

# Terms of Reference for the Review of Tomorrow's Schools

The primary purpose of the review of Tomorrow's Schools will be to consider if the governance, management and administration of the schooling system is fit for purpose to ensure that every learner achieves educational success.

The review will be led by an Independent Taskforce (the Taskforce) supported and informed by a designated cross-sector advisory panel (Annex C).

## Vision and objectives

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The key features of the Government's vision for the education portfolio are that:

- This Government will champion a high quality public education system that provides all New Zealanders with learning opportunities so that they can discover and develop their full potential throughout their lives, engage fully in society, and lead rewarding and fulfilling lives
- This Government believes in an education system that brings out the very best in everyone and that means our educational offerings need to be as diverse as the learners we cater for
- We need our people to be resilient, creative, and adaptable, with great communication and interpersonal skills, and prepared to work collaboratively as well as independently
- To be effective in meeting these aspirations, our education system needs to change to meet the needs of the 21st century.

The Government has five main objectives for the work programme for the education portfolio over this term of Government. These are:

- Learners at the centre
- Barrier free access
- Quality teaching
- Quality public education
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning.

## Outcome

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The review of Tomorrow's Schools will focus on the changes we need to make to governance, management and administration in education to ensure the fitness of the school system to meet the challenges we face, and to achieve equity and excellence.

The Taskforce is expected to provide its recommendations on the future arrangements for schooling in New Zealand to the Minister of Education by 9 November 2018.

## Scope

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The review will cover the provision of compulsory schooling for children and young people aged 5-19 years (or 21 years for learners with high needs), with a focus on a system that promotes equity and excellence for all NZ children and young people.

The review is limited to the state and state-integrated schooling system and relevant education agencies, but may take into account how the governance, management and administration of the schooling system impacts on the opportunities for employer engagement, the secondary-tertiary interface, transition to tertiary study and work, and transition from early learning to schooling.

The review will be broad-based and not constrained in its thinking, but should explore the following key themes:

- The ability of governance, management and administration of the schooling system to respond to the education needs of the future;
- 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;
- The roles of governance, management and administration in schools, and how they could better support equity and inclusion in the educational progress and outcomes for all children throughout their schooling;
- 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 meet the needs of all Māori students and assessing its effectiveness for Māori medium students.
- The environment within which schools operate, including the roles of the Ministry, ERO, NZQA, Education Council and NZSTA in supporting schools (and the yet to be established Education Advisory Service and the Leadership Council).

## **Operation**

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The Taskforce will lead the review by:

- Providing independent advice on the future arrangements for the governance, management and administration of schooling in New Zealand beyond 2020 to meet the needs of all New Zealanders;
- Consulting widely to gather a representative spectrum of stakeholder views, including children and young people, (especially those for whom the current system is not effective), the teaching profession, parents, whānau, iwi and Pasifika communities, leaders and employers, and capturing these views in the final report;
- Evaluating the environment within which schools operate, including the roles of the Ministry, ERO, NZQA, Education Council and NZSTA in supporting schools and whether these continue to be fit for purpose;
- Considering how schools interact with social and wider government services;
- Basing its advice on best practice, insight and sound evidence; and
- Evaluating the relative efficiencies and effectiveness of proposed changes and the potential impacts of change for children, schools and their communities.

## **Engaging stakeholders**

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This is an opportunity for all New Zealanders to provide their thoughts and experiences of the schooling system, and their advice on improvements and changes.

The Taskforce will undertake extensive and broad-based consultation so that the full spectrum of stakeholder views including learners and teachers, but also parents, whānau, iwi and Pasifika communities and employers are captured and reflected in the final report. Particular effort will be taken to include input from children and young people currently least well served by the system.

A designated cross sector advisory panel will also be established to support the work of the taskforce (see Annex C).

## **Report back**

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The Taskforce is to report its findings and opinions, together with recommendations, to the Minister of Education in writing no later than 9 November 2018. In order to ensure the Minister is kept appropriately informed as to progress, the Chair will provide regular updates to the Minister on the taskforce's progress throughout the course of the inquiry. The report will focus on identifying issues that support a case for change and what improvements are needed, and will set a direction for a detailed design work programme in 2019.

## **Annex A**

### **Background**

Tomorrow's Schools is the underpinning governance and regulatory framework for New Zealand's state and integrated schools. It was introduced in the late 1980s, following the Picot<sup>1</sup> review that identified serious weaknesses in the education system. It was over-centralised, outdated and inflexible, and not responsive to the broader changes happening in the economy.

Legislative change gave effect to the recommendations, particularly focussing on governance, accountability and administrative arrangements. This resulted in schools being autonomous, self-managing learning institutions governed by elected boards of trustees, which are responsible for learning outcomes, budget oversight, the employment of all staff and property management. The review also led to the disestablishment of the Department of Education and Regional Education Boards and the establishment of Boards of Trustees, the Ministry of Education, a review and audit function (that became the Education Review Office) and Special Education Services (which was later incorporated into the Ministry of Education).

The encouragement of greater responsiveness by the education system initially reflected a community responsiveness model. However, in keeping with the opening up of the New Zealand economy at the time, this community responsiveness model then rapidly shifted to a competitive model with schools envisaged as independent businesses competing in a market.

