

8 May 2013
For immediate release

PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS OPPORTUNITY ATTRACTS STRONG COMMUNITY RESPONSE

The Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua Authorisation Board has received a total of 35 applications from communities and organisations from throughout the country wishing to establish Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua.

Chair of the Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua Authorisation Board Catherine Isaac said the Board is pleased with the very positive response to the call for applications and impressed with the range and calibre of the applications.

“The applications represent communities from right across the country and are very diverse in nature. A large number are from Māori and Pasifika organisations and they include many innovative approaches to working with disadvantaged and underachieving students to help them succeed in education.

“The applications include proposals for primary, middle, secondary and upper secondary schools. They range from a vocational and trades focus to a traditional academic approach and many others in between.”

Ms Isaac said the process involved a great deal of detailed work and commitment on the part of the applicants, and the Board was greatly encouraged by the depth of thinking and the passionate concern for seeing the children in their communities get a better start in life that lay behind the applications.

The Board is currently working through a formal evaluation process, assessing each application against a common set of criteria. Short-listed applicants will be required to attend an interview with the Board, and to undergo a rigorous due diligence process. No final decisions will be taken until after the Education Amendment Bill has been passed.

The Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, will announce the successful applicants in due course.

In the interests of ensuring a robust evaluation and procurement process, the Authorisation Board will not be releasing any further information on the applications at this stage.

ENDS

Background notes

Partnership schools

- The Education Amendment Bill creates the legal framework for a third type of state-funded school, Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua (in addition to state schools and state-integrated schools. The second reading of the Bill is expected to take place on 8 May.
- Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua are one of a number of initiatives aimed at lifting educational achievement among disadvantaged students. The schools will provide parents, students and communities with another option to choose from, when considering the most appropriate type of education for a particular student's needs.

- Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua will be held accountable to the Government for raising achievement through a contract to deliver specific outcomes. In return they will have more flexibility to make decisions about how they operate and use funding, such as the number of teachers they employ, how teachers are paid, the length of the school day and how the school purchases resources.
- Successful applicants will sign a contract with the Crown that clearly sets out the responsibilities and obligations of both parties.

The Authorisation Board

Appointed on 1 March 2013, the Authorisation Board's role is to evaluate applications to establish Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua and provide advice and recommendations to the Minister of Education on which applications should be approved. Subject to the passing of the legislation, the Board will also be responsible for overseeing the monitoring of each school's progress against agreed outcomes. The Board comprises:

Catherine Isaac – Chair

Catherine Isaac brings experience from the Government's Welfare Working Group and numerous senior roles in public, corporate and not for profit organisations.

John Shewan – Deputy Chair

John Shewan is the chair of Fonterra Shareholders' Fund Management Company and a number of other boards, and the former chair of PricewaterhouseCoopers. He is also an Adjunct Professor of Accounting at Victoria University.

Terry Bates

Terry Bates is the Chief Executive Officer of Cognition Education. He has a background in public sector education and has held related senior public service roles.

John Morris

John Morris's experience in education includes 22 years as principal of Auckland Grammar School and Takapuna Grammar School. He is currently a member of a number of boards and advisory groups, including the board of Education New Zealand.

Tahu Potiki

Tahu Potiki's experience includes five years as the Chief Executive Officer for Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu and four years in a senior executive position at Christchurch Polytechnic with responsibility for the Polytechnic's responsiveness to Māori. He is currently the Independent Chair/Governance Advisor for the Otago Whanau Ora Māori Provider Collective.

Dr Margaret Southwick

Dr Margaret Southwick is a member of the Partnership Schools|Kura Hourua Working Group. Her experience includes tenure as Dean of Whitireia Community Polytechnic's Faculty of Health, and Director of the Pacific Health Research Centre.

Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi

Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi has been deeply involved in Māori education, including 13 years as the Chief Executive Officer of the Te Kohanga Reo Trust Board. Dame Iritana has served on a number of Government advisory groups and working parties.

