



Briefing Note: Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Ministerial Group Meeting 10 February 2021

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	5 February 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1249545
Drafter:	Tahirah Moton	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key contact:	Jennifer Fraser	DDI:	
Approved by:	Andrea Schöllmann	DDI:	
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round robin:	No

Purpose

This briefing provides information to support your attendance at the first meeting of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Ministerial Group on Wednesday 10 February 2021. It includes background on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, information on Ministry of Education initiatives that contribute to it and further opportunities.

Summary

- The first meeting of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Ministerial Group will be held on 10 February 2021. It will be chaired by the Prime Minister and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will distribute an agenda and working papers to Ministers.
- The agenda will include:
 - An overview of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy);
 - Discussion about Strategy priorities and measures;
 - Budget 2021; and
 - Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Group.
- The Strategy was launched in August 2019. It sets out a shared understanding of what children and young people want and need for good wellbeing, what Government is doing to contribute and how others can help.
- Education and the wellbeing of children and young people exist in a reciprocal relationship. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) thus has a significant role to play in the implementation of the Strategy.
- The Ministry is jointly responsible for two priority policy areas under the Strategy and has implemented a range of actions to support these two areas:

- tackling racism, discrimination, and stigma; and
- advancing child wellbeing for those aged 0-6 years, particularly in the first 1,000 days.
- We have summarised some of the key education initiatives that contribute to these priorities in **Annex 1**.
- 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- There are also further opportunities for the Ministry promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Proactive Release

Agree that this briefing will **not** be proactively released at this time as it contains budget sensitive information.

Agree / Disagree



Andrea Schöllmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy

05/02/2021



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

8/02/2021

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

__/__/__

Background

1. You are attending the first meeting of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Ministerial Group, to be chaired by the Prime Minister, on Wednesday 10 February 2021 between 3.00pm – 4.00pm.
 - a. Minister Hipkins has been invited in his capacity as Minister of Education.
 - b. Minister Tinetti has been invited in her capacity as Associate Minister of Education.
 - c. Minister Davis has been invited in his capacity as Minister for Children.
2. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) have prepared an agenda and will circulate associated papers to Ministers. Key agenda items are:
 - a. An overview of the Strategy (supported by papers providing an *Overview of the Strategy* and *Child Poverty Reduction Targets and Measures*);
 - b. Discussion about Strategy priorities and measures (supported by papers providing an *Update on Policy Priority Areas* and *Current Actions*);
 - c. Budget 2021 (supported by a *Summary of Proposed Initiatives*); and
 - d. Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Group (supported by a *draft Terms of Reference* for discussion).

Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy: Overview for Ministers

3. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) provides direction for promoting wellbeing and equitable outcomes for children and young people. It sets out a shared understanding of what children and young people want and need for good wellbeing, what government is doing to contribute, and how others can help.
4. The Strategy was developed as a requirement under the Childrens Act 2014. It was developed by DPMC with support from Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, Social Development and Oranga Tamariki. It was launched in August 2019 having been informed by input from over 6,000 children and young people and their families and whānau. They told us about what makes a good life and what gets in the way of this.

The Strategy Sets out Six High-Level and Interconnected Outcomes

5. The Strategy's outcomes focus on ensuring children and young people:
 - a. are loved, safe and nurtured;
 - b. have what they need;
 - c. are happy and healthy;
 - d. are learning and developing;
 - e. are accepted, respected and connected; and
 - f. are involved and empowered.
6. These outcomes signpost the social, economic and environmental factors needed to support child and youth wellbeing as well as the key areas for Government and other adopters of the Strategy to prioritise their efforts.
7. While these outcomes are a useful framework, they must not be viewed in isolation. Agencies must work together to ensure all initiatives contribute to wellbeing in a holistic way to support the wellbeing of all children and young people.
8. In addition to these outcome areas, there are also a set of principles for the Strategy. This includes the foundational role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the importance of the Māori-Crown relationship. Another key principle is that the wellbeing of children and young people is interwoven with the wellbeing of the family and whānau.
9. There is strong alignment between the Strategy and the 30 Year Education Vision & Objectives.

