



# NZEI TE RIU ROA

**27 November 2025**

## **Making a submission on the Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill**

Submissions are now open until 11:59pm January 14, 2026.

Written submissions can be made as an individual or a group.

### **Follow this guide to help support your submission writing**

First, tell them who you are

- Your whakapapa/background/experience
- Are you writing as an individual or a group? If you are writing as a group, who do you represent and how many of you are there?
- Outline your experience and credentials, your role, and how long you have been involved in education.

Remember that your submission will be publicly available as part of the submissions process, so do not include any information you do not want to be publicised.

### **Submission content**

You do not need to address every aspect of the bill.

- Short submissions focussing on your main concern(s) are good.
- Submissions illustrating risks to education, ākonga, your practice and communities are powerful.
- Collectively, submissions from educators will give depth and breadth to the impact this bill could have in education and society.
- It is important that you explicitly state your opposition to this bill and recommend that it does not progress.



**The guide below discusses key aspects and can be used to inform your submission**

### **Oral submission**

In addition to making a written submission you can ask to make an oral submission to the select committee. This is a powerful opportunity to amplify your message. If you opt for an oral submission, you will be contacted by the select committee about how this will occur. Often this is now online via zoom, or you can ask to attend in person.

Note that oral submissions from groups are usually given 10 minutes for presentations, while individuals are given 5 minutes.

### **What else can you do?**

- Share with your online community. Post on social media why you're submitting against the bill and encourage others. Share what you submitted to support them.
- Speak with your school colleagues and wider whānau community. Share your concerns about this bill with colleagues, parents, and whānau of the community and support them to submit against the bill. A strong collective view that your community oppose this bill will be important.

## **Guide to key amendments of the Education and Training (System Reform) Bill**

### **1. Attendance exemptions**

Removing principals' ability to apply discretion to attendance exemptions

- Currently principals can use their professional discretion to exempt students from attending schools for numerous reasons including cultural, learning and wellbeing, and distance needs.
- The amendment introduces a new set of rules, to be determined by the Secretary for Education, that all principals must follow regardless of student need, to issue attendance exemptions.
- The attendance exemption rules won't be set out in the Act, rather the Secretary will be able to issue and change the rules. This means that at this stage we don't know what the rules will be. There is a risk that this change will disadvantage Kaupapa Māori and Māori medium schools by removing their right to manage non-attendance through a Te Ao Māori approach.



- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)

## 2. **Setting Curriculum Statements**

- Creating a new power for the Minister to directly set curriculum statements without a curriculum review or report from the Ministry of Education by the Secretary of Education.
- The amendment to section 90 and insertions of 90A and 90B will shift what are currently democratically and professionally shaped national curriculum statements into direct Ministerial and political control.
- The amendment also provides for a regular review process for curriculum statements; however, the Minister will have the power to change curriculum statements at will and without review or consultation.
- This is concerning because it places Mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori further at risk. It removes the ability for schools to implement localised curriculum that is responsive to the specific context of the school and undermines the professional decision making of educators. The amendment also constitutes a profound politicisation of curriculum because of the unprecedented power it gives to the Minister of Education to dictate curriculum.
- **No Regulatory Impact Statement has been prepared for this change.** No problem definition has been provided. The costs, benefits and risks to this change are not presented.

## 3. **Removing the professional functions of the Teaching Council**

Shifting setting professional standards and teaching criteria from the independent Teaching Council to Ministerial and political control.

- This new section is a profound shift in the regulation of the teaching profession by moving powers of standard and criteria setting for qualifications, practice and certification from the Teaching Council, a democratically elected council of teaching professionals, to the Ministry of Education which answers to the Minister.
- This new section also shifts the balance of power within the Teaching Council by reducing the overall number of members and making most Ministerial appointments.
- This is a direct attack on the professional autonomy of the teaching profession and a clear politicisation of education. No other professional body



(e.g., nurses, doctors, lawyers) suffers this level of direct political interference.

- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)
- [Open letter from peak bodies on stripping Teaching Council of professional functions](#)

#### 4. **Health curriculum**

A shift from community consultation to community notification about delivery of the health curriculum in kura and schools.

