



## Prime Minister

Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage

Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Minister for National Security & Intelligence

07 OCT 2019

Matthew Hooton  
fyi-request-11086-4d8ba043@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: PMO 207-2019

Dear Matthew Hooton

### Official Information Act request relating to the School Lunch programme

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 29 August 2019. You requested:

*“Earlier today you announced a trial of a school lunch programme. Your press statement at <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/school-lunch-programme-launched> refers.*

*Under the OIA, I request the Cabinet Committee and Cabinet papers on which the announcement was based, and any and all communications strategy documents for the announcement, and drafts of same. ...”*

The time limit for deciding on your request was extended on 26 September 2019 by an additional 20 working days. The extension was required because of the consultations needed to make a decision on your request.

With regards to the first part of your request, for any Cabinet Committee and Cabinet papers associated with the ‘school lunch programme’, that information is currently being prepared by Officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for proactive release and publication on their website. Accordingly, I have refused your request for the Cabinet documents under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested will soon be publicly available.

As it relates to the remaining part of your request, for any and all communications strategy documents relating to the ‘school lunch programme’, please find enclosed information that has been identified as relevant to your request. Some information has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

I have withheld a copy of the draft press release attached in the briefing. Please note that the final version of this is available online and can be found on the Parliament website here: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/school-lunch-programme-launched>

Please note that we have not included information, in the attached documents, that relates to the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Launch, as you have specifically asked for information

relating to the 'school lunch programme'. However, please contact us if you would like that information to be considered for release.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Raj Nahna  
**Chief of Staff**

# Briefing

## CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING STRATEGY LAUNCH

To: Minister for Child Poverty Reduction (Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern)  
Minister for Children (Hon Tracey Martin)

Cc: Minister of Education (Hon Chris Hipkins)  
Minister for Youth (Hon Peeni Henare)

<b>Date</b>	21/08/2019	<b>Priority</b>	Medium
<b>Deadline</b>	26/08/2019	<b>Briefing Number</b>	DPMC-2019/20-184

### Purpose

This paper informs you of the arrangements for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy launch at Kaitao Intermediate School on Thursday 29 August, 1.00pm-2.30pm in Rotorua, and provides you with supporting communications material for the event.

### Recommendations

1. **Note** the arrangements and supporting communications material for the Launch event of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy on Thursday 29 August

s9(2)(a)

Maree Brown  
Director, Child Wellbeing Unit

21/08/2019

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern  
**Prime Minister**  
**Minister for Child Poverty Reduction**

...../...../2019

Hon Tracey Martin  
**Minister for Children**

...../...../2019

**Contact for telephone discussion if required:**

Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Maree Brown	Director, Child Wellbeing Unit	s9(2)(a)	✓
Gabrielle Tully	Senior Communications Advisor, Child Wellbeing Unit	s9(2)(a)	

**Minister's office comments:**

- Noted
- Seen
- Approved
- Needs change
- Withdrawn
- Not seen by Minister
- Overtaken by events
- Referred to



# CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING STRATEGY LAUNCH

## Purpose

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1. This report is to inform you of the arrangements made for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy launch you are co-hosting at Kaitao Intermediate School on Thursday 29 August, 1.00pm-2.00pm in Rotorua. Hon Peeni Henare will also attend as the Minister for Youth.
2. Attached for your consideration is the communications information pack (refer to attachments A through E) regarding the launch event. The pack comprises:
  - a) A draft press release
  - b) Speaking notes
  - c) Q&As
  - d) Event information sheet and invitation list.
  - e) Ministry of Education's communications pack for free healthy school lunches programme

## Background

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3. You are scheduled to attend the event from 1.00pm-2.30pm on Thursday 29 August. This event will launch the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and provide a platform for you to announce the Free Lunches in Schools programme. The launch is being led by PMO events, in conjunction with the Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) and the Ministry of Education regional office.

