

31 March 2021

Consultation on establishing an ESA within a redesigned Ministry.

We are pleased to provide comment to the Secretary for Education on the proposal for establishing an ESA within a redesigned Ministry.

About Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ) is an Incorporated Society of members committed to high quality early childhood education for every child. Established in 1963, the organisation is an influential leader in shaping today's early childhood sector through advocacy, policy, tertiary education qualifications and professional development programmes.

We advocate for early childhood education services and the teachers | kaiako who provide education to thousands of infants, toddlers, and children | tamariki. Our members are drawn from a diverse range of community-based, privately-owned, kindergarten and homebased early childhood education services.

Te Rito Maioha is also a registered Private Training Establishment (PTE) with the highest Category One rating for a tertiary provider. We are accredited and approved by New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to deliver a range of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate qualifications (levels 4-9), including specialist teacher | kaiako education, both nationally and internationally.

We are committed to achieving high-quality teaching and learning by:

- increasing teachers' | kaiako knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Aotearoa New Zealand's dual cultural heritage;
- providing access to online blended delivery of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate tertiary education programmes leading to recognised and approved qualifications;
- promoting quality teaching and leadership through ongoing professional learning and development programmes;
- providing a range of unique resources and services to our members.

General Comments

As requested, we are providing feedback on where the various functions of the current Ministry sit within the proposed framework for both the Education Service Agency (ESA) and the redesigned Ministry of Education.

From a systemic point of view, we trust that this major change management programme within the Ministry will be for the purpose of improving engagement with services and consistency of practice at a local and national level and will be inclusive of all ākonga from 0-18.

Education Service Agency (ESA)

We note that the groups within the ESA closely mirror current Ministry structure – i.e. Regions, National Office Sector Enablement and Support, Learning Support, ELSA etc. We hope that the new ESA will work in a different way to ensure the intent of the change is met, especially relating to ensuring much improved integrated services for early childhood education.

Regional Delivery Groups

It appears that the proposed Regional Delivery Groups will provide similar services to what is provided currently by the 10 Ministry regions. A benefit of bringing the regions together is that the current issues the sector has in terms of consistency of decision making may be improved.

While it is good that the groups will be able to tailor and deliver support and resources that are relevant at the local level, there is a risk that a national view may be lost. There is, however, the risk that three groups will simply be a “merge” into larger regional teams. Care will be needed to ensure the intent of the change is not lost, nor current and future service requirements.

Operations and Integration Group

This group will be pivotal in ensuring that the three regional groups within ESA have the required capability, practices, and processes to ensure consistency. Also, this group will help maintain a national systems view.

We agree with keeping funding and regulation functions close to the sector.

It is good that the Insights and Data group of the current Ministry are moving closer to the sector so they maintain an understanding of what happens “on the ground” rather than in a more theoretical “big P policy” space.

Establishing (or maintaining) a strong partnership with both the Policy and Integration Group and Corporate Group will be crucial so sector issues are not lost, and quality informed decision making is cohesive i.e., not happening in isolation.

Te Marautanga - Curriculum Centre

We support the proposed design of the curriculum centre and are pleased that there will be curriculum advisors in the Regional Delivery Groups so support and advice is available to the sector.

We note that the Curriculum Centre will be responsible for managing teacher supply, and ask if this will be for the early childhood as well as the compulsory sector? We trust that it would.

Redesigned Ministry Groups

Policy and Integration Group

It is good to see that the policy group will be looking across the whole ākongā pathway, especially for tamariki with learning support needs. As noted above, working collaboratively with the Operations and Integration Group will be crucial.

Corporate Group

We note that the corporate group remains unchanged. Again, links to relevant groups within the ESA will be needed to ensure smooth collaboration and cooperation.

Make submission to the Secretary for Education by 31 March 2021.

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