**Briefing Note: Minister Martin to meet with Board members Salisbury School**

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<tr>
<th>To:</th>
<th>Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education</th>
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<td>Gc:</td>
<td>Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>15 October 2019</td>
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<td>Priority:</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Security Level:</td>
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<td>METIS No:</td>
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<td>Drafter:</td>
<td>Harley Hepetema</td>
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<td>DDI:</td>
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<td>Key Contact:</td>
<td>Dr David Wales</td>
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<td>DDI:</td>
<td>s 9(2)(a)</td>
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<td>Messaging seen by Communications team:</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Round Robin:</td>
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**Purpose of Report**

This report is to support your upcoming meeting with Salisbury Board Chair Emma Thompson and Salisbury Board of Trustees member s 9(2)(a) on 17 October 2019 from 3:00pm – 3:30pm.

As requested, it provides:

- background information on the current Board of Trustees
- an overview of issues Emma and s 9(2) may raise with the Minister
- description of recent interactions between Salisbury, other residential schools and the Ministry of Education
- talking points

The Ministry of Education recommends that you:

**Agree** that this Briefing will not be proactively released at this time because the advice involves restricted or confidential budget related information pertaining to an individual Residential Special School.

 Agree / Disagree
You have accepted an invitation to meet with Emma Thompson (Board of Trustee’s Chair for Salisbury School) and (Board of Trustee’s member) in Wellington on 17 October 2019 from 3:00pm – 3:30pm.

Emma Thompson has indicated that they wish to discuss with you the current enrolment process to Salisbury School and the ongoing low level of enrolments the school has.

As part of the Ministry’s commitment to increasing the rolls at all three RSS the Ministry and RSSs have established the RSS only pathway.

The RSS only pathway, established in October 2018, creates a pathway for a young person to enrol in a RSS without the support of Te Kahu Tōi Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS). The RSS only pathway is an education intervention, and provides a second option for young people and their families who may not want, or require the comprehensive package of support offered by IWS.

The Ministry has recently approved funding to rebuild Salisbury School on the existing site. The Capital Works Delivery Manager has informed the school that the Business Case for the redevelopment of the school has been approved. The Ministry does not publicly announce its funding decisions. Any decision as to when or if this is to be publicly announced will be made by Minister Hipkins.

As of 30 September Salisbury School has seven students enrolled. Of the seven girls attending Salisbury, five enrolled via the IWS pathway and the remaining two came through the RSS only pathway.

Brenda Ellis, previous principal of Salisbury School for ten years ended her tenure as at the end of Term 3 this year. Alison McAlpine is the acting interim principal. Alison is the former Principal of Nelson College for Girls and Chair of the NZ Teachers Council.

On 17 September, the Ministry met with the Board Chairs, David Turnbull (Board of Trustees Chair for Westbridge and Halswell RSS) and Emma Thompson (Board of Trustees Chair for Salisbury RSS), to discuss the introduction of service specifications and the draft funding model. Both indicated that they wished to discuss the funding model with their Board of Trustees.

To strengthen the RSS only pathway the Ministry meets with the three RSS principals each term to discuss how the pathway is progressing. The Term 3 meeting was held on 18 September at Westbridge. Janine Harrington (Principal of Halswell RSS) was not in attendance.
It is likely that the Salisbury Board may raise the financial pressures on the RSS and the ongoing work on the draft funding model. They may also ask about the future property plans for the school. Finally, they may raise a recent issue regarding the payment for the Financial Advisor the Ministry assigned to the school.

Katria Casey  
Deputy Secretary  
Sector Enablement & Support  
15/10/2019

Hon Tracey Martin  
Associate Minister of Education  
17/9/19
Background

1. Salisbury School in Nelson is one of three residential special schools for students who have social, behaviour and/or learning needs that are highly complex and challenging (and may have associated intellectual difficulty). Address

2. In December 2017 Minister Hipkins wrote to the then Board Chair John Kane to advise that the school will remain open. This decision was in line with pre election commitments made in the 2017 election campaign.

3. Previous reports provided you about keeping Salisbury open, and ensuring a functional residential special school network that adds value to the wider schooling network, were provided in December 2017 (METIS 1093370) and February 2018 (METIS 1103454).

