

Sensitive

Office of the Minister of Education

Chair, Social Wellbeing Committee

Tomorrow's Schools Review: Report of the Independent Taskforce

Proposal

- 1 This paper supports the report back of the review of Tomorrow's Schools by the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce: *Our Schooling Futures, Stronger Together I Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini*.
- 2 This paper also seeks Cabinet agreement to:
 - 2.1 Release the Taskforce's report in December 2018 for public consultation;
 - 2.2 Extend the appointment of the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce until 31 May 2019 to enable them to lead the public consultation on their report; and
 - 2.3 Agree to revised Terms of Reference for the Taskforce

Executive Summary

- 3 On 12 March 2018, the Cabinet Business Committee, agreed to the Terms of Reference for the Tomorrow's Schools Review (CBC-18-MIN-0029 refers) and on 28 March, the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee agreed to the appointment on an Independent Taskforce (APH-18-MIN-0030 refers).
- 4 The Terms of Reference set out the purpose, objectives and scope of the review. The primary purpose of the review was to consider if the governance, management and administration of the schooling system is fit for purpose to ensure that every learner achieves educational success.
- 5 The Independent Taskforce reported back to me on 16 November 2018 with their report and recommendations for change (Annex One).
- 6 Their report, titled *Our Schooling Futures, Stronger Together I Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini*, recommends significant changes to the compulsory schooling system of Aotearoa New Zealand. I recommend public consultation on these recommendations to support the Government's response and ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to have their views heard before decisions are taken.

Background

- 7 A review of our current compulsory schooling system arrangements, known as *Tomorrow's Schools*, is a key component of the Government's 2018 education work programme agreed by Cabinet [SWC-18-Min-0004 refers].
- 8 The Taskforce's review was required to focus on the following key themes:
 - 8.1 The ability of governance, management and administration of the schooling system to respond to the education needs of the future;
 - 8.2 The ability of schools to respond flexibly to their local communities and the need to balance this with every child's right to a responsive education at their local school, regardless of where they live;
 - 8.3 The roles of governance, management and administration in schools, and how they could better support equity in the educational progress and outcomes for all children throughout their schooling;
 - 8.4 Giving active expression to te Tiriti o Waitangi by exploring the impact of the governance, management and administrative system on the ability of schools to achieve excellence and equity for all Māori students, including Māori medium students; and
 - 8.5 The environment within which schools operate, including the roles of the Ministry, ERO, NZQA, Education Council (now Teaching Council) and NZSTA in supporting schools.
- 9 In April 2018, Cabinet agreed to the appointment of an independent Taskforce to lead the review. The Taskforce members are:

Bali Haque (Chair)
Barbara Ala'alatoa
Prof Mere Berryman
Prof John O'Neill
Dr Cathy Wylie.
- 10 The Taskforce was supported by a 45 member Cross-Sector Advisory Panel representing a wide range of education stakeholders.

Review Process

- 11 The Tomorrow's Schools Review was carried out in three phases:
 - 11.1 Initial information gathering: April-June 2018;
 - 11.2 Public engagement: July-September 2018;
 - 11.3 Review findings: October-November 2018.
- 12 The Taskforce were required to consult widely to gather a representative spectrum of stakeholder views, including young people (especially those for whom the current system is not effective), principals, the teaching profession,

parents, whānau, iwi, Māori and Pacific communities, Boards of Trustees members, and employers.

- 13 The Taskforce consulted through a range of channels including:
 - 13.1 Through their Cross-Sector Advisory Panel;
 - 13.2 Two public surveys (in nine languages);
 - 13.3 Face to face meetings; and
 - 13.4 A formal submissions process.
- 14 From July-September the Taskforce held over 200 meetings and focus groups with stakeholders in twenty towns and cities around New Zealand. These included teachers, principals, Board of Trustees representatives, support staff, young people (in particular those who the current education system has not delivered for), iwi, alternative education providers, Māori and Pacific community members, employers, ethnic community leaders, members of the disability and learning support communities, education experts, academics, advocates for children and young people, and leaders and staff from government agencies.
- 15 They also received 2,275 survey responses, 1,389 responses via social media, and 85 formal submissions and attended fono and wānanga being held as part of the wider education work programme engagement.
- 16 I am advised by the Taskforce that they carefully considered all the feedback they received, alongside the evidence and analysis, to reach their recommendations.

The Taskforce's Report: *Our Schooling Futures, Stronger Together | Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini*

- 17 The report contains eight key sections:
 - Governance
 - Schooling Provision
 - Competition, Choice, and the Schooling Network
 - Disability and Learning Support
 - Teaching
 - School Leadership
 - School Resourcing
 - Central Agencies.

