MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

Briefing Note: Advice on the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report on student voice in school/kura governance

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	19 February 2021	**Priority:**	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	**METIS No:**	1249917
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	**Round Robin:**	No

Purpose of Paper

This briefing provides advice on the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report on student voice in school/kura governance. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has asked to meet with you to discuss this report.

Summary

- In December 2019, you invited the Children's Commissioner to undertake a review of children and young peoples' participation in school/kura governance and recommend improvements. In December 2020, the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) gave you its final report.

- The Office of the Children's Commissioner made six recommendations to improve student voice in school/kura governance, including amending the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) to require schools to create a mechanism for student engagement.

- The OCC recommends amending legislation to remove the current student representative on school boards with students above year 9 and replacing this with a new mechanism for student engagement. We propose working with the OCC and the sector to create a national approach that schools will use to enable student engagement and to capture and hear students' voice. Following development of the national approach, we will consider whether legislative change is required.

- We are comfortable that the non-regulatory recommendations outlined in the report are either already key considerations of, or can be incorporated into, our current work programmes.

Proactive Release

Agree that this briefing will not be proactively released until the Office of the Children's Commissioner have publicly released their report.

Agree / Disagree

Dr Andrea Schöllmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

19/02/2021

8 / 4 / 2021

I'm not that keen on the removal of BOT learner reps.

Background

1. On 16 October 2019, Cabinet agreed that, as part of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms, the Minister of Education should invite the Children's Commissioner to review the requirements for children and young peoples' participation in school/kura governance and provide recommendations on what improvements could be made, if any [SWC-19-MIN-0153 refers].

2. Following Cabinet's decision, in December 2019, you formally invited the Children's Commissioner to undertake a review of children and young peoples' participation in school/kura governance and to recommend improvements [METIS 1214988 refers].

Undertaking the review

3. This review was delayed due to Covid-19, causing the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) to reconsider how it engaged with students. They provided you an update in April 2020 on the review work programme.

4. In early December 2020, OCC invited the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) to provide feedback on its draft report, and then on 17 December 2020 the OCC sent you its final report, *Advice from the Office of the Children's Commissioner on how the requirements for student participation in school/kura governance can be improved.*

5. The OCC's final report provides six recommendations. These are discussed below and are outlined in Annex 1. The OCC has asked to meet with you and the Ministry to discuss these recommendations.

The Ministry's response to the OCC final report and recommendations

6. In general, the Ministry largely agrees with the conclusions of the OCC final report. We acknowledge that most schools and kura can do better in seeking student input in their decision-making, and that student engagement processes could better capture the diversity of the student community.

7. However, there are two key issues with OCC's report, that we note will potentially be considered when we develop the Action Plan for improving student attendance and engagement (discussed in paragraph 19 below):

The conflation of the concepts of 'management' and 'governance' and how this pertained to student decision-making

a. The Ministry noted that the review's findings confused management and governance. Additionally, the draft report blurred the difference between decision-makers hearing and considering student voice, and students being decision-makers themselves.

Gaps in the review methodology in terms of groups surveyed and interviewed, namely Pacific communities and 5 - 7-year-old students

b. Although the findings from the review provide insights into the current state of student engagement in school decision-making, we consider that any policy proposals arising from the review will require further research and analysis of student engagement in school/kura settings.

Recommendation one: amend legislation to create a mechanism for student engagement

Recommendation two: develop guidelines to support a mechanism for student engagement

Recommendation three: mandate the Education Review Office to monitor implementation of the mechanism for student engagement

8. OCC recommended that the legislative requirement for boards to have a student representative (for schools where students are enrolled full-time in year levels above year 9) be removed and replaced with a requirement for schools to have a mechanism[1] which commits to engaging with students in schools/kura to understand their experience and act on student voice. In addition, OCC recommended that legislation should also consider objectives when designing the mechanism, including ensuring students have a say; that the design and evaluation of the mechanism include a range of diverse perspectives; give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi; consider and act on student voices; and take a holistic view of students.

9. In addition to the recommendation to amend legislation, OCC also recommended the following:

   a. guidelines be developed to support school/kura boards and principals/tumuaki to implement the mechanism, ensuring they consult with a range of audiences during implementation; and

   b. the Education Review Office (ERO) should be given the mandate and support to monitor school/kura implementation of the student engagement mechanism, to ensure schools are giving students the opportunity to engage in school decisions.

Issues with the current model for student engagement on boards

10. The review found that the 'one student board member' model alone was not an effective way of enabling students to have a say at school. Students often did not know who the board were or what their role was. Additionally, some felt that the model was a burden for student board members and did not guarantee that student voice was informing governance decisions.[2]

11. Although the current legislation provides that boards, with a standard constitution that administer schools with students enrolled full time above year 9, must include one student member,[3] the Ministry considers that schools/kura should be doing more to ensure students have a say. For example, we provide advice to schools that they should ensure that students have a voice in the development of schools' strategic plans.

12. Using this provision as the only way to access student voice, as the review finds, is evidence of a problem with the current model. OCC's review provides an opportunity for the Ministry to work with the OCC and the sector to develop a national approach that schools will use to enable student engagement and to capture and hear students' voice. As this work develops, we can determine whether legislative change is required.

Guidance and monitoring of a mechanism for student engagement

13. Currently, the Ministry provides schools with high-level guidance on student engagement activity, such as via the National Education and Learning Priorities[4], and schools have the responsibility to create policies that meet their objectives under the Act.

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[1] This mechanism could include student engagement via student councils or hui, student leadership positions, and surveys.

[2] There was also the concern that the model excludes primary aged students, given the provision for standardly constituted state school boards to have a student representative only applies to boards that administer schools with students in year level 9 and above. This then means there are no specific provisions in the Act for primary school aged students to be on a board.

[3] Section 119(1)(f) of the Act specifies that schools must have a student representative on boards if the board administers a school for students in year levels above year 9.

[4] The National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP) set out the Government's priorities for education to ensure the success and wellbeing of all learners. Ensuring engagement from a diverse range of learners aligns with NELP priorities of: ensuring learning spaces are safe, inclusive and free from discrimination and bullying; working with whānau and communities to design/deliver education that responds to learners needs; reducing barriers to education for all learners; and developing staff to strengthen teaching, leadership and learner support capability.

14. <mark>The guidance and resources we currently provide can be overwhelming for schools, families and learners,</mark> both in volume and the content provided in each. We therefore consider that a national approach, developed with the OCC and agreed with the sector, would be preferable to more guidance or advice. This approach will result in an agreed tool that schools will use to engage students in board matters.

15. The Ministry is already progressing work on a framework for measuring wellbeing. We would link this work with the engagement work to ensure that board obligations relating to student wellbeing and student engagement are aligned.

16. In regard to monitoring, ERO has advised that monitoring school/kura compliance of a student engagement mechanism sits within their current mandate and would not be a significant burden on their existing work. ERO currently engages with students as part of its review process, and schools are required to engage students on what and how they are learning.

Work on school board elections framework

17. Currently, the Ministry is progressing a review of the school board election framework. This follows from concerns that the one student board member model is not effective enough at ensuring student voice in school board decisions. For example, if there is a casual vacancy for a student representative, schools are required to run another election to fill it. If no nominations are received, or no board member is elected at this election, the vacancy for the student representative is not allowed to be filled until the next annual student elections.

18. We propose removing this prohibition and requiring schools to either select a student representative or establish a different method through which to enable student voice on school boards. As a minimum, <mark>we consider that schools should be required to make greater efforts to publicise and hold student representative elections.</mark> Advice on the board elections framework will be provided to you in March 2021, along with a draft Cabinet paper seeking approval to publicly consult on proposed changes.

Education Work Programme Action Plan to improve student attendance and engagement

19. The Cabinet paper on the Ministry's Education Work Programme for 2021 includes work to produce an Action Plan to improve student attendance and engagement. While this Plan has not yet been developed, it is likely to include a focus on student voice and strengthening educationally powerful connections between education providers, students and whānau, and wider communities, which are all known to impact on student attendance and engagement. Given this aligns with OCC's finding that student engagement in school decision-making invests students in their school and wellbeing, this will be considered when developing the Action Plan.

Ministry recommendation

20. As the review confirmed that there is a problem with the one student one board model, particularly as a way for schools to capture student voice, there is merit in considering the issue further in other work programmes, such as the Action Plan on Attendance and Engagement and board elections framework. We also recommend working with OCC and the sector to create a national approach that schools will use to enable student engagement and to capture and hear students' voice. Following development of this work, we will consider whether legislative change is required.

Recommendation four: amend legislation to strengthen the Treaty partnership

21. OCC recommended that the Ministry insert a provision into the Act that places an obligation on the Secretary for Education (the Secretary), to the extent they are empowered to, to give practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, similar to section 7AA of

the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.[5] OCC envisage that this provision would encompass obligations to set and report on ways that schools/kura enable Māori students to have a say in board decisions, as well as obligations to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to increase participation in governance and improve Māori outcomes.

22. The Act already contains a new provision (section 6) that gives the Minister and the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti the power to issue a joint statement to the Secretary that sets out expectations for the agency to give effect to public service objectives that relate to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This means that a statement can set out expectations about how the Ministry will support Māori students to achieve equitable outcomes in the education system, along with expectations for the Ministry to achieve this.

23. In addition, the Public Service Act 2020 has provisions that set out the Crown's relationships with Māori.[6] In particular, the role of the public service includes supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This is done by the heads of public service agencies (including the Secretary for Education) having responsibility for developing and maintaining the capability of the public service to engage with Māori and to understand Māori perspectives.[7]

24. The Ministry considered section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act when developing the Act. We instead decided to progress the approach taken in section 6 of the Act (paragraph 22 above).

Ministry recommendation

25. We consider that the new provisions in section 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020 and Public Service Act 2020 already achieve the objectives sought in OCC's recommendation.

Recommendation five: strengthen board training around student decision-making

26. OCC recommended that the Ministry ensure that board training includes how to enable students to have a say in decisions in ways that are student-centred and culturally responsive.

27. This follows from the review finding that students saw a need for teachers and boards to have more training, such as in disability awareness and what constitutes safe spaces for students to have a say. In addition, the review found that students thought that boards did not get adequate training on how to get student input.

28. Following Cabinet decisions, the Ministry is preparing advice on options for reforming board training, including whether any training should be mandatory [SWC-019-MIN-0153 refers]. As part of this work, the Ministry will consider the training material that provides boards guidance on how to ensure effective student and whānau engagement in school decision-making, and whether any improvements are needed.

Ministry recommendation

29. We recommend accepting this recommendation, as we can include student engagement and decision-making into our future review of current board training, and wider advice on options for progressing mandatory board training.

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[5] Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act sets out the duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki in recognising and providing practical commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This is done through the agency's policies, practices, and services that impact on Māori children, where the agency should give regard to mana tamaiti and the whakapapa of Māori children, as well as developing strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations, and reporting on progress to achieve this.

[6] Section 14 of the Public Service Act 2020.

[7] Additionally, the good employer requirements of section 73 of the Public Service Act include chief executives being responsible for recognition of the aims and aspirations and employment requirements of Māori, as well as the need for greater involvement of Māori in public service.

