



## Briefing Note: Talking points - Early learning network management: policy approvals for final policy settings

To:	Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	26 July 2022	Priority:	Medium
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### Purpose of paper

This paper provides talking points for the paper *Early learning network management: policy approvals for priorities, and regulations* at Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee on 27 July 2022.

### Summary

- This Cabinet paper seeks approval of the final policy settings for early childhood network management, in particular:
  - Priorities for network management to be outlined in National and Regional Statements.
  - Policy settings for network management regulations and to issue drafting instructions to Parliamentary Council Office to give effect to these settings.
  - Creating a public register of network management approvals and revocations on the Ministry of Education website.

## Proactive Release

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- a **agree** that this Briefing Note is released in September after Cabinet has approved the final regulations.

**Agree / Disagree.**



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**Acting Group Manager**  
**Te Puna Kaupapahere**

26/07/2022

Hon Aupito William Sio  
**Associate Minister of Education**

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## Annex 1: Talking Points: *Early learning network management: policy approvals for final policy settings*

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1. In November 2021, Cabinet noted the Minister of Education's intention to submit a further paper to the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee in 2022 on the remaining network management proposals and to seek policy approval for new regulations for network management [CAB CAB-21-MIN-0490 refers].
2. This Cabinet paper seeks approval of the remaining policy proposals for early childhood network management:
  - a) Priorities for network management to be outlined in National and Regional Statements.
  - b) Policy settings for network management regulations and to issue drafting instructions to Parliamentary Council Office to give effect to these settings.
  - c) Creating a public register of network management approvals and revocations on the Ministry of Education website.

### **Our intent is to take a more active role in managing the licensed network**

3. The purpose of network management is to take a more active role in managing the licensed early learning network to help ensure all children have access to quality licensed early childhood services by preventing oversupply and increasing provision in areas and communities currently underserved. Network management approvals examine the need for an early childhood service and the suitability of the applicant.
4. Network management was originally signalled in 2019 in the Early Learning Action Plan.
5. Sections 17 and 18 of the Education and Training Act 2020 introduced network management for licensed early childhood services. These provisions have a delayed commencement and will come into force on 1 February 2023 (subject to the Education and Training Amendment Bill (No 2) in the House).

### **We have consulted on these proposals**

6. During 14 April to 2 June 2022 the Ministry of Education consulted on the proposals set out in this paper. In total 69 survey responses were received and seven written submissions on the network management proposals and respondents were generally very supportive.

### **We will signal Government priorities in National and Regional Statements**

7. The intent of setting out Government priorities for network management by issuing National and Regional Statements is to indicate to the sector the particular types of service offerings that are a priority for the licensed early childhood network overall, and therefore the types of applications the Government will prioritise.
8. The Minister of Education is proposing 11 priorities to be included in National and Regional Statements:
  - Māori bilingual and immersion services (that are not excluded from the requirement to seek network management approval)
  - Hapū/iwi-owned services
  - Services with a distinct Māori identity and culture
  - Pacific bilingual and immersion services
  - Pacific language and/or cultural services
  - Language immersion services (non-English/Māori/Pacific)
  - Services well-equipped for learning support needs

- Services well-equipped for migrants and former refugees
  - Services planned to operate on a new school site
  - Organisations funded by Targeted Assistance for Participation (TAP)
  - Wrap-around services
9. These priorities best meet the criteria of giving effect to obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, an identified national need for this service offering, a clear priority from existing education strategies and can be defined and monitored.
10. I propose that these priorities be included in the National and Regional Statements. The statements will be released in October 2022 when the other information required for the statements is complete.
11. Priorities related to affordability, and increased quality requirements (such as high ratios) did not best meet the criteria as they were difficult to define and monitor and would be better provided for through other policy levers.

### **Policy for new regulations**

12. The Minister of Education is proposing the creation of separate regulations for network management under section 636(1)(a) of the Act to clearly delineate network management processes from licensing requirements in the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008. The network management regulations would set out procedural requirements to support the network management provisions outlined in the Bill.
13. The regulations would cover:
- Information requirements
  - Processing timeframes
  - The notice for network management approval
  - Amendments
  - Network management fees
14. The Minister of Education is also proposing that all network management approvals and revocations will be listed on a dedicated Ministry of Education network management webpage alongside any National and Regional Statements.

### **Monitoring and evaluation and next steps**

15. Network management is a new function, and it will be important to learn how well it is operating. The Minister of Education intends to report back to Cabinet on this monitoring and evaluation in 2025 alongside the review of expiry of approval to apply for licence.<sup>1</sup>
16. This Cabinet is the final policy Cabinet paper for network management. The next steps for the Ministry will be to complete designing all the operational settings to implement the policy ahead of February 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 1, clause 9 of the Education and Training Act requires the Minister of Education by no later than 1 August 2025, to review, or arrange for a review of the expiry of approval section.