



PPTA TE WEHENGARUA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

# THE TOMORROW'S SCHOOLS REVIEW

2018 PPTA CONFERENCE PAPER



New Zealand has been given a once in a generation opportunity to revise its education system. This paper has been prepared to help members to consider how the system is working for them, individually, and as a whole.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT the PPTA support the Independent Taskforce's design principles as amended, which are:
  - The system is constantly in learning mode
  - The system is coherent from the perspective of all participants
  - The system is purposefully 'connected'
  - The system actively supports and nurtures teachers and school leaders
  - The overall education system enables local support, provision and delivery
  - The system works for equity
3. THAT the PPTA reaffirm that the review should focus on
  - fairness and equity
  - student achievement
  - student well-being
  - devolved administration and the effective use of public resources
  - duplication of resources
  - school innovation
  - collaboration between schools
  - the ability to meet national objectives
  - democratic participation
  - support for teachers
  - trust
  - outcomes for Māori
  - outcomes for Pasifika
4. THAT the PPTA reaffirm the commitment made at the International Summit of the Teaching Profession to work with the Ministry to co-construct the governance and administration system of New Zealand schools.
5. THAT the PPTA urge the Minister to ensure that any changes be carefully planned, implemented, and properly resourced.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. In 1989, the New Zealand schooling system changed dramatically. Under Tomorrow's Schools, governance of schools passed from the central and regional Department of Education managed by public servants to elected parent representatives on individual school boards. Existing regional support networks (such as the district inspectors of schools) were stripped away. There was no longer a body between the school and the central organisations. A broad range of previously centralised functions and duties were devolved from the Department of Education to approximately 2500 individual volunteer school boards: employment of staff, allocation of staffing and funding, management of school property, and other administrative duties, as well as the oversight of the education of students.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2. The Department of Education was disbanded and separate agencies formed. The Ministry of Education focussed on policy. The Education Review Office (ERO) was established to ensure that schools were accountable for the government funds they spent, and for meeting the objectives set out in the school charter. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) was established to be responsible for qualifications and assessment. The organisation now known as the Education Council became both the regulatory body for teachers, and responsible for providing leadership for the teaching profession.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.3. Almost overnight, the New Zealand educational system became one of the most devolved education systems in the world<sup>3</sup>, with individual schools as the fundamental unit and with regional level support structures like the inspectorate stripped away. Explicit in the new governance/administration model was the notion of schools as competitive units vying for students, and with this competition as the main driver of 'quality' in the system.
- 1.4. The transfer (and multiplication) of administrative responsibility and accountability were affected in what the government insisted was a cost neutral process.
- 1.5. In many ways, the model represented the high point of neoliberal thinking in New Zealand.
- 1.6. In the intervening years, there have been modifications to the system – usually to stem concerns about increases in inequality, student underachievement, or the number of schools that were failing. These include a gradual but inexorable expansion of the role of the Ministry, introduction of decile funding to assist schools in low-socioeconomic communities, a change by ERO to a 'review and assist' model, tighter control of initial teacher education by the Teachers Council (now Education Council), the ability of boards to govern more than one school, the Ministry offer to take over the management of property, and latterly, an attempt to encourage collaboration between schools with Investing in Educational Success (IES).
- 1.7. The sheer number of modifications required to keep the system running is a warning sign, and raises the question of whether the current system can ever deliver on the Purpose

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<sup>1</sup> Briefing Note: Background reading for a review of Tomorrow's Schools. Ministry of Education (2017)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Wylie, C. (2012). *Vital Connections: Why we need more than self-managing schools*. Wellington. NZCER Press.

Statement of the Ministry of Education: to ensure equity and excellence<sup>4</sup>. Rather, the evidence points to increasing inequality in our schooling system under Tomorrow's Schools.

