



NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS
Te Kauae Kaimahi

**Submission of the
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions
Te Kauae Kaimahi**

to the

Education and Science Committee

on the

Education Amendment Bill

24 January 2013

P O Box 6645

Wellington

October 2012

Summary of Recommendations

- This Bill, if it were to proceed, would establish “charter schools” that are removed from fundamental mainstream provisions governing other schools in New Zealand. These include accountability and auditing requirements, parental and community participation on governance boards, regulated teacher provisions and requirements for schools to follow the New Zealand Educational Curriculum.
- The Bill would radically alter educational policy in New Zealand. There is no mandate for this Bill and it is widely opposed by teachers, academics and parents. The Bill should be withdrawn.
- Charter schools are being promulgated as a response to educational underachievement. The real causes of educational underachievement of a significant minority of New Zealand students are high levels of poverty and the growth of income inequality in New Zealand. Government action is needed to address these causes.
- Charter schools are not needed to provide greater diversity. There are provisions in the Education Act now that enable the school system to respond to diversity needs. Innovative models of education in low-socio-economic areas in South Auckland demonstrate the ability of the system to cater for diverse needs and populations.
- Close examination of the evidence does not bear out the proposition that charter schools will turn around the so-called “educational failure”. Charter schools may well increase educational disadvantage.
- Education is a basic right, a public good and brings positive benefits to wider society. It is unacceptable that charter schools be established on the basis of making a profit from the delivery of education services to children and students.
- This Bill proposes to allow the introduction of teachers that are not registered into schools. There is strong evidence to show that teacher registration makes a difference to educational outcomes. The official advice received in analysing this Bill strongly opposes the introduction of unregistered teachers. This advice must be heeded by Government.
- The Bill removes requirements that ensure transparency, monitoring and accountability in the education system. These requirements are a critical component of good governance in education services.

- If charter schools are introduced, they cannot be exempt from the usual forms of scrutiny and accountability such as the Official Information Act and Ombudsman audits.
- The removal of charter schools from the requirements under the current Education Act relating to teacher salaries will erode the national conditions of employment for teachers that support the delivery of high quality education.
- The Government does not have a mandate for the introduction of any ACT policy, let alone one as potentially damaging as charter schools.
- Clause 31 of the Bill that inserts a new Part 12A in the Education Act and creates the underlying framework for charter schools is opposed.
- Clauses 23,24,25,26 of the Education Amendment Bill which would allow the hiring of unqualified people to work as teachers and allow non-teachers to be principals are all opposed.
- New Section 158D which does not require charter schools to follow the world-leading New Zealand education curriculum is opposed.
- New Section 158T which excludes charter schools from the Education Act's Teachers Council provisions is opposed.
- New Section 158T which exempts charter schools from the requirement to include elected parents and community representatives on school governance bodies is opposed.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This submission is made on behalf of the 36 unions affiliated to the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, Te Kauae Kaimahi (CTU). With 350,000 members, the CTU is the one of the largest democratic organisations in New Zealand.
- 1.2. The CTU acknowledges Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and formally acknowledges this through Te Rūnanga o Ngā Kaimahi Māori o Aotearoa (Te Rūnanga) the Māori arm of Te Kauae Kaimahi (CTU) which represents approximately 60,000 Māori workers.
- 1.3. The Bill used the term Partnership Schools/ Kura Hourua. The CTU use the term “charter schools” throughout the submission as this was the term used in the National-Act Confidence and Supply Agreement¹ that introducing the policy.
- 1.4. Educational policy and legislation is a key policy concern of the CTU. The provisions in this Bill would make fundamental and anti-democratic changes to New Zealand’s education policy and services.
- 1.5. Teachers, education academics and education staff are strongly represented in the CTU’s membership through the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA), the Tertiary Education Union (TEU) the Tertiary Institutes Allied Staff Association (TIASA) and the Independent Schools Education Association (ISEA).
- 1.6. Teachers and teachers’ unions have expertise in educational policy and their legitimate authority must be acknowledged. The Bill is widely opposed by the teaching profession and education academics.
- 1.7. The CTU endorses the submissions of its members. Numerous CTU affiliates and members have made submissions on this Bill demonstrating the widespread union concern about this policy.
- 1.8. Te Rūnanga o Ngā Kaimahi Māori o Aotearoa (Te Rūnanga) strongly supports this CTU submission. Te Runanga views charter schools as principally a means of privatising education using the educational under-achievement of Māori as an excuse for the establishment of an education policy that is experimenting on vulnerable, low income, Māori and Pasifika children, families and communities.

