

NZ Model of Charter School Working Group

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For immediate release

WORKING GROUP WELCOMES DEBATE ON CHARTER SCHOOL CONCEPT

At a meeting in Wellington this week, the Working Group on the Design and Implementation of the New Zealand Model of Charter Schools welcomed the recent report of Massey University College of Education's Education Policy Response Group (EPRG) on charter schooling.

Working Group chair Catherine Isaac said the group is keen to encourage debate and that the EPRG's work would be of value in helping ensure the New Zealand model of charter schools builds on the lengthy and extensive experience of other countries in this field.

"As the EPRG report notes, there is a vast amount of literature on charter schools and as we progress through our task we can learn from both the successes and mistakes other jurisdictions have made.

"The identification of issues such as the need to ensure fair enrolment policies and appropriate financial management and accountability by the sponsor, and the importance of learning-focused interactions with the parent community are examples of where the EPRG's findings align with our terms of reference.

"It is also pleasing to see that the EPRG acknowledges that New Zealand's main education problem is the extent of underachievement among disadvantaged groups, in particular students who are Māori, Pasifika, have special education needs, or come from low socio-economic backgrounds.

"The development and implementation of a New Zealand Model of charter schools can not be expected single-handedly to solve this long-standing and apparently intractable problem.

"But it does offer a new approach to raising achievement for those who are not well served by the current system. It gives us the opportunity to harness the commitment of community groups, iwi, businesses and faith groups to make a positive contribution to the outcomes for these young New Zealanders", said Ms Isaac.

ENDS

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