Discussion document

Education Workforce Advisory Group

June 2010

This discussion document is a companion paper to the Education Workforce Advisory Group report (available at www.beehive.govt.nz).

This document summarises key issues, proposals and implications for consideration.

Attached is a feedback form seeking comment from teachers, principals, boards of trustees, professional bodies and members of the public.

This Government is committed to lifting educational achievement in all New Zealand schools. To do this, we need to ensure our teacher workforce is one where professional teachers are supported to grow and develop their skills, and school leaders are clearly focused on raising student achievement.

Late last year I established a Workforce Advisory Group to provide me with independent advice on the future directions for New Zealand's teaching profession.

I asked the Advisory Group to consider the range of issues facing the teaching profession, and report back to me on potential changes that could be made to raise the overall quality of teaching across New Zealand.

The Advisory Group has now provided me with a report outlining a vision for the New Zealand teaching profession, and proposing a way forward to achieve this vision.

Given that these proposals have implications for the way we develop and manage the teacher workforce, and early childhood sector, I am looking to engage the wider education community on these issues. Specifically I would like to hear the views of teachers currently in training or in the workforce; from school principals; boards of trustees; professional bodies and members of the public.

The Advisory Group has recommended that further consideration be given to raising the quality of teaching in Māori-medium settings. I intend progressing consideration of these issues and engaging specifically with the Māori-medium sector at a later date.

I look forward to this process of engagement, and continuing to work with teachers, schools and other members of the education sector, as together we work to build a teaching profession that can deliver the outcomes we want for all New Zealand students.

Hon Anne Tolley
Minister of Education

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Overview

Late last year the Minister of Education established an independent advisory group (Education Workforce Advisory Group) to advise on how to raise the overall quality of teaching across the school system. This group comprised education practitioners, teacher educationalists, and management specialists:

Barbara Ala'alatoa, Principal, Sylvia Park School

Byron Bentley, Principal, Macleans College

Barbara Cavanagh, Principal, Albany Senior High School

Peter Ferris, Principal, Ilminster Intermediate

Emeritus Professor Gary Hawke, Victoria University of Wellington

Professor Alister Jones, Dean, Faculty of Education, Waikato University

Dr John Langley, Chief Executive, Cognition Education

Sally Webb, Leadership Consultant.

Over several months the Advisory Group considered evidence and key issues. Working through a process of discussion and analysis, the Advisory Group identified a vision for the New Zealand teacher workforce, and a number of key proposals designed to achieve that vision.

The Advisory Group's full report is available at www.beehive.govt.nz. It includes a discussion of the evidence considered; the judgements underpinning the Advisory Group's work; and key proposals.

This discussion document presents a summary of **issues**, key **proposals** and **implications** for consideration. A feedback form is attached to gain comments from teachers, principals, boards of trustees, professional bodies and other interested parties.

The consultation process will take place over an eight week period, with feedback received up until 6 August 2010.

The Government will consider the Advisory Group report and outcomes of this consultation process later this year.

How to provide feedback

Individuals can access this document at www.beehive.govt.nz or use the attached feedback form at the back of this publication.

Return hard copy submissions to the Ministry of Education by post, email or fax.

Mail to	Workforce Advisory Group feedback
	Ministry of Education
	PO Box 1666
	Wellington 6140
Email	WAGroup.Feedback@minedu.govt.nz
Fax	04 463 8374

Closing dates for submissions is 6 August 2010.

Approach

The establishment of an Education Workforce Advisory Group acknowledges the significant role of the teaching profession in shaping the next generation of New Zealanders. The work of the Advisory Group recognises that effective teaching is the most important way to improve educational outcomes for students.

The Advisory Group held focused discussions on the issues facing the teaching workforce, which is made up of around 51,000 teachers located in more than 2,500 schools. The Advisory Group's discussions were informed by research, literature and consideration of local factors.

The Advisory Group was positive about the role effective teachers and leaders can make in New Zealand schools. It does, however, consider there is a need to make some changes to ensure that:

- high quality, capable people enter the profession

- the best and most capable of these become leaders in the profession

- there is flexibility to support the growth of teachers within the profession.