Overview of Child Poverty Reduction Measures, Targets and Progress to Date

10. The Strategy enables the monitoring and reporting of progress towards addressing child poverty. To do this, the Strategy uses measures of child poverty outlined in the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018. The primary measures relate to household income, material hardship and persistent poverty.
11. The Statistics New Zealand report for the 2018/19 year indicated that, prior to COVID-19, the Government was broadly on track to meet its three year child poverty targets. It is likely that COVID-19 will negatively impact our progress towards the targets as the economic impacts of the pandemic will increase financial pressure on many New Zealand families.
12. The first three year child poverty reduction targets are due to be reviewed, and the next round of three year targets set, by June 2021. There are a number of upcoming reports on child poverty that will assist with this review.

Education has a Key Role in Supporting the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

13. Evidence shows that the universal provision of education can positively influence children and young people's wellbeing. Equally, when children and young people have a strong sense of wellbeing, they can engage meaningfully in learning.
14. We know that inclusive learning environments, an engaging and meaningful curriculum, student, whānau and community partnership, and culturally responsive teaching are key elements to promoting wellbeing.

Agenda Items for Discussion

Discussion about Strategy Priorities and Measures

15. There are five priority policy areas under the Strategy that agencies have been working on since its development which are as follows:
 - a. reducing child poverty (led by the Ministry of Social Development and Child Poverty Unit);
 - b. mitigating the impacts of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage (cross-agency work convened by the Child Poverty Unit);
 - c. tackling racism, discrimination and stigma (led by the Ministries of Education and Justice);
 - d. advancing child wellbeing for those aged 0-6 years, particularly in the first 1,000 days (cross-agency work convened by the Child Wellbeing Unit); and
 - e. extending whānau-centred approaches to improve child and youth wellbeing (led by Te Puni Kōkiri and Oranga Tamariki).
16. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is significantly contributing to all five policy priority areas through a range of initiatives, with a focus on two areas, as outlined below.

Tackling Racism, Discrimination, and Stigma

17. There are a range of actions that we have taken to address this policy area, for example:
 - a. Introduction of the Education and Training Act 2020. Section 127(1)(b)(iii) states that a primary objective of a board in governing a school is to ensure that the school takes all reasonable steps to eliminate racism, stigma, bullying, and any other forms of discrimination within the school.
 - b. Confirmation of the Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities, the Tertiary Education Strategy, Ka Hikitia and the Action Plan for Pacific Education which provide consistent guidance and support to address racism, stigma and discrimination in education services.
 - c. Support for the teaching and learning of Aotearoa New Zealand histories within our national curriculum.

- d. Roll-out of Te Hurihanganui to provide training and direct support for education services and communities to work in partnership to address racism and inequity.
18. The Ministry also contributes to broader work around social inclusion, including in relation to the Government's response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Attack on Christchurch Mosques. A Briefing Note has been sent to you updating you on the progress of this work [METIS 1249602 refers]. Recommendation 36 of the report recommends that the Government:

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.

Advancing Wellbeing for 0-6 Years, Particularly in the First 1,000 Days

19. The Ministry has taken a range of actions to address this policy area, for example:
- expansion of ENGAGE, a structured play programme aimed at supporting pre-schoolers' self-regulation;
 - significant new investment in Ngā Kōhanga Reo; and
 - strengthening of core universal services through the Early Learning Action Plan.

Further Progress on Education Actions in the Strategy

20. The Ministry has 43 actions in the Strategy monitoring reports, some of which are business as usual. Other actions that contribute to the Strategy are ongoing and are described in Annex 1. Some examples include:
- the Education Workforce Strategy and workforce strategy for Māori-medium education;
 - initiatives to prevent and respond to bullying in schools; and
 - strengthening a youth voice in policy.

