

# Supporting all schools to succeed

## Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools system

### Information for Boards of Trustees

All schools should be great places to learn. We're resetting the system that governs, manages, administers, and supports schools so that all learners have the same chance to succeed.

Thirty years ago, the Tomorrow's Schools reforms changed New Zealand's schooling system, creating a system intended to better engage parents, whānau, and communities with their local schools.

While the current system has strengths, it is inadequately serving some of our learners, in particular Māori, Pacific, people with disabilities and/or learning needs, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Now, New Zealand has the opportunity to reset the education system with a greater level of resource and expertise at the front line where it is needed.

This reset is significant. Changes will require ongoing investment of time and resource, and will need to be managed in a coherent and connected way over the next ten years.

#### Key changes for Boards of Trustees

The Government respects the vital role that Boards of Trustees play in our education system. Boards will retain their legal status and remain the employer of all school staff, including principals. However, the Government is proposing a number of improvements to better support and guide Boards.

**Training for Board members** – Some training for Boards is currently available, including through NZSTA. The Government will take this opportunity to assess whether the range and nature of that training is fit-for-purpose, or if it could be expanded and/or improved. The Ministry of Education will provide advice on whether Board members should be required to undertake mandatory training as part of their role.

**Board rules** – The Government will also put forward law changes to require Boards to consult with students, staff, and the school community when making school rules.

**Code of Conduct** – There is a need to specify individual and collective duties for Board members, and to make compliance mandatory. A Code of Conduct will provide flexibility to set out commonly held expectations as to the minimum standards of conduct expected of Board members.

**Responsibilities for property** – The Ministry of Education will provide advice on the feasibility and cost of taking on more property related responsibilities from Boards over the next 5 to 10 years, while ensuring schools and communities continue to have significant input into the design of their physical spaces.

**Taking a network-based approach to enrolment zones** – The role of developing enrolment schemes will be undertaken by the Ministry of Education at a regional level, working closely with the relevant schools to ensure their views and those of their communities are taken into account as part of the design process. The best interests of all learners/ākonga and their whānau will be taken into account.

**Complaints and disputes resolution** – Over the next 2 to 4 years, the Government will enable the establishment of panels to resolve disputes, where they cannot be resolved at the school level. The panels' focus will be to resolve serious disputes in an inclusive, culturally appropriate, and timely manner. Complaints about teachers will continue to be within the jurisdiction of the Teaching Council.

**Māori representation** – There will be greater engagement by Māori/iwi in school governance. The Ministry of Education will develop advice about how this can be achieved by June 2020. Schools will be asked to ensure that their plans, policies, and local curriculum reflect local tikanga, mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori; and focus on achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students.

**Other areas of work** – The Government will also ask the Children's Commissioner to review the requirements for student participation in school governance, taking into account the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12).

## What's next?

The Government acknowledges that this is a significant change to further strengthen the education system. Changes related to governance and management of schools need to work in a complex system that includes early learning and tertiary education. The changes require ongoing investment of both time and resource, and will need to be managed in a coherent and connected way over the next ten years.

A detailed timeline can be found in Appendix 1 of the Government's position document, '*Supporting all schools to succeed: Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools system*'.

Website: <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/tomorrows-schools-review/>