



Briefing Note: Meeting with previous members of the independent Taskforce for the Review of Tomorrow's Schools

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:			
Date:	18 October 2021	Priority:	Low
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1274607.
Drafter:	Ross Clapcott	DDI:	9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
Key Contact:	Ross Clapcott	DDI:	9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

- **Note** the information to support your zoom meeting on Wednesday 20 October with the previous members of the Independent Taskforce for the Review of Tomorrow's Schools
- **Agree** to the proactive release of this briefing note.

Agree / Disagree



Iona Holsted
Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Mātauranga
Secretary for Education



Hon. Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister Education

18/10/2021

19 /10/ 2021

Background

1. The Independent Taskforce for the review of Tomorrow's Schools was appointed in 2018 with a Terms of Reference to focus on the 'changes needed to governance, management and administration in education to ensure the fitness of the school system to meet the challenges we face, and to achieve equity and excellence'.
2. The Taskforce consulted on their initial report from December 2018 to April 2019 before submitting its final report to the Minister of Education in July 2019.
3. The Government then released its decisions in its response on 12 November 2019, also releasing the related Cabinet papers, including; the Government's position, the relevant legislative provisions and, establishing a Leadership Centre within the Teaching Council. The latter making clear the roles of the Ministry and the Teaching Council on supporting leadership in the schooling system.
4. The Minister thanked the chair and members for their work and dis-established the Taskforce. You are meeting with all the people that were on the Taskforce. This group wrote to, and met with, Hon Hipkins in early 2021 expressing similar views to those they have provided to you in their note for this meeting. Hon Hipkins' reply is attached as *Appendix 1*.

Points the group have raised for discussion

Intent of the taskforce's 2019 report and Government's decisions on the reform of Tomorrows Schools.

5. The Taskforce Report focused strongly on the need to improve equity and excellence for all learners/ākonga, particularly those whose needs are not currently being met. It also called for the school system to be founded on the rights of the child and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the need for localised support and decision-making and to build more trust within the system.
6. An underpinning of the Taskforce recommendations was the establishment of a separate new entity, the Education Support Agency, with regional offices (Education Support Learning Networks) to provide more support and services relevant to achieving equity and excellence of learning outcomes across the education system and replacing the current Ministry of Education regional offices
7. In its response, *Supporting all Schools to Succeed*, the Government took on board the intent and many of the recommendations of the Taskforce which are to be developed over time as resources and funding are made available. The Government did not agree with the recommendation to establish a new entity, highlighting the likelihood of creating more chasms in the system, a distraction from the substantive work, and that the significant resources and capability that would be required could be better utilised improving the system for learners/ākonga.
8. Instead, the Government decided to establish a more responsive, accessible, and integrated local support function for early learning services and schools by substantially rebalancing the Ministry of Education towards more regional and local support, through the establishment of a separately branded business unit, the Education Service Agency (ESA, within a redesigned Ministry of Education.

9. As you know, this month (4 October), Te Mahau was established within a redesigned Ministry of Education (with the name Te Mahau replacing the ESA working title). Te Mahau is the separately branded sector-facing part of te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, and is comprised of:

- Te Poutāhū | Curriculum
- Te Pae Aronui
- Te Tai Raro | North
- Te Tai Whenua | Central
- Te Tai Runga | South

Engagement with the sector

10. The 4 October establishment was preceded by a change process conducted by the Secretary in her role as Chief Executive to create the roles and high level design required to implement Government's decisions. While this process started in 2020 it was put on hold for the Covid-19 response until Late 2020 with final decisions advised to staff in June this year.
11. Sector leaders were kept informed (but not invited to be involved) during the period of organisational change, given this stage's focus on leadership team role and affected senior staff. New Hautū | Deputy Secretaries for te Mahau and across the redesigned Te Tāhuhu have been in role for just over two weeks.
12. Along with advising the sector of high level structure and role decisions in June, the Secretary invited sector leaders to begin joint work on the development of the relationships and services that Te Mahau and the sector will develop. This began with meetings and workshops with the Early Childhood Advisory Committee, English-medium peak bodies, and Rāngai Māori peak bodies. It was then extended to a series of regional engagements between education leaders and Directors of Education in regions. The engagement with ECAC and peak bodies included joint work on the frontline advisory capacity funded in Budget 21 but has not extended to other areas not yet Budget-funded such as Leadership Advisors.
13. In late August the Ministry and the sector leaders mutually agreed to pause this engagement so leaders could focus on responding to the current Covid-19 outbreak and Te Tāhuhu could focus on supporting them to do this. We hope to restart this joint work in November.
14. Covid-19 has been disruptive to establishing and engaging with the education sector on Te Mahau and the redesigned te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga. It has however also seen Ministry teams and leaders in early learning services, schools working together in responsive and supportive ways. This does not take away the need for significant further joint work, but it has shifted practice and trust.