¹ http://www.parliament.nz/NR/rdonlyres/5634F13B-7744-4D03-A9F9-OE4F83621/207925/NationalACT_Confidence_and_Supply_Agreement0512201.pdf

- 1.9. Charter schools have also been justified on the ground of improving the educational outcomes for Pasifika students. The CTU Komiti Pasifika has made a submission on this Bill objecting to charter schools being touted as a solution for the underachievement of Māori and Pasifika in the New Zealand educational system.
- 1.10. Komiti Pasifika states that for some 75,000 Pasifika students in New Zealand schools, charter schools are not the solution for improved educational achievement. Instead, Komiti Pasifika advocate for a comprehensive, multipronged initiative to improve the existing public school system with funds concentrated in low-decile schools where the bulk of Māori and Pasifika students are located.
- 1.11. Educational policy and legislation are the concern of the CTU's wider membership too. All CTU affiliates have an investment and interest in education. Tens of thousands of CTU union members are parents who have daily involvement with their children's education.
- 1.12. This Bill poses a major threat to our world-leading quality public education system, would undermine and damage New Zealand's public education system and has real potential to harm children and young people's educational prospects should it be allowed to proceed.

2. Charter schools background

- 2.1. The 2011 Confidence and Supply Agreement² signed by the National and Act Parties established an agreement to implement a new school called the Charter School System within the 2011-2014 parliamentary term.
- 2.2. The Agreement provided for implementation of these schools to be based on the Knowledge is Power Programme (KIPP) school system in the United States and the Free Schools in the United Kingdom.
- 2.3. Charter schools would operate in areas of significant educational challenge for groups of students identified as not being served well by the education system: Māori, Pasifika, students with special education needs and students from low-income areas.

² Ibid

3. CTU policy

- 3.1. The CTU is a values and principle-based organisation. We measure policy changes by the principles of fairness; participation, security, improving living standards, sustainability and sovereignty.³
- 3.2. Education is a basic human right and is a means to accessing other human rights. The right to education is set out in law including international law and in human rights treaties. The CTU policy is for universal free access to quality public education from early childhood to tertiary level.
- 3.3. The CTU supports the provision of public education through taxation funding. This Bill provides for public funding of private schools. The Bill would effectively privatise a section of the public education system and in doing so would break down our cohesive and publicly accountable education system.
- 3.4. The CTU opposes the role of private sector and for-profit businesses in the education system. Education is a fundamental human right and a social and public good. It is unacceptable and morally wrong to have private business providers to make a profit from the delivery of education services to children and students. However, our opposition to charter schools is not limited to for-profit provision as this submission goes on to demonstrate.
- 3.5. The problem of underachievement of a significant minority of New Zealand students is a concern that the CTU and its affiliates share. We agree it is an urgent policy problem that needs strong political action.
- 3.6. This Government has steadfastly failed to take action on the wider determinants and responses needed to reduce poverty and stop the growth of income inequality.
- 3.7. The CTU disagrees that the solution to the underachievement of some students will be found in the form of charter schools. The poorer rate of some students' educational achievement is inextricably linked to poverty and the growing gap in income equality. Charter schools may increase disadvantage for some students.
- 3.8. Accountability and transparency are two principles that are core to the governance and delivery of education service and policy. The Bill removes basic accountability and transparency requirements that all other publicly funded schools and services

³ Alternative Economic Strategy, Tetahi Atu Ōhanga Rautaki, New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, 2010

are required and expected to meet including parental participation through governance requirements.

- 3.9. We share a deep unease that this major education policy change is being introduced into the vulnerable communities of South Auckland and Christchurch. Christchurch is a community under severe psychological, economic and social stress and South Auckland is disadvantaged economically and has been heavily impacted by job losses and high levels of poverty.