- Currently at least every two years, public schools must consult their community before adopting a statement on the delivery of the Health Curriculum. This is an opportunity for school communities could learn about and contribute to how health is taught to their tamariki.
- The proposed amendment removes the requirement for schools to consult with their communities and replaces it with a requirement to notify the community about the delivery of health curriculum in schools.
- This needs to be seen in the context of the Government's decision to remove the Relationships and Sexuality Guidelines, which supported schools to deliver an inclusive and supportive curriculum for tamariki of all identities.
- On the one hand, this change could leave the education of relationships, sexuality and identity to chance, potentially putting the wellbeing of rainbow tamariki at risk. On the other hand, this change may reduce the chance of schools being targeted for their approach to delivering the health curriculum.
- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)

#### 5. **State schools of serious concern**

Introducing this new concept and a rushed, punitive approach to 'supporting schools' which is lacking trust and collaboration with schools.

- This amendment introduces the language of 'schools of serious concern' to the Education and Training Act and gives the Chief Review Officer (ERO) the power to inform the Secretary and Minister of Education that they have formed a view that a particular school is 'of serious concern'.
- The Chief Review Officer then has 28 days to give a written report to the Secretary and Minister detailing (1) whether the school is still 'of serious



concern' and (2) recommendations for statutory interventions. The Secretary then has 30 working days to report to the Chief Review Officer and Minister specific actions taken to intervene.

- The language of 'schools of serious concern' is performative and has no place in a public education system. The term will place blame for any number of problems on schools rather than the education system. It is notable that the bill does not define what it means for a school to be of 'serious concern'.
- There are further concerns that this amendment opens the door for forced charter school conversions.

## 6. **Changes to the Charter School model**

A legislative pathway for state schools that have converted to charter schools to reconvert back into a state school

- This was a pathway proposed by many individuals and organisations that made submissions when the charter school model was being introduced in 2024.
- This amendment also allows for charter school sponsors to hold multiple charter school contracts and run multiple schools.
- While creating a path for converted schools to return to the state sector is positive, the power to make this decision ultimately sits with the Minister, and not the school community. However, the reversion will end the employment of all staff at the school. Existing staff will be given priority in reapplying for their jobs, but employment at the reconverted school is not guaranteed.
- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)

## 7. **Establishment of a New Zealand School Property Agency**

Moving responsibility for school property from the Ministry of Education to a Board appointed by the Minister.

- The NZSPA will have powers of entry and inspection to order construction, maintenance, and repairs to be paid for by school operational budgets as directed by NZSPA.
- The NZSPA will carry out works 'in a manner that gives effect to the standards and priorities set by the government' of the day. The establishment of this



agency signals a shift from schools managing their own maintenance and upkeep, to greater centralised control and compulsion.

- The agency is given powers to require information, undertake 'interventions', and impose 'action plans' on schools. The NZSPA can instigate 'specialist audits' and issue 'performance notices' to schools regarding their ability to comply and attend to directives from the NZSPA. For Kaupapa Māori and Māori medium settings, this agency is another Crown-controlled body placed between Māori and the land and space they require mana and rangatiratanga over to educate their tamariki.
- Kura, schools and early childhood centres with state owned land and property can be forced to pay for maintenance work carried out without their approval or contribution, which could create financial strain and impact staffing and resourcing unless significant additional funding is provided.

## 8. System monitoring studies

This new subpart of the Act empowers the Minister to give notice that schools must participate in system monitoring studies if selected.

- Currently schools have discretion as to which monitoring studies they participate in. They use their professional judgement as to whether the timing of the study, purpose or management of the study is suitable for their students.
- Kura are exempt from this requirement, as are other registered schools if they do not provide instruction in the language of the notified study.
- Registered schools would be compelled to participate regardless of the fidelity of the study or usefulness of the assessment to the students or school. Exemptions may be granted if the Minister is satisfied with 'acceptable reasons'.
- This new subpart enables the Minister to set the parameters of what is deemed important system monitoring and what is not, while excluding schools and the system as a whole from determining what success looks like. It also opens the door to further mandatory testing such as standardised national testing, for example through the new SMART tool.
- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)