The Advisory Group has identified ways in which this could occur, so that its vision for the teaching workforce can be realised.

The Advisory Group's vision for the teacher workforce is one where:

- **high quality, capable people enter the profession**

- **the best and most capable become leaders in the profession**

- **ongoing professional learning and development supports effective teaching**

- **high levels of flexibility for school leaders supports the growth and capability of teachers within their schools and profession to raise student achievement.**

Education Workforce Advisory Group Report

Members concluded that there were specific challenges facing the teaching workforce in relation to Māori outcomes, and Māori-medium education, concluding that: *further work is required to consider … the standards and capability of teachers in Māori-medium settings, and … to support achievement of Māori students.*

Key proposals

The Advisory Group's key proposals focus on:

- initial teacher education and induction

- reward, recognition and progression for teachers in the workforce

- leadership in schools and of the profession.

Initial teacher education

> There is no one "best model" for initial teacher education and induction. However, we do know a range of characteristics that support more effective models. ...A stronger link between initial teacher education and classroom practice is required to improve the quality and retention of graduate teachers. This includes assessment of a potential teacher's disposition to teach, and further exploration of significant changes in the structure of initial teacher education.
>
> Education Workforce Advisory Group Report

Issues

The Advisory Group suggests that variability in the abilities of beginning teachers arises from:

Entry standards and selection	Entry standards to initial teacher education programmes are relatively low and do not necessarily attract top graduates. Induction into the profession not being sufficiently robust.
Programme content	The connection between theoretical components and effective classroom practice is not always well integrated. Course content does not always reflect current research about effective teaching, behaviour management and teaching a diverse range of students.
Professional standards	Professional standards are not applied rigorously across teacher education and registration processes. There is no external assessment or moderation of teachers against professional standards when they become registered teachers.
Training for associate and mentoring teachers	Specific learning is necessary to be an effective associate or mentor teacher, but there is no requirement for the training of teachers in supervisory and mentoring roles. The existing resourcing model does not provide a career and salary structure which encourages/supports mentoring as a specialised path.

Proposals

Proposals to improve initial teacher education and the quality of graduates:

1. moving toward initial teacher education being provided only at postgraduate level (so that entry into teaching is dependent on holding a postgraduate qualification)

2. addressing the balance between the number of teachers being trained and the number of appropriate placements available for trainee and beginning teachers

3. ensuring that trainee teachers are accepted into initial teacher education programmes only after being assessed with a "disposition to teach" through a formal selection process

4. changing how initial teacher education is delivered to strengthen links between trainee and beginning teachers, and teacher education providers and schools.

Implications

These proposals have implications for:

*   the structure of initial teacher education courses by tertiary providers

*   funding of teacher education provision

*   induction of teachers

*   practical training and development of new teachers within schools

*   entry to the teaching profession and provisional registration standards.

Reward, recognition and progression

> Teachers, as members of a profession, need to be able to take ownership of their development and to make career choices that support their professional goals. Equally, they need to be able to be supported to achieve this.
>
> Education Workforce Advisory Group Report

Issues

The Advisory Group suggests that professional development and incentives should not be mutually exclusive, and that the following issues should be considered.

Reward mechanisms	The mechanisms available to reward responsibility, professional development and capability are highly complex.
	There is tight prescription over the use of reward mechanisms provided in collective agreements.
	Reward mechanisms and some allowances do not necessarily reinforce the importance of teaching and learning.
Selection and appointment of mentors	There could be clearer standards/expectations set around mentoring or professional leadership roles that inform selection and appointment decisions of principals.
Incentives and salary structures	Salary structures could be changed to provide external motivation for teachers to develop specialisations in mentoring or professional development.

Proposals

Proposals to improve reward, recognition and progression include focusing on:

1. providing career development opportunities to support effective teaching and progression through the profession

2. creating greater flexibility for principals to use resources at their disposal, such as salary units and non contact time, to provide opportunities for teachers to upskill and to reward their increased skill and capability

3. setting clear standards so that effective, transparent and robust judgements of teacher capability and performance can be made.