## The Launch Event

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4. Kaitao Intermediate School has accepted the invitation to host the event. The school roll comprises 383 children between the ages of 10-12 who come from the suburbs and surrounding rural areas in western Rotorua. Around 75% of students identify as Māori, many of whom whakapapa to Ngāti Whakaue and other hapū of Te Arawa.
5. The invitation list (refer to Attachment D) of approximately 80 people comprises a cross section of national and local stakeholders from iwi, Māori, NGOs and communities. Through the Ministry of Education we have also arranged for a small group of students from local primary schools to attend.

### Programme

6. The programme for the event is set out overleaf:

[IN-CONFIDENCE]

<b>Arrival</b>	12.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invited guests assemble outside the school (if wet make way to library and assemble there). There will be a kuia from the school to greet guests as they arrive.</li> <li>DPMC staff on hand</li> </ul>
	1.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministers arrive and are greeted at school gate by Ezra Schuster (Ministry of Education's Regional Manager), who will introduce the kaikaranga (caller) and kaikorero (speaker)</li> </ul>
<b>Mihi whakatau</b>	1.02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manuhiri (visitors) to proceed to the hall.</li> <li>Karanga and haka are performed as the party proceeds and arrives in the hall.</li> </ul>
	1.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guests stay standing until haka is ended.</li> </ul>
	1.07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tangata whenua speaker (likely to be Kingi Biddle)</li> <li>Students perform waiata tautoko</li> </ul>
	1.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manuhiri speaker</li> <li>Waiata Tautoko (Tirotiro)</li> </ul>
	1.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tangata whenua close with karakia and then guests are invited to hararu (handshake and hongi) with a selected number of tangata whenua.</li> </ul>
<b>Speeches</b>	1.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student MC invites Principal, Phil Palfrey, to speak</li> </ul>
	1.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal address</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Waiata</li> </ul>
	1.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MC invites the PM to address</li> </ul>
	1.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PM address</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student waiata</li> </ul>
	1.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MC asks the Minister for Children, Hon Tracey Martin to address</li> </ul>
	1.34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hon Tracey Martin address</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Waiata</li> </ul>
	1.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MC closes the formal phase of the event</li> <li>Guests invited to proceed to the library for light refreshments – escorted by students</li> </ul>
<b>Mix and mingle + Media</b>	1.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministers interact with students and teachers (in the Hall)</li> <li>Q &amp; A session with students</li> </ul>
	2.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media stand-up in Room 1 with some students</li> </ul>
	2.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministers join guests in library to mix and mingle</li> </ul>
<b>Closing</b>	2.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministers leave</li> </ul>
	2.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Event concludes</li> </ul>

7. The Event Information Sheet (refer to Attachment D) provides further details of the event.

*Supporting officials in attendance*

8. You will be supported by Geoff Short, Executive Director, Child Poverty Reduction Group and Maree Brown, Director, Child Wellbeing Unit and staff.
9. Ezra Schuster, Regional Director, Ministry of Education is the local official who has been liaising directly with the school and local Iwi leaders on the draft programme. He, along with Geoff, will meet you upon your arrival.

### **Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Website Go Live**

10. The standalone child and youth wellbeing website will go live at 1.00pm on the day of the launch.
11. The website features navigable versions of the strategy and programme of actions, as well as downloadable Strategy documents in a range of formats, including summary documents in English and te reo Māori and an Easy-read version.

<b>Attachments:</b>	
<b>Attachment A:</b>	A draft press release
<b>Attachment B:</b>	Speaking notes
<b>Attachment C:</b>	Q&As
<b>Attachment D:</b>	Event information sheet and invitation list
<b>Attachment E:</b>	Ministry of Education's communications pack for free healthy school lunches programme



## *Draft talking points for the Prime Minister*

There's an old adage that NZ is a great place to bring up your kids – it's something we like to say about our country. And while there are many things that make New Zealand a great place for children and their families, it doesn't take much investigation to know that there are many children and families that are missing out.

Too many children and young people are facing significant, often ongoing, hardships and challenges in their lives. I think we can all agree this isn't right.

Around one in five children in New Zealand live in households that struggle to put enough, good quality food on the table. Many families, even with both parents working, struggle to meet every day needs like food, rent, clothes, heating, education and sports costs, getting from A to B – and to do things that others take for granted.

The future that we, and young New Zealanders want requires dramatic improvement in the opportunities and outcomes of those who are living with disadvantage.

