the Ministry after initial discussions the Teaching Council. GCEN members are proposing a study tour across a two-week period, including their annual symposium. Their proposal suggests New Zealand host the study tour and the symposium in April 2022. They estimate up to 70-80 people would attend over the two weeks.
5. GCEN have two working groups that are interested in visiting New Zealand:

- a. *Working Group on Improving Equity and Dismantling Racialised Oppression in Education Systems through International Knowledge Sharing*

This working group is dedicated to implementing targeted anti-racist policies in their districts. The group is proposing a 3-day tour to do in-depth observations and have discussions with New Zealand education experts. In particular, they are interested to learning more about restorative justice practices, Unteach Racism and Te Hurihanganui.

- b. *Working Group on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Learning Differences*

This working group's goal is to catalyse system changes in SEL policies and practices within districts where communities are diverse and experience poverty. They share and apply effective practices across their group's member cities. They are proposing a 2-day tour to learn more about systemic integration of social emotional learning and the impact it is having on students. In particular, this working group is interested in how Te Whariki is working in practice.

6. GCEN also proposes to hold their annual 2-day symposium in New Zealand, at the end of their study tour. The symposium participants identify common high-priority problems that they collaborate on to develop solutions that can be adapted to their own cultural and political contexts.
7. There would be opportunities for New Zealand officials and education experts to collaborate and participate in the study tour sessions, as well as learn from international evaluative practices.
8. The Chief Executives of the Ministry and the Teaching Council held a Zoom call with Antony Mackay, an advisor to GCEN, to discuss the proposal.

9. While we believe there is merit in maintaining international connections, we do not believe the timing or an in-person visit is the most effective approach for information sharing. We have suggested that GCEN consider the following:
- Moving the timing from 2022 to 2024 because it is likely that travel restrictions may still apply, and the timing would not suit New Zealand education sector who have been under ongoing pressure from our Covid response. In addition in 2022 a range of Education Work Programme changes will be focused on implementation with the sector.
 - Greater use of technologies such as videos that showcase a range of New Zealand's initiatives and learnings, and hosting online sessions to discuss these learnings.
10. If GCEN agreed to move the date and use a virtual approach, we would highlight cross-agency initiatives. By 2024 much of the Education Work Programme change would be implemented, enabling New Zealand to effectively highlight the systemic shifts we are seeing for learners from these reforms. In addition, Te Hurihanganui would have completed its community testing and could be used as an example of systemic change to address equity.

Next Steps

11. The Teaching Council will attend an upcoming virtual session in April focused on education leadership.
12. It was agreed the GCEN advisor, Antony Mackay, would consult the organising committee with our suggestions and come back to us on their views.

Proactive Release

13. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as part of the next publication.