Implications

These proposals have implications for:

- the way teachers are incentivised and rewarded for ongoing professional learning

- standards for, and expectations of, teachers.

Leadership within a school

> Strong leadership is based on adequate preparation, effective professional support, effective remuneration and a clear understanding of the roles and practices of leadership.
>
> Education Workforce Advisory Group Report

Issues

The Advisory Group suggests that stronger educational leadership can be developed by reconsidering what skills are valued and rewarded in schools.

Progression	There are no specific requirements to become a principal other than being a registered teacher.
Appointment and appraisal	Boards of trustees hold responsibility for decisions on: • appointing principals • appraisal and performance management of principals.
Mentoring	There is no requirement or expectation that principals will have a mentor to assist them to reflect on and improve their practice.
Status of rural principal roles	Rural principalship is not regarded as a positive step on a career pathway and is less valued than gaining experience in urban/non-teaching principal roles.
Building on experience	There is a loss of skills and knowledge of experienced principals when they move out of schools.

Proposals

Proposals to strengthen professional leadership within schools include:

1. establishing compulsory training and development for aspiring and new principals and focusing more support on growing distributive leadership within schools

2. introducing a system of professional mentoring for all principals to support professional discussions/development

and that there needs to be greater focus on:

3. supporting educational leadership rather than administrative management

4. introducing secondments across schools for teachers aspiring to become principals

5. introducing a system of professional mentoring for all principals to support

6. providing flexibility for principals to support, recognise and reward teaching excellence and distributed leadership.

Implications

These proposals have implications for:

• employment relationships

• the expectations set for appointment to principalship.

Leadership of the profession

Strong leadership within the profession is … significant to the success of schools and ultimately of students.

Issues

The Advisory Group suggests that the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) has a strong role to play as the professional body for teachers. It considers that there are issues that impact on the ability of NZTC to provide professional leadership.

Role clarity	Teaching has no specific requirement for ongoing professional development as part of continuing registration (unlike nursing, social work, law etc).
	Direct representation of teacher unions on NZTC may lead to emphasis on employment conditions and industrial matters rather than professional leadership.
	It is unclear how NZTC's role differs from professional leadership roles and activities developed by teacher unions.
Nature/identity of the profession	There are no comprehensive and binding ethical standards required of teachers – NZTC's Code of Ethics is more a guideline than a robust set of standards against which teachers are expected to align.

Proposals

Proposals to strengthen professional leadership for the teaching profession include:

1. refocusing the role of NZTC with responsibility for setting clear requirements for:

    a. entry to the profession

    b. continuing professional development within the profession

    c. ethical accountability of teachers.

Implications

These proposals may have implications for:

- the current capacity and capability of NZTC

- membership of NZTC.

Feedback form

- Details of where to submit feedback is on page 1 of this document
- You can access this document and form at www.beehive.govt.nz

To help us review and summarise all feedback received, please indicate if you are a:

☐ Teacher trainee   ☐ Board member

☐ Teacher   ☐ Parent

☐ Principal   ☐ Member of a tertiary education organisation

☐ Member of the public

You may wish to indicate your name/organisation:

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Initial teacher education and induction

1. Provide comment on the Advisory Group's proposals for initial teacher education/induction:

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2. Identify any other proposals in relation to initial teacher education and/or induction you think should be considered:

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3. Identify any other implications in relation to initial teacher education and/or induction you think should be considered:

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Reward, recognition and progression

4.   Provide comment on the proposals outlined for reward recognition and progression:

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5.   Identify any other proposals you think should be considered:

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6.   Identify any other implications you think should be considered:

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Leadership within schools

7.   Provide comment on the proposals outlined for leadership within schools:

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8.   Identify any other proposals you think should be considered:

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9. Identify any other implications you think should be considered:

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Leadership of the profession

10. Provide comment on the proposals relating to leadership within schools:

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11. Identify any other proposals you think should be considered:

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12. Identify any other implications you think should be considered:

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