- 1.8. The new system was successful in increasing the involvement of parents in their local school and kindling the ideal that schools are responsive to the needs of their local community as well as to the needs of the wider community. An administrative model like Tomorrow's Schools, however, is by no means the only way this can be achieved, and a change to the way our education system operates is needed.
- 1.9. Many countries have improved the effectiveness of their education systems<sup>5</sup>. These cases did not happen by chance, but through deliberate, thoughtful, systematic and evidence-based approaches – usually with public support. This is what New Zealand needs to replicate. It is pleasing to see that the government is consulting widely in this review.
- 1.10. If changes are made, they need to be carefully planned and implemented so that they work for all schools. New Zealand needs a response to the fallings of the present system, not an over-reaction. In this regard, it should heed the words of Finnish educator Pasi Sahlberg who cautions, "Go far, not fast."<sup>6</sup>

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## 2. THE REVIEW

### *Ecosystem*

- 2.1. The Independent Taskforce leading the review has suggested considering the education system as a 'learning ecosystem'. An ecosystem exemplifies the complexity and the interconnectedness of a community made up of living organisms and non-living components. In an ecosystem, the quantum and capacity of each component dictates how it interacts and impacts other members of the system. It recognises, too, that at certain points, limitations in one part of the system create insurmountable barriers to the effectiveness of the system as a whole.
- 2.2. Considering education as an ecosystem has merit, because it moves the discussion from a yearning for a nostalgic past, or a debate between central and local; it is about designing a system that identifies, understands and values each component of the education system in order to provide appropriate support at the right level, at the right time to meet the needs of the students, teachers, principals, schools, and ultimately, the local and national community.

### *Responsibility, accountability and authority*

- 2.3. The new system was described by ex-Secretary of Education, Howard Fancy, as 'tight-loose-tight': tight expectations on what government expected from schools nationally, a loose hands-off approach to the way schools met those expectations locally, and high levels of accountability for meeting the expectations set. The impacts of this are discussed in greater detail below. Fundamentally, however, these delineations undermine shared responsibility for educational outcomes, letting central agencies off the hook for a range of matters which they hold great influence over. Exemplifying this approach is the Ministry of

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<sup>4</sup> Purpose statement – Ministry of Education

<sup>5</sup> Crehan, L. (2016). *Cleverlands: The secret behind the success of the world's education superpowers*. London. Unbound.

<sup>6</sup> An interview in PPTA News Vol 39, No. 3 May 2018

Education's regular insistence that if one school can be shown to be dealing successfully with any given challenge, then there's no reason why every other school shouldn't do the same.

#### *Design Principles*

- 2.4. The Independent Taskforce has decided on six design principles to guide the review. They are as follows:
1. The system is constantly in learning mode.
  2. The system is coherent from the perspective of all participants.
  3. The system is purposefully 'connected'.
  4. The system actively supports and nurtures teachers and school leaders.
  5. The system actively supports and nurtures local education system leaders.
  6. The system ensures that resources are allocated and used effectively.
- 2.5. These principles are worthy. However, it is unclear exactly what principle five means. We fully support it if it means more support for schools and teachers at the local level, and below we suggest different wording. Principle six appears to be about equity. If so, it should be stated simply and unequivocally. While resourcing is part of equity, equity is so much more.
- 2.6. Here are the PPTA's recommended revised design principles:
1. The system is constantly in learning mode.
  2. The system is coherent from the perspective of all participants.
  3. The system is purposefully 'connected'.
  4. The system actively supports and nurtures teachers and school leaders.
  5. The overall education system enables local support, provision and delivery.
  6. The system works for equity.
- 2.7. A review of the way schools are governed, managed, and administered should address the following issues:
- Fairness and equity
  - Student achievement
  - Student well-being
  - Devolved administration and the effective use of public resources
  - School innovation
  - Collaboration between schools
  - The ability to meet national objectives
  - Democratic participation
  - Support for teachers
  - Trust
  - Outcomes for Māori
  - Outcomes for Pasifika

#### **EQUITY**

- 2.8. Tragically, the way New Zealand schools are governed and managed has not led to an equitable education system. Consider three areas: school boards, funding, and property.

### *School boards*

- 2.9. Not all school boards work well. In 2017, one in 16 schools had been the subject of government intervention within the last three years: 154 schools either had a limited statutory manager, or a commissioner who acted as the board. Sixty-five school boards were under Crown management. The average length of intervention was 19 months, with the longest lasting 14 years.<sup>7</sup> These were the extreme cases; many more schools were merely underperforming.
- 2.10. Schools that are not managed well cannot provide excellent education for their students.
- 2.11. The current decentralised autonomous school structure has resulted in some school boards lacking the skills to govern. These boards are expected to succeed in a system unable to address fundamental issues like teacher supply. The school may lack an appropriately experienced principal, or be unable to employ suitably qualified teachers and therefore be forced to offer a modified or compromised curriculum.
- 2.12. Even the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) suggests it might be time to review boards' responsibilities given that many trustees are mostly interested in issues around teaching and learning.<sup>8</sup>
- 2.13. Many board members concur with NZSTA's view, some stating that they felt uncomfortable being the employer of the principal. If boards are relieved of this responsibility, who should take on that role?
- 2.14. In a number of high-performing countries, principals are employed by a local ministry office. These principals report to the local office manager, meeting regularly with them to discuss goals, and receiving their support to attain them. If goals are not being met, the manager puts more support in place to help. Sometimes a principal is removed from the role if they are not able to turn things around. In these jurisdictions, the chances of this happening are rare, as the principal has usually undergone leadership training and will have a proven record in leadership roles before appointment. This idea is worth investigating.
- 2.15. An appealing outcome of this arrangement is that it would make the Ministry responsible for how schools perform. This would force the Ministry to connect and engage with schools in a way that they do not need to in the present system.

