



**Briefing Note:** Initial themes emerging from feedback received on the draft statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP)

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	13 January 2020	<b>Priority:</b>	Low
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1214917
<b>Drafter:</b>	Rachel Sutcliffe	<b>DDI:</b>	s 9(2)(a)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Ben O'Meara	<b>DDI:</b>	
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of paper

This paper provides you with an overview of the initial themes that have emerged from the feedback received during the recent consultation on the statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP), as part of *Shaping a Stronger Education System with New Zealanders*. A full analysis of all feedback received is currently underway.

### Summary

- Consultation on the proposed NELP priorities took place from 17 September 2019 to 25 November 2019.
- Generally, people reacted well to the intent of the priorities, and to the whole of system approach promoted by *Shaping a Stronger Education System with New Zealanders*. However, some challenges were highlighted and changes suggested.
- This paper provides our initial analysis of the feedback received at consultation events. It also includes summaries of the submissions received from 10 education sector national bodies (peak bodies).
- We are now completing a full analysis of all feedback collected during the consultation. In line with your expectation of an integrated approach, we intend to provide coordinated advice on what we heard on the NELP and the TES in early February, and to publish a full engagement report later this year, along with the final NELP and TES.

## Proactive Release

---

We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released once the final NELP has been approved by Cabinet and published.

Agree / Disagree

*Ben O'Meara*

Ben O'Meara  
**Acting Deputy Secretary**  
**Education System Policy**

13/01/2020

*Chris Hipkins*

Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister of Education**

29/1/20

## Background

---

1. Section 1A of the Education Act 1989 (the Act) allows the Minister of Education to issue a statement of National Education and Learning Priorities, following consultation with stakeholders in the early childhood and compulsory education sectors.
2. On 17 September, the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) released the discussion document, *Shaping a Stronger Education System with New Zealanders* (METIS 1201190 refers), to support consultation on the draft NELP (Annex 1) and TES. Details of the consultation process are included as Annex 2.
3. The discussion document summarised the outcomes of the Kōrero Mātauranga | Education Conversation, and presented the enduring vision for education and the five strategic objectives for Education (the objectives), adopted by the Government, along with the actions Government has taken or is taking to support progress towards those objectives. The vision, objectives and associated actions by Government set the context for the draft NELP and TES, which were the subject of the consultation.
4. You have already received advice detailing the high-level themes from the feedback gathered on the proposed TES (METIS 1205230 refers). In response to this paper, you indicated that you preferred to wait to receive the NELP feedback and consider the whole package, before progressing with a final strategy. Our initial analysis suggests that there are several areas of alignment in the feedback received on the NELP and the TES. We will provide you with more detailed advice on a coordinated response to consultation on both the NELP and the TES in February.

## Initial themes emerging from the NELP consultation

---

5. Generally, the sector and communities reacted positively to the whole of system approach promoted by *Shaping a Stronger Education System with New Zealanders*, and to the proposed NELP priorities. However, some challenges were highlighted and changes were suggested.
6. Our initial analysis of feedback gathered during the meetings has provided the following themes:

### ***Inclusion and acknowledgement of the diverse make up of New Zealand society***

7. There were comments that while the priorities specifically acknowledge the importance of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, they are silent on Pacific languages and culture, and other cultures in New Zealand.
8. It was also noted that New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), which is an official language of New Zealand, is also not specifically mentioned or supported by the priorities.

### ***Wording and structure***

9. The structure of the NELP priorities, and their place in the discussion document, was confusing for some. Some attendees thought that certain priorities did not align with, or adequately address, the Objectives for Education they had been associated with. This comment was made with particular reference to the priorities under Objective 2: Barrier free access and Objective 4: Future of learning and work.