Recommendation six: build diversity of student board members, Te Tiriti o Waitangi training and engagement activities into the Ministry's wider diversity of board member workstream

30. The students interviewed as part of the OCC review noted that increasing the number of students on the board would help them have a greater say in decision-making, as students could support each other at board meetings. Additionally, students spoke of the need for more diverse representation of students on boards, including greater gender and disability diversity.

31. In our initial feedback on the draft report, we advised OCC that a workstream to 'increase the diversity of board members' was not specifically commissioned as part of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms. The Ministry is applying a board diversity lens over several of its Tomorrow's Schools workstreams, including development of a board code of conduct, greater engagement by iwi and Māori in schooling governance, and broader analysis of the Act through a Te Tiriti o Waitangi lens.

    Ministry recommendation

32. It will be important to build diversity into the national approach that schools will use to enable student engagement. Applying a board diversity lens will also be considered as part of relevant Tomorrow's Schools reforms work streams.

Key Risks and Benefits

33. We are comfortable that many of the recommendations outlined in the report are either already key considerations of, or can be incorporated into, our current work programmes.

Annexes

Annex 1: Recommendations from the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report on student voice in school/kura governance

Annex 1: Recommendations from the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report on student voice in school/kura governance

1. Replace the legislative requirement to have a secondary school student board member in section 119(1)(f) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) with a requirement for schools to, within 18 months of the amendment coming into force, have a mechanism which commits to engaging with students in schools/kura to understand their experience and enable them to have input into decisions at the school. The mechanism should include the following objectives:

    a. Enable students to have a say on a broad range of issues at school, including both governance and management decisions;

    b. Take a holistic view of students, including understanding them in the context of their families and whānau;

    c. Give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by ensuring that the mechanism reflects tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori in collaboration with Māori students and whānau;

    d. Involve students in design and evaluation of the mechanism;

    e. Consider and act on student voices using a clear and transparent process;

    f. Include a diverse range of student voices, including Māori, Pacific other ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQIA+, in ways that are accessible to them.[8]

2. Develop guidelines to support school/kura boards and principals/tumuaki to implement the above requirement in consultation with children and young people, and groups representing the interests of whānau and hapori, teachers/kaiako, principals/tumuaki and school/kura boards. The guidelines should support schools/kura to design a mechanism that ensures a diverse range of student voices are heard and include best practice examples to this effect.

3. Mandate and support the ERO to monitor the implementation of this requirement alongside the learning outcomes it already evaluates, to help ensure schools are giving children and young people the opportunity to have a say effectively.

4. Insert a provision similar to, but stronger and more reflective of Treaty partnership than, section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 into the Education and Training Act 2020 that imposes obligations on the Secretary of Education, to the extent they are empowered, to give practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This could include obligations to set and report on ways schools/kura enable Māori students to have input into governance and management decisions at school/kura, and to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to increase participation opportunities and improve outcomes for Māori students.[9]

5. Ensure board training includes how to enable students to have a say in decisions in ways that are student-centred and culturally responsive.

6. Ensure the workstream to increase the diversity of board members includes a focus on the diversity of student board members, Te Tiriti o Waitangi training, and considers how to ensure engagement carried out by, or on behalf of the board, are inclusive of the full diversity of the school/kura community.

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[8] OCC note that while a mechanism is being established the requirement for secondary schools to have a student board member would remain.

[9] This recommendation aligns with the Ka Hikitia guiding principle of Te Tiriti and the outcome domain of Te Tangata.

Advice from the Office of the Children's Commissioner on how the requirements for student participation in school/kura governance can be improved

The Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) was asked by the Minister of Education to review and recommend updates to the requirement for student participation in school/kura governance.

> **"I imagine the board as rainbow unicorns in the sky."** – *student focus group member*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Following the Tomorrow's Schools Review, the OCC was asked to review the requirements of student involvement in the governance/operations of schools/kura, taking into account Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and provide recommendations for improvements.

2. The review involved five focus groups with 28 students, a total of eight phone interviews with principals/tumuaki, an online student survey with 85 responses from five schools and community groups, and a high-level desk search of current research on the topic of student participation in New Zealand and internationally.

3. Through this review, we found students do not necessarily distinguish between goverance and management decisions. They want to have a say on a broad range of both governance and management issues at school in different ways and that what "good" looks like is different in different settings.

4. We also found there are some considerations unique to kura, including different processes to seeking and acting on student voice involving both ākonga and whānau, which needs to be recognised in legislation. Related to this, we found kura tumuaki consider seeking and acting on ākonga input is an emobodiment of true partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which should be given practical effect in legislation.

5. We also found the one student board member model alone is not an effective way of enabling students to have a say at school. Many students did not know who the board are or what their role is. Even when there was an awareness of the board and its role, most students and school/kura principals/tuamaki did not feel the one student board member model alone was an effective mechanism due to the burden it puts on students and the "fleeting and illusory" ways boards often interact with students. This model of getting students' input does not necessarily mean that student voice more generally is informing governance decisions. Instead, there is a need to make minimum legislative requirements both stronger and more flexible.

6.   We make a number of recommendations to enable stronger and more flexible means of including student voice which align siginificantly with the newly issued Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP) – particularly priorities 1, 2, 3, and 6. This includes a recommendation to remove the legislative requirement to have one secondary school student board member in section 119(1)(f) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act). We recommend section 119(1)(f) of the Act is replaced with a requirement for schools to have a mechanism which commits to engaging with students in schools and kura to understand their experience and enable them to have input into both governance and management decisions, underpinned by a number of objectives. The mechanism may incorporate a range of ways of hearing from students within a school/kura environment.

7.   This requirement should be implemented by school and kura boards and principals/tumuaki within 18 months of the amendment coming into force and students should remain on secondary school boards in the meantime.

8.   Introducing this requirement, which mandates the "what" but not the "how" of hearing student voice in school/kura decisions, would have a number of benefits that the current one student board member requirement does not. It would:

- extend obligations to get the input of students and their whānau in decisions at school to all schools, including kura, primary schools, and schools in youth justice and care and protection facilities;
- enable students themselves to be involved in the design and evaluation of the mechanism;
- enable students to have a say on a broad range of issues at schools and kura, including governance and management decisions;
- enable a diverse range of students to have a say at schools and kura in ways that are accessible to them.

9.   Schools may still choose to have student board members as part of being informed by student voice. Where this is the case, we consider at least three student board members to be good practice, rather than the one student requirement as currently legislated. Training, both for student board members and for the other board members working alongside students, will be important to ensure this is an effective mechanism.

10.   We look forward to meeting with you and your officials to discuss our recommendations further. We have kept in touch with Ben O'Meara, Group Manager, Education Systems Policy and his team at the Ministry of Education throughout our review and sent them a draft of this report on which they have provided initial feedback on our findings and recommendations.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

OCC recommends you:

note our findings that:

- most students want to have a say on a broad range of issues at schools, at different levels and in a range of ways;
- there are some good examples of ways students have a say at school;
- there are barriers to students having a say at school, including the current one student board member model being narrow and inflexible;
- there is a need to make existing legislative requirements both stronger and more flexible by mandating in legislation that, rather than one student board member, schools are

required to have a mechanism to hear and act on student voice, underpinned by a number of objectives. This would better enable students of all ages in all types of school settings to have a say on things that affect them at school, while providing appropriate flexibility for a diversity of students, schools, and kura.

consider our recommendations to:

a. replace the legislative requirement to have one secondary school student board member in section 119(1)(f) of the Education and Training Act 2020 with a requirement for schools to, within 18 months of the amendment coming into force, have a mechanism which commits to engaging with students in schools and kura to understand their experience and enable them to have input into decisions at school. The mechanism should have the following objectives written into the amended section: for the mechanism to:

- enable students to have a say on a broad range of issues at school, including both governance and management decisions;
- take a holistic view of students, including understanding them in the context of their families and whānau;
- give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by ensuring that the mechanism reflects tikanga Māori, matauranga Māori and te ao Māori in collaboration with Māori students and whānau;
- involve students in design and evaluation of the mechanism;
- consider and act on student voices using a clear and transparent process;
- include a diverse range of student voices, including Māori, Pacific, other ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQIA+, in ways that are accessible to them.

The amendment should make clear that while the mechanism is being established, the requirement for secondary schools to have a student board member remains;

b. develop guidelines to support school and kura boards and principals/tumuaki to implement this requirement in consultation with children and young people, and groups representing the interests of whānau and hapori, teachers/kaiako, principals/tumuaki and school/kura boards. The guidelines should support schools/kura to design a mechanism that ensures a diverse range of student voices are heard and include best practice examples to this effect;

c. mandate and support the ERO to monitor the implementation of this requirement alongside the learning outcomes it already evaluates, to help ensure schools are giving children and young people the opportunity to have a say effectively;

d. insert a provision similar to, but stronger and more reflective of Treaty partnership than, section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 into the Education and Traning Act 2020 that imposes obligations on the Secretary of Education, to the extent they are empowered, to give practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This could include obligations to set and report on ways schools and kura enable Māori students to have input into governance and management decisions at school/kura, and to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to increase participation opportunities and improve outcomes for Māori students;

This aligns with the Ka Hikitia guiding principle of Te Tiriti and the outcome domain of Te Tangata.

e. ensure board training includes how to enable students to have a say in decisions in ways that are student-centred and culturally responsive;

f. ensure the workstream to increase the diversity of board members includes a focus on the diversity of student board members, Te Tiriti o Waitangi training, and considers how to ensure engagements carried out by, or on behalf of the board, are inclusive of the full diversity of the school or kura community.

BACKGROUND

1. Following their review of the compulsory schooling system from 2018-19, the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce ("the Taskforce") called for a different approach to including students in the governance and operation of schools/kura beyond the current requirement to have one student board member at secondary schools or kura. The Taskforce wrote:

> "We believe one learner/ākonga on a board with the principal/tumuaki and other adults, and only at secondary schools/kura, represents a minimal commitment to learner/ākonga voice, which is increasingly seen to be critically important, not only at governance level, but throughout the schooling experience of all our children.
>
> Although many schools/kura use student councils or augment boards with additional informal learner/ākonga representation, we believe there is a need for a more comprehensive, imaginative, and transparent approach to including learners/ākonga in the governance and operation of all schools/kura."[1]

2. Subsequently, the Taskforce recommended that "the Children's Commissioner be tasked with reviewing the requirement for learner/ākonga participation in school/kura governance with a view to updating current requirements".

3. The Government agreed with this recommendation in its response to the Taskforce's report.[2] Subsequently, on 12 December 2019, the Minister of Education formally invited the OCC to review the requirements, taking into account Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and provide recommendations for improvements.

4. This report sets out our advice following this review. It starts by outlining our methodology, then sets out our findings from engagements with students and school/kura principals/tumuaki, and concludes with six recommendations for change.

METHODOLOGY

5. The review consisted of six elements, with a focus on hearing from a range of students themselves and school/kura principals/tuamaki. It involved:

   a. A meeting with the Ministerial Youth Advisory Group;

   b. A high-level desk search of current research on the topic of student participation in school decision-making processes, in New Zealand and internationally;

   c. An online survey of 85 students asking them about their participation in decision-making processes at school;

   d. A meeting with some New Zealand School Trustee Association (NZSTA) regional board chairs;

   e. Five focus groups with 28 students/ākonga;

   f. Phone interviews with the principals/tumuaki of eight schools/kura.