While this produced some level of diversity of approaches and did strengthen local community influence on schools, the competition was for students rather than improved education results.

The benefits from this change have run their course, and we need to take a fundamental look at the system.

It has been almost thirty years since the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools, and many changes have occurred in that time. The changes are within the school system and the context it operates in. For example, we have a new curriculum, a new qualifications system, changes in Māori Medium education, changes in the way we support students with additional learning needs, changes in societal expectations, changes in our economy, trade, technology; and changing demographics.

Significant changes have already been made to the Tomorrow's Schools model, but they have been incremental. If we want to get the best out of what we have now, and address the weaknesses we now know exist, we need to create space for an open, inclusive discussion and debate.

The review is an opportunity to understand the experiences and expectations of the wide range of stakeholders including children, young people, families and whānau, teachers, principals, Boards of Trustees and communities and groups that interact with the school system and its government agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Administering for Excellence (1988).

## **Annex B**

### **Functions and Role of the Independent Taskforce**

The Taskforce will be an independent group of five to seven members appointed by the Minister of Education (the Minister).

#### *Accountability*

The Taskforce is accountable to the Minister for the quality and timeliness of its advice and reports.

#### *Conduct of Business*

The Taskforce will agree an approach with the Minister for carrying out its role. This will specify the content and frequency of its reporting. Given the timeframes for the development of the report, it is expected that the Independent Taskforce will meet frequently.

The Chair of the Taskforce will:

- Provide free and frank advice using a no surprises approach with both the Minister and the Secretary for Education;
- Consult the Minister and the Secretary for Education before talking to the media; and
- Receive from the Ministry accurate reporting and other advice, the nature and detail of which will be determined by the Board.

The Ministry of Education, in order that the Taskforce can fully execute its functions, will support its role by:

- Operating a no surprises approach;
- Providing timely advice and information to the Taskforce through a secretariat function within the Ministry of Education; and
- Consult with the Taskforce on engagement with the media.

All advice or information provided to the Taskforce will be subject to the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 and Privacy Act 1993. All advice or information provided by the Taskforce to the Minister, other Ministers, and/or the Secretary for Education, will be subject to the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 and its release will be subject to consultation with Ministers. Decision on the release of information will be determined after consultation with all interested parties.

The Secretary for Education will support the Taskforce by ensuring that it is provided with the information and expert advice relevant to the development of the report. The Secretary will meet with the Taskforce's Chair to determine the form and content of this information, and on other support to be provided. They will agree upon a budget for the Taskforce following consultation with the Minister.

### *Authority*

The Taskforce is an advisory body and has no authority to direct any government department or agency, employ staff, enter into contracts, or make commitments or undertakings on behalf of any Minister or the Secretary for Education.

### *Other business*

Members are expected to act in good faith, with integrity and with reasonable care in performing their duties on behalf of the Taskforce.

### **Connections with other education priorities**

Various aspects of the education system are being worked on, reviewed or reformed in 2018. Connections need to be made with these pieces of work as they progress. They are:

- The development of the Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP)
- The NCEA review
- The development of a future-focused Education Workforce Strategy
- Development of an action plan for learning support
- A comprehensive reform of school property
- A review of home-based education and care services
- The development of an Early Childhood Education Strategy
- The development of a Tertiary Education Strategy
- A programme of change for the institute of technology and polytechnic (ITP) subsector
- Supporting strong research that delivers outcomes for all New Zealanders; and
- A continuous focus on raising achievement for Māori learners through:
  - Work on Ka Hikitia
  - Development of a strategic pathway for Māori-medium education
  - Providing long term solutions for the supply of Maori language teachers
  - Improving transition from school to the work force and/or further education and training
- A continuous focus on raising achievement for Pasifika learners through work on the Pasifika Education Plan.
- The development of the International Education Strategy and the International Student Wellbeing Strategy

## **Annex C**

### **Functions and Role of the Cross-Sector Advisory Panel**

The Advisory Panel will be established by the Ministry of Education, and will include representatives from the range of groups and organisations that have an interest in the state and state-integrated schooling sector, including families and whanau, employers, early learning providers, boards of trustees, principals, teachers and young people. The panel will include both English Medium and Māori Medium representatives.

#### *Conduct of Business*

The advisory panel will work with the Taskforce and the Ministry to provide cross-sector advice into the work of the Taskforce. It is expected that the advisory panel will meet several times to align with key points in the review process.

The Advisory Panel will bring together a wide range of experiences of and perspectives on the state and state integrated schooling system to ensure that the review can consider the diversity of the schooling system, including the different types of schools and kura, the range of communities they serve, and the expectations and needs of those communities.

The Ministry of Education, to enable the advisory panel to execute its functions, will support its role by:

- Hosting advisory panel meetings;
- Supporting the panel in its role of providing cross-sector advice; and
- Ensure that the panel's advice is provided to the Taskforce.

All information provided to the Advisory Panel will be subject to the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 and Privacy Act 1993.

#### *Authority*

The Panel is an advisory body, and has no authority to direct any government department or agency, employ staff, enter into contracts, or make commitments or undertakings on behalf of any Minister or the Secretary for Education.

#### *Other business*

Participants in the Advisory Panel are expected to act in good faith and with integrity in providing advice into the review.