4. The Ministry has worked with the three RSS to establish and operationalise the new pathway, with a focus on ensuring RSS rolls are sustainable. In June 2018 Minister Hipkins approved the implementation of the new RSS only pathway [METIS 118231]. The new pathway allows students to enrol in a RSS without the support of the Te Kahu Tōi Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS) where an intensive wraparound level of support is not required.

Salisbury School Board of Trustees and Principal

5. Brenda Ellis, previous principal of Salisbury School for ten years ended her tenure at the end of Term 3 this year. Alison McAlpine is the acting interim principal. Alison is the former Principal of Nelson College for Girls and Chair of the NZ Teachers Council.

6. Emma Thompson is the current Board Chair for Salisbury. Emma replaced John Kane at the start of 2018. Prior to this Emma was a Board Member for two years and a Strategic Advisor since 2012. She has a commitment to building a positive future role for Salisbury School.

7. The below table shows the list of members of the Board of Trustees for Salisbury School:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Board Position</th>
<th>Member Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alison McAlpine</td>
<td>14-Oct-2019</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s 9(2)(a)</td>
<td>27-Sep-2013</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Co-Opted Member</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20-May-2016</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-May-2015</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent Representative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>06-Jun-2013</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-Jun-1996</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-May-2010</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>08-Apr-2004</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13-Feb-2018</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ministerial Appointed Member</td>
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1 this data has been sourced by the consolidated schools information systems (CSIS):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mrs Emma Thompson</th>
<th>14-Feb-2018</th>
<th>Chairperson</th>
<th>Co-Opted Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29-Aug-2018</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-Jun-1996</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-May-2019</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Elected Parent of Ex Pupil</td>
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**Recent interactions with Salisbury and other residential schools**

8. On 17 September, the Ministry met with the Board Chairs, David Turnbull (Board of Trustees Chair for Westbridge and Halswell) and Emma Thompson (Board of Trustees Chair for Salisbury), to discuss the introduction of service specifications and the new draft funding model. Both indicated that they wished to discuss the funding model with their Board of Trustees.

9. During the 17 September meeting David Turnbull expressed verbally his concerns with the funding model, which consisted of:
   a. The schools’ view that the funding model is incomplete.
   b. Lack of communication from the Ministry of Education about what direction the funding model was taking.

10. Gaps in the funding model from the point of view of the schools include:
    a. Disputing the grading levels of staffing e.g. staff costings calculated at 60% of the band.
    b. Costs associated and detail pertaining to staff overtime.
    c. Principals concurrence and grand-parented HDA allowances are not accounted for.
    d. Penal rates/time are downplayed.
    e. Gaps between the model and the current actual costs.

11. At the 17 September meeting the Board Chairs also briefly discussed a draft BDO report conducted by BDO. BDO is an accounting and business advisory services organisation. The Board Chairs sought advice and support from BDO to undertake a review of the draft funding model. The key conclusions and recommendations in the draft BDO report include:
    a. The Boards believe the draft model potentially has some merits over previous models.
    b. The draft model would not allow the Boards to meet the schools’ or the Ministry’s service delivery outcomes, nor enable the Boards to operate in a financially sustainable manner.
    c. Significant operating deficits would be the most likely outcome together with a continued decline in working capital.
    d. The draft funding model would have significant negative impacts on the management and operation of the three schools and negatively impact student outcomes.
    e. A critical issue is that there are a number of key assumptions that drive the model, with one particular assumption being that the schools operate in a relatively consistent manner and incur costs in a similar pattern.
    f. The report recommends that the approach taken by the Ministry should not
be driven by funding but instead should be a model focused on the outcomes desired for students, delivered efficiently within an agreed fiscal envelope.

12. On 1 October the Ministry received the final BDO report. The Ministry is reviewing the report and will schedule a meeting with the RSS Board chairs to discuss the recommendation and issues raised in the report.

13. A briefing on the progress of the funding model and service specifications will be provided to you in late October.

14. To strengthen the RSS only pathway the Ministry meets with the three RSS principals each term to discuss how the pathway is progressing. The Term 3 meeting was held on 18 September at Westbridge. Janine Harrington (Principal of Halswell RSS) was not in attendance.

