



Briefing Note: FIANZ Five Year Education Sector Work Programme

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
cc:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	2 November 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1274785
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Purpose of Report

This brief provides information about correspondence from the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) relating to its Five-Year Education Sector Work Programme. It also updates you about our social cohesion work in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Christchurch Terrorist Attacks.

Summary

- The Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) is an umbrella national body for Muslim associations in New Zealand.
- It has developed a Five-Year Education Sector Work Programme to support social cohesion and improved outcomes for Muslim learners and families. Its work has been influenced by the series of public hui undertaken to discuss the Government response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Masjidain on March 15 2019 (RCOI).
- On 7 October 2021, FIANZ wrote to Ministers Little and Radhakrishnan about their Five-Year Education Sector Work Programme. They advised Ministers that they intend to undertake consultation about their Work Programme in November 2021 and acknowledged their ongoing engagement with the Ministry of Education.
- The document sets out seventeen initiatives at a high level, with brief comments on the work scope, rationale, and additional notes. There is limited information about the proposed initiatives (that is, there is no information about proposed timing, any investment that may be sought from the Ministry of Education or other sources, or how these initiatives might interface with existing work in the education system).
- We do not propose to undertake a detailed analysis of the proposals at this time. We will continue to engage with FIANZ following its consultation process with a view to providing practical support for its ongoing work to refine and implement its programme.
- As part of the whole-of-government response to the RCOI, we have been leading work on supporting social cohesion through education. A summary of current work is

attached at Annex 1. We have engaged FIANZ and other relevant community organisations on our work to increase social cohesion and will continue to do so in the future.

- You may wish to forward this brief to Ministers Little and Radhakrishnan for their information.

Proactive Release

The Ministry recommends that you

- a **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing once it has been considered by you. Some information may be withheld.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**



Tipene Chrisp
Group Manager
Te Puna Kaupapahere

2/11/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

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Background

1. On 7 October 2021 FIANZ wrote to Ministers Little and Radhakrishnan regarding the ongoing work to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Masjidain on March 15 2109 (RCOI). Noting that the education sector is a high priority within the RCOI recommendations, FIANZ enclosed a Five-Year Education Work Programme.
2. Minister Little is leading the response to FIANZ letter. The letter and enclosure have been forwarded to you as it relates to the education sector and the work we have underway regarding social cohesion.

Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ)

3. The Muslim population in New Zealand is diverse, comprising many ethnicities, languages and cultures. There are several groups that represent Muslim and ethnic communities.
4. The Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) is an umbrella national body for Muslim associations in New Zealand. The organisation has recently endeavoured to ensure that their governing group better represents the Muslim population of New Zealand.
5. The Ministry of Education has engaged with FIANZ on an ongoing basis. The Ministry has also been in contact with the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand (IWCNZ) and other community members.

The Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry

6. The RCOI report included Recommendation 36, which challenged the Government to:
Invest in opportunities for young New Zealanders to learn about their role, rights and responsibilities and on the value of ethnic and religious diversity, inclusivity, conflict resolution, civic literacy and self-regulation.
7. The report also set out a vision of a more socially cohesive Aotearoa New Zealand, noting that this has broad benefits for society, is an important contributor to long-term prosperity and can contribute to preventing or countering extremism.
8. Following publication of the RCOI report, the Government engaged in a nationwide programme of hui to listen to community voices and concerns. Many of the most common and prominent themes in these hui directly related to education, included addressing structural racism through curriculum change and increasing the cultural competency of teachers.

FIANZ Five-Year Education Sector Work Programme

9. The document begins with the demographic profile of Muslims in New Zealand. Key understandings from the data include that there is linguistic and ethnic diversity within the community, they have a youthful population, and that one in every four Muslims in New Zealand was born here.