10. The wording of some of the priorities was seen as ambiguous and difficult to understand. We received feedback that the priorities should not contain jargon, and they should be shortened and rewritten in plain English to be sharper and more focussed, rather than high level and vague. The wording of the priorities was described as almost too nice and not confronting enough. They were described in one instance as being "boring and ignorable".
11. We were told that nine priorities were too many to focus on, and that some priorities overlapped with others. By having so many priorities, they lose the sense of being a 'priority'. Some meeting attendees also questioned why there were two sets (NELP and TES) of priorities, when there was considerable overlap between both.

#### ***Elements missing from the NELP***

12. People commented that learning, the main objective of education, is not mentioned in the NELP priorities. There was also feedback that the NELP is largely also silent on the curriculum, including foundational skills, literacy and numeracy, and digital literacy for both teachers and learners/ākonga.
13. Submitters felt that careers education and the need to prepare learners/ākonga for the future world of work needs to be strengthened throughout the education system. This was seen as missing from the priorities supporting Objective 4: Future of learning and work.
14. There was some feedback that environmental sustainability was missing as a focus for learners/ākonga and places of learning, and should be included as a priority.

#### ***Measurement against the priorities***

15. There was feedback that measuring progress or success against the priorities as currently worded would be difficult. How places of learning should measure their progress against the priorities is not referenced in the discussion document, and people commented that guidelines should be included.

#### ***Additional expectations on places of learning***

16. In many cases, the NELP priorities were seen as 'good', however there was a view that there is too much variation between places of learning, for example needs, strengths, and context, to make them all compulsory for every place of learning.
17. Concerns were raised that the Ministry is placing unachievable expectations on places of learning, when they can only influence certain aspects of learner/ākonga life. For example, life outside of school has a huge impact on learners/ākonga, and places of learning can only control what happens when they are at school.
18. In relation to Priority 2, there were comments that there are parents who either don't want to be involved in their child's education, or do not have the capacity or means to be involved. This makes it difficult for places of learning to develop meaningful relationships and promote involvement.

#### ***Implementation of the NELP in places of learning***

19. Concerns were raised about how places of learning will implement the NELP, and how they would be supported to achieve these priorities. There were comments that extensive professional learning and development (PLD) would be required to ensure teachers and senior management staff have the necessary skills to implement the priorities. There were also questions about how the Ministry will ensure places of learning will implement the NELP.

20. Many people commented that places of learning can't be expected to implement these priorities on their own, and they're going to need additional support from the Ministry, the Government, and other social sector agencies. Conversely, some reported that they are already practicing the behaviours required by the NELP, so there is no need for specific legislation to enforce their implementation.

### **Resourcing**

21. Places of learning reported they are generally under-resourced (in terms of time, staffing and funding), which would make it difficult to meaningfully implement the NELP. There was also a widely reported lack of resourcing and support for learners/ākonga, and their family and whānau, who have additional learning needs.
22. In reference to Priority 9, we heard that iwi do not always have the resources or capability available internally to meaningfully engage with places of learning. They will need additional support and resourcing to play their part.

### **Summary of submissions from peak bodies**

---

23. To support the consultation process, we wrote to all education sector national representative organisations (peak bodies) to inform them of the consultation process. We provided them with the *Shaping a Stronger Education System with New Zealanders* discussion document, and invited them to let us know if there was any specific ways they would like to engage with us to provide their feedback.
24. We received submissions from 10 peak bodies. These are summarised below and full copies of the submissions summarised here are included as Annex three. Please note, we did not receive a submission from the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA), or any submissions on behalf of iwi.
25. Submitters took the opportunity to comment on all of parts of the discussion document including the vision, objectives and priorities, as well as the structure of the discussion document itself. Where possible, we have referenced the specific part of the discussion document each comment refers to. However, in some cases they did not make it clear whether they were referring to objectives, priorities, or just making statements about the education system generally.

### **The New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF)**

- a. The NZPF was concerned that the long term vision could be subverted by changes in administration and the political agenda of the day.
- b. They supported the value placed on wellbeing and the aspirational direction of the discussion document.
- c. They were concerned about lack of implementation detail.
- d. NZPF supported equitable funding for Maori medium pathways.
- e. NZPF want to see stringent protocols around sharing and use of data as part of Te Rito (the Ministry's student information sharing initiative).
- f. In relation to the Objectives for Education, NZPF commented:
  - Objective 1: Learners at the centre – want to see 'genders' added to descriptions of who we are. School leaders and teachers would require extensive PLD to be equipped to respond to these needs.