Meeting with Ministerial Youth Advisory Group

6. We met with the Ministerial Youth Advisory Group on 21 February 2020. We asked the members the following questions:

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[1] Page 27, Tomorrow's Schools report.

[2] Page 29, Government response report.

- What opportunities does/did your school provide for students to have a say in decisions made at school that affect them? And how did/do you find them?

- If you were the Minister, how would you ensure students can have a say in decisions made at their schools?

- How do you think students can have a say on this issue and what questions would they be asked? For example, survey, focus group, interviews.

7. Members' feedback informed the design of our survey and focus groups, including the questions we asked.

> **"Whenever things go to the board, you don't know what is going on, it's shrouded in mystery!"** – *Ministerial Youth Advisory Group member*

Desk research

8. Five online databases were searched using a range of terms to find information relating to the voice of students in school governance, including on the school Board. There were commonalities throughout the 21 sources obtained however, the vast majority were from a Western viewpoint.

9. Our search revealed the complex power dynamics between students' voices, teachers, the wider school systems and within the student body themselves. Emily Nelson's thesis best reflects this by explaining how student influence can be illusory, fleeting or difficult to sustain.[3]

10. Examples of "illusory practice" were common in the research we found, in terms of students only being consulted on minor issues (for example, homework ideas) or how students would be on the school board but did not speak or weren't invited to every meeting.

11. Student influence being fleeting was also a common research theme. This links with illusory practice in that students may be asked to consult on things which are not seen as "proper issues", that the consultations are just a once off or are done in ways which are not effective at improving the students' situations (e.g minor surveys). This brings forward the problem of consultation fatigue.

12. Linked to this, we found examples in the research of student voice being "difficult to sustain" in that the value of the student voice on the school board is often dependent on the student of the day adults are more receptive to certain students (for example, an articulate speaker) and how receptive the adult board members are to getting students' input.

Meeting with New Zealand School Trustees Association regional board chairs

13. We met with a group of NZSTA regional board chairs on 20 June as part of their regular meeting time. We were interested in their experience as to how having a student rep on the board works (or not) as a mechanism for student voice, and in their ideas for ensuring student voice is heard and acted on by boards.

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[3] *'Is This Student Voice?' Students and Teachers Re-negotiate Power through Governance Partnerships in the Classroom.* Emily Nelson's Thesis, University of Waikato, 2014, https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/8846/thesis.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

14. Their feedback helped us understand some of the issues from the perspective of board members. They also linked us with the principal of one of the schools we interviewed for one of the case studies.

Student focus groups

15. We held five engagements with small groups of students that aimed to capture a diversity of children and young people of different ages, backgrounds and life experience. This included:

    - A Zoom call with three disabled young people in their early 20s. All had left school, but spoke about their experiences at secondary school in a learning support unit.

    - A face-to-face session with six members of the student council 9(2)(a)

    - A Zoom call with four students in leadership positions 9(2)(a) .

    - A face-to-face session with 14 years 4-6 students a9(2)(a) in Christchurch.

    - A kanohi ki te kanohi hui with a designated ākonga board member from 9(2)(a)

16. Across the engagements, we asked three questions:

    - Is there something your school does to make sure students get heard on big decisions at school? If so, what?

    - If you had the choice, how would you like to have a say in big decisions at your school?

    - What are the things that get in the way of having a say in big decisions made at school?

17. The views of children and young people we spoke to informed our findings.

Online student survey

18. Our engagements with children and young people were complemented by an online survey to which we received 85 responses from five schools and community groups. The survey contained a mix of open and closed-ended questions informed by feedback at the session with the Minister's Youth Advisory Group and consistent with the questions we asked in the student focus groups.

19. Demographically, 37 percent of the survey respondents identified as male; 57 percent identified as female, and 5 percent as another gender not listed. European was the most commonly chosen ethnicity (78 percent of respondents) followed by Māori (12 percent) and Pacific, including Samoan, Cook Islands Māori, Tongan and Niuean (12 percent). About 25 percent of respondents were in primary school (8 and 9 year olds) and 75 percent in secondary school.

20. A copy of the survey questions is attached as Appendix 1.

Phone interviews with school/kura principals/tumuaki

Interviews with principals of English medium schools

21. As well as engaging with children and young people, we interviewed principals at three English medium secondary schools that we had heard from a range of sources, including existing connections, engagement with the NZSTA, and national conferences, used innovative ways of engaging with their students.

22. The conversation centred around the following questions:

- Do you include students in school governance processes? How?
- Do you have any examples of where students have had a say in a governance decision of the school?
- Were there any barriers to enabling students to have a say in governance decisions and how did you overcome these?
- What advice would you give to the Minister of Education about how schools should ensure students get to have a say in governance of their schools?

23. As well as informing our findings, we have used these interviews to form the basis of three case studies set out in Appendix 2. In addition, we held two follow-up interviews with two student board members at one of the schools. Their experiences also informed the case studies.

<u>Interviews with tumuaki of kura</u>

24. Additionally, we interviewed the tumuaki of five kura, with four out of the five being interviewed in te reo Māori. We asked the same questions as we did of the mainstream school principals, translated into te reo Māori.

25. A report containing a summary of and key quotes from each of the kura interviews is set out in Appendix 3. The kura report is written in the language the interviews were conducted, with four out of five in te reo Māori. An overview in English in section six and translated key quotes in section seven of the report have been provided by the interviewer.

LIMITATIONS

26. The research and engagements have some limitations that are important to note. Firstly, the desk research we undertook relied on freely accessible material in an online search; the majority of international sources were from a Western viewpoint and the literature search was not informed by a te ao Māori worldview as we did not find these sources in our search. The desk research was not a full literature review, but a scan of available resources to inform our advice.

27. Secondly, the Covid-19 lockdown, and related travel restrictions, delayed and downsized our engagement processes and meant apart from the primary school and Wellington Girls' focus groups, we engaged with children and young people and principals/tumuaki by phone and online rather than in person as originally planned. This had a particular impact on our ability to engage fully with kura, who ideally would have been interviewed kanohi ki te kanohi over a longer period, and to conduct focus groups with ākonga.

28. It also meant that we did not get to engage with a full range of primary school students – 5-7 year olds in particular. This should not be taken to mean we consider our recommendations do not apply to them due to their age; we consider all children at school have the capacity to have a say in decisions and the process should be made accessible for them to do so. Guidelines should address different forms of participation appropriate for different age groups.

29. Thirdly, it meant we did not engage with any schools in Auckland which means a large proportion of Pacific children and young people's views are not represented in these findings.

30. Fourthly, we did not get as many responses to the online student survey as we hoped, due to schools being busy supporting students during the Covid-19 lockdown period and settling back into schools afterwards.

31. Given these limitations, further, more in-depth engagements will support robust guidelines for schools/kura.

Most students want to have a say on a broad range of issues at school, at different levels and in different ways

On different topics

32.   In the online survey, we described some types of decisions that boards make. This included:

- "What we learn (for example, te reo Māori, sports, arts);
- How we learn (for example, group learning, individual inquiry, use of technology, school trips);
- The identity and rules of our school (for example, uniform, tikanga, clubs, playground rules;
- The design of the school (for example, buildings, classrooms, school grounds)".

33.   We asked children and young people how interested they were in having a say in each of these areas – from very interested to not at all interested. The vast majority were either very interested or somewhat interested in having a say in all four areas.

34.   This was further reiterated by children and young people in the focus groups who gave a range of examples of topics in which they were interested in having a say. This included how the school is organised (for example, mixing the students in mainstream and learning support units), classroom organisation and design, teacher quality and curriculum, what subjects they learn, and how property renovations are done.

At different levels

35.   These topic areas sit across a range of levels in the school – from decisions made by teachers at a classroom level, to broader management decisions, to governance decisions made around the board table. It became clear that children and young people do not see management and governance decisions as distinguishable; but that they are inter-connected.

36.   This was reiterated by some of the principals/tumuaki we interviewed who believed students were more interested in having a say in management decisions, rather than board decisions such as financials. Some of the examples they gave of situations where students had a say were in management decisions, such as those relating to what they wear and school property, while others, such as school policy on gender identity, curriculum design and school priorities, were more at a governance level.

In different ways

37.   Rather than there being one particular way of having a say, children and young people could see a number of ways their voices could be heard in school decisions.

Increasing the number of student board members on school boards

38.   Children and young people in two of the focus groups thought increasing the number of students on the board would help them to have a say. Alongside this, the students spoke about the need for more diverse representation of students on the board, including greater gender and disability diversity.

39.   About a third of survey respondents considered increasing the number of students on school boards would help students have more of a say at school.

Increased presence from the school board

40.   The need for more of a presence from the board at school was brought up in all the focus groups and also in the survey. Many children and young people thought that assembly was a good opportunity for the board to hear from students. Young people in one focus group

noted that the board needed to "reach down" to students, rather than students having to go "through the chain" to address ideas to a board.

41.   This was also a popular idea in our student survey; almost half of respondents considered students sending ideas directly to the board would better support students to have a say in decisions at school.

School staff actively consulting with students

42.   Children and young people in two of the focus groups also talked about the need for the school staff to actively consult with them. Some students gave examples of overseas mechanisms they had heard about in for example, Sweden and Japan, where there is an emphasis on hearing and acting on student voice through student councils.

More training for board members

43.   Children and young people in two of the focus groups raised the need for teachers and boards to have more training. Young people in one focus group said disability awareness training for both teachers and Boards is necessary. Young people in another focus group thought that professional development for teachers about how to create safe spaces for children to share their ideas would be helpful.

44.   Around a quarter of respondents to the student survey considered training for boards on how to listen to students would help students have more of a say at school.

Raising awareness of opportunities to have a say amongst students

45.   Related to the need for training for staff and board members, young people in two focus groups spoke about the need to raise awareness of opportunities for students to have a say amongst students themselves. One suggestion was to create a booklet for students outlining the role of the student council and other avenues for students to have a say. Young people in another focus group talked about the need to build student leaders at a junior level, in order to build their agency and encourage them to get involved in having a say on decisions in later years.

Student representative at each year level to speak on others' behalf

46.   Having a trusted student representative at each year level that can represent students' concerns and speak on their behalf was suggested a few times in the survey. Students thought that it was important to have someone their own age they could relate to and share experiences with, rather than an adult.