4. New Zealand is a recognised world leader in education

- 4.1. New Zealand does well in educational outcomes as shown by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results. In the most recent results (2010) New Zealand was ranked fourth out of 34 OECD countries in reading literacy, fourth in scientific literacy and seventh in mathematical literacy.
- 4.2. The New Zealand Treasury recognises our high performing education systems stating, "*The proportion of students achieving at the highest levels is amongst the best in the OECD*".⁴
- 4.3. As well as leading the OECD field in a number of areas of education, our spending on primary and secondary school students is lower than OECD averages. Professor John O'Neill describes this result as, "*we spend less per student yet get impressive results....New Zealand teachers provide very good value for money to government and the country*".⁵
- 4.4. Despite our overall good score on OECD educational measures, an issue of major concern is the lower educational outcomes for a large number of our students. Low-income students are overrepresented in "the long tail of underachievement".
- 4.5. One reason for the underachievement of some students may be a higher drop-out rate of otherwise competent students. In an assessment of 2010 NCEA level 2 results, Emeritus Professor Terry Crooks, concluded that only about 7 percent of students leave primary school ill-prepared for high school and NCEA level 2. He

⁴ Challenges and Choices: New Zealand's Long term Fiscal Statement, 7 Specific Policy Areas, Education New Zealand Treasury, 2010

⁵ http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/about-massey/news/article.cfm?mnarticle_uuid=99EB7CDB-0307-D404-BA4B-EEDE19C6129F

attributes a reason for the lower levels of achievement as that some of these students are simply not at school long enough to get qualifications.⁶

- 4.6. There is also emerging evidence that the New Zealand school system has measurably improved educational outcomes for all students over the last decade and disproportionately for Māori and Pasifika. The Ministry of Education's own data shows that since NCEA was introduced, achievement levels for Māori and Pasifika have both improved significantly year after year.⁷
- 4.7. The CTU is very concerned about the misleading narrative that is being built up about "educational failure". This narrative is being used to justify the introduction of charter schools in New Zealand.
- 4.8. The narrative is deeply flawed. It fails to recognise how well the New Zealand education system does overall for its students, the significant improvements in education outcomes for Māori and Pasifika, how well some New Zealand schools are doing in low-income areas and the significance of poverty as the major contributing factor to student underachievement.

5. Poverty: the real reason behind educational underachievement

- 5.1. It is poverty and inequality that are the real reasons for the underachievement of New Zealand's students. Underachievement in student education relates to economic and social policy decisions in the last twenty years in New Zealand which have grown the gap between the rich and poor faster than in any other OECD country. This growing inequality gap has widened educational underachievement and outcomes.
- 5.2. Research by the New Zealand Council of Educational Research has shown that parental income during the early years of childhood continues to affect children's achievement throughout their primary schooling.⁸
- 5.3. Leading academics Professors Ivan Snook and John O'Neill, after examining the literature on factors leading to underachievement, conclude that:

⁶ <http://www.educationaotearoa.org.nz/all-stories/2012/2/8/its-not-1-in-5-who-are-failing-its-less-than-1-in-10.html>

⁷ <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/indicators/main/education-and-learning-outcomes/1781>

⁸ Wylie, C. (2001). *Ten Years Old & Competent - The Fourth Stage of the Competent Children Project: A Summary of the Main Findings*. Wellington: NZCER

*“The overwhelming weight of the evidence that we have assembled leads to the view that enlightened principals can shape a learning culture and well educated teachers can foster individual achievement but this is not enough. There must also be changes in the wider community and this will require changes in social and economic policy including parent support, preschool and out of school education programmes and effort to enhance family and community wellbeing. Governments which want to substantially reduce unequal educational achievement must institute policies which both reduce social and economic inequalities and directly address the cognitive and affective disadvantages these cause long before school begins”.*⁹

- 5.4. Experts in child poverty, the New Zealand Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) also back this view, stating:

