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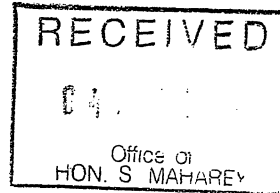
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# TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

NEW ZEALAND



30 November 2006

The Honourable Steve Maharey  
Minister of Education  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

## Social Studies Curriculum Review

Dear Mr Maharey,

The Board of Transparency International New Zealand feels very strongly that there needs to be a much greater understanding among New Zealanders of the way their country is governed. This would involve inclusion of civic education in the school syllabus. The Social Studies Curriculum is currently being reviewed and we have been assured that this subject is already included in the syllabus.

However, references to this material are to us vague. There is no comprehensive civic education framework, nor any material or teacher training programme to support such a framework.

NZAID is currently funding TINZ to help many of our Pacific neighbours develop comprehensive civic education programmes, yet we do not have anything comparable in our own curriculum. We therefore enclose the following recommendations and ask that the Social Studies Curriculum Review accord this subject the importance it deserves.

A brief background note on TINZ and its Board of Directors is enclosed below.

Yours sincerely,

*Gerald McGhie*

Gerald McGhie QSO  
Chairman

*CI*  
*re: the social studies curriculum*

FROM: OFFICE OF HON. S. MAHAREY	
TO: MOE	DATE REQUIRED
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# Transparency International New Zealand Submission on the Social Studies Curriculum.

## **The need for comprehensive civic education**

*“Civic: connected with the duties and obligations of belonging to a community.”*

*Encarta® World English Dictionary.*

Transparency International New Zealand (TINZ) is the New Zealand chapter of an international network which works to promote transparent and accountable governance and to combat corruption. The TI-NZ Board (See Appendix B.) represents a broad range of public and private sector experience at the highest levels.

In 2003 TI-NZ produced a report on the diverse parts of society which keep New Zealand honest and determine the quality of the country's governance, the National Integrity System (See Appendix A and Attachment B). This deals with all the legislative and citizen based structures that influence the way this society functions. That report, which included extensive research and input from a high level advisory board, noted the lack of any wide-ranging civics curriculum or teaching programme and the urgent need for improved civic education so that New Zealanders have a comprehensive understanding of the way their system of government works and how then can participate in it.

Many societies have citizens who know little of the operation of their country's governing system or the rights and obligations of citizens and those who govern them. Such societies are vulnerable to falling levels of participation in public affairs, decision making and elections, indeed, as the Government's 2006 Social Report makes clear, voter turn out in New Zealand's national and local body elections has been consistently falling over the past two decades<sup>1</sup>. Societies whose citizens have little input to the systems that make laws at national and local level are likely to see diminished trust in government and respect for the law, diminished respect for the tax system and less functional systems to ensure peace and order, and the delivery of public services. Improved trust in government is a particular goal of the New Zealand government<sup>2</sup> and a greater understanding of the broad system of government and how to participate in that system is a fundamental prerequisite to improved trust in government.

### **TI-NZ's recommendation**

1. A standard compulsory civic education syllabus
2. Training for teachers to allow lively and participatory modes of teaching
3. Development of standardised teaching resources to allow all students, during the term of their compulsory education, to be exposed to and understand the workings of the structure set out in Appendix A and to have the confidence to participate in it.

### **Compulsory Syllabus**

TI-NZ recommends that all students are exposed to the basic structure of New Zealand's system of governance. (See appendix A.) By the time students complete the

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<sup>1</sup> 2006 the Social Report – indicators of social wellbeing in New Zealand, New Zealand Government, 2006, pp. 72-73

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.dpmmc.govt.nz/dpmmc/publications/key\\_goals.html](http://www.dpmmc.govt.nz/dpmmc/publications/key_goals.html)

compulsory period of their schooling they should understand the structures and processes outlined in Appendix A and know how to participate in the processes of government and have experience of having done so.

Currently there is no syllabus to ensure that students acquire civic understanding in the way that the teaching of basic numeracy and literacy is compulsory and develops as students progress through the school system. Nor is there any comprehensive training to assist teachers in this teaching, nor any body of resources to ensure an understanding of the system of governance which applies to all citizens of New Zealand wherever they are.

#### **Resources and training for teachers**

Currently teaching of the system of governance is haphazard and supported by enthusiastic teachers with resources they acquire themselves. In other cases teachers and schools are supported by enthusiastic staff from local authorities. But there are many schools where little if anything is taught, while in places where civic education is taught there are many parts of the structure in Appendix A which are not taught at all.

To redress this, schools should be supplied with core teaching materials and regular updates to reflect changes in society and new ways to teach civics. This does not just mean supplying content but also to supply pre written but easily adaptable interactive tasks for use in civics classes.

#### **Active participation**

Students should be given opportunities to emulate the democratic interaction and participation that we want to occur in the wider society. This requires that teachers use interactive methodologies and that they assess students' abilities to interact as well as students' knowledge and skills.

Students should be involved in some practical application of this knowledge in their community so there needs to be provision in the curriculum for this to happen. Provision for such participation will have budgetary implications.

TINZ recognises that it will be important to develop ways of teaching this material which stimulate and involve students. This will require the support and involvement of teacher training institutions and the development of comprehensive resources

#### **TINZ Expertise**

The preparation of civics education material should not be confined to any government department. Civil society organisations with experience in preparing civic education programmes must have an opportunity to contribute to this process in New Zealand. TINZ has a consultant with experience and expertise in the New Zealand education system who also has considerable international experience in developing and implementing civic education curricula, developing teaching resource material and teacher training programmes, who could provide direct input to this part of the Social Studies curriculum.

With NZAID funding TINZ has engaged him to help Pacific Island countries develop civic education material in Pacific island countries. TINZ believes New Zealand should be introducing at home what it is helping its neighbours to develop.

**TINZ recommends that this Social Studies Curriculum Review address these matters and accord these subjects considerable importance.**

## Appendix A.

### Civic Education to cover:

Constitutional norms and what makes the system work

Structure of Government    Executive ·  
  Legislature ·  
  Public Service ·  
  Police and Serious Fraud Office  
  Crown Law Office Prosecutions ·  
  State Service Commission

Electoral System ·

Political Parties ·

The tax system ·

Judiciary ·

Auditor General ·

Ombudsman ·

News Media ·

Civil Society ·

Lobby groups,  
Chambers of Commerce,  
Trades Unions  
Churches

Professional bodies: eg. for lawyers, accountants,  
doctors and engineers

Private Sector / Business ·

Regional and Local Government

The Treaty of Waitangi

## Appendix B

### Transparency International - New Zealand New Zealand's Chapter in the Coalition against Corruption

Transparency International is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation, to counter corruption in international and national business transactions and government decision making.

There are over 80 National Chapters of TI worldwide.

The International Secretariat of the organisation is in Berlin.

#### Mission Statement

TI - NZ will work to :

Promote transparency, good governance and ethical practices in the private and public sectors in New Zealand;

Promote ethical business practices by New Zealand business offshore, and transparency and good governance in our region;

Contribute to the international effort to reduce corruption and promote good governance and ethical business practices.

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