10. The document then presents seventeen initiatives which are broken down in the following table:

#	Initiative	Category
1	Offer Modules to all ECE, Primary and Secondary teachers as part of their pre-service and in-service professional development	Addressing the wider community
2	Learning resource materials for Primary and Secondary schools	Addressing the wider community
3	Promote Social Cohesion Day, possibly on 15 March, at all Primary and Secondary schools	Addressing the wider community
4	Annual Exhibition Programme at all NZ Secondary schools and all Tertiary institutes	Addressing the wider community
5	Muslim Contribution to New Zealand Society with research funding on Muslims and Islam in NZ for NZ Muslim academicians/researchers or students	Addressing the wider community
6	Develop an Education Policy Team as part of our advocacy who can contribute to discussions on national educational issues and Government policies from our community needs perspective	Addressing Government
7	Promote Arabic as a Formal Language taught at primary and secondary schools (NCEA level)	Addressing Government
8	Establishing a NZ-Focused Islamic Education Curriculum (ages 5 to 18) with learning resources, suitable for use nationwide - for all Sunday classes and Masjids/Islamic centre-based children's classes	Addressing our own community
9	Registration of Teaching Centres (eg: Sunday classes, after-school classes, to be provided at Islamic Centres, Masjids, etc)	Addressing our own community
10	Islamic Education Resource Centre - for all Islamic centres/Masjids in NZ	Addressing our own community
11	Annual National Workshop for Muslim Teachers and Administrators of our Sunday Schools, Mid-week schools, madrasah at Masjids and Islamic Centres	Addressing Muslim educators
12	Code of Practice and Basic Pedagogic Skills for all teachers at Islamic Centres, Masjids, Madrasahs, etc, in NZ	Addressing Muslim educators
13	Professional Association of all Muslim ECE, Primary and Secondary Teachers, and Administrators	Addressing Muslim educators
14	Scholarships for NZ Muslim Tertiary Students	Addressing equity and encouragement issues
15	Introduce Basic Funding for all Teaching Centres (Islamic centres, Masjids, etc) based on an established criteria (to be developed).	Addressing equity and encouragement issues
16	National Awards for Meritorious Muslim Students	Addressing equity and encouragement issues
17	Islamic Education Website of Educational Resources for the Pacific (with appropriate language translation)	Addressing our neighbours

11. Under each initiative, the document briefly sets out the work scope, rationale, and additional notes. These are all presented at a high level.

12. The document does not set out how the Ministry of Education, education agencies or education services would be involved (or expected to be involved) in these initiatives.
13. There is an invitation for readers to provide feedback on the overall work programme, the scope of the work, prioritisation of the seventeen initiatives, and whether the reader can volunteer to help.
14. FIANZ have also set up two national hui to discuss the work programme, which will take place online on the 6th and 7th of November 2021.
15. It is not clear who this document has been circulated to beyond Ministers. The Ministry has not had direct engagement with FIANZ about this document or these initiatives.
16. We expect that FIANZ may create a second iteration of their work programme following the consultation process. This may include the full scope of the programme and prioritisation of initiatives. We will continue to work with FIANZ with a view to providing practical support for its ongoing work to refine and implement its programme.

Initial Analysis of the FIANZ Education Sector Work Programme

17. FIANZ initiatives are discrete pieces of work focussing on the Muslim community which could possibly be embedded in our design for a system-wide shift, or sit apart from it but still further the same objectives.
18. There is limited information about the proposed initiatives (that is, there is no information about proposed timing, any investment that may be sought from the Ministry of Education or other sources, or how these initiatives might interface with existing work in the education system).
19. The initiatives in the 'Addressing the Wider Community' category are the most aligned with the aims of our social cohesion work.
20. Two of these initiatives describe work that is underway: (a) FIANZ and the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand have been discussing trial orientation modules relating to the Muslim Community; and (b) we have been working with FIANZ and other groups to develop resources for primary and secondary schools.
21. Other initiatives could be more effective with government support. For example, an "annual Social Cohesion Day" in schools would require buy-in and sponsorship from across the education sector, as would the proposal for an annual exhibition programme at all NZ secondary schools and tertiary institutes.
22. Many of the initiatives in the other categories are inward-facing (that is, they are aimed at Muslim communities and FIANZ), including developing a policy team within FIANZ, setting up Islamic Education Resource Centres within every Islamic centre/Masjid, and establishing national awards for meritorious Muslim students.
23. We would need further information about the proposed initiatives and more comprehensive problem definition and rationale for a detailed analysis.