9(2)(f)(iv)

[REDACTED]

22. Our focus on child and youth wellbeing is reflected across key Ministry strategy documents, including the new Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP) and Tertiary Education Strategy (TES), Ka Hikitia (the Māori Education Strategy), and the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030. These outline how we can work with the sector, communities and other agencies to support the wellbeing of children and young people, achieve equitable outcomes and create transformative and sustaining change.
23. There are further opportunities for the Ministry to promote wellbeing. We consider that it will be important to provide increased mental health support for learners following the COVID-19 lockdown. In the longer-term, we want to focus on (a) valuing the diverse identities, languages and cultures of learners and (b) building educationally powerful connections with families, whānau and communities to enhance outcomes for all students.

Annex

Annex 1 Ongoing Education Initiatives Contributing to the Strategy

Annex 1: Ongoing Education Initiatives Contributing to the Strategy

Action	Description	Milestones for 2021	Minister
Have what they need			
Free and healthy school lunch programme	Ka Ora, Ka Ako provides a daily, free lunch to all students within eligible schools and kura	Further expansion to reach more students	Hipkins
Free access to period products in schools and kura	We are working to provide access to free period products to children and young people in all state schools and kura during 2021	Further expansion to all state schools on an opt-in basis	Tinetti
Address learners' needs by improving data quality, availability, timeliness and capability	Te Rito provides a national repository of learner data, enabling information to travel with the learner throughout their education	Expansion to more schools. Work is also underway to ensure the safety and privacy of information flow	Tinetti
Happy and Healthy			
A code of pastoral care for domestic tertiary students	The Interim Code sets out a general duty of pastoral care that all tertiary education providers must provide for domestic students	Further development of replacement Code and Disputes Resolution Scheme	Hipkins
Programme to establish Curriculum Leads to support the health and wellbeing of learners	Forty new curriculum lead roles have been created to assist schools with delivering mental health and healthy relationships content	Recruitment/training of leads and completion of service design	Tinetti
Learning and developing			
Enabling distance learning	This includes the provision of devices and internet connections	Flexible learning policy work underway as part of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms	Hipkins
Changes to teaching New Zealand history in schools and kura	Update of the National Curriculum to ensure Aotearoa New Zealand's histories are taught in schools	Preparation of draft curriculum content for further testing in 2021	Hipkins
National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NECA) Change Package	This change package will strengthen NCEA for all young people	Continue to add and pilot new NCEA level 1, 2, and 3 standards	Hipkins
Reform of vocational education	This reform is to create a strong, unified, sustainable vocational education system that is fit for the future of work	Establishment of Workforce Development Councils	Hipkins
Improve learning support: Learning Support Action Plan	A range of actions to provide earlier support and strengthen an inclusive education system where every child and young person feels a sense of belonging	Ongoing development of resources and a review of the guidelines on Suspensions, Stand-downs, Exclusions and Expulsion	Tinetti
Equity Index	The Index estimates the extent to which children grow up in socio-economically disadvantaged circumstances, and will be used in resourcing decisions	External quality assurance and second round of engagement to commence	Hipkins
Tomorrow's Schools Review	The Tomorrow's Schools system will put more frontline support closer to schools to give every child the best chance to succeed	Continue with front line changes and design the Curriculum Centre	Hipkins
Accepted, respected and connected			
Initiatives to prevent and respond to bullying in schools	The Bullying Prevention and Response Work Programme for 2019-2022 is the main vehicle through which bullying prevention/response work is progressed	Work with OCC to understand how schools can provide inclusive and safe environments	Tinetti
Education Workforce Strategy and workforce strategy for Māori-medium education	These strategies are to create a capable, valued, connected and supported education workforce	Continue strengthening Māori-medium education pathways	Davis
Involved and empowered			
Strengthening a youth voice in policy	A Youth Advisory Group was established to enable young people to have their say and influence the education system and issues that affect them	The YAG will continue to meet to inform the Ministry on their views of the system	Hipkins