

Education: the community has spoken

17 September 2019

New Zealanders have had a major opportunity to have their say on the future of education in this country, the Chair of the Guardians of the Education Conversation, Judge Andrew Becroft, said today.

The Guardians, a Ministerial advisory group, oversees how the views expressed in Kōrero Mātauranga | the Education Conversation are reflected in education policy.

“Through a ground breaking national conversation starting with the Education Summit and continuing through a range of engagements like online surveys, face-to-face meetings, hui and fono we’ve heard nearly 50,000 voices. The people have let the Government know about their hopes for education and for their whānau, communities and children.

“Today the Guardians are releasing a high-level summary of what we have heard through the Kōrero. This represents the voices of the community as we heard them.

“We have heard that we all want our kids to learn good basic skills. Our education system should help develop independent thinkers, who can read, write and analyse. But equally we have heard we need an education system that considers the wellbeing of learners too.

“We’ve heard there are big challenges facing some people in education. New Zealanders like to think all children have the same opportunities at school, and all young adults can access and participate in tertiary and on-going education. But people have told us the playing field is far from level. Māori children, young people, whānau and teachers told us that the system needed to better reflect and foster Māori identity, language and culture. Those in lower decile areas, Pacific learners and those with disability also struggle in mainstream education.

“In publicising key ideas collected from New Zealanders, the Guardians are providing a frame of reference for successive governments and systems to assess what is delivered through education in the decades ahead.

“And by recording these voices, the Guardians are helping to ensure the Ministry of Education is living up to its commitment to work with communities in a new, more inclusive and transparent way.

“The Education Conversation has taken a design-led, participatory approach that is unique at such scale. We are grateful so many people - tangata whenua, recent migrants, experienced educators, children in their early years of education, Pacific peoples, disabled people, employers and many others - have given their views about the future of education.

“The Guardians believe the principle of engaging citizens in the design of education has been a valuable process. It exemplifies what democracy is all about and that education is a community responsibility.”

Judge Becroft said the Guardians’ are looking forward to seeing New Zealander’s views reflected in the Government’s 30-year vision for the future of education which has been released by the Minister of Education today, alongside consultation documents on National Education & Learning Priorities and the Tertiary Education Strategy [here](#).

Enclosed: Annex – Kōrero Mātauranga | Education Conversation *What people told us*

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Editor's note:

The Education Summit Advisory Group, also known as the Guardians of the Education Conversation is Chaired by Judge Andrew Becroft, Children's Commissioner and has as its members Sir Lockwood Smith, Marian Hobbs, Prof Rawinia Higgins, Dr Suitafa Debbie Ryan, Dr Welby Ings, Etta Bollinger, and Deborah Walker.

The group was established to:

- provide guidance and oversight to the Ministry of Education on the narrative and kaupapa of the overall Education Work Programme
- continue to provide input and insight for the Government's 30-year vision for education, reflecting the voices and kaupapa that have emerged from Kōrero Mātauranga | the Education Conversation
- maintain a high level overview perspective so it can identify areas of particular focus where the voices could be more strongly emphasised, and
- through its work, provide a mechanism that delivers increased confidence and assurance to the Government, and to New Zealanders, that the voices that have emerged from Kōrero Mātauranga | the Education Conversation are reflected in the Education Work Programme

For more about the Guardians, see <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/leaders-guide-future-education-nz>

For more about the process involving a range of voices in the design of the future of education, see:

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/education-conversation/>