15. The discussion on 18 September was positive, and the following areas were noted as issues to address or potential improvements towards the pathway:
   a. improving the quality of the risk assessments in applications
   b. establishing a debrief process when RSS only students transition out of a RSS suddenly
   c. agreement that the pool of students eligible for the RSS only Pathway is quite small
   d. clarification that the length of time a student attends a RSS will vary on a case-by-case basis (up to a maximum of two years) rather than every student staying for two years.

16. An updated Briefing Note on the progress of the RSS only Pathway will be sent to you in late November.

17. On 19 September the Ministry's Nelson Director of Education Derek Lucic responded to a letter received from Emma Thompson. The letter expressed the Board's unhappiness about having to pay the costs of a Financial Advisor assigned to their school last year in regards to the statutory intervention (financial).

18. The Ministry assigned a financial advisor to Salisbury School to complete a scoping report on the financial and operational costs of the school.

19. The scoping report concluded that any short term risks to the financial performance of the school were now manageable due to the work Salisbury Board has completed. It was deemed that the School no longer needed the Financial Advisor's assistance.

20. The Board did not qualify for financial assistance from the Ministry to pay the costs of the Financial Advisor. The Education Act is clear that the responsibility for the costs of a scoping report from a Specialist Advisor falls to the Board unless the criteria for financial assistance is met.

Rationale for Salisbury School to remain open

21. In December 2017 Minister Hipkins wrote to the then Board Chair John Kane to advise that the school will remain open. This is in line with what Minister Hipkins promised in his campaign prior to the 2017 election.
Current and likely enrolments

22. Emma Thompson has indicated that they wish to discuss with you the enrolment process and the low level of enrolments at Salisbury School.

23. As of 30 September Salisbury School has seven students enrolled. Of the seven girls attending Salisbury, five enrolled via the IWS pathway and the remaining two came through the RSS only pathway. Two further RSS only pathway enrolments have been supported but the students have subsequently reviewed their plan to enrol.

24. Applications for the RSS only pathway and Te Kahu Tōtū IWS are sent to the Panels for Intensive Support. Further decisions will be made in October, leading to new enrolments.

25. The application process through the RSS only and IWS access pathway is outlined in Annex 1.

Low levels of enrolment in Salisbury School:

26. Since the establishment of the RSS only pathway, 22 RSS only applications have been supported by the Panels for Intensive Support. Five of these applications specified a preference for attending Salisbury. Of these:
   a. Two applications were supported by the National Director of Learning Support and enrolled.
   b. One application was supported however, the student and their family decided a local option was more suitable.
   c. One application was not supported as Salisbury School considered the level of need was beyond the support the RSS only pathway could provide.
   d. One application has just been supported by the Director of Learning Support, and their enrolment is pending.

27. Factors that contribute to low levels of enrolments include:
   a. Salisbury School being a single sex school. Some parents and young people have intentionally requested a co-educational setting.
   b. Unusually high levels of students transitioning out of the school in 2019.
   c. Parent and guardians may request a comprehensive wraparound service through the IWS which supports students at home, in school and in the community. This can include an enrolment at a RSS as part of the wraparound plan.
   d. The total number of applications received for female students since October 2018 (IWS and RSS only) is less (15%) than the number of applications for males (85%).
   e. All applications identify a preferred school, and all reasonable attempts are made to support this choice. Since October 2018, 10 girls have been enrolled into a RSS, four enrolled into Salisbury, four enrolled into Halswell, and two enrolled into Westbridge.
   f. All three RSS schools may decline a request for enrolment if there are circumstances that show their school is not a suitable option for a young person.

2 This student is now supported through IWS
Continued focus is on increasing rolls

28. The Ministry is working with referrers and the Panels for Intensive Support to ensure eligible applications are supported via IWS or the RSS only pathway. The Ministry is committed to young people receiving the appropriate intensive support service that they require.

Property

29. Salisbury School is situated across a large site. The school has significantly more property than it needs to accommodate its roll and functions, and has many buildings in poor condition that are at the end of their economic life.