- 18 The report makes 31 key recommendations. These recommendations include significant change to our current schooling system, including the:
- 18.1 Roles and responsibilities of Boards of Trustees;
 - 18.2 Disestablishment of the 10 Ministry of Education regional offices, and replaced with approximately 20 new Crown entities to support schools and kura (called Education Hubs), including the consideration of the establishment of a national Education Hub for Kaupapa Māori settings;
 - 18.3 Principal and teacher employer arrangements;
 - 18.4 Current resourcing of schools and kura;
 - 18.5 Disestablishment of NZQA and ERO and the establishment of an Education Evaluation Office as an Office of Parliament.

Next Steps

- 19 Given the significance of the report, its wide reaching implications, and the public interest in the Taskforce's findings, I recommend that *Our Schooling Futures, Stronger Together / Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini* be publicly released in December 2018 for public consultation. Public consultation will close on 7 April 2019.
- 20 I also recommend that the Taskforce be extended until 31 May 2019 in order to lead the public consultation on their recommendations and report back to me on that consultation by 30 April 2019 in order to inform future Government decisions.
- 21 The Ministry of Education will sit alongside the Taskforce during this stage of consultation, to ensure it can listen to the emerging feedback to inform the Government response. The Ministry will also be responsible for analysing all written submissions the Taskforce receives to support their final advice.
- 22 A revised Terms of Reference for the Taskforce is attached as Annex Two.
- 23 When I report back to the Committee in May 2019, the report-back will also include:
- 23.1 the relative costs and benefits of the proposals that the Minister intends to progress or consult further on, and
 - 23.2 the estimated fiscal costs and regulatory impacts of those proposals

Communication

- 24 As this is the report of an Independent Taskforce, I do not intend to take a view on their recommendations at this stage, or make any commitments. Given the significance of the system-wide changes the Taskforce have recommended, I want to be informed by the next stage of public consultation, alongside detailed policy options, before bringing to Cabinet decisions on a Government response.

Consultation

- 25 Due to the sensitive nature of some of the report's recommendations consultation has been restricted. The Education Review Office, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, State Services Commission, Teaching Council, Treasury, and The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet have been informed of the report and its recommendations.

Financial and legislative Implications

- 26 The extension of the Taskforce's appointments and the public consultation will be funded through the Budget 2018 appropriation for the education work programme.
- 27 The Taskforce's recommendations have significant financial and legislative implications if progressed in part or whole. These will be assessed in the detailed policy analysis process that will be carried out alongside public consultation on the report.
- 28 Any new funding for policy changes arising from this review will be sought in future Budgets alongside other Government priorities

Human Rights

- 29 This proposal is consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Disability Perspective

- 30 This programme of work is consistent with the objectives of Article 24 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026. The disability community will be keen to share its views on the changes to the education system and have, through the New Zealand Disability Strategy, developed a draft set of indicators to report on progress at a systems level for children with disabilities. The Taskforce will ensure that disabled children and young people and their parents and whanau are provided with the opportunity to provide their thoughts on the report's recommendations.

Treaty of Waitangi Implications

- 31 One of the key themes of the review is giving active expression to te Tiriti o Waitangi by examining the impact of the governance, management and administrative system on the ability of schools to achieve excellence and equity for all Māori students, including those learning in Māori medium settings.
- 32 The Taskforce has recommended the roles of school boards of trustees be reoriented. If these recommendations are progressed, they will have implications for the governance of kura. The Taskforce has also recommended that

consideration be given to the establishment of a national Education Hub for Kaupapa Māori education settings.

- 33 The Taskforce will consult with Māori and Kaupapa Māori education providers to ascertain their views on their recommendations.

- 34 The Treaty of Waitangi implications of the proposals will be assessed in the detailed policy analysis process that will be carried out alongside public consultation on the report.

Recommendations

- 35 The Minister of Education recommends that the Committee:
 - 1 **note** the report back of the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce: *Our Schooling Futures, Stronger Together / Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini* (Annex One)
 - 2 **agree** to the public release of the report in December 2018 and public consultation on the report's recommendations until 7 April 2019
 - 3 **agree** to extend the Taskforce's tenure until 31 May 2019 to enable them to lead public consultation on their report
 - 4 **agree** to the revised terms of reference for the Taskforce (Annex Two)
 - 5 **invite** the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce to report back to the Minister of Education by 30 April 2019
 - 6 **invite** the Minister of Education to report back in May 2019 on the results of public consultation and proposed next steps
 - 7 **note that**, when the Minister of Education reports back to the Committee in May 2019, the report-back will also include:
 - 7.1 the relative costs and benefits of the proposals that the Minister intends to progress or consult further on; and
 - 7.2 the estimated fiscal costs and regulatory impacts of those proposals
 - 8 **note** that any new funding for policy changes arising from this review will be sought in future Budgets alongside other Government priorities

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education