### *Funding*

- 2.16. The way schools are funded is not part of the review, but questions of structure and resourcing cannot be separated. The issues of adequacy of resourcing, and resourcing for equity will need to be addressed at some stage, alongside those of administrative organisation. However, the economic inefficiency of a system geared to choice and generating multiple small schools should – and can – be addressed when philosophies underlying Tomorrow's Schools are considered.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/education/89899426/one-in-16-schools-has-government-intervention-in-three-years>

<sup>8</sup> <http://103.14.3.1/national/programmes/insight/audio/2018650326/insight-examining-tomorrow-s-schools>

### *Property*

- 2.17. The devolution of responsibility for school buildings to individual boards has also had a significant impact. The wide range of quality and appearance of school property that has emerged over the last thirty years could be a metaphor for the system as a whole.
- 2.18. Not all boards have done a good job in maintaining their facilities, and hence the government predicts that it will have to spend \$1b by 2030 to bring all school buildings up to code. Minister Hipkins admits that some “schools have prioritised other things for very good reason, but the reality now is their facilities are run-down and we're going to have to spend more money bringing them up to speed. Money is provided to schools to maintain their buildings for a reason and they shouldn't really be spending that on other things.”<sup>9</sup>
- 2.19. On the other hand, other schools have spent considerable amounts on ‘beautifying’ community-facing property in ways that have little – if any – educational benefit in order to provide a competitive edge against other local schools.
- 2.20. One solution would be to transfer to national or regional bodies tasks that are too big, onerous or specialised (like property) for the average board to manage, or those which would more efficiently be managed at a level that allows for economies of scale to operate in administration.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

- 2.21. An education system should revolve around student learning, and unfortunately it is not possible to assign any improvement in student outcomes to the Tomorrow's Schools model. Student achievement did not improve in the first 20 years of the Tomorrow's Schools system, although in the last few years there has been an improvement in attainment of NCEA Level 2. It is moot to what degree this is a result of ‘gaming’ the qualification system in response to the high stakes ‘tight’ accountability measures reflected by the 85% Level 2 NCEA Better Public Services target. International results, in contrast, have remained the same or have dipped. In the last PISA and TIMSS results, while New Zealand's top students performed well, the gap between the low and high achievers – an important measure of equity in education – has widened. The gap is wider than that of many OECD countries.<sup>10</sup>
- 2.22. Wylie maintains that New Zealand teachers will not be able to respond to the needs of our weakest students if they continue to operate in isolated schools, where they are shielded from new ways of teaching and do not get the opportunity to learn off, share with, and build on the learning of their peers.<sup>11</sup>
- 2.23. Take, for example, recent research around cultural responsiveness – an area that is critically important for New Zealand. A heavily devolved system where decision-making on professional development is at the school level makes it very difficult – if not impossible – for the Ministry to integrate current best practice. This effect has been compounded by a loss of system responsibility as a result of schools focussing on their individual needs.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/361379/third-of-school-buildings-fall-short-on-health-and-hygiene>

<sup>10</sup> Mathematics achievement: What we know from New Zealand's participation in TIMSS 2014/15 and PISA 2015. Ministry of Education (2017)

<sup>11</sup> Wylie, C. (2012)

Measurement of teacher activity indicates that while hours worked by teachers increased in total, the number of hours they spent on professional development actually declined when Tomorrow's Schools was introduced.