*“Poverty has an enormous effect on educational achievement. The Ministry of Education seems to believe that underachieving students can be saved by changing teachers’ attitudes and introducing personalised learning. But this overlooks the fact that school failure is closely associated with inferior housing, overcrowding, lack of resources, poor health, and, in some cases, sheer hunger. Each of these is the result of poverty. The much lamented “tail” of underachievement is the tail of poverty. It is perverse to suggest that this can be removed by changing teachers’ attitudes and providing different approaches to learning”.*¹⁰

- 5.5. The response from the proponents of charter schools is to say that poverty is no excuse for the educational system failing poor children. This is disingenuous. If children arrive at school hungry, if they have to change schools frequently because of parental unemployment or job losses, if their parents are unable to give sufficient support to their children because of their own lack of education or exhaustion from long hours of work, if children have to go to work themselves because their parents’ income is insufficient for the family to live on, then poverty is the reason why children and young people cannot succeed at school.

- 5.6. In response to the statement used by charter school proponents that poverty is not an excuse for students not succeeding, Diana Ravitch, a research professor at New

⁹ Education Policy Response Group, Massey University, College of Education April 2012, page 12

¹⁰ CPAG Report, 2008 “Long tail of underachievement is the tail of poverty”

York University since 1995, who served as an Assistant Secretary of Education and has edited scores of education journals and books says,

“Poverty is not just an excuse. In some ways the (US) educational reform movement is in denial of the number of immigrant children, the hardening of class lines, growing inequality, the number of kids with disabilities. Some poor kids do very well but the odds are against them.”¹¹

- 5.7. Ravitch, who formerly advocated for the American-based No Child Left behind Programme, which measures schools and teachers based on the test results of teachers, has reversed her support for charter schools to now being one of the leading figures in opposing charter schools.
- 5.8. The issues Ravitch raises are the same issues and the same concerns as being raised in New Zealand. Ravitch states the US education reform movement, that has promoted charter schools, robs the regular public schools of resources and intellectual strength. She states, *“the reformers are scanting (sic) the largest problems facing educators: the cyclical poverty that afflicts more than a fifth of the nation’s children”*.
- 5.9. New Zealand could learn from Finland, the leading country in the PISA outcomes. The Finnish education system links education achievement and poverty directly, has a strong commitment to equity and has a range of social policies to eliminate most poverty from society. The lessons we can learn from the Finnish education system according to Professor O’Neill¹² is that they recognise that *“there is a strong correlation between poverty, particularly intergenerational poverty, and educational achievement”*.

6. There is no evidence for charter schools

- 6.1. There needs to be very close examination of the evidence that charter schools will be able to turn around the so-called “educational failure”.
- 6.2. There is no reliable data to back up the claim that charter schools do better than public schools yet this is the basis of how they are being sold to New Zealand politicians and to the general public.

¹¹ Denby, D. *Public Defender: Diane Ravitch takes on a Movement*, New Yorker, November 19, 2012

¹² Education Policy Response Group, Massey University, College of Education, April 2012

- 6.3. The best research suggests only that the data on charter schools is inconclusive on the actual effects on student achievement. The 2009 Stanford University CREDO (Centre for Research on Education Outcomes) study, reviewed data across the USA on charter and public schools. The study found that 17 percent of charter schools perform better than public schools, 56 percent perform about the same and 37 percent perform worse than the public schools.¹³
- 6.4. While some charter schools in the USA have produced some good results, the National Assessment of Educational Progress tests in 2003 and 2006, and a 2010 study commissioned by the US Department of Education, showed that charter schools either underperformed compared with district schools in the same demographic or performed at the same levels.¹⁴
- 6.5. Data from a 2012 study in Wisconsin¹⁵ examining poverty and comparing the school performance data of charter schools to public schools found that on average public schools outperform charter schools on their report card indices and that, even when adjusting for poverty in the analysis, public schools performed better than charter schools.
- 6.6. The outcome of the Wisconsin study was that legislators were urged to work with state educational leadership and citizens to address the significant correlation between economic disadvantage and educational outcomes with a call for public policy to ensure that economic disadvantage must be acknowledged as a significant factor affecting educational outcome and that:
- “Future economic and educational policies need to receive collaborative consideration as the highest priority in the state budget. Both have a significant impact on each other”.*¹⁶
- 6.7. The Knowledge is Power Programme (KIPP) that runs 125 charter school programmes across the USA claim that they have been able to show significant achievement gains for students from low income families. KIPP claims that 80 percent of the children who complete the 8th grade (year 9) go on to university compared with just 20 percent of children from public schools.