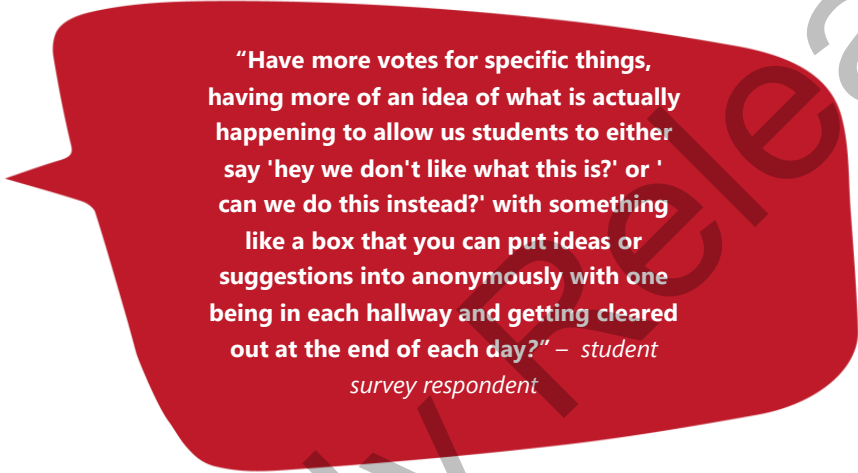### Getting student feedback anonymously through a survey/ideas box

> **"I would like to have [our] own year nine president/year leader something like that and we can tell him/her anything we would like. Eg: main thoughts about lockdown, talking about how camp went or trip. Like a leader of that year to guide us. just like a helpful young individual that has experience/ experienced anything being young or that can relate to."** – *student survey respondent*

47.   Getting student feedback through a survey was another common answer in both the focus groups and the survey. Forty-one percent of survey respondents thought that a survey from the Board asking students about their ideas would better support students to have a say on decisions at school.

48. Similar to this, an "ideas box" with things students want to have a say on or suggestions for change was another common suggestion. It was suggested these could be placed in hallways around the school, or in the classroom with the most popular ideas being collated class-by-class.

49. Some children and young people emphasised these mechanisms should be anonymous. On the other hand, young people in one focus group said their school was reluctant to have an anonymous system because they were concerned it would be abused and made it impossible for them to follow up with students who disclose sensitive information.

Having dedicated times to discuss issues

50. Other related ideas included using assembly or form time to discuss issues facing students, having "discussion evenings" with students and their whānau with ideas and plans for the school and students getting the opportunity to "vote" on decisions that affect them.

> **"Have more votes for specific things, having more of an idea of what is actually happening to allow us students to either say 'hey we don't like what this is?' or ' can we do this instead?' with something like a box that you can put ideas or suggestions into anonymously with one being in each hallway and getting cleared out at the end of each day?"** – *student survey respondent*

We found some good examples of ways students currently have a say at school

51. Both students and principals/tumuaki in schools and kura shared examples of effective ways students have a say at school. Some of these are set out in detail in both the three school case studies in Appendix 2 and the kura report in Appendix 3.

Mechanisms for student participation varied

52. Students had a say in a variety of different ways, including through representtation on the board, student councils, student-led meetings on topics of interest, and choosing what subjects they want to learn.

There are some considerations unique to kura

53. Kura tumuaki made the point that kura processes often strongly involve whānau which are inclusive of – but not separate to – ākonga; good practice as outlined in the Whānau outcome of Ka Hikitia. This is a different dynamic to English medium schools that usually only involve students: for example, one or two students on a school board, or a student council. Legislative requirements need to recognise school and kura diversity and be flexible.

54. Kura tumuaki also talked about seeking and acting on ākonga inupt in decisions at school being an embodiment of true partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Giving practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the context of enabling students to have input into decisions at school needs to be reflected in the legislation across all education settings, and was specifically raised as an issue by kura.

> **"There is a big difference between kura and mainstream with the former being totally focussed on te reo – Te Aho Matua is the ridge pole for everything."**
> *– kura ākonga board member*

There are some common principles across schools and kura

55. Both school principals and kura tumuaki said they are aware of the current requirement to have a student on the board, but emphasised they want to involve students in a way that best meets the needs of their school/kura.

56. We also found the schools and kura we engaged with are all at different stages of enabling students to have input in decisions at school depending on their location, resourcing, school leadership, and the capacity of individual boards. Some schools and kura involved students mostly at board and/or student council level, while others encouraged students to have input into most decisions, except serious HR matters. Importantly, all schools and kura had aspirations to involve students more.

57. The fact that our examples of good practice in both schools and kura are so varied demonstrates that requirements for student involvement must be flexible enough for schools and kura to implement in ways that best work for students.

There are barriers to students having a say at school

The attitudes of adults can be a barrier to children and young people having a say

58. A theme across most focus groups was that adults don't listen to students or disregard their ideas. Children and young people talked about having to "defend" and "fully think through" their ideas before presenting them. They talked about having their ideas vetoed and sometimes with poor reasons such as a reluctance to do things differently, or assumptions about their capacity to offer ideas, or adults only listening to certain students.

59. From the survey, students said the main barrier to having a say at school was the attitude of adults. This included adults not listening, only listening to certain students (not them) and not taking their ideas seriously.

60. The importance of attitudes of adults were also mentioned in the principal interviews. Principals/tumuaki emphasised that there is a need for school staff to not make assumptions about what students' views are or to filter them. They said staff should encourage students to have input into decisions at school and support them to develop the skills to do so.

61. These views are consistent with examples highlighted in existing research in relation to scepticism from adults about children's capacity, concerns from adults about their views being undermined by children and young people or that engagement requires too much effort, adults only being receptive to students they perceive to be "articulate", and not challenging the status quo.

The current "one student board member" model is narrow and inflexible and does not enable strong and diverse student voice

62. From our findings, it is clear the current requirement to have one student on the board does not enable students to be heard effectively.

63. Many children and young people we spoke to did not know who the board was, or what their role was, demonstrating the yawning gap between boards and students.

64. Even when students did know about the board, it alone was not an effective mechanism for students to have a say. For example, children and young people talked about the board limiting who they consult with based on who they think is most affected, the board not interacting with the student board member outside of board meetings, the board not getting adequate training on how to hear from students, and the board only making financial decisions which children and young people are not interested in. This shows that this model of getting students' input does not necessarily mean that student voice more generally is informing governance decisions.

65. The "fleeting" and "illusory" ways boards engage with students was also raised as an issue in the research we found, with examples given of students only being consulted tokenistically on minor issues, or in ways that do not actually improve students' situations (for example, conducting surveys that are never followed up), or student board members not being given the opportunity to speak at board meetings.

66. Some principals/tumuaki also raised the point that children and young people may not be interested in some of the matters boards deal with, and that it is some matters, such as staffing or disciplinary matters involving employees or other students, are not appropriate for student board members to be involved in.

67. Children and young people talked about the unfair voting process for selecting students to speak on behalf of others because it was often a "popularity contest" rather than choosing the person most suited for the role. Some said that not being selected made them not want to try again. Some made the point that they need both the self-confidence and encouragement from their school to put themselves forward for such roles. The need to encourage students to have a say, and lack of self-confidence of students, were also raised by principals/tumuaki as being barriers to their participation.

68. Children and young people also talked about student leaders, including the student board member, not consulting with them and/or ignoring their ideas. Some children and young people said they feel reluctant to approach student leaders with their ideas in case they were put down, while others felt the board member and/or student council don't always represent the views and experiences of the whole student body.

69. Further, the current one student board member model does not distinguish between student voice and student representation in governance when in fact they are two separate things. The student board member role is perceived by some students and school staff to be a conduit for student representation, but in reality, the mechanism is such that the student is first and foremost a board member who happens to be a student – as is recognised for the adult board members.

70. There is a need to separate out the student board member role, which serves an important but specific purpose at a governance level, from other ways of hearing from the student body in general. This is especially important given that we found students are interested in having a say on different topics, at different levels (from class and school management to governance), through different mechanisms.

There is a need to make existing legislative requirements stronger and more flexible by mandating in legislation that schools have a mechanism to hear and act on student voice

71. It is clear there is a need for schools to have a flexible mechanism to hear and act on student voice that recognises that one size does not fit all. What "good" looks like is different in different settings and is dependent on a range of factors, including the type of school (for example, Kura Kaupapa Māori (Te Aho Matua) or English medium, primary or secondary), location, resourcing, school leadership, and capacity of school boards. Further, different students would like to have a say on different topics, at different levels (both management and governance), and in different ways.

Increasing the number of students required to sit on a board would not fully address the issue

72. While an improvement on the status quo, we consider that simply increasing the number of students required to be on a board would not necessarily improve student voice in school governance. This mechanism wouldn't guarantee that school leadership actually listens to the student board member(s) and considers their views nor would it provide the flexibility schools and kura need.

73. Increasing the number of students would make it feel easier and safer for the students, as they can support each other. However, a good board could support a single rep, while a board that is not committed to being child-centred could pay lip service to any number of student board members. Boards that are more child-centred currently have the flexibility to co-opt additional student members onto a board, and we have seen examples of this in this review.

74. Lastly, it would not address the needs of a significant proportion of students. For example, an elected student trustee is not inclusive of whānau being involved in governance, as currently occurs in kura processes; it is inaccessible to primary school students given the complexity of some board processes, the confidential nature of some matters discussed, and meetings being held in the evenings; and inaccessible to students in youth justice and care and protection facilities given a student's board term is usually for a year and these students are only in residential schools for a short time.

Instead, the requirement for schools to hear from students should be broader, stronger and more flexible with connections between different levels of decision-making

75. We consider the legislative requirement in section 119(1)(f) of the Act to have one secondary school student board member be amended and replaced by a requirement for schools to have a mechanism which commits to engaging with students in schools and kura to understand their experience and hear and act on student voice. The mechanism may incorporate a range of ways of hearing from students within a school/kura environment.

76. We consider such a change would better enable students of all ages in all types of school settings to have a say on things that affect them at school at both a governance and

management level and embed a culture of valuing student voice and agency, while providing appropriate flexibility for schools and kura by providing mechanisms other than the current one student board member requirement. This would not prevent schools from having student board members if they consider that is an effective mechanism for them, but would allow for other mechanisms. For those that choose to have student board members as part of their mechanism to seek and act on student voice, we consider at least three student board members to be good practice, rather than the one student requirement as currently legislated.

77. Introducing a broader and more flexible requirement would:

- extend obligations to get the input of students and their whānau in decisions at school to all schools, including kura, primary schools, and schools in youth justice and care and protection facilities;
- enable students themselves to be involved in the design of the mechanism;
- enable students to have a say in both school governance and school management decisions;
- enable a diverse range of students to have a say at schools and kura in ways that are accessible to them.

78. We consider the following objectives of the mechanism should be stated in the legislation; for the mechanism to:

- enable students to have a say on a broad range of issues at school, including governance and management decisions;
- take a holistic view of students, including understanding them in the context of their families and whānau;
- give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by ensuring that the mechanism reflects tikanga Māori, matauranga Māori and te ao Māori in collaboration with Māori students and whānau;
- involve students in design and evaluation of the mechanism;
- consider and act on student voices using a clear and transparent process;
- include a diverse range of student voices including Māori, Pacific, other ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQIA+, in ways that are accessible to them.

79. We acknowledge establishing such a mechanism will take time, so recommend the revised section gives schools 18 months after the amendment comes into force to do so. The existing requirement to have a secondary school student on the board should remain in the meantime.

80. We also acknowledge that school management decisions sit with principals rather than boards, so this change will mean principals are more involved in hearing from students than they have previously been in many schools, and we consider this to be a strength of having a more flexible mechanism. The examples we heard about of effective ways students have a say all involved principals to some degree.

81. The amendment should also take other relevant legislative requirements in the Act into account such as section 126 which states that a board must consult its staff, students (to the extent the board considers appropriate) and school community on proposed bylaws, section 127 which sets out the objectives of boards, and section 618 which states that the board must consult its school community in developing additional criteria relating to appointment of principals.