30. The Ministry has recently approved funding to rebuild and reconfigure the school on the existing site.

31. The Capital Works Delivery Manager has informed the school that the Business Case for the redevelopment of the school has been approved. The Ministry does not publicly announce its funding decisions. Any decision as to when or if this is to be publicly announced will be made by Minister Hipkins.

32. The redevelopment plans include demolition of all of the existing residential buildings, ancillary buildings, the administration, and the Day School.

33. New site access will be constructed from D'Arcy Street. New residential accommodation units to cater for a roll of 20 Students will be built, together with a new administration, new multi-purpose hall and dining facility, and kitchen. A new Day School will also be built.

34. We are in the early planning stages and an optimised design to suit the pedagogical needs of the school will be developed, in consultation with the school. Accessibility standards will be met, and this is particularly important in the high needs environment of a residential special school, where fit for purpose facilities require very high specifications. Construction is expected to take around 12 months and is estimated to get underway in 2021.

Proactive Release

35. We recommend that this Briefing is not proactively released at this time because the advice involves restricted or confidential budget related information pertaining to an individual Residential Special School.
Annexes

Annex 1: The application process through the RSS only and IWS access pathway

Annex 2: Talking Points - Minister Martin to meet with Board members Salisbury School
Annex 1: The application process through the RSS Only and IWS pathways

The application process through the RSS only access pathway

1 Applications are made by the existing learning support providers including Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), Ministry specialist staff, day special and fund holder schools. Applicants note the preferred school on the application form. Referrers are also required to provide a detailed risk assessment for the young person, a parent consent form and a manager sign off form.

2 Regional Panels for Intensive Support (Panels) decide if the three access criteria have been met and if a RSS enrolment is a safe and suitable option for the young person. The three criteria that an application needs to meet are:
   a. The young person is in year 3 to 10 at the time of application
   b. The child/young person has behaviour, social and/or learning needs that are highly complex and challenging (and may have associated intellectual difficulty) and requires support at school, at home, and in the community.
   c. Local learning support services/support have been fully utilised for the child/young person and are unable to meet need.

3 When the above three criteria has been met the application is supported by the Panel and is sent to the Ministry’s National Office.

4 At National Office, the applications are discussed by advisors and the RSS principals who identify which school they believe is best suited to meet the needs of the young person.

5 Advice is then provided to the Director of Learning Support. The Director of Learning Support is the Section 9 delegation holder on behalf of the Secretary of Education and holds the responsibility to make a final decisions for RSS enrolments. The Section 9 application is an agreement between the Ministry and the parent and/or guardian of the young person.

6 Decision letters are sent and when the application is supported the name of the recommended school and the signed section 9 agreement is included.

7 The referrer alongside the family and RSS develop a transition plan for enrolling the young person into the RSS.

RSS interventions via the IWS pathway:

8 Applications for IWS are made by referrers that include Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), Ministry Learning Support specialists, Day special and fund holder schools. Referrers indicate the family’s preferred school on the application form. Referrers are also required to a parental consent form and a manager sign off form.

9 Regional Panels for Intensive Support (Panels) decide if the three access criteria have been met and prioritise access to IWS support. The three criteria that an application needs to meet are:
   a. The young person is in years 3 to 10 at the time of application
   b. The child/young person has behaviour, social and/or learning needs that are highly complex and challenging (and may have associated intellectual difficulty) and requires support at school, at home, and in the community.
c. Local learning support services/support have been fully utilised for the child/young person and are unable to meet need.

10 All applicants that are prioritised for service go onto receive support from IWS.

11 Decision letters are sent out following Panels.

12 All prioritised applicants are assigned an Intensive Wraparound Facilitator who works with the young person and family to coordinate a team of people who are relevant to their life to collaboratively implement an individualised plan of care. This plan may include a RSS placement as a targeted intervention identified in the wraparound plan.

13 If a RSS enrolment is part of the plan a risk assessment is completed by IWS and the Section 9 application progressed. The Director of Learning Support is the Section 9 delegation holder on behalf of the Secretary of Education. The Section 9 application is an agreement between the Ministry and the parent and/or guardian of the young person to enrol in a RSS.