Today, the Government makes a firm commitment to improving the lives of these struggling families, and making New Zealand the best place in the world for all children and young people.

Our recent Wellbeing Budget and current work across government is targeted at addressing child poverty, family violence, and inadequate housing, and improving early years, learning support and mental wellbeing for children, young people and their families and whānau.

And after more than a year of research, development and talking with communities about child and youth wellbeing, today we are launching New Zealand's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy that sets out a shared understanding of what children and young people need and want to be well. Achieving the strategy will benefit all New Zealanders now and in the future.

Reducing poverty experienced by families is a big focus of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, because it gives people choices, helps create more independence, inspires hope and enables more participation in opportunities.

Throughout the engagement around wellbeing, children, young people and whānau said one of the barriers to wellbeing and learning was being hungry at school.

We know that good nutrition helps social and brain development. When kids are hungry it's hard for them to focus, concentrate and learn in class. Their learning ability and brain development is impaired.

Today, I have the great pleasure of announcing a Free Lunches in Schools programme. This is the latest of more than 75 initiatives in the Programme of Action that sits alongside the Strategy.

Directly addressing food insecurity is a powerful way to support our children to achieve, grow and reach their full potential.

The programme will help ease the costs and time pressures on parents to prepare healthy school lunches for their children

From Term 1 2020, we will begin trialling the offer of a free and healthy school lunch to all Year 1 to 8 students in a mix of schools and kura in urban, rural and isolated locations



Students here at Kaitao Intermediate will be amongst those to benefit from this trial.

We estimate that by the beginning of 2021, up to 21,000 students in around 120 schools will be eligible for a free and healthy lunch.

Free school lunches is one of a number of changes we are making to reduce education costs for New Zealand families, especially for some families who struggle with the high cost of living. . We want to put more money in their pockets, and to improve the wellbeing of all our children and young people.

Recently, we committed \$265 million to enable all Decile 1 to 7 state and state integrated schools to receive \$150 per student, if they agree not to ask for school donations. Around 63 percent of our students attend these schools. We estimate this initiative could benefit the families of around 500,000 children and young people.

Another way we're talking the financial pressure off parents can be seen our decision to remove fees for NCEA and NZ scholarship exams. More than 145,000 New Zealand households will benefit from the removal of these fees.

These are some examples of how this Government is putting the "free" back into "free education."

No child in New Zealand should be hungry at school, and no parent in New Zealand should feel pressured to stretch an already tight budget to 'donate' to fund their children's education. No parent in New Zealand should ever feel they cannot afford the exam fees to enable their children to progress and to succeed.

I'd like to acknowledge Kaitao Intermediate for its forthrightness and support for students coming to school without breakfast or lunch.

From a recent school newsletter I quote school Principal Mr Phil Palfrey whose message to whanau and students was 'Please, never let kai be a barrier to students coming to school every day. Attendance matters.'

It typifies the spirit and action of a community we want to partner with; that nurtures children and young people.

Together we can create the changes need for all our children to have a promising future and make New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE  
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**  
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

## **Child Wellbeing & Poverty Reduction Group:**

**Key messages: August 2019**

Not relevant to your request

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Editor's note: Please note that the following six pages have not been released, as they contain information that is not relevant to your request.



## **Reactive Questions and Answers**

Not relevant to your request



### ***Why is the free school lunches only a small prototype?***

- A prototyping approach provides an effective way of identifying and addressing the wide range of practical and logistical considerations associated with the implementation of a government-funded free school lunch programme, while also enabling the programme to be implemented within a short timeframe and learning while doing.
- It allows different models to be tested, evaluated, and adapted over the period, to determine which models work best in different types of schools and circumstances.
- Evaluation of the prototype programmes will also provide important evidence about the impact of the programme on student outcomes, to help inform decisions about continuing or expanding the programme beyond 2021.

Not relevant to your request



Editor's note: Please note that the following three pages have not been released, as they contain information that is not relevant to your request.





