

# Briefing report

## Education Review Office (ERO): Leadership Partners Initiative

Date	6 June 2019
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M19-24
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
<b>Minister of Education</b>	<p>It is recommended that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>note</b> ERO's proposal to implement the Leadership Partners initiative in 2019/20</li> <li>b) <b>note</b> that the initiative has support from key sector groups</li> </ul>	



### Attachments:

**Education Review Office (ERO):  
Leadership Partners Initiative**



### Comments:

### Minister's Office to complete

Noted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to:	
Date signed by Minister:	18.6.19



Our Ref: M19:24

6 June 2019

**Hon Chris Hipkins**  
**Minister of Education**

### **ERO Leadership Partners Initiative**

#### **Purpose**

1. This paper follows up on the initial note, ERO Leadership Partners Initiative (M19-21) and provides you with an update on progress in relation to ERO's implementation of the Leadership Partners initiative.

#### **Background**

2. ERO has a strategic priority to enhance sector leaders' confidence and trust in education evaluation. This initiative arose from discussions between myself and key sector groups. The sector groups suggested that more reciprocal engagement through the review process between ERO and the sector could be beneficial to all parties.
3. The Leadership Partners initiative will provide successful school leaders with an opportunity to join review teams as partners in ERO's external evaluation process. The initiative is intended to build strong enduring partnerships and networks, build school leaders' understanding of evaluation for improvement, and enhance the review process for both schools and ERO.

#### **Leadership Partners**

4. A Board, with representatives from key school sector groups has been established and an initial meeting held in May 2019. The Board includes representatives from the Secondary Principal's Association of New Zealand, the New Zealand Principals' Federation, Middle and Intermediate Schools Principals, and the School Trustees Association. It also includes senior staff from ERO's Review and Improvement Services group.
5. The Board agreed that there would be mutual benefits for the sector and ERO from having current practitioners adding valuable insights to reviews while developing better understanding of ERO processes. The approach to the initiative is evidence based and based on similar initiatives internationally.
6. The Board see the proposed initiative as a unique professional learning opportunity for leaders who participate. It will extend leaders understanding of external evaluation

practice, and the complementarity of external and internal evaluation. The initiative also creates the potential for leaders to develop insights into their own school through the opportunity of contributing to the review of others. Building strong enduring partnerships and networks, along with school leaders sharing their expertise across the sector, will potentially drive up good practice in our schools.

7. The Board see the following benefits that are likely to impact on improving outcomes for the sector and children:
  - Enhancing career pathways, building capacity and capability for leadership. The initiative has the potential to promote system- wide leadership for partners and provide opportunities for senior leaders within and across schools.
  - Developing reciprocal professional learning and development opportunities for principals/leaders and ERO. The initiative has the potential to extend the evaluative thinking of leadership partners and extend the understanding of current pedagogy in action for reviewers.
  - Strengthening partnerships will provide greater potential to identify good practice and build evaluative practice across the sector.
  - Building networks across the sector that could lead to colleagues building educationally powerful and professional relationships that support improvement in practice at the school and system level.
  - In relation to benefits for ERO it may also encourage some school leaders to see education evaluation as a possible employment pathway for themselves or other senior colleagues.
  - Increasing diversity across ERO in relation to expertise, experience and knowledge. Some schools that are reviewed by ERO have additional complexities, for example, specialist institutions. The benefit of a leadership partner on these reviews could support the review team to navigate these complexities and maintain a strong evaluative focus on what contributes to improved outcomes for students.
8. The Board also identified potential risks that will need to be taken into account in the policy to practice phase. The Board considered how each of the risks identified could be mitigated to ensure ERO's reputation, the professional safety of the leadership partners and the schools being reviewed, and the ongoing smooth running of the leader's school in their absence.
9. Processes for the recruitment, selection, induction and professional development of prospective leadership partners were discussed. Leadership Partners will receive statutory designation as Review Officers under the Education Act, with associated powers, albeit the designation will be limited to specific review contexts.
10. A further matter discussed was payment for leadership partners' services. At this stage the Board feels that schools could cover limited costs for the leader's absence, in return for the professional development opportunity provided by the initiative. However this is a matter that we may return to in future discussions once the initiative is under way, as it relies on the goodwill and capacity of each board to fund the initiative.

### Next steps

11. As a result of the positive support from the Board and sector feedback, I intend to progress the development and establishment work for this initiative. Work will be completed by the end of July 2019.
12. ERO will trial the initiative over the next 12 months and will report to you in 2020 about further extension of the initiative.

### Recommendations

13. It is recommended that you:

- a) note ERO's proposal to implement a Leadership Partners initiative for 2019/20. **noted**
- b) note that the initiative has support from key sector groups. **noted**



Nicholas Pole  
Chief Review Officer

NOTED



Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education

18 / 6 / 19