82. As well as strengthening student voice at school, we consider that mandating such a mechanism aligns significantly with the newly issued NELP – particularly 1, 2, 3, and 6. It would also support the government to deliver on the recently released Youth Plan, particularly in the leadership and voice focus areas, and the Child and Youth Wellbeing

Strategy, by ensuring children and young people are able to be more involved and empowered in their learning and development.

83. In making this legislative change, we recommend guidelines be developed to support schools and kura to implement the new legislative requirement. The guidelines should be developed in consultation with children and young people, and groups representing the interests of whānau, teachers/kaiako, principals/tumuaki and school/kura boards and hapori. The guidelines should support schools/kura to design a mechanism that ensures a diverse range of student voices are heard and include best practice examples to this effect.

84. Alongside mandating the mechanism in the Act, we recommend the ERO be mandated to monitor the implementation of this requirement, to help ensure schools are giving children and young people the opportunity to have a say effectively, alongside the learning outcomes it already evaluates. As the ERO does in other areas already, it could evaluate both what's working well and make suggestions for where improvements can be made in hearing and acting on student voice. The ERO will need to be supported to build its capacity to properly carry out this mandate.

85. Additionally, to give effect to the considerations specific to kura in relation to ākonga having input into decisions at school being a reflection of true partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, we recommend inserting a provision similar to, but stronger and more reflective of Treaty partnership than, section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 into the Act. This would impose obligations on the Secretary of Education, to the extent they are empowered, to give practical effect to Te Tiriti Waitangi. This could include obligations to set and report on ways schools and kura enable Māori students to have a say, and to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to increase participation opportunities and improve outcomes for Māori students.

These changes have implications for board governance training and diversity workstreams

86. Based on our findings, there is a need for boards to have better training on ways to hear and act on the views of children and young people, and to be more representative in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and disability. Boards will need to consider this as part of the requirement to have a broader mechanism to hear from students.

87. These changes will therefore need to be considered in the Ministry's workstreams related to improving board training and increasing the diversity of school boards.

> **"Boards have to represent their communities. A few years ago the board at my school was all white and there was this sense they were elite and "lording" over us. We recently got a Māori Deputy Principal and the whole mentality of the board started to shift for the better. You can already see a positive difference. We need more diversity"** – *Ministerial Youth Advisory Group member*

RECOMMENDATIONS

88.   As detailed in the findings above, we recommend you:

note our findings that:

- most students want to have a say on a broad range of issues at schools, at different levels and in a range of ways;

- there are some good examples of ways students have a say at school;

- there are barriers to students having a say at school, including the current one student board member model being narrow and inflexible;

- there is a need to make existing legislative requirements both stronger and more flexible by mandating in legislation that, rather than one student board member, schools are required to have a mechanism to hear and act on student voice, underpinned by a number of objectives. This would better enable students of all ages in all types of school settings to have a say on things that affect them at school, while providing appropriate flexibility for a diversity of students, schools, and kura.

consider our recommendations to:

a.   replace the legislative requirement to have one secondary school student board member in section 119(1)(f) of the Education and Training Act 2020 with a requirement for schools to, within 18 months of the amendment coming into force, have a mechanism which commits to engaging with students in schools and kura to understand their experience and enable them to have input into decisions at school. The mechanism should have the following objectives written into the amended section: for the mechanism to:

- enable students to have a say on a broad range of issues at school, including both governance and management decisions;
- take a holistic view of students, including understanding them in the context of their families and whānau;
- give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by ensuring that the mechanism reflects tikanga Māori, matauranga Māori and te ao Māori in collaboration with Māori students and whānau;
- involve students in design and evaluation of the mechanism;
- consider and act on student voices using a clear and transparent process;
- include a diverse range of student voices, including Māori, Pacific, other ethnic communities, disabled and LGBTQIA+, in ways that are accessible to them.

The amendment should make clear that while the mechanism is being established, the requirement for secondary schools to have a student board member remains;

b.   develop guidelines to support school and kura boards and principals/tumuaki to implement this requirement in consultation with children and young people, and groups representing the interests of whānau and hapori, teachers/kaiako, principals/tumuaki and school/kura boards. The guidelines should support schools/kura to design a mechanism that ensures a diverse range of student voices are heard and include best practice examples to this effect;

c.   mandate and support the ERO to monitor the implementation of this requirement, alongside the learning outcomes it already evaluates, to help ensure schools are giving children and young people the opportunity to have a say effectively;

d.   insert a provision similar to, but stronger and more reflective of Treaty partnership than, section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 into the Education and Traning Act 2020 that imposes obligations on the Secretary of Education, to the extent they are empowered, to give practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This could include obligations to set and report on ways schools and kura enable Māori students to have input into decisions at school and

to develop strategic partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations to increase participation opportunities and improve outcomes for Māori students;

This aligns with the Ka Hikitia guiding principle of Te Tiriti and the outcome domain of Te Tangata.

e. ensure board training includes how to enable students to have a say in decisions in ways that are student-centred and culturally responsive;

f. ensure the workstream to increase the diversity of board members includes a focus on the diversity of student board members, Te Tiriti o Waitangi training, and considers how to ensure engagements carried out by, or on behalf of the board, are inclusive of the full diversity of the school or kura community.

NEXT STEPS

89. We look forward to meeting with you and your officials to discuss these recommendations further. We have kept in touch with Ben O'Meara, Group Manager, Education Systems Policy and his team at the Ministry of Education throughout our review and received initial feedback on a draft of this report prior to sending it to your office.

APPENDIX 1: ONLINE STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

See attached PDF.

APPENDIX 2: CASE STUDIES OF THREE SCHOOLS BASED ON PHONE INTERVIEWS WITH PRINCIPALS

Case study One: Decile 7 co-ed boarding and day state-integrated school, South Island

This school has three child-centred ways of hearing from, and responding, to student voice:

1) Student hui, 2) Student council, 3) Flexible Friday

This secondary school went through a staged approach to grow a more child-centred school.

The first stage was initiating a restorative justice approach in relation to school board disciplinary hearings. This made the board more child-centred. That led on to curriculum review by listening to student voice through a student-led "whānau hui".

The board now invests in a child-centred "student advocate" position that grew from a restorative approach to all relationships including between students and teachers. This role does preventative pastoral care to keep students engaged in learning, attending, and achieving at school, by restoring relationships between the student and teacher. The advocate acts on the student's behalf to resolve any relationship issues and ensure teachers are respecting each student's needs.

The school has implemented a student-initiated curriculum review that culminated in a 'Flexible Friday'. This means every Friday, senior students can choose career-related options (including Gateway, work experience, polytech or university courses) while junior students have more flexible inquiry-led classes in longer periods/sessions. At this boarding school, students are grouped into "kura whānau", and these student whānau groups held a hui, facilitated by year 13 students, where they discussed what would make the school better for them. The ideas were workshopped and a staged approach to implementation was developed. The school managed expectations throughout, because it took five years to fully implement the changes. The students were involved in co-design during this time. Students saw the opportunity to contribute to a better future for their younger siblings or future students.

The child-centred board attitude grew from the principal implementing restorative justice approaches to avoid exclusions, teachers being "followers and supporters" of the approach, and as a result, the culture of the school has improved.

> **"It is important that students feel their ideas are being responded to – that they see change**." – *School principal*

Case study Two: Decile 1 co-ed state school, rural area, North Island

When the principal started, the school had a poor reputation and low achievement rates, with many students in the area choosing to attend other schools, including a kura kaupapa Māori school nearby. Students' belief in themselves needed building up. The teaching culture also needed to become more respectful and child-centred to improve student behaviour.

The principal believes that in order for students to believe in themselves, you need to get them involved in decisions and leadership. Currently, about a quarter of students are in leadership positions of various kinds, and some of the student leaders told OCC that they feel their voices a*re* being heard. The leadership group builds up students to learn new skills, such as volunteering. However, they don't feel they have a close relationship with the student trustee on the board - they don't know if she gets support or what is talked about with the board. The student leaders said they were going to push for three students on the board or at least two – of different genders – so that there was better representation and diversity of ideas.

The principal didn't believe students *want* to have a say on governance matters, and the structure does not seem to mitigate the large size of the student leadership body and its disconnect from the student trustee. These factors may be reducing the potential for students to have a say in governance. The board invites students to present to it, but there is not a feeling that students know about the board or governance. The principal said "*[i]f a board is committed to students having a say, in management – they need student-friendly training*!".

However, despite this disconnect at governance level, the students have had input in big school decisions such as design and flexibility of the uniform, removing the uniform as a focus area for discipline by teachers, and a change in focus on the academic curriculum. The latter involved students identifying their aspirations using an "I am" phrase, for example, "I am a lawyer", "I am a banker", and the school responding by implementing new modules, and inviting visiting speakers in those careers to open the eyes of students as to the possibilities for their futures.

This has given the students hope for a future career that, in turn, underpins their engagement in education and their mental wellbeing. Furthermore, the flexibility of NCEA is being used to provide students with useful opportunities for future vocations. For example, those who say "I am a writer" help each other to become published – in real life (not just an essay for the teachers to read). In this way, there is a mechanism for student voice to have a direct effect on each student's ability to achieve their aspirations. The student leaders noted that alongside having a say in their own aspirations, they are trying to build up the expertise of teachers, as there are so many who mainly teach PE (as sport used to be a main focus of the school) and the students want better expert teachers in maths, for example. The students are also driving for academic excellence and purpose and supporting other students to step up and become leaders.

This case study shows that schools are starting from different places, and the ability to engage students in governance may depend on first engaging them in school at all, and developing hope and belief in themselves. A one-size-fits-all-schools approach will not work.

Case study Three: Decile 10 co-ed state school, North Island

The principal of this school thought it was important to find mechanisms for students to decide, set, and implement new policies, and for them to see the results. Students need to feel heard with concrete actions in response to their concerns.

At this school they implemented two policy changes in response to student concerns – a new wellbeing programme for curriculum core competencies, and a transgender policy to support gender diversity.

This school has opted to have two students on the school board. The person with the most votes is voted on as per legislation, and the person of a different gender with the next-most votes is co-opted by the board. While training is only available to the elected rep, they both feel supported by the board with the chair being in personal contact to support them. These student board members then run a student application and interview process to select the student council that is diverse and represents the entire school. They do not "shoulder tap" so students are not "appointed" by teachers or others – the students *want* the leadership positions to represent other students, for example in their year group. The student council then meets regularly and invites the principal to attend when *they* want her to. Being both student council leaders and board members means the student board members can get the voice of student's concerns straight to the board without their concerns being filtered through teachers or other mechanisms. It also means the workload is heavy, but the two students seem to manage it well.

The wellbeing programme involved first training teachers using YouthLine expertise and resources on "talking about mental wellbeing". Teachers then took discussion skills to their ako (form) classes to ensure students could talk about wellbeing matters. The wellbeing has been embedded into the curriculum via the ako classes. The students say this has enabled better recognition of wellbeing of students across the school. The transgender policy recognises gender diversity and has resulted in installation of gender-neutral toilet options for students.

This model of student leadership at different levels supports the success of the two student board members, along with the support of the board chair and principal. The student board members are closely connected to the student council of leaders across the school, so can tap in to the concerns of the student body. This again speaks to "good" looking different in different schools and the need for requirements to hear from, and act on, student voice to be flexible.