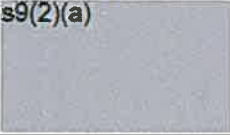

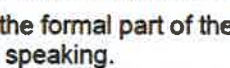
# Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Event Summary		
<b>Host organisation</b>	PMO	
<b>Title and type of event</b> (conference, launch, prize-giving, etc.)	Launch event for Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy	
<b>Dress code</b>	N/A	
<b>Date and timeframe of Prime Minister's requested attendance</b> Please indicate the full requested time of attendance, from arrival to departure, not solely the speaking time	<b>Date</b>	Thursday 29 August
	<b>Start time</b>	1.00pm
	<b>End time</b>	2.45pm
	<b>Travel time or other considerations</b>	Launch event is in Rotorua
<b>Venue</b>	Kaitao Intermediate School - 30 Bell Rd, Western Heights, Rotorua 3010	
<b>Contact person</b>	<b>Name</b>	Gabrielle Tully
	<b>Position title</b>	Senior Communications Advisor
	<b>Phone number</b>	s9(2)(a)
	<b>Email address</b>	s9(2)(a)
<b>Will someone be on hand to meet the Prime Minister on arrival?</b>	<b>Name</b>	Ezra Schuster (Ministry of Education) Geoff Short (DPMC)
	<b>Position title</b>	Director of Education for Bay of Plenty, Wairiki Executive Director, Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group
	<b>Mobile phone number</b>	s9(2)(a) s9(2)(a)
	<b>Exact location to meet</b>	The school gate
<b>Running order for the event</b>	A run sheet for the event has been included in the briefing note to the PM regarding the Launch	
Attendees		
<b>Please provide a guest/attendance list</b> Please include each attendees' full name, position title, and the organisation they represent	An invitation list has been provided as an attachment to the briefing note for the Strategy Launch.	
<b>Are other Members of Parliament being invited to attend?</b> If so, who?	Minister Martin and Minister Henare are attending. The following MPs have been invited: Tamati Coffey (accepted), Angie Warren-Clark (yet to RSVP), Todd McClay (yet to RSVP) and Fletcher Tabuteau (declined).	



How many people in total are being invited or are expected to attend?	Approximately 90 invited.
<b>Media Involvement</b>	
As a strict condition of the Prime Minister's visit, you cannot make reference to her involvement in the media.	
Should you be planning any form of press release or media advisory about this visit, it must be arranged in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office, and it must have the approval of the Prime Minister's Office before it is sent out.	
All invitations that mention the Prime Minister must also be approved by the Prime Minister's Office.	
Are media invited? (If yes, which agencies)	Yes. A media stand up has been planned.
The day before the event, the Prime Minister's Office will put out a media advisory notifying the media where she will be the next day. This means media <i>may</i> turn up at the event.  <u>Please advise if you don't want your visit on the advisory.</u>  <b>NOTE:</b> if you have privacy or security concerns, we can ask media to register with you so you can set parameters around their attendance.	N/A - media are expected.
Will anything be taking place at this event that would work well on Facebook and other social media platforms?	The Launch of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy
Will there be a photographer?	The Ministry of Education will be taking photos
<i>If any photos are taken of Prime Minister we would appreciate receiving copies by email to <a href="mailto:jacinda.ardern@parliament.govt.nz">jacinda.ardern@parliament.govt.nz</a> Note that if the Prime Minister's staff are requested to take photos then we may request the people depicted to sign a consent form.</i>	
<b>Venue</b>	
How will the venue be laid out? e.g. lecture style with podium at front/meeting around a table?	The Prime Minister will be speaking in a school hall. Students and guests will be seated.
<b>General and Speech Information</b>	
Would you like the Prime Minister to make a speech?	Yes. It has been confirmed with the Prime Minister's Office that the Prime Minister will be making a speech.