¹³ Ibid, page ii

¹⁴ Denby, D. *Public Defender: Diane Ravitch takes on a Movement*, New Yorker, November 19, 2012.

¹⁵ <http://forwardinstitute.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/wisconsin-report-card-study-2012.pdf>

¹⁶ Ibid

- 6.8. But the EPRG group review found that the data has been found to be misleading on several counts. Scrutiny of the results shows that those high achievement figures are attained because student attrition is high and skewed: those who leave are those who have performed less well or who cannot conform and forty percent of male African-American students leave KIPP schools before Grade 8.¹⁷
- 6.9. There is also a high dropout rate in KIPP schools which accounts for the high figure of remaining students going onto university. The high dropout rate in KIPP schools is attributed to the rigid standards KIPP schools set for standardised tests.¹⁸
- 6.10. In Sweden, two studies concluded that although there were short term improvements in student achievement from charter schools these were not sustained. Children of highly-educated parents benefited most while there was little evidence of benefits to children from families (including immigrant families) with low levels of education.¹⁹
- 6.11. A study of the Swedish system argued that significant benefits have been created by Swedish free schools. However, that the Swedish education system has retained central and municipal responsibility for all its schools and has tight financial control as well as a national curriculum.
- 6.12. The views of the New Zealand Education Policy Response Group (EPRG) in their study on charter schools are critical as they examined charter schools from a New Zealand context. They found that the reasons why the research on charter schools is so inconclusive is that there is an enormous variety in the charter schools that exist and this makes comparison very difficult; findings from one school are not generalisable to another; that charter schools only measure mean student performance results; that significant results may not be sustainable in everyday practice; and that charter school researchers are insufficiently objective.
- 6.13. These investigators found, following a detailed analysis of the evidence on charter schools²⁰, that there is little evidence to support that views that charter schools will:
- i. Provide choice for large numbers of low income parents
 - ii. Promote greater equality

¹⁷ Education Policy Response Group, Massey University, College of Education, April 2012, page 49.

¹⁸ Ibid,

¹⁹ Ibid page ii

²⁰ Ibid page iv

iii. Eliminate the long tail of underachievement.

6.14. **We oppose Clause 31 of the Bill that inserts a new Part 12A in the Education Act and creates the underlying framework for charter schools.**

7. Removing accountability requirements is antidemocratic

7.1. The provisions in this Bill are an attack on the democratically accountable New Zealand school system as established by Tomorrow's Schools. The introduction of charter schools would radically alter the way schools could operate in New Zealand.

7.2. The proposed exemption of charter schools from Official Information Act requirements and from auditing by the Ombudsman, when these institutions are taxpayer funded, is fundamentally antidemocratic.

7.3. There is convincing evidence available on the performance of charter schools overseas to show that the outcomes from charter schools are not better than state schools and in some places they are worse (see para 5.3 & 5.4 above). Yet this Bill proposes to take away fundamental and essential monitoring and accountability requirements by having a newly introduced educational model not being subject to the Official Information Act.

7.4. Given the experimental nature of this policy, the evidence that is available about charter schools outcomes overseas, and that one of the major concerns about the Bill at its first reading was about the secrecy that charter schools would operate under, this is a major concern.

7.5. The provisions in this Bill would have the school sponsor of the charter schools as being responsible to meet agreed student achievement goals as well as financial and operational standards. This would mean no public scrutiny and accountability of individual schools and the sponsor or sponsoring organisation.

7.6. The proposal in the Bill that charter schools are accountable to their sponsors would also remove the school governance convention that schools are accountable to their local communities. That the charter school sponsor may have no understanding of the local community is a major reversal in New Zealand educational policy and alters the traditional relationship and connection that schools have with their local communities. This is a radical departure from established education policy and practice.