> **Having a student council is a huge benefactor to increasing student voice in governance, especially when the group is made of diverse characteristics (year levels, genders, cultures, sexualities, beliefs). Having a range of people also increases awareness amongst the year levels and ensures that all students can communicate their struggles/ideas with a council member who can then take that information forward to council meetings and the student reps." -** *Student board and council member*

APPENDIX 3: KURA REPORT

(prepared by Te Amokura Consultants, 27 July 2020).

Section 1. He Whakamārama [Introduction]

a) Ī roto i Te Ture Mātauranga 1989, i raro i te wēhenga 105, ī whakatūria he Poari hei whakahaere ī ngā āhuatanga katoa o te kura. Ko te kaupapa ī tū ai ngā ture nei e mōhiotia nei ko, "Ngā Kura Mo Apopo". Ko ngā mema o aua Poari he mātua, he kai ako ana he ākonga anō. Ko te wawata hoki kia ranonga te reo o ngā ākonga i roto i ngā mahi ī whakahaerehia e te Poari, mo te kura. Tuatu ī tēnā, ka whakatinanahia aua whakaaro, aua kōrero, rānei.

b) Ahakoa koinei te tikanga, kua puta mai he whakaaro akuanei pea kahore he kaha rawa te reo o te ākonga ki roto i ngā kura. Ka tono te Kaikomihana Tamariki kia tino pai ke atu te waihanga o ngā ākonga i runga i nga Poari, ana, i tukuna ki te Rōpū e Titiro ana ki te whakahou i te kaupapa "Ngā Kura Mo Apopo".

c) Nā taua rōpū ano i tohu ma te Kaikomihana Tamariki e āta rangahau ka whakahou hoki i ngā tikanga e pa ana ki ngā ākonga mē wā rātau mahi i runga i te Poari whakahaere.

d) *Titiro ki te Puka Tāpiri II*

Section 2. He Whakarāpopoto [Summary]

a) Mehemea e tino hiahia ana te Tāhuhu O Te Mātauranga ki te titiro ki te waihanga o ngā ākonga mē wā rātau mahi i runga i te Poari whakahaere o te kura, he ngāwari te ara whakamua.

b) He ngāwari te tohu ake ma te Tari o te Arotake Mātauranga e āta titiro i te wā e whakamātautauria ia kura. Kei roto hoki taua Tari i ngā kura katoa ia tau ki ia rima tau rānei, ana he roa te wa e noho ana te tari nei i roto i ngā kura.

Section 3. Ngā Tikanga Whakaoti I Ngā Mahi [Methodology]

a) Ī roto i ngā whiriwhitanga o te Kaikomihana Tamariki, ka whakaritea ko ēnei take e whai nei, ara ko te:

- āta pānui i ngā tuhituhinga, i ngā rangahau e mōhiotia ana, mo te kaupapa nei;
- whakatūwhera he pae-ipurangi kia wātea ai ngā ākonga te whakawhiti atu ki te tuku i wā rātau whakaaro, ahakoa i katia tēnei i muri tata i te 23 Hune;
- uiui-ā-waea ki ētahi Tumu Whakarae; ā
- hui ā pae-ipurangi, hui ā-kanohi rānei, ki ngā ākonga.

b) *Titiro ki ngā Puka Tāpiri III me te VI*

c) mo ngā kura kaupapa, kura Māori hoki, ko te mea tino whakapono, ana ko te reo Māori e rere ana;

d) mo ngā uiuinga kī ngā Tumu Whakarae, e whai ake nei te rārangi pātai:

i) Kā whakaurua ē koe / koutou, ngā ākonga kī roto ī ngā tikanga whakahaere ō Te Kura? Mā te aha? [*Tauira*: kī te mahi tahi kī te ākonga kei runga ī tē BOT {Rūnganganui}, ki ngā kaunihera kura – mā tē aha koe kā ū kia uru te reo ō ngā ākonga kī roto, kā rangona rānei, kia ū pono, ā tinana mai wā rātau ake whakaaro ī ngā whakahaere, ē pā ana kia rātau?

ii) Hē tauira wāhau hei whakaatu mai heaha ngā momo whakaritenga ī whakamanahia ī tē kura?

iii) Hē uauatanga ī pā mai kia koe kia whakauru ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga kī ngā whakaritenga whakahaere, ā, ī pehea tō karo ī ēnei mea?

iv) Heaha ōu tohutohu kī te Minitā mō Tē Mātauranga mē pehea ngā kura ka "whakauru ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga ī ngā whakahaere ō te kura"? [Hē tauira: mā te ture, ē tukunaatu mā te kura ē whakarite, mā te āta tono o ngā akoranga, ō ngā hapori rānei]; ā

v) Hē whakaaro anō wāhau?

Section 4.   Ngā Take Ka Puta Mai I Te Ripoata Nei [Findings of the report]

a) He matatau ana ngā kura ki te ture kia whakatūria he ākonga ki runga ī te Poari Whakahaere ēngari kei ia rātau te mana whakahaere me pehea ake taua hiahia e whakatinanahia. Kia rātau hoki, koinei te tino ngako ō te kōtuitanga o te Tiriti o Waitangi;

b) Mo ngā Tumu Whakarae, he tino uaua te whakawātea he wā hei kōrerotanga no te mea he kura wā rātau hei whakahaere, ana, kātahi anō tātau katoa ka puta mai i ngā aukatitanga o Koroweta-19. Ahakoa ngā whakapātanga mo ngā wiki o muri i te kōrero tuatahitanga, erua ngā kura kāore i whakahoki i ngā waea me ngā īmera;

c) Kotahi te Kura kāore i wātea, ana, kāore e tarea kia uiuia mai i te timatatanga;

d) I au e whakapā ana ki ētahi ake Kura Kaupapa kia pakari ke atu te reo Māori, he nui aua kura i mea mai kāore he tauira kei runga i ta rātau Poari. Ko te take i pēnei ai he whakaaro kāore e pai kia rongo ngā taringa rangatahi i ētahi o ngā take tino taumaha e korerohia. Kāore hoki e pai kia mau aua momo take ki te hinengaro taiohi ana ka pōrearea wā rātau titirohanga ki te ao kei mua ia rātau;

e) Mehemea e hiahia ana te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga ki te wahakamana i tēnei tikanga i roto i ngā Kura Kaupapa / Kura Māori me ngā kura katoa, he ngāwari te tuku ma te Tari o te Arotake Mātauranga, tēnei mahi he whakaoti. Rokohanga he rite tonu te haere o tēnei o ngā tari kāwanatanga ki roto i ngā kura katoa ana ka rite tonu te puta mai o ona ripoata. Nā tēnei hoki, kāore e pai ki te hāmana i te kura mehemea kāore taua kura e whakatū ākonga ki te Poari. Ko ronga ngā kura ki te wairua o te ture ēngari he pai ke atu te tuku ma ia kura e āta whiriwhiri me pehea ake te whakatinana i te ture.   Kāore e koa atu, kāore e komai.

Section 5.   Nga Kōrero I Puta Mai I Ngā Kura [What the Kura Said]

a) *__Kura 1__*:

i) He kaupapa tino hōhonu tēnei ana he tika kia kōrerohia. Ahakoa tēnei na, kāore te take nei e uiuia i te wā ō ngā whakamātautau mai i te Tari Arotake Mātauranga. Me whakarerekia tēnei;

ii) Kei te marama mātau mo te ture engari ko te whakatinana kei a mātau tūturu, tēnā, Koinei hoki te tikanga o te pūtahitanga i manokihia i roto i te Tiriti o Waitangi - Me tino ū ai mātau ki tēnei āhuatanga,

iii) Ko te Runanganui te poari whakahaere i te kura. Kei konei anō te whakarite i ngā take tino taumaha pera i te raweke tamariki me ena momo take. Kāore he tino nui ngā take pēnei. Engari mo te nuinga o nga mahi ka mahi tahi te Rūnanganui me te Kaunihera;

iv) Ko te Kaunihera te waha mo ngā ākonga i runga i te tikanga:

ko ngā amorangi tokorua kei runga, [he tama, he kōtiro], ko rāua anō ngā kaiārahi;

tekau ngā ākonga kei runga, erua mō ia taumata mai i te tau iwa ki te tau tekau ma toru;

erua nga kaiako, ana ko tā rāua mahi hei tohutohu, hei ārahi anō hoki;

v) Ko ngā momo take ka whakaritea e te Kaunihera kō te:

pōwhiri ki ngā ākonga hou, katoa;

heaha ngā kai mo te pōwhiri;

kowai te / ngā kaikōrero mai i ngā ākonga;

heaha ngā momo kaka ia ra mo te haerenga ki te kura, ngā kaka mehemea e puta ana koe i te kura ahakoa heaha te kaupapa, ngā kaka whakataetae, ngā kaka kapa haka me ēnei momo kaupapa katoa;

te āta whakatau i ngā tauira hou kia kore ai rātau e whakaaro, he rāwaho rātau;

vi) I runga ake i tēnei waihanga ko ngā tino hua ke atu ko te:

whakatō i ngā tikanga marae pērā i te haka pōwhiri, te whakatau, te moteatea, te manaaki manuhiri, te tunu ngā momo kai katoa;

tino pakari o te tū o te kapa haka o te kura i waho ano;

whakahīhi i roto i te reo mē onā tikanga katoa;

waihanga o te whakapakari whānau mai i waho, mai i roto, mai i runga, ana mai i raro hoki;

vii) Mai i te ripoata o te Tari Arotaki Mātauranga, e whai ake nei ētahi kaupapa ke atu e riro i ngā ākonga e whakahuatia i roto i Te Whakarāpopototanga Whānui ara:

"ka uru atu, ka whakaaweawe, ka ārahi, ka whai wāhi mātātoa atu te whānau ki te angitu o te mātauranga" – i roto i tēna ko ngā ākonga anō;

b) ***Kura 2***

i) We are aware of the legislation however the reality dictates that we do it our way – a common sense and best practice, approach. We have two members from the ākonga, male and female from the senior school. Initially there were four ākonga chosen by an internal election process but for us the popularity factor had to be balanced with a capability factor. The other two withdrew and hence our current position;

ii) From the outset, it was important for us to determine what it was that they would do. From that developed the process outlined in para iii), below

iii) It is in place mainly as a mechanism to channel ākonga voices through to management which is used mainly for curriculum design outside of the core academic required subjects. This is achieved by the members having weekly, once a fortnight but definitely no less than once a month hui with their peer groups [years nine through to thirteen]. This process is based on our value ethic of "he tamaiti, hei raukura", Effectively, a consult, negotiate and a co-design of what needs to be done.

iv) While the position is as described above, there are four other key elements which warrant mention and they are:

the process was hard to set up as in most cases ākonga came from a "do as you are told environment" and therefore, it was difficult to move them to a "self-start position";

rather than "governance per se", ākonga interest was greatly enhanced by way of creating "passion areas" with regards, academic, sporting, vocational and cultural interests. Accordingly, visits of observation and practical experiences are deemed essential (*for example, attending hui, visiting speakers and appropriate events*); and

each ākonga has an individual and personal development plan across the previously mentioned passion areas. Although it is good to have the peer consultations, for Kura 2, the individual plans and the daily presentation of individual ākonga is what matters (*for example, a very small boy was bullied at his previous schools and when a stronger and bigger student tried to impose his will on that ākonga, other and senior ākonga intervened with the main outcome being - we don't do that here. We are all about whānau and we are one very supportive whānau here at Kura 2. The daily significance of this is the fact that the little boy is at school every day*).