<p><b>How long should the Prime Minister speak?</b> i.e. 2 minutes, 5 minutes or 10 minutes</p>	<p>The Prime Minister has been scheduled to speak for 5 minutes</p>
<p><b>Will there be a question and answer (Q&amp;A) session?</b> Please indicate the length of the session and the likely types of questions</p>	<p>15 minutes have been allocated for Ministers to have a Q and A session with a small group of students. Students will be asked by the school to pre-prepare questions. Four Mangere College students, who appear in the Strategy document, and the invited primary school students will also attend this session. A further 15 minutes have been allocated for a media stand-up with Ministers and some students. Q&amp;As have been provided to Ministers as an attachment to the briefing note for the Strategy Launch.</p>
<p><b>Suggested content for speech</b></p>	<p>Talking points have been provided to your office</p>
<p><b>Which attendees should the Prime Minister acknowledge in her speech?</b></p>	<p>The Kaitao Intermediate School principal, Mr Phil Palfrey. This has been included in the speaking notes. Four Students from Mangere College, whose images featured in the Strategy document, and who will be present at the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• s9(2)(a)</li> <li>• </li> <li>• </li> <li>• </li> </ul>
<p><b>Who else has been invited to speak?</b></p>	<p>There will be speeches from tangata whenua as part of the welcoming ceremony into the hall. Minister Henare will speak on behalf of manuhiri. During the formal part of the launch, Phil Palfrey (Principal) and Hon Tracey Martin will also be speaking.</p>
<p><b>Who will be introducing / acknowledging the Prime Minister</b></p>	<p>The student MC of the event.</p>
<p><b>Any other tasks?</b> If you would like the Prime Minister to present an award, hoist a flag, light a lamp or similar, then provide details of what you would like the Prime Minister to say or do</p>	<p>Ministers have been invited to mix and mingle with the invited stakeholders in the school library for 15 minutes following the formal part of the proceedings and media stand up.</p>
<p><b>Specific elements?</b> Are there any specific cultural elements or expectations the Prime Minister should be aware of?</p>	<p>The school and Ministry of Education Regional Director have confirmed that the mihi whakatau will be relatively short and not involve a kaikaranga (caller) or haruru (handshake and hongi).</p>
<p><b>Will the Prime Minister's attendance be recorded/broadcast in any way?</b> If so, what are the details?</p>	<p>A media stand-up has been planned.</p>
<p><b>Anything else?</b> Is there anything else you would like us to know?</p>	<p>N/A</p>



Please return this completed form to:

s9(2)(a)

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Template (only) authorised by Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

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**Editor's note: Please note that we have withheld a copy of the invitation list in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.**

## FREE HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES PROGRAMME

### Key Messages

- *Regular nutritious food is vital for children's development. It affects their ability to focus, concentrate and learn.*
- *When children are hungry, they're not learning.*
- *Children will miss school rather than turn up without lunch.*
- *By providing lunches to all Year 1-8 students in a school, we will ensure there is no stigma associated with receiving a free lunch.*
- *Around one in five children in New Zealand live in households that are severely or moderately affected food insecurity.*
- *Between 150,000 and 250,000 children are classified as in poverty on official measures.*
- *Many families even with both parents working can struggle to pay bills and buy enough food for their children.*
- *Children and young people have told us that they want 'the basics', including eating a healthy lunch and having good food choices.*
- *The programme will provide a daily free and healthy lunch to all Year 1 to 8 students in participating schools.*
- *The 'prototyping' approach we're adopting allows different options to be tested and evaluated, and help us better understand what works in different schools and communities.*
- *Overseas experience tells us that it's important to take the time to get these programmes right. We will be taking the time to designing, implementing and evaluating the programme in a considered and collaborative way.*
- *The lessons learned and evidence gathered through the programme will help inform decisions about whether to continue or extend it beyond 2021.*
- *We (the Ministry) will work closely with schools and their communities to support their decisions about the design and delivery of free school lunches.*
- *Where possible, we will work with clusters of schools to encourage a community approach to the design and delivery of free school lunches to students.*
- *There will be opportunities for existing school food providers to work with participating schools, kura and government, including by adapting existing lunch programmes.*

- *A free lunch programme within schools is one way government can directly address poverty and food insecurity, and positively impact children's wellbeing.*
- *The programme is directly linked to the strategy's Outcome 2 'Children have what they need' and Outcome 4 'Children and young people are learning and developing'.*
- *Directly addressing food insecurity is a powerful way to support our children to achieve, grow and reach their full potential.*
- *Healthy happy children make healthy happy adults.*
- *The programme will help reduce financial and time pressures on parents to prepare healthy school lunches for their children*

*Released under the Official Information Act 1982*

*DRAFT*



**(For distribution at the launch)**

## **FREE HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES PROGRAMME**

### **BACKGROUND**

Regular nutritious meals give children the energy, focus and concentration they need to learn and develop.