- 2.24. The system needs to develop and support networks of schools and teachers focussed on student learning. The Ministry should employ researchers, teacher educators, and curriculum experts to establish current best practice, develop resources to aid teachers, trial resources to ensure they are effective, and then use local Ministry offices to share the new teaching practices and support teachers to adopt them.
- 2.25. Local Ministry offices should be developed further. Schools value local support, especially if that is provided by staff with experience and credibility, or people who have been principals, for example.<sup>12</sup> Local offices could be used to tidy up areas around who employs people who are a resource for a number of schools in an area, for example RTLBs, itinerant music teachers, VLNs and activity centres.

### **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

- 2.26. The review is an appropriate time to consider the status and funding of positions like deans, guidance councillors, and special education needs coordinators (SENCOs). New Zealand has high rates of teenage suicide, and increasing levels of anxiety among students. The government is committed to supporting students with learning needs.
- 2.27. Schools vary greatly in how they respond to students who need extra support, as the current method of funding allows schools to decide priorities, and these support roles are sometimes marginalised.
- 2.28. The review could recommend centralised funding and units and staffing based on a school's roll and needs profile for deans, guidance counsellors, and SENCOs to ensure students get additional support. Further, professionals with roles critical for student well-being could be employed regionally for ease of access by schools.

### **DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATION AND THE EFFECTIVE USE OF STATE RESOURCES**

- 2.29. There are numerous examples of waste in the system. Individual schools paying for auditors adds up to millions of dollars each year, with schools having to seek out auditors, provide accounts, and pay the fees for a service which is entirely predictable and could be provided by the state. It is inefficient for 2400 boards to replicate administration and financial functions when many of these tasks could be shared. This is a waste not just of money, but also of time and energy and should be streamlined.
- 2.30. The devolved system also inhibits economies of scale. The New Zealand education system working as a unity must have tremendous buying power, yet the structure means that schools continue to operate on their own.
- 2.31. Another example is the inefficiency of school network decisions. It is too easy for schools to start up and to remain open when they are no longer viable. Take the recent example of

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<sup>12</sup> Wylie, C. (2012)

Tuturumuri School in southern Wairarapa: This school had no fulltime staff or pupils, but remained open until very recently, with the Ministry continuing to pay its annual operating costs of about \$250,000<sup>13</sup>. It is much cheaper and educationally beneficial to run one 800 student secondary school and offer a wider range of subjects than it is to run two 400 student ones with fewer subject choices.

- 2.32. We support consultation and community desires, but the system has lost the ability to weigh up local concerns and those of the country as a whole. The system needs to find a better balance between central, regional, and local decision making.
- 2.33. No-one advocates going back to a central controlling bureaucracy where central permission was required for ordinary purchases, but the present system lacks the right balance. Currently, the centralised bureaucracy insists on 'tight' accountability mechanisms that a highly fragmented system relies upon. It has traded equity for limited autonomy, and economy of scale for a very permissive interpretation of choice.

*Duplication of resources*

- 2.34. Funding schools for the number of students they enrol has encouraged schools to compete. When schools compete, they tout for students. Schools try to outperform competing schools through advertising, open nights, staff, courses and facilities. From the outside, this could seem like a good thing – keeping schools 'on their toes'. In reality, it adds to the workload of staff, schools manipulate results to make themselves look better than they really are, and embark on building projects that make the school look modern or state-of-the-art.
- 2.35. Strangely, schools competing for students actually reduce student choice. Schools usually end up offering the same courses as the neighbouring school to prevent students choosing that school instead of theirs, as every student that ends up at the school down the road means less funding for our school.
- 2.36. Competition creates a climate of distrust between schools. Teachers do not want to share resources that will make another school's programme more attractive than theirs. They duplicate each other's work rather than sharing resources and lessening workload. Competition inhibits schools from working together to provide opportunities that working separately they cannot provide – for example, specialising in different subjects, providing alternative education, or different vocational pathways.
- 2.37. At the opposite end of the scale, some schools are able to rely for their competitive edge on public perceptions of measures that do not relate to the quality of the learning environment in the school. These institutions are not only largely free from competitive pressures, but are able to reverse an underlying tenet of Tomorrow's Schools and select their students rather than the other way round. For a number of schools this can involve selecting students from outside the school's natural catchment area. The effect of this on students who remain in surrounding schools is negative in many ways.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/education/105018260/education-ministry-makes-call-to-shut-the-wairarapa-school-with-no-students>

- 2.38. The schools that are benefiting from the current model will be resistant to changes that move them from their current privileged position. Greater integration of schools at a regional level would lead to a better sense of shared responsibility for all students in our broader communities, and help to mitigate against this.
- 2.39. It is time to change the funding arrangement for schools so that they are only funded for students in their catchment, or so all adhere to zoning rules. In addition, local Ministry offices should facilitate schools working together, and determine facilities and specialisations across a network of schools to avoid inefficient duplication.