It is accepted that if you don't dream, you will get nowhere. The consultations and personal plans inclusive of their dreamt and ideal vocation interests were not matched by the practical reality as is evidenced by the following examples:

- an aspiring vet could not handle a simple docking operation to the extent that to even inoculate lambs was beyond her;

- a similar and deeply interested "working with tamariki" person who was placed at a combined kohanga reo/day care centre, didn't go back there after lunch because of all of the crying etc;

- a personal trainer and future owner of his gymnasium, changed his mind when challenged to meet a kaiako at the gym at 5.30 the next morning as he did not realise that his clientele would probably be middle aged, overweight and the like. His motivation was to coach the Warriors or All Blacks and was undoubtedly attracted by the glamour lifestyles; and finally

- the basic reality of NRL and NBA as opposed to the essential ABC.

v) The beauty of taking on board ākonga views is that they at seventeen and eighteen years of age, are amazing students. They along with their peer groups are involved in Kura 2 philosophy, pedagogy, ākonga and kaiako relationships with an honest approach;

vi) The final advantage of the ways we work and particularly with regards ākonga involvement is not to box them according to first impressions of them and their, whānau. It also relates to the reality that whānau are disadvantaged in many respects. All these whānau still want the best for their ākonga and getting their view is the core to establishing positive and personalised pathways. Having fun, enjoying life and succeeding being normalised is integral at Kura 2.

c) ***Kura 3***

i) Kā whakaurua ē koe / koutou, ngā ākonga kī roto ī ngā tikanga whakahaere ō Te Kura? Mā te aha? [*Tauira*: kī te mahi tahi kī te ākonga kei runga ī tē BOT {Rūnanganui}, ngā kaunihera kura – mā tē aha koe kā ū kia uru te reo ō ngā ākonga kī roto, kā rangona rānei, kia ū pono, ā tinana mai wā rātau ake whakaaro ī ngā whakahaere, ē pā ana kia rātau?

Ahakoa ō mātau hiahia kia whakatūria tētahi Kaunihera a tauira, kāre i ea ēngari, ka whakahuihui ngā tauira i a rātau anō mo ngā kaupapa ka whai take ki a rātau. Ka tukuna e mātau te wā ki a rātau mo ēnei hui.

Ka mahi au i te taha o ngā tauira ia rā, ia rā. Ko au hoki te kaiako hāpai o ngā tauira tau 13 (Pae 7). Ka whai wāhi hoki au te whakaako i te nuinga o ngā tauira Wharekura. Ka whiriwhiri whakaaro mātau mo te huhua o ngā kaupapa ka whai pānga ki a rātau. Ka whai wā hoki ngā tauira katoa ki te kōrero ki ā rātau kaiako, ōtira ki ō rātau mātua hoki.

E kaha nei mātau ngā kaiako ki te whiriwhiri whakaaro kia pai ai te tui i te kaupapa o te kura, ngā wawata o te whānau, ngā moemoeā o ngā tauira. Ahakoa ka puta ētahi taukume i ētahi wā, ka pēra te ao.

Mo ngā momo kaupapa ka whakaakona i roto i te kura, kei ngā tauira te mana hei kōwhiri i ngā momo kaupapa mahi kia ea ai ō rātau wawata, ōtirā ngā wawata o ā rātau whānau kia mutu rātau i te kura.

ii) Hē tauira wāhau hei whakaatu mai heaha ngā momo whakaritenga ī whakamanahia ī tē kura?

Ia mutunga tau ka uiuitia ngā tauira mo ngā mahi e hiahia ana rātau te mahi a te tau hou. Ka whakahāngai mātau i ō rātau wawata ki te huarahi e hiahia ana rātau te takahi kia mutu rātau i te kura.

Ka ākina hoki rātau kia tono mai mo te awhina ki waho o ngā haora kura mehemea ka hiahia i tua atu i tēra e taea ana e mātau ngā kaiako i ngā haora kura.

iii) Hē uauatanga ī pā mai kia koe kia whakaurua ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga kī ngā whakaritenga whakahaere, ā, ī pehea tō karo ī ēnei mea?

Ko te nuinga o te wā kāre he raru. Kei te mārama ngā tauira ki te kaupapa o te kura, ara, kia puritia te reo me ngā tikanga o te kāinga. Ka taea e rātau te kōrero i ō rātau whakaaro mo ngā āhuatanga e pā ana ki to rātau kura. Ka whai wā ngā tauira Wharekura ki te kōrero ki ō rātau kaiako hāpai (kia rua ngā wā ia wahanga), ki a mātau ki roto i ngā hui Wharekura (e 3 ia wiki). Ko te mea uaua, kia whai kaha ngā tauira ki te āta whiriwhiri whakaaro.

iv) He aha ōu tohutohu kī te Minitā mō Tē Mātauranga mē pehea ngā kura ka "whakauru ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga ī ngā whakahaere ō te kura"? [Hē tauira: mā te ture, ē tukunaatu mā te kura ē whakarite, mā te āta tono o ngā akoranga, ō ngā hapori rānei]

Ko tāku, kia awhinatia ngā tauira ki te ako i ngā momo pūkenga, huarahi, ngā āhuatanga ka whai pānga ki roto i tētahi whakatau ka whai pānga ki ētahi atu tāngata, te whakamahinga rānei o ngā rawa o te katoa. Mehemea ka ako ngā tauira ki ēnei pūkenga, ka tino ora tātau te iwi Māori a ng`s tau e heke mai nei.

v) Hē whakaaro anō wāhau?

(1) *He mea nui kia whai wāhi ngā tikanga Māori, ngā wāriu Māori i roto i ētahi tikanga hei whakamana i te reo o ngā tauira i roto i tētahi tikanga /ture a motu. I runga i tēra pai kē atu ma te whānau o ia kura e whakatau i ngā tikanga pai ki a rātau. Ki te tohutohu tētahi mai waho o te whānau kia pēnei, kia pēra, ka raru.*

d) ***Kura 4***

i) Kā whakaurua ē koutou, ngā ākonga kī roto ī ngā tikanga whakahaere ō Te Kura? Mā te aha? [*Tauira*: kī te mahi tahi kī te ākonga kei runga ī tē BOT {Rūnanganui}, ngā kaunihera kura – mā tē aha koe kā ū kia uru te reo ō ngā ākonga kī roto, kā rangona rānei, kia ū pono, ā tinana mai wā rātau ake whakaaro ī ngā whakahaere, ē pā ana kia rātau?

Ka whai wāhi ngā tamariki ki roto i ngā mahi whakahaere a te kura mā o rātou mātua, kaitiaki rānei. Kua whakaaetia mātou kia haere mai tētahi ākonga ki te wahanga tuatahi o ngā hui a te rōpū whakahaere, arā, te Ohu Kaihautū, ki te whakatakoto i ngā hiahia, i ngā tono, i ngā nawe rānei a ngā taiuira.

Ko te nuinga o aua kaupapa ka ahu mai i ngā tamariki Wharekura i te mea he kaha nō te whānau whānui o tēnei kura kaupapa Māori ki te tae a tinana mai ki ngā hui a whānau, ki reira whakatakoto ai ngā whakaaro, ngā āwangawanga, ngā manako, ngā hiahia, ngā moemoeā rānei mā o rātou tamariki – kura tuatahi mai, Wharekura mai.

E whakapono ana mātou ko ngā mātua e kawea mai nei ngā whakaaro e puta mai ana i o rātou tamariki, mā reira whai reo ai, whai mana ai ngā tamariki ki roto i ngā whakaritenga me ngā whakahaeretanga a te kura.

ii) Hē tauira wāhau hei whakaatu mai he aha ngā momo whakaritenga ī whakamanahia ī tē kura?

Ehara i te mea kua kite ai au i tētahi tauira e kōrero mai nā te pātai nei – he kaupapa here pea, heoi anō, ki te kore ahau e kitea i roto i tētahi wā poto e whai ake nei, ka whakaritea tētahi kaupapa here hei tautoko i ngā whakaaro ei runga ake.

iii) Hē uauatanga ī pā mai kia koe kia whakaurua ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga kī ngā whakaritenga whakahaere, ā, ī pehea tō karo ī ēnei mea?

Me he uauatanga, i toko ake te pātai ka pēhea te whānuitanga o tā tētahi ākonga whai wāhitanga ki roto i ngā kaupapa katoa ka kōrerohia ki roto i ngā hui Ohu Kaihautū? Hei tauira, e tika ana kia rongo e tētahi ākonga, ngā whakamahuki katoa e pā ana ki tō tētahi kaiako/kaimahi tūranga mahi, utu rānei? Ko te whakautu, e kao.

Koira te take i puta mai te whakatau, ka noho te ākonga ki te wahanga tuatahi o te hui ki te rongo i te pūronga a te tumuaki, ki te rongo i ngā pūrongo nō ngā ohu mahi, kia rongo i te pūrongo pūtea me ngā take pea e hāngai ana ki aua pūrongo katoa heoi, kīhai mātou i whakaae kia noho te ākonga ki te rongo i ngā kōrero e pā ana ki ngā kaiako/kaimahi.

He rautaki tērā ki te tiaki i te tamaiti, ki te tiaki hoki i te hunga pakeke – kei pāngia te whakamā ki tētahi. He mea nui ki a mātou kia ita tonu te mana o tēnā me tēnā.

iv) He aha ōu tohutohu kī te Minitā mō Tē Mātauranga mē pehea ngā kura ka "whakauru ī tē reo ō ngā ākonga ī ngā whakahaere ō te kura"? [Hē tauira: mā te ture, ē tukuna atu mā te kura ē whakarite, mā te āta tono o ngā akoranga, ō ngā hapori rānei].

Mehemea i a mātou te taringa o Te Minita mō te Mātauranga, kua mea ake – waiho ma ia kura tāna ake huarahi te para, te whakarite kia whai wāhi ai te reo ākonga ki roto i ngā whakaritenga me ngā whakahaeretanga heoi, me whai wāhi ka tika, ngā reo o ngā ākonga ki roto i ngā whakahaeretanga o ia kura ka tika.

v) Hē whakaaro anō wāhau?

E whakaaro nui ana mātou mō te whakataukī ka kīia: "Ka pū te ruhā, ka hao te rangatahi," heoi anō me arahi tonu, me tiaki tonu e te reiroa i ngā mātātaki mō te āpōpō mā te awhi me te arahi tika ki te mātāpuna o te mōhio me te māramatanga – me āta tere tātou.

vi) Ngā whakaaro o te ākonga kua whakaritea ko ia te māngai ki te Poari.