- Objective 2: Barrier free access – want an urgent injection of funding, resources and expertise to address the increasing volume and complexity of needs of students.
- Objective 3: Quality teaching and leadership – want PLD for teachers to specifically support upskilling in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori. Supports the move to establish a leadership centre in the teaching council.
- Objective 4: Future of learning and work – highlighted the need for additional PLD to help teachers deliver new digital and history curricula.
- Objective 5: World class inclusive public education – support the overall system approach to respecting Māori and Pacific world views, and aspiration to strengthen Crown-Māori partnerships.

#### **New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA)**

- NZSTA strongly supported the underlying approach of the proposed vision, objectives and NELP. However, it considered the timeframe for consultation had been too short to allow NZSTA to engage its membership fully.
- They also noted that the consultation timeframe, to 25 November, relates to the NELP and they would like greater clarity on how the Government intends to engage the sector over the proposed vision and objectives.
- NZSTA made the following recommendations:
  - Consultation be continued throughout 2020.
  - The proposed vision, objectives and priorities be introduced as provisional for 2020-21.
  - Further targeted consultation is carried out in 2021 before final versions implemented for 2022.
  - A 5-10 year review cycle be built into legislation.

#### **NZEI Te Riu Roa**

- NZEI stated that the draft NELP priorities fail to consider that while education may be a leader of change in society, the education system does not have the resources to make wholesale societal change.
- NZEI had concerns about the burden that these NELP will have on those working in the education system, from early childhood education through to tertiary education.
- The decision to have multiple areas of focus in the NELP is likely to exacerbate issues in the system. NZEI thought this may result in a scattered approach, no discernible change or potentially, change that is at odds with professional practice based on knowledge, experience and a sound research base.
- They wanted a significant increase in provision of PLD to help teachers (especially in ECE) deliver on these objectives and priorities.
- NZEI supported developing a wider range of measures of success, but wanted to see how the Ministry will track and measure its own impact – the way it implements initiatives has a significant impact on the sector.

- f. Regarding the actions to support Māori Medium pathways (Objective 4: Future of learning and work) NZEI suggested that this should only happen when 'whānau' want it (not children).

#### **Industry Training Federation (ITF)**

- a. The Industry Training Federation (ITF) is the national body for New Zealand's eleven Industry Training Organisations (ITOs). Their submission focussed on the TES, but covered the Objectives for Education for both the TES and the NELP.
- b. The ITF supported the aim of developing a joined up whole of system set of objectives and priorities.
- c. They would like to see greater articulation of what success would look like to support the high level objectives, and more detail on how we will get there.
- d. In terms of specific content, they would like to see a more explicit focus on literacy and numeracy to ensure that all New Zealanders gain foundation skills. They noted that this is a significant change from the previous TES, which may cause some confusion for providers that do focus on adult literacy and numeracy.

#### **Career Development Association of New Zealand (CDANZ)**

- a. The Career Development Association of New Zealand (CDANZ) is a national membership organisation drawing together the broad range of people working in the careers and related fields.
- b. CDANZ recommended that:
- The term 'lifelong career development' is included at a high level in the NELP and TES. Career development can be defined as: "The lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure and transitions in order to move towards a personally determined and evolving future."
  - Definitions are included to clarify critical careers interventions such as careers guidance, advice and information, as they require different resourcing for different audiences and outcomes.
  - The professional development of the teaching workforce includes lifting understanding of career development and career education
  - There should be explicit reference to the development and funding of a careers specialist workforce.
  - Career management competencies are included in the learning programmes.
  - The career development benchmarks to be further developed to support teaching and learning.
  - There needs to be greater clarity on the supporting actions to co-design solutions for employers and employees.

