

Feedback from WAPA
Presidents Regional Hui
31 May 2024

Regional Perspectives - Charter Schools

1. Are private Charter Schools more likely than existing public schools to lift achievement in reading, writing and maths for all students across the country?

Waitākere Area Principals agree that there is insufficient documented evidence that Charter Schools will more likely lift achievement in Reading, Writing and Maths than existing public schools; and we would request that the Minister present evidence-based comparison data about the success rate of State, State integrated and Charter schools both in Aotearoa and Internationally.

However, we assert that better-resourced schools are more likely to raise achievement - therefore this is not an **education issue** but a **resourcing** issue.

Paradoxically, in the cabinet paper, the bill introduces a new category of LAT which will only require a police check. Allowing unqualified and untrained teachers to teach Reading, Writing and Maths presents as problematic when striving to 'lift achievement.' See the attached draft cabinet paper.

2. How might Charter Schools increase student attendance?

Waitākere Area Principals mostly agree that an adequately resourced school may have the financial flexibility to provide bespoke attendance services - the more resources you have, the more options you have.

From the cabinet paper, it is also possible that particularly at secondary level students attending a Charter School, might not have to attend to be marked present.

Additionally, if parents have committed to a charter school they may be more likely to attend - also if students are not expected to achieve at a level of expectation consistent with their same-age peers, then this may increase attendance.

*We understand **Chronic attendance** to be a more deeply complex issue whereby barriers are too great and so neither state nor charter would make a difference in increasing attendance.*

3. How might Charter Schools help address inequities?

Waitākere Principals agree that charter schools will only **increase funding inequities**. All schools in Aotearoa should have access to adequate funding. We expect that Charter Schools will take further funding away from state schools. Again, no evidence supports why charter schools should exist.

4. Do you agree that Charter Schools should choose who and how many students they enrol?

Waitākere Area Principals disagree with Charter Schools choosing who and how many students they enrol.

From the briefing papers, it appears that charter schools will only have limited control over who can enrol, but controlling how many is certainly a possibility. With incentive to stay around 150 students in the proposed funding model.

Many schools have an enforced enrolment zone, why should Charter Schools not be the same? This is a road to elitist, exclusive schools being set up that is the antithesis of society.

5. Do you agree that the NZ education system would benefit from having Charter Schools as an additional choice of schooling?

Most Waitākere Principals do not agree that our education system would benefit from having Charter Schools as an additional choice of schooling.

We may however benefit from having character schools within our system that students could attend for specific things i.e. work work-based experience, introduction to apprenticeships, specialised sporting, performing arts, science, etc and could be attached to school clusters or regions.

Waitākere Area Principals advocate for adequate funding for all state schools to enable innovation and resources to better manage the complex demands we are increasingly being asked to manage. **This additional 'choice' would create winner and loser schools.**

6. Do you think that Charter Schools might drive societal divisions by being

enabled to set up schools with a fringe agenda, such as strong religious beliefs that condemn LGBTQI options?

Waitākere Area Principals unanimously agree that Charter Schools will continue to drive societal divisions in Aotearoa, potentially raising human rights concerns.

- 39 **agree** to the amendment of section 92(2) of the Education and Training Act 2020 so charter schools | kura hourua can permanently appoint a person to a teaching position who does not hold a practising certificate
- 40 **agree** that teachers without a practising certificate working at a charter school | kura hourua need to hold a Limited Authority to Teach to be able to teach at charter schools | kura hourua, subject to contract restrictions
- 41 **agree** that teaching positions can be filled by teachers holding a practising certificate, or holders of a Limited Authority to Teach (with the legislation requiring contracts to specify a minimum percentage of teachers that must hold a practising certificate and the roles they must hold)
- 42 **agree** that Limited Authority to Teach holders at charter schools | kura hourua will not need to demonstrate they have a specialist skill in an area not widely available among teachers with a practising certificate, or a skill that is in short supply
- 43 **agree** that Limited Authority to Teach at charter schools | kura hourua would be subject to the professional disciplinary (conduct) processes of the Teaching Council but not subject to competency evaluation processes
- 44 **agree** that teachers employed by charter schools | kura hourua that are Limited Authority to Teach holders are able to be employed for any length of time
- 45 **agree** that charter schools | kura hourua would have flexibility on negotiating salaries for new teachers they employ who are Limited Authority to Teach holders