### **SCHOOL INNOVATION**

- 2.40. A positive result of local control has been the ability of schools to create and resource programmes that respond to the needs of their students. Schools have responded positively to increased flexibility around staffing, and to being more in control of their spending.
- 2.41. Secondary schools have become more in tune with their communities. There is a clear mechanism whereby parents can influence the direction of a school. Schools are now more accountable to their communities. The devolved system allows schools and teachers to operate with more individuality, flexibility and creativity. Working against this is the bureaucratic demand of the current system: that teachers and schools must constantly provide complex and time-consuming evidence that they are doing their jobs.
- 2.42. To retain individuality, flexibility and creativity, the government and its agencies should operate in a framework of trust that teachers will plan and teach in ways that meet the diversity of the students they teach. Any new model should be based on 'tight-support-light-support': clear expectations, support for individual schools to achieve these in and for their local community, light monitoring to ensure that things are moving forward, and support for schools where this is not so. This form of accountability and support would work better with the Ministry of Education taking over ERO's functions, and providing regional structures which actively support schools on an on-going basis.

### **COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS**

- 2.43. Collaboration between schools almost disappeared with the advent of Tomorrow's Schools. In high-performing countries teachers work together sharing knowledge, practices and resources. They explore how students learn, perform inquiries, and investigate activities that deepen students' understanding of concepts. Guidance and advice from peers is a very powerful device.
- 2.44. Communities of Learning (CoL) have attempted to encourage schools to work together, but these results have been mixed. The review needs to consider how regional structures can be used to establish networks of schools to encourage cooperation, collaboration, and efficient use of resources.

### **ABILITY TO MEET NATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- 2.45. When Tomorrow's Schools was introduced, few people envisaged the amount of research and subsequent knowledge that would be discovered about effective ways to teach. In a

highly decentralised system it is difficult to get new practices into the classroom. This was particularly so when the Ministry operated as a policy-only agency.

- 2.46. Over time, however, the Ministry has softened on its policy/implementation split. A recent example is the introduction of the new Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko Curriculum, where the Ministry allocated \$38 million to ensure schools and teachers have an understanding of the new curriculum content and how it can be integrated into teaching and learning programmes.
- 2.47. It assembled a group of technology teachers and other experts to design an implementation plan, beginning with data it had gathered on the current state of digital technology teaching levels. It then designed professional development that caters for three levels of readiness:
- Digital fluency
  - Nationwide digital readiness programme
  - Tailored digital technologies professional learning and development
- 2.48. The Ministry also provided specialised online modules to assist teachers and students to support the new content for senior secondary levels.<sup>14</sup> This provision is not perfect, but is the kind of support teachers need.
- 2.49. We would like to see subject and pedagogical capacity built up in the Ministry, making it a mecca of knowledge. Currently, the Ministry outsources most PLD. If support programmes are outsourced, the Ministry loses control over quality, and expertise is not built up in the Ministry as it is lost once the project is over. It costs more because of duplication of tasks like administration and advertising. In addition, in-house PLD could provide career opportunities for teachers.

### **DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION**

- 2.50. Community involvement has been a positive outcome of Tomorrow's Schools. However, as mentioned above, not all schools can self-manage. What is the solution?
- 2.51. Some school leaders are eager to retain the current model, believing that it would be a mistake to force greater centralisation on all schools just because some schools are struggling. The argument has been made for a "two-track" system<sup>15</sup> that gives 'successful schools' similar or more local control, and others much less.
- 2.52. The PPTA has some thoughts about this proposal. A 2011 ERO publication reported between 16 and 20 per cent of schools struggling with the responsibilities of self-management – especially in low-income or rural communities, and in small schools<sup>16</sup>. The report went on to state that the schools that are struggling are not necessarily the same ones from year to year.
- 2.53. A system that does not work for in excess of 20% of schools is broken. The challenge is to facilitate community involvement in schools in a way that does not require the community to

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/specific-initiatives/digital-technologies-and-hangarau-matihiko-learning/comprehensive-support-package/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://103.14.3.1/national/programmes/insight/audio/2018650326/insight-examining-tomorrow-s-schools>

<sup>16</sup> Wylie, C. (2012)

be spending time on administration, tasks that require specialist knowledge, or the responsibility of being an employer of the principal and staff.