Māori Medium and Kaupapa Māori Education

15. 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

16. 9(2)(f)(iv)

Curriculum centre

17. The paper provided to you by Bali Haque for this meeting outlined concerns about how the curriculum centre has developed and the curriculum work programme. We note that many of the areas raised by the group are underway and part of Te Poutāhū and Te Mahau now that these are formally established, although may not be as advanced as this group would like.
- A dedicated national curriculum centre Te Poutāhū is now an integral part of Te Mahau
 - External expertise is built into Te Potāhū through two standing advisory groups, the Curriculum Advisory group and Te Whakaruruhau. These groups are in place, cover the full curriculum pathway, and are in addition to the expert groups convened for specific curriculum areas.
 - The Online Curriculum Hub, the working title for the new digital platform that will replace Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI) and enhance Kauwhata Reo is being progressed with an initial release intended for Term 3 2022.
 - The first tranche of curriculum advisors is in place in Te Mahau regions. They are part of regional teams and are provided with practice leadership by Te Poutāhū. Te Mahau will increase curriculum advisory capacity as planned as funding is available and as resources are shifted to frontline services.
18. These components of Te Poutāhū and Te Mahau are integrated with and responsible for delivering the curriculum work programme including the NZ histories curriculum, the wider curriculum refresh, the redesign of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the NCEA reform. Each of these elements of the work programme are being progressed with substantial engagement with practitioners and leaders. You have been provided with advice about rephrasing different parts of the work programme recognising the challenges the sector faces in being able to provide the input they want to in the face of responding to Covid-19.

Leadership centre

19. The reform of Tomorrows School Cabinet paper identified stronger arrangements to underpin principal leadership of the schooling system as one of the three key shifts intended for the reforms. This included the creation of a Leadership Centre, a role allocated to the teaching Council and frontline support for principals from leadership advisors to be provided by the ESA.
20. The roles between the Teaching Council were clarified in a Cabinet paper released together with the reform of Tomorrows Schools Cabinet paper in November 2019. This outlined that the direction setting and strategy role 9and the name Leadership Centre)

for the support and development of principal leadership was the role of the Teaching Council with the responsibility for operational delivery including through leadership advisors falling to the ESA (now Te Mahau). The table outlining this role clarification is attached as *Appendix 2*.

21. In setting out the reforms the Minister of education advised that the degree of change intended would take five to ten years to implement fully and would be funded over a number of Budget cycles. The leadership aspects of the reforms have not yet been resourced through Budget and accordingly development of leadership advisor roles has not yet started.
22. The Teaching Council have progressed their leadership strategy and have created Rauhuia a virtual leadership space for all Kaiako. They have also partnered with a number of peak bodies to commission work to consult with principals and provide recommendations on the professional learning and development they feel they need. Cathy Wylie who is part of the group you are meeting has been supporting this work.
23. The Minister of Education is progressing legislative change to rectify the misalignment identified by the High Court between the teaching Council's statutory functions and fee setting. As part of this the Minister intends to make the Council's leadership functions 'optional' meaning they will not be linked to Council fee-setting. This will enable these activities to be progressed without being enmeshed in fee-setting concerns from practitioners. These activities will, however, need the Minister's agreement and separate resourcing.

Governance monitoring of reforms

24. The paper provided to you for the meeting by Bali Haque calls for the establishment of an independent expert group to monitor, advise on and challenge progress of the Government approved changes.
25. This group also advocated this in their letter and meeting with the Minister for Education at the beginning of this year. In his attached reply Hon Hipkins referred the group to the wider and significant set of reforms underway being overseen by education Ministers and the need for these to come together in a coherent way.
26. The Minister recognised that the Secretary has the appropriate responsibility for progressing and integrating the Tomorrow's Schools reforms with the above and has the leadership role for implementing the required structural and cultural changes within the Ministry.

Proactive Release

27. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.