Ministry of Education Work Programme

24. As part of the whole-of-government response to the RCOI, we have been leading work on supporting social cohesion through education.

25. Our ambition is to create a sustained culture shift in schools towards inclusion, diversity and cohesion. In addition to an increase in cultural competence across both teaching and non-teaching staff, this shift would also require a change in how schools engage with local communities, in how local curriculums are designed, and in how ākonga are made to feel welcome and supported in their own identity.
26. We expect this to be realised through a broad programme of work, including through:
- a. implementation of the National Education and Learning Priorities (Priorities 1 and 2)
 - b. implementation of the Education and Training Act 2020 (sections 6, 9 and 127)
 - c. curriculum refresh (through overarching principles of inclusion and biculturalism)
 - d. refresh of individual learning areas and underpinning teaching resources (e.g., Aotearoa New Zealand histories).
27. We believe a meaningful, system-wide shift of this nature can be supported by connecting local communities directly with schools and Kāhui Ako.
28. In December 2020, Cabinet agreed to allocate funding of \$5.243m over 18 months to the Ministry of Education to implement Recommendation 36 of the RCoI, through a trial of:
- e. support for young children in early learning services to develop capacities for self-regulation, resilience, and social skills
 - f. the community partnership between the Ministry of Education and ethnic communities in Christchurch (continuing until June 2021)
29. An update on the broader programme of work contributing to Recommendation 36 can be found at Annex One.
30. We will also provide you a separate update on the conversation about religion in schools which relates to this work (METIS 1274460 refers).

Next Steps

31. We will continue to work with FIANZ and other community groups in our work to support social cohesion through education.
32. Once the FIANZ consultation process is complete, we will work with them to provide practical support for their ongoing work to refine and implement their programme in our engagements with them.
33. You may wish to forward this brief to Ministers Little and Radhakrishnan for their information.

Other Relevant Information

34. The document mentions that there are growing numbers of Māori and Pasifika Muslims. Locally created initiatives from groups like FIANZ may help these populations feel more engaged in their community and education system.

Annex one: Update on examples of work contributing to RCOI Recommendation 36

RCOI Rec 36 theme	Subject	Status and next steps
Valuing ethnic and religious diversity & Inclusivity	National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP)	Operational as at end of Term 1 2021.
	New Zealand curriculum refresh	Ongoing – over five years.
	Local Curriculum Design	Curriculum Leads recruited to support implementation. Evaluation of MoE curriculum supports ongoing.
	Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories	Public consultation on the draft curriculum content closed on 31 May and will be taught in schools beginning in 2022.
	Challenging Racism and Bias kit	Ongoing – available to self-selected schools.
	Teaching resources	Posters and <i>Aya and the Butterfly</i> literacy book released in March 2021. Three further books co-designed with the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand are in pre-press, expected to be delivered to ECE and Primary schools in Term 4 2021.
	Christchurch Learning Hubs	We have secured \$1 million in funding to continue providing Learning Hubs, in Christchurch and expand the model to Auckland and Wellington. A national Team Leader has been appointed and further appointments are expected shortly. 9(2)(f)(iv)
Rights, responsibilities, and civic literacy	New Zealand curriculum refresh	Social science refresh to be carried out during 2021.
	The School Leavers' Toolkit	Launched the Civics and Citizenship Teaching and Learning Guide in June 2020, which is now available in English and te reo Māori. Developed an inclusion and diversity video alongside the Human Rights Commission.
Self-regulation	Social and Emotional (SEL) practice and progress tools	Targeted trialling of draft tools until June 2021. Wider trial commenced September 2021. 9(2)(f)(iv)
	SEL programmes in early learning settings (e.g. ENGAGE, Alert, Incredible Years Beginnings)	<i>Engage</i> rollout began July 2021. Programme has reached 10 ELS centres in Auckland. <i>Alert</i> and <i>Incredible Beginnings</i> rolled out in October 2021 (TBC).