### **SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS**

- 2.54. Teacher PLD is a major concern. This is addressed in a separate conference paper.
- 2.55. The principal is a key appointment in any school as they are the point where governance, administration, and being an educational leader converge. Some boards are unable to appoint a principal with the experience and skills that they want. In addition, the pressures of management often take priority, and principals are not able to provide the educational leadership that they would like. The review is an opportunity to ease principal workload and support them to be educational leaders.

### **OUTCOMES FOR MĀORI**

- 2.56. The review is an opportunity to assess how well the schooling system is meeting Māori aspirations, be that in mainstream or kura kaupapa Māori. Are there governance or management issues that inhibit partnership and participation, or do not protect the culture? Are systemic changes necessary to foster Māori identity, language and culture – to allow Māori students to succeed as Māori?<sup>17</sup>
- 2.57. Research shows that using a culturally responsive pedagogy can increase the engagement and attainment of Māori students. As mentioned above, a system focussed on individual schools is not equipped to promote new practices, like those advocated in Ka Hikitia.
- 2.58. A compounding issue affecting Māori achievement is that rural schools and those in low socio-economic communities often have high Māori rolls. These are sometimes the same schools that are failing because they struggle to get boards of trustees with the skillset to govern schools, experienced principals and teachers, and teachers in some subject areas.

### **OUTCOMES FOR PASIFIKA**

- 2.59. Pasifika students are another group who are over-represented in the lowest achieving students.
- 2.60. The Tapasā<sup>18</sup> draft framework consultation feedback summary report urges practices similar to those espoused in Ka Hikitia, namely that Pasifika students need teachers who understand and acknowledge their identity, language and culture. Only an aligned, connected education system can facilitate these initiatives.

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## **3. FINAL COMMENTS**

- 3.1. This paper will conclude with three issues – the PPTA involvement in any changes, the place of the teacher registration body, and importantly, implementing changes.

*PPTA involvement*

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<sup>17</sup> <https://poutamapounamu.org.nz/profiles/mere-berryman>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Ministry/consultations/Tapasas-draft-framework-consultation-feedback-summary-report-FINAL.pdf>

3.2. At the 2018 International Summit of the Teaching Profession (ISTP), the PPTA entered into an agreement with the government which stated that the Ministry would involve the unions and the teaching profession in the co-construction of any changes to education. We see our involvement in the reference group as part of that process, but believe that we have a vital role to play in the next phase of the review, especially where changes may affect terms and conditions of employment of secondary teachers and principals who are our members.

3.3. The PPTA would welcome some changes to the current employment model as it is highly problematic, with the Secretary of Education as the employer for the purpose of collective bargaining, and individual schools for daily application and enforcement. The Ministry has little incentive to enforce the collective agreement in schools, and is often unaware of the realities of its application, and schools as employers have little commitment to national collective agreements that they often do not understand well. The PPTA would be very interested in working with the Ministry and other unions on changes that will address these problems.

#### *Education Council*

3.4. The PPTA would like to see the retention of an independent teacher professional registration body, currently the Education Council. We believe that an independent professional body with a clear focus on its functions – deciding and regulating who is able to practise as a teacher in New Zealand, free from political influence – is a safeguard for New Zealand society.

#### *Change management*

3.5. The PPTA wants to see any changes implemented in a way that is mindful of teacher well-being – workload in particular. The implementation of Tomorrow's Schools, the NZ Curriculum, and NCEA left teachers overwhelmed and feeling unsupported. Many teachers left the profession as a result – it was a distraction from the core task of teaching.

3.6. There is no reason for the government to act with undue haste. Any changes should be carefully planned, implemented, and properly resourced. It may be useful to consider different time frames for different transitions; for example, administrative changes, curriculum changes, establishing the advisory service.

#### *A trial*

3.7. One way to ensure that changes will be effective and manageable is to start with a pilot in the spirit of a learning ecosystem. This could be with a region, a district, or a cluster of schools. It would be more illuminating if the trial was in an area where schools are under pressure, or where educational outcomes are poor. This would identify the support and resources that are needed to ensure equity and excellence.

3.8. A successful, transparent trial will be the evidence that will convince the rest of the country to come on board.