- 7.7. The Bill removes the right of parents to be involved in school governance thus removing a core accountability mechanism and connection between schools, students and communities they serve.
- 7.8. **We oppose proposed section 158T that exempts charter schools from the requirement to include elected parents and community representatives on school governance bodies.**
- 7.9. **Charter schools cannot be exempt from the usual forms of scrutiny and accountability such as the Official Information Act and Ombudsman audits.**

8. Undermines teachers' employment conditions

- 8.1. This Bill represents an attack on the employment conditions of teachers and by the exemption of charter schools from many of the provisions of the current Education Act will reduce collective organisation and representation mechanisms.
- 8.2. Charter schools, if implemented, would be removed from the requirements of Part 8A of the Education Act which sets provisions for teacher salaries. This provision protects teachers' employment conditions by setting out pay scales and conditions of employment in collective agreements.
- 8.3. The provisions for the charter school sponsor to set terms and conditions of employment including hours of work and pay rates will undermine the current terms and conditions in the teachers' national employment agreements. The major teachers' employment agreements in the primary and secondary school sectors set the terms and conditions nationally for over 45,000 teachers and education staff.
- 8.4. The CTU views the proposal in the Bill as a deliberate attempt to undermine teachers' current employment terms and conditions and introduce employment conditions that the teacher unions have opposed. We believe that will reduce and undermine New Zealand's quality public education system.
- 8.5. Good working conditions for teachers are essential in keeping a quality education system. New Zealand has obligations under international labour conventions to ensure compliance with core labour standards.
- 8.6. New Zealand is a signatory to International Labour Convention (ILO) Convention 98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining. This convention upholds the right of

workers to be represented through their collective union organisations and to negotiate their wages and terms of employment through their union.

9. Pushing education privatisation

- 9.1. The introduction of charter schools in New Zealand are a move towards privatisation of the public education system.
- 9.2. Charter schools will dismantle the publicly education system and will drain public money away from communities and schools.
- 9.3. In Sweden the for-profit free schools have become a big business. Originally charter schools were to be set up by parents. But despite this, the for-profit schools are the fastest growing with the market dominated by one firm.
- 9.4. The EPRG reported in their investigation of charter schools in Sweden that:

*“Public schools have literally become tradable commodities, caught up in a global battle for supremacy among transnational corporations and private equity investment funds”.*²¹

- 9.5. Charter schools, if introduced, in New Zealand will be a way for private equity firms to make money out of vulnerable communities and people. This is simply turning education into a business venture at the expense of children’s education.
- 9.6. **We oppose Clause 31 which inserts a new part 12A and would allow for charter schools to take over or compete with local state schools.**

10. Removing teacher regulation requirements

- 10.1. The Bill proposes to make changes to Section 120A–120C of the Education Act and will allow unqualified people to work as teachers and will allow principals to be non-teachers. This is one of the most disturbing aspects of this Bill.
- 10.2. It is inexplicable that the Government would consider removal of the requirements to have a regulated teaching workforce when the research evidence overwhelmingly shows that improving educational achievement is related to the quality of the teaching workforce.

²¹ Ibid , page 31

- 10.3. We note that the removal of teacher regulation requirements for charter schools is against official advice, with the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) stating:

“The overall potential for a negative impact on students education from teachers who do not meet the minimum standards for the profession is high...Teacher registration is one of the most influential levels in raising teacher quality across the profession. Allowing charter schools to stand outside this framework will significantly damage the credibility of the Crown.”²²

- 10.4. The CTU notes the official advice from the Ministry of Education warns against removing teacher regulation requirements:

Officials advise that all teachers at Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua must be registered. It aligns with the teacher registration requirements for state, state-integrated and private schools, and the focus on quality teaching to meet our BPS target.²³

- 10.5. The evidence is very strong that teacher qualification is linked to education outcomes. For example, Darling Hammond found that measures of teacher preparation and certification are by far the strongest correlation of student achievement in reading and mathematics, both before and after controlling for student achievement.²⁴ This finding was consistent with many earlier studies. The study concluded that the effects of well-prepared teachers on student achievement can be stronger than the influences of other factors such as poverty, language background and minority status.