He rereke ngā kura kaupapa Māori ki ngā kura auraki. Ara, ko te Aho Matua te tuanui akoranga ana ko te reo Māori me te tautoko o ngā whānau, ngā waka kawenga;

Ko ngā pātai e tika kia pātaia ko te waihanga o te hopu whakaaro mai i ngā ākonga me te whiriwhiri heaha ngā take he tika kia kawea ki te Poari;

Ahakoa kua whakaritea ko au te māngai mo ngā ākonga, kāore anō au kia tae ki tētahi hui. Ahakoa kei te pēnā tonu, e whai ake nei ko aku whakaaro mo te tūranga nei:

- ko ngā take tino hohonu [matua] anake he tika kia kawea ki te Poari;
- ka puta mai he take mai i ngā / tētahi ākonga rānei, me āta whiriwhiria e au te tuatahi;
- tuarua, ka korero au ki tētahi / ētahi pakeke, tētahi / ētahi kaiako rānei;
- katahi ka whārikihia ki te aroaro o te Poari

e) ***Kura 5***

i) Kaore anō a Kura 5 kia whakauru mai ngā taiohi ki te Ohu Whakahaere/Poari.

ii) Aroha mai, kaore a tatou tauira. I ngā tau tīmatatanga ka whai waahi ai te kai=kōrero nō te Wharekura ki te kawe i a ratou kaupapa/take hoki ki te hui whānau.

iii) Barriers: mō te noho ki ngā hui whānau otiia ki ngā hui o te Ohu Whakahaere/BOT ko ngā take "human resources" ka puta. A ko ētehi kaupapa hoki he taumaha.

iv) Flexibility for schools/Kura – the option should be left for kura whānau. Taiohi should be involved in governance via a "facilititated system" whereby a Pouako or whānau member teaches the varying skills of communication required within a holistic/whānau driven model of governance, including- facilitator skills/listening, recording skills. We will endeavour to set Wharekura taiohi hui – tuakana, in the near future to see how we can acknowledge and ensure taiohi/tamariki voice, views needs and ideas come to the governance sphere.

v) Overview:

Anei aku whakautu, te tumanako ia he whakautu whai hua mai māu me te mahi rangahau na.

Ka tika me whai reo te taiohi ki te whakahaere me te anga whakatemua o tona kura, heoi, kaore anō ahau kia āta whakariterite mai me pewhea he aha hoki tona āhua.

Ngā mihi manahau hoki ki a koe, me te manako ka oti pai ai enei mahi rangahau ākōtata nei.

f) *Titiro ki te Puka Tāpiri I*

Section 6.   He Kōrero Whakaruruhau [Overview]

a) It is obvious that while accepting or being aware of the requirements of student involvement on the board, the five kura involved are at various stages of implementation. This is the reality and is accepted as it is, what it is. Another reality is that some kura do not have a student board member with one kura not being able to commit to having one involved in the very near future. This relates to their all being too busy and at the same time, accommodating the dynamics of running a kura as well as facilitating whānau hui for the kura and the hapori. At the time of this research project, all kura were just coming out of the Covid-19 lockdown.

b) Secondly, and with the kura being at various stages of implementation, some kura surveyed view it as expressing the true intention of the partnership intended in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Others view it as the basis to design an implementation strategy according to their needs as well as those of the whānau and hapori. A form of tino rangatiratanga. This too is accepted.

c) One of the kura has based their model on a senior male and female ākonga being charged with the responsibility of convening peer group hui of no less than one per month and as frequently as one every two weeks – this is the preferred option to obtain ākonga, views. That kura has also quite creatively moved to the design of individual and personal student development plans around "areas of passion" for each of their ākonga. Their involvement with their ākonga is more focussed and frequent.

d) Thirdly the interviews from the kura were either written by them and filed "as is" or written by me after an interview. This was done in the case of two kura and the texts were sent back to both for final approval. It therefore goes without saying that if any further detail is required from all of the kura, they should be approached direct.

7. Puka Tāpiri I: Te Ngako O Ngā Kōrero [The Litany of Sound] – Quotes from the Principals

Te Kura Kaupapa Māori 1:

"perhaps this is something that the ERO can pursue"

"we know the requirements of the law but we will implement it our way"

"this is as close as one can get to the true partnership intended under Te Tiriti O Waitangi"

"ākonga involvement is encouraged in most things except very serious matters"

"representation involves two students from each of year nine to thirteen as led by a male and a female senior ākonga and guided and advised by two kaiako"   ,

"they completely plan and implement the pōwhiri to all new ākonga inclusive of for example haka pōwhiri, kaikaranga, kaikōrero, waiata tautoko , kawa etc and these are based on Tainui marae kawa and tikanga"

"te reo and whānau involvement are very strong and this is reflected in our kapa haka performances at national level competition"

Kura 2:

"we will do it our way"

"it is important to determine what the ākonga's purpose is first"

"it is an important mechanism for representing ākonga views to management"

"we had to move ākonga from a you do as you are told mentality to a self-determining one through their developing of personal **areas of passion**"

"personal development plans for each ākonga means more intimate and frequent dealings with them as individuals"

"vocational aspirations are to also be demonstrated through practical realities"

"ākonga views are amazing and they should not be pre-judged by their previous backgrounds and personal appearance"

Kura 3:

"while our aspiration is to establish a Student Council this has not yet been done formally"

"the ākonga facilitate their own hui and represent matters that are of interest to them"

"staff continually work alongside ākonga"

"as staff we are all very keen to include the aspirations and dreams from our hapori and whānau"

"the subjects taught are driven by ākonga"

"at the end of each year the vocational aspirations of ākonga are determined and then plans put in place to achieve these the next year"

"there are regular hui with ākonga"

"there is a need for personal and skill development for ākonga who will be on the BOT"

"there is an acceptance of the law and its intent, but there should be a greater facility for the inclusion of tikanga Māori with the whānau determining the nature of the actual process and outcomes"

Kura 4:

"we have an ākonga designated for this role but she has not yet been formally involved so currently ākonga views are through the medium of their parents at the whānau hui"

"parents and caregivers attend all hui"

"each kura should be left to implement this policy in a way that best represents their needs"

"while we greatly endorse the whakatauāki "**ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi**", rangatahi still need guidance, support etc"

Ākonga View:

"there is a big difference between kura and mainstream with the former being totally focussed on te reo – Te Aho Matua is the ridge pole for everything"

"I have not attended any hui yet but I will think that only serious matters should be referred to the board"

"once I am in this role, my view is that I will rationalize the matter first then discuss it with kaiako or other adults before presenting it to the Board"

<u>Kura 5</u>:

"we have not yet involved ākonga on te Ohu Whakahaere

"how the policy is implemented should be left to the kura to determine"

"ākonga should be supported by appropriate personal development so that they are better able to fulfil the roles required of them"

"a possible barrier is the discussing of human resource matters which can be quite serious"

Tēnā koe, Fakatalofa atu, Bula, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Namaste, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Hi!

Kia ora!

The Minister for Education has asked us (Office of the Children's Commissioner) to find out the best way school students can be involved in decisions about how their school is run. Your ideas are important to help us find out what works best.

If you choose to do this survey, we will use your answers to help us advise on the best way for students to have more of a say in big decisions at school.

What you need to know:

• This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers.
• The survey will take about 10 minutes.
• You don't have to take the survey, but if you do, what you tell us will be used by us to help affect government decisions.
• Your answers will be anonymous. No one will know what you said.
• If you need help answering a question please ask your teacher or friend.
• Please don't tell us your name or address.
• You can skip a question if you do not want to answer.

Click next to agree to participate in the survey.

Thank you for participating! Whakawhetai ki a koutou!

Ko wai koe? All about you.

1. How old are you? Please tick the <u>one</u> answer that applies to you.

- ( ) 8
- ( ) 9
- ( ) 10
- ( ) 11

- ( ) 12
- ( ) 13
- ( ) 14
- ( ) 15

- ( ) 16
- ( ) 17
- ( ) 18+

2. How would you describe yourself?

- ( ) Male / Boy
- ( ) Female / Girl
- ( ) Another gender not listed here
- ( ) I'd rather not say

3. What ethnic group, or groups, do you belong to? Please tick <u>all</u> answers that apply to you.

- [ ] Māori
- [ ] NZ European
- [ ] Samoan
- [ ] Cook Islands Māori
- [ ] Tongan
- [ ] Niuean
- [ ] Chinese
- [ ] Indian
- [ ] Other Pacific Nation not listed (please tell us in the box below)
- [ ] I'd rather not say

I belong to another ethnicity (please tell us more)

Introduction

All children and young people have the right to have a say in decisions that affect them. These rights are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (also known as the Children's Convention).

We want to find out the best ways students can have a say in the governance of their school. Governance means the big decisions about how your school runs. Examples of governance include things like creating school rules and agreeing how the school's money is spent. Recently it's meant making decisions related to COVID-19, for example if water fountains were going to be used.

The people who make these big decisions are known as the Board of Trustees.

Your teacher should have talked to you about who make up the Board of Trustees and what sorts of decisions they make. Please ask them if you are unsure.

4. Here are some types of decisions the Board of Trustees makes. How interested are you in having a say in each of them?
1=not at all interested, 5=definitely interested

	Not at all interested	Not very interested	A bit interested	Very interested
What we learn (e.g. te reo Māori, sports, arts)	◯	◯	◯	◯
How we learn (e.g. group learning, individual inquiry, use of technology, school trips)	◯	◯	◯	◯
The identity and rules of our school (e.g. uniform, tikanga, clubs, playground rules)	◯	◯	◯	◯
The design of the school (e.g. buildings, classrooms, school grounds)	◯	◯	◯	◯

I want to have a say in other areas:

5. Does your school make sure students are heard when making these decisions?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ I don't know

If yes, how does your schools make sure students are heard on these decisions?

3

6. If you had a choice, *how* would you like to have a say in these big decisions at your school?

7. From the list below, what gets in the way of you having a say in big decisions made at school? (tick all that apply)

- [ ] It won't make a difference/they won't listen
- [ ] I'm not interested in having a say
- [ ] I don't feel like my ideas are taken seriously
- [ ] I don't know how
- [ ] They only want to hear from certain students (not me)
- [ ] I'm busy with other things

Tell us more

8. Pick three ways you think would better support students to have a say in big decisions at your school:

- [ ] More than one student board representative
- [ ] Student council (group of students elected to speak on issues)
- [ ] Students run the school for a day
- [ ] Survey from the Board asking students about their ideas
- [ ] Student leaders can talk to the board
- [ ] Students are able to send experiences and ideas directly to the Board
- [ ] The school being required to have a plan showing how they will hear from students
- [ ] Training for students on a board about how to get ideas across
- [ ] Training for board members on how to listen to students
- [ ] I have another idea

9. Is there anything else you want to tell us about students having a say in big decisions at your school?

Student Representatives on school Boards

All secondary schools must have a student representative on their Board of Trustees.

10. Are you a current or past Student Board Representative?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Student Representatives on Boards

11. Please rate how well you feel (or felt) listened to, on the Board (Where 1 = not at all and 5 = all your contributions felt valued)

1. I didn't feel at all valued   5. All my contributions felt valued

12. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience as a Student Board Representative?

Thank you! Kia ora!

Thanks for taking this survey. We will use your answers to give advice to government, and we will share a report with schools summarising what we heard.

If you have any other thoughts on this topic (or any topic) you can also email us at: voices@occ.org.nz

Mā te wā (bye for now)!