



Briefing Note: Implications of the Carbon Neutral Government Programme for Education

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	23 November 2020	Priority:	High
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Purpose of paper

We understand that the Cabinet Business Committee (CBC) is considering the paper *Leading the way: Establishing a Carbon Neutral Government Programme* on 25 November 2020. This note provides a brief summary of the implications of these proposals for the education sector.

Key Messages

- The Ministry recommends an exemption for School Boards from reporting their carbon emissions and reduction plans. We consider this requirement will be overly burdensome, particularly for small schools.
- The Ministry is currently unable to advise on whether the new emission reporting obligations will be reasonable for Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs).
- You will be a member of the interim Ministerial group governing the Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP).

Implications for Education

- The paper seeks agreement to start the Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP). It aims to make a number of government organisations carbon neutral by 2025, and takes initial steps to help them accelerate their reduction journeys.
- CNGP organisations, which include School Boards of Trustees and TEIs, will be required to measure and publish their emissions and reduction plans in their annual reporting.
- Reporting across CNGP organisations will be staged. By December 2023 Crown Agents and School Boards of Trustees will be directed to report emissions and publish reduction plans [para 17 bullet point 2]. The paper suggests that an exemption or different approach to individual reporting may need to be taken for entities such as School Boards

due to the potential resourcing implications. However, this is not reflected in the paper's recommendations – we recommend it should be included.

- 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
- There is a report back in March 2021 [recommendation 7 page 11] on how the CNGP organisations will measure, manage and report emissions. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]
[redacted]
- The aim to phase out active, high-use coal boilers from the state sector by 2025 will require additional funding for the State Sector Decarbonisation Fund that will be sought by the Minister for Climate Change in Budget 2021 [para 59]. The current programme of coal boiler replacements in schools is targeting less than half of the total number of coal boilers.
- The ongoing cost to schools from replacing coal-fired boilers and switching to electric or biomass heating systems is not clear, however the paper notes [para 7] that further funding will be required for the additional capital costs associated with investing in low-emissions technologies.

Implications for Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs)

- By December 2023 tertiary institutions would be 'encouraged' to report emissions and publish reduction plans voluntarily in their annual reports [para 17, bullet point 3]. The paper estimates this reporting would cost between \$15,000 (for small organisations) and \$100,000 (for large organisations). We are unsure how much information TEIs currently collect on their emissions, and, therefore, how difficult it would be for them to report.
- The paper also notes the early thinking on the feasibility of offsetting emissions, in particular that Cabinet could in future consider whether we encourage TEIs to offset their remaining emissions by December 2025. A report-back in June 2021 will include advice on when this offsetting obligation would apply and the feasibility of including TEIs.

Interim Ministerial Group

- The paper asks for agreement to set up an interim Ministerial group governing the CNGP [recommendation 21 page 13]. You will be part of this group in your role as Minister for the Public Service.

¹ 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]
[redacted]

Proactive release

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released once Cabinet decisions have been made.

Agree Disagree



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23/11/2020



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

25/11/2020