### **Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools (APIS)**

- a. APIS supported the nature of the document, but said they would wait to see the implementation plan (for the objectives) before commenting specifically.
- b. They noted the emphasis on removing financial barriers, and pointed to the Education Act that provides for the right of proprietors to charge attendance dues and seek donations for special character. They assume that this right will not be affected by the priorities.

### **ISANA International Education Association New Zealand**

- a. ISANA NZ's submission states it is the peak body for practitioners in the international education sector.
- b. They stated that they want to see explicit reference to the vision of the International Education Strategy, including the benefits that international students bring to our education system.

### **Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand**

- a. Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand is a national organisation that promotes high-quality early childhood education (ECE) through initial teacher education, professional development, leadership programmes, advocacy and membership services.
- b. They generally supported the priorities and the integrated approach across the system. They were pleased that the priorities align closely with Te Whāriki, and look forward to seeing the supporting actions fleshed out in the Early Learning Action Plan.
- c. Te Rito Maioha commented that, while they were supportive of the priorities:
  - Some services will struggle to maintain fee levels and reduce financial barriers.
  - In relation to growing the workforce:
    - i. They look forward to the education workforce strategy supply initiatives in light of the move to 100% qualified teachers.
    - ii. Some smaller ECE services have limited resources to grow their staff.
  - In relation to Objective 5, they supported the increased monitoring of services to ensure consistently high quality provision.

### **New Zealand Family Planning**

- a. Family Planning applauded the focus on wellbeing and inclusion in Objective 1: Learners at the centre and Priority 1, however suggested this could be widened to include a focus on schools and teachers as well.
- b. They would like to see an education and learning priority, focussed on learners/ākonga gaining the skills and knowledge necessary to promote their own wellbeing and positive relationships.



## BusinessNZ

- a. Business NZ agreed with the priorities, but suggested additional content be added to strengthen the contribution of the education sector to the labour market.
- b. Overall comments on the full discussion document included:
  - They would like to see a stronger emphasis on the need to connect to the world of work, and working with business to create experiential learning opportunities.
  - It failed to recognise the links to the Future of Work agenda, Employment Strategy and the Economic Plan, which explicitly has the objective that People are skilled, adaptable and have access to lifelong learning.
  - We should utilise the existing wealth of research to focus the strategy on an evidence based approach, including (but not limited to) focussing early childhood education support and services, and collaboration with relevant agencies to deliver, targeted social investment in the first 1,000 days.
  - It should emphasise importance of pastoral care and whanaungatanga for supporting and managing transitions through the system, and improve the consistency and quality of support for learners as they journey through the system.
  - We should undertake a review of the career advisor network within the work programmes considering the teaching workforce.
  - Place greater emphasis on the use of open data and analysis, and make education data, analysis and information readily available for all stakeholders.
  - As part of the Future of Work agenda, scope the development of a national learning management system and learning portfolios, to make learning more transferrable and to create greater visibility of skill development outside the formal education system.

## Next Steps

---

26. Per your request that we consult with ethnic communities (METIS 1201190 refers), we are working with the Office of Ethnic Communities to arrange a consultation event with members of their community.
27. We are currently analysing all the feedback gathered during the consultation. We will provide a more detailed report on the feedback received, along with advice on possible changes to the NELP and TES in response to feedback, in early February.

## Annexes

---

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Annex 1: | The statement of National Education and Learning Priorities – current draft priorities |
| Annex 2: | Consultation details   |
| Annex 3: | Peak body submissions  |

## Annex 1: The statement of National Education and Learning Priorities – current draft priorities

---

***To achieve each objective for education, early learning services and schools must:***

**Objective one: Learners at the centre – learners with their whānau are at the centre of education**

1. Make sure that every learner/ākonga feels safe, appreciated and included for who they are, including their identity, language and culture, and learning needs.
2. Include family and whānau as partners central to the learning and achievement of every learner/ākonga.

