

Submission

to the

Ministry of Education

on

The New Zealand Curriculum
Draft for consultation 2006

from

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EMA Central

1. EMA Central represents the interests of over 2,400 enterprises in the central and lower North Island and upper South Island regions. Collectively our members employ 115,000 employees. Members include many government agencies and not-for-profit organisations as well as private and public companies. They all need to operate using the same broad competencies that are so well illustrated in the graphic depicted in the curriculum's Overview, which also emphasises the important role the education system plays in developing valued members of society and our workforce.

Key Performance Indicators for Success of Curriculum

2. The Foreword states that we all want the very best education system for our young people. It is true that the vast majority of New Zealanders think and act based on that belief, but a significant minority don't and this aspect needs to be addressed as a priority if this curriculum review is going to have the greatest positive impact.
3. The evidence indicates that despite some deficiencies in the current curriculum, students from supportive families do relatively well in international comparisons of educational achievement. On the other hand New Zealand has a large tail of underachievement in education that is relatively worse than other nations, where that support and aspiration for the education of our children is not so evident.
4. For the employer members of EMA these facts place the review process for the curriculum in perspective. A quality education system in our view would be one that is capable of demonstrating improving outcomes each year in 2 ways.
 - ✓ through engaging a much greater proportion of our under achieving young people and their families in constructive learning pathways, and
 - ✓ helping the majority who might be doing relatively well internationally, but who may still be falling well short of their real potential.
5. Expressed in performance terms we would want ERO to have these much higher level goals as their prime Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for schools and teachers before looking at the details under specific Achievement Objectives.
6. We would recommend that the Ministry of Education (MOE) lead a whole of Government focus on these goals in partnership with other Government agencies to help schools and families consider how the implementation of a new curriculum might better achieve these 2 high level goals. We believe it would play a vital catalyst role and assist the Government's commitment to transforming our economy including challenging the adults in families about the value of engaging

in on going learning. For New Zealand to regain and/or sustain the highest standards internationally from an economic, social and environmental perspective, we depend on the ability and willingness of our population to be enterprising in all three areas of society.

7. Our employer members reflect a broad cross section of New Zealanders who sense that the curriculum and achievement objectives over emphasise the academic and learning in a traditional classroom environment, as important as these aspects are for many students. There seems to be inadequate emphasis in the curriculum and achievement objectives on learning by doing, including in more real world contexts, such as in the local community including visits to work places or work experience, or through creative uses of technology. In that respect the draft curriculum appears to be more focussed on yesterday's schooling environment rather than looking forward.
8. This aspiration for finding constructive learning pathways is present within the draft curriculum. However, it is buried under the greater attention given to the inputs or potential content of the curriculum. It is so important that it needs to be up front and expressed strongly as a bold challenge to schools and teachers to make the curriculum relevant and deliver it in more engaging ways for students. We would encourage MOE to reflect in the final curriculum more of the Students First philosophy as described in the excellent work undertaken by 'Secondary Futures'.

Entrepreneurial and Enterprising

9. We are really encouraged by the Vision statement. As employers we find that confident and actively involved people often make the greatest contributions in the workforce despite not achieving well academically.
10. However, the helpful emphasis on developing enterprising and entrepreneurial young people in the vision statement didn't make it very far into heart of the curriculum. In fact we found it difficult to see either of these two words reflected in the later stages of the curriculum document and the Achievement Objectives that we understand the teachers take more notice of.
11. It is now very widely accepted that we must have enterprising adults in all aspects and organisations that make up a modern society and especially to establish, manage and govern business ventures that generate the wealth that in turn funds so much of our social and environmental aspirations. If New Zealand is to have enterprise in its business, social and environmental organisations, it must have enterprise in its schools. It is therefore very important to the future prosperity of New Zealand that schools produce enterprising and capable young people.
12. Work therefore needs to be done to align the Vision Statement with the Values and Key Competencies as well as acknowledge Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in the Learning Areas and Achievement Objectives. What "Enterprising" and

“Entrepreneurial” will mean in the classroom needs to be unpacked and to be visible in the detail of the Achievement Objectives, because it is these objectives that the classroom teacher will focus on, and unless they are mentioned specifically, they are unlikely to be acted on.

13. New Zealand could become a leader in 21st Century education by creating a new learning area called ‘Enterprise’ to stand alongside the other eight learning areas. Currently there is no natural home for Economics, Accounting and Business Studies. Neither does Financial Education have a place.

We support the suggested content for the new learning Area recommended by the Enterprise NZ Trust. It could include but not be limited to:-

- Economics
- Business Studies
- Accounting
- Finance
- Financial Literacy
- Environmental and social responsibility
- Business Ethics and Integrity
- Employment Relations
- Legal, regulatory and contractual issues
- Innovation and development
- Risk, consequences and rewards

14. However, if this is too challenging then as a very minimum Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Achievement Objectives should be incorporated as a recommended context in as many existing Learning Areas as possible. Examples are Technology and Social Sciences and even Art and Physical Education, as this context can help student understand how a business or income can be created from success in art, sports or other passionately held interests and competencies. Also in the case of physical education, that there are better economic outcomes when the individual is fitter and healthier.
15. There is a natural fit between enterprise education and a number of current Learning Areas. Taking Technology as an example, it would be relatively easy to add the word ‘economically’ to the list of contexts that currently includes ‘social, environmentally and technically’. Including an economic context in Technology would facilitate student enterprise and entrepreneurship. For example, students could plan, develop and produce a product to sell, thus giving more meaning to the production process.
16. There is also the opportunity to create enterprise experiences in other Learning Areas through the addition of appropriate Achievement Objectives. For example, in Mathematics and Statistics students could apply the numerical theory they have learnt to operating a business venture. In this way learning would be strongly

linked to economic, social and environmental outcomes, and the trade offs between these, thereby putting Achievement Objectives into an authentic context.

17. The experiential learning that is central to enterprise education should be acknowledged as a valuable and creditable method of teaching, to lie alongside the social inquiry model on which much of the curriculum is based. In the Technology and Science areas the curriculum could extend the prototype and experimental approaches to include a Business Model that demonstrates how to turn ideas in commercial reality.

Effective Pedagogy

18. We would like to see that effective pedagogy becomes inclusive of the enterprise education approach to learning and have reflected that view to other groups including the Enterprise NZ Trust. We understand from discussion with them that this would mean that BES practice teaching would need to be extended to include a wider range of teaching approaches. Teachers themselves need to model enterprising behaviour in their teaching and to encourage enterprising attitudes and behaviours in their students.
19. We would therefore recommend that the section in the curriculum on Effective Pedagogy needs to include the idea of “Teaching for Enterprise, within an enterprising learning environment”. That is, teachers need to actively encourage creativity and enterprise in as many authentic contexts as possible.
20. In our view, the statement defining when students learn best misses valuable learning environments and approaches. It should be expanded to include such ideas as ‘Students learn best through a whole range of approaches, including discovery, experimental and active engagement with new issues and more complex challenges’. As valuable as the Social Inquiry approach is in the Social Sciences curriculum, it too should be expanded to include ‘experimentation and practice in real contexts’.

An International and Holistic Perspective

21. While wanting to encourage our young people to be proud New Zealanders, teaching practice and the curriculum need also to directly contribute to young peoples’ abilities to maintain and enhance the quality of life in New Zealand in an increasingly global context. New Zealanders are increasingly competing locally and globally in the world markets and young people need to be able to see how their actions have consequences - economically, socially and environmentally, simultaneously.