- 10.6. The EPRG investigation into charter schools found that, as practiced in Finland, a better approach to education is one that favours high levels of teacher education and on-going professional development, avoids centralised control and refuses to focus narrowly on the assessment of measurable student’s achievement outcomes.²⁵

²² Developing and Implementing a New Zealand Model of Charter School, Regulatory Impact Statement, page 15

²³ <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/CabPapers/CabinetPaperDevelopingAndImplementingNZCharterSchoolModel.pdf>

²⁴ Darling Hammond, L. Teacher Quality and Student Achievement, A Review of State Policy Evidence, January 2000.

²⁵ Education Policy Response Group, Massey University, College of Education, April 2012 page vii

- 10.7. The results of a NZEI commissioned UMR poll showed that introducing unregulated teachers was a move strongly opposed by parents. 85 percent of New Zealand parents agreed all teachers should be qualified and registered.
- 10.8. We cannot understand why the removal of teaching registration requirements is contemplated when the evidence strongly shows that teacher quality makes the difference, this is backed by official advice from the Ministry of Education and when parents oppose having unregulated teachers. It is even more mystifying when the Minister of Education announced in the last Budget moves to increase professional development for teachers in public schools.
- 10.9. **Clauses 23, 24, 25, 26 of the Education Amendment Bill which would allow the hiring of unqualified people to work as teachers and allow non-teachers to be principals are all opposed and should be withdrawn.**

11. Undermining educational quality

- 11.1. Section 158D of the Bill provides for charter schools not to follow the New Zealand Educational Curriculum. The Curriculum is considered to be a world-leading document that allows for flexibility in the delivery of education. Exempting charter schools, from this provision would allow them to deliver a very narrow or sectarian curriculum. Coupled with the removal of public monitoring and accountability proposed for charter schools in the Bill, this could amount to a dangerous experiment with children and young people's education.
- 11.2. **We oppose Section 158D which does not oblige charter schools to follow the New Zealand curriculum.**

12. Education is a public good

- 12.1. The reason why public schooling is nominally free is that it has a broad social benefit. Public schools create a social good with the objective of positive outcomes for all students and for society as a whole. Education serves higher purposes than just generating educational test outcomes. Yet charter school proponents see the purpose of education as almost purely one of achieving measurable educational outcomes and preparation for the employment market.

13. No mandate

- 13.1. The charter schools arrangement came about through an agreement between the National Party and the ACT Party.
- 13.2. Examined at any level, the Government does not have a mandate for the introduction of any ACT policy; let alone one as potentially damaging as this. The initial discussions about charter schools between the National Party and the ACT Party commenced after the 2008 election. Charter schools were ACT policy not National Party policy.
- 13.3. The Government are allowing the ACT party to have a disproportionate influence on political and educational policy. In the 2011 election, ACT received 1.07 percent of the party vote nationwide. Only one Act MP, John Banks, was elected to Parliament who said at the time (ACT has) “just about had its use-by-date”.²⁶ It was the party’s worst election result since it began in 1996.
- 13.4. The Government, by introducing charter schools, is hiding behind this 2008 agreement with the ACT Party which could justifiably be shelved given the 2011 election result. This leads to the questions: who does want charter schools, who is pushing them and why?

14. Conclusion

- 14.1. A coherent Government policy is needed to improve the educational outcomes of the children who are not succeeding in the education system and to reduce the inequality and the poverty experienced by children in low-income families and among Māori and Pasifika children and students.
- 14.2. This Bill is profoundly antidemocratic in removing essential safeguards and processes that ensure the school system is adequately staffed, involved with parents in governance arrangements and is publically accountable and responsive to the community it serves.
- 14.3. The conclusion of the EPRG study into charter schools stated that:

....it is quite likely that the charter school experiment, far from improving our education systems will be another costly mistake which will lead to further

²⁶ Radio New Zealand Checkpoint, 26, November, 2011

inequality in educational achievement and leave our most vulnerable children at the mercy of the market.

14.4. The CTU endorses this view.

14.5. The CTU opposes the Education Amendment Bill and urges its withdrawal.