**Objective two: Barrier free access – great education opportunities and outcomes are within reach for every learner**

3. Have high expectations for every learner/ākonga and eliminate practices that limit access across the curriculum.
4. Support successful transitions into, within, and from places of learning.
5. Ensure financial and other barriers for learners/ākonga and their whānau do not prevent equitable access to teaching, learning and participation in the life of the early learning service or school.

**Objective three: Quality teaching and leadership – quality teaching and leadership make the difference for learners and their whānau**

6. Grow their workforce to strengthen teaching and leadership and to contribute to a stronger profession across the system.
7. Incorporate te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the everyday life of the place of learning.

**Objective four: Future of learning and work – learning that is relevant to the lives of New Zealanders today and throughout their lives**

8. Ensure they offer learning that equips learners/ākonga with an understanding of New Zealand's cultural identities and our history.

**Objective five: World class inclusive public education – New Zealand education is trusted and sustainable**

9. Develop relationships with their local iwi and hapū and communities to align aspirations and strategic direction setting.

## Annex 2: Consultation details

---

1. Proposed priorities for both the NELP and the TES were approved for consultation by Cabinet on 11 September 2019 [SWC-19-MIN-0120 refers]. Consultation opened on the 17 September, and ended on 25 October for the TES and on 25 November 2019 for the NELP.
2. From 17 September until 25 October we ran a joint consultation process on the NELP and the TES. Consultation continued solely on the NELP from 25 October to 25 November.
3. Letters were emailed to education peak bodies and iwi advising them that consultation on the NELP and the TES was underway, and invited them to engage with us in the way that suited them best.
4. Items were included in both the Ministry Bulletin for School Leaders | He Pitopito Kōrero and the Early Learning Bulletin | He Pānui Kōhungahunga, to advertise consultation to the sector. Meetings were advertised on the Ministry's Facebook page, and through a series of local radio advertisements. Where possible, we worked with the Ministry regional offices to advertise the consultation to as many interested parties as possible.
5. Hui attendees on the NELP included school principals, board of trustees members, teachers in both early childhood and compulsory education, parents and whānau with children at school (with and without additional learning needs), community members, and learners/ākonga from a range of ethnicities and backgrounds.
6. Attendance at community and sector hui varied around the country, ranging from two to 36 attendees. We were told at most of these hui that consultation at this time of year was not suitable for the sector and that they were being consulted on many education and wider government initiatives.
7. Consultation on the draft NELP consisted of:
  - a. **Face-to-face meetings:**
    - 25 community hui (15 joint NELP/TES hui, and 10 NELP specific hui), covering most regions.
    - 36 stakeholder engagements (30 TES specific where the NELP was also discussed, four joint NELP/TES engagements, and 2 NELP specific engagements).
    - Eight targeted engagements, including the Disabled People's Organisations Coalition, the Minister's Youth Advisory Group, LGBTQIA+ students, two groups of prison inmates, and a group of year 9 and 10 students from a college.
    - Four regional sector hui, combined with presentations on the Equity Index, Reform of Vocational Education, and Curriculum, Progress and Achievement (in Auckland, Hamilton, Dunedin and Invercargill).
    - The NELP was part of the Ministry stall at Te Mana Kuratahi in early November 2019. This was an opportunity to advertise the consultation, and gather informal feedback on the priorities

- b. **378 responses** to a detailed online survey on the NELP.
  - c. **40 submissions**, 31 on behalf of organisations and nine from individuals.
8. The vision and objectives for education were presented and discussed at each community and sector hui as the context for both the NELP and the TES and where comment has been made on these, it has been collected and will be included in our full analysis.

Proactively Released

Annex 3: Peak body submissions received (submissions attached separately)

1. New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF)
2. New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA)
3. NZEI Te Riu Roa
4. Industry Training Federation (ITF)
5. Career Development Association of New Zealand (CDANZ)
6. Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools (APIS)
7. ISANA International Education Association New Zealand
8. Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand
9. New Zealand Family Planning
10. BusinessNZ