Between 150,000 and 250,000 children are classified as in poverty on official measures.

Approximately 20 percent of New Zealand children experience moderate to severe food insecurity according to the New Zealand Health Survey.

Year 1-8 students in around 30 schools will be offered a daily free school lunch from Term 1, 2020. From there, we will progressively roll out the programme, reaching around 20,000 students in about 120 schools and kura by the beginning of 2021.

The programme is part of the new Child Youth and Wellbeing Strategy which recognises that reducing child poverty is vital to improving the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children and young people.

The free school lunches programme is linked to the strategy's outcome '*Children have what they need*' which highlights children and young people 'having regular access to nutritious food'.

Wellbeing was a common theme in the Ministry of Education summits and Kōrero Mātauranga conversations. Children, young people and whānau said one of the barriers to wellbeing and learning for students was going to school hungry.

Young people said they wanted 'the basics', including eating a healthy lunch and having good food choices.

Schools in the programme will include a mix of schools and kura in urban, rural and isolated locations with high levels of disadvantage.

Government has decided on a universal offer of lunch to all Years 1-8 students in participating schools, to minimise the stigma sometimes associated with receiving free meals at schools.

The programme will emphasise a community approach with schools, parents, whānau and providers working together to provide free school lunches for their students.

The Ministry of Education will work closely with schools and communities to support the design and delivery of their healthy free school lunches, so that it meets their needs and circumstances.

Existing providers will continue to have a role in the programme. There will be opportunities to work with schools, kura and government, including adapting existing lunch programmes.

Using a prototyping approach will identify what works best for different communities. Evaluation will also measure the impact of the programme on student wellbeing and education outcomes.

The Government will use the lessons learned and evidence gained over the next two years to determine whether to continue or roll the programme out more widely.

The free school lunches' programme connects with other government programmes supporting student learning and wellbeing including promoting healthy eating and quality physical activity in schools and kura.

For more information on the programme go to [www.education.govt.nz](http://www.education.govt.nz)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



## **NARRATIVE: FREE HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES PROGRAMME**

All our children deserve to learn and thrive. And they do that best with food in their tummies.

Regular nutritious meals give children the energy, focus and concentration they need to learn and develop. But sadly, for thousands of kids in Aotearoa, going to school without lunch is a stark reality.

Between 150,000 and 250,000 children are in poverty, depending on the measures used. 174,000 children experience moderate or severe food insecurity. In our most disadvantaged communities, 40 percent of parent's runout of food sometimes or often.

The Prime Minister has announced that Year 1-8 students in at least 30 schools will be offered a free school lunch from Term 1, 2020. By the start of 2021, the offer will be available to 21,000 students in 120 schools.

The programme is part of the Prime Ministers new Child Youth and Wellbeing Strategy. The Strategy recognises that reducing child poverty is vital to improving the wellbeing of many of our most vulnerable children and young people.

We have identified 30 Bay of Plenty and Hawkes Bay schools with high levels of disadvantage, who will be invited to participate in the programme. We will be contacting other schools in these regions, with the same characteristics, as well as schools in Otago/Southland.

Starting in these regions will give us the mix of schools and kura in urban rural and isolated locations we need to fully evaluate impacts and issues in the prototype.

The Ministry of Education will work closely with schools and their communities, to support the design and delivery of free school lunches. Where schools are close together, we will encourage a community approach to providing free healthy lunches.

We know that there are many hungry students in other parts of New Zealand. In 2021, the Government will consider a wider rollout in light of the results of the initial programme.

In 2018, the Prime Minister launched Korero Mātauranga| Education Conversation asking New Zealanders their views about education, and what they wanted changed.

Many participants said hunger was one of the barriers to wellbeing and learning. Young people wanted 'the basics', including a healthy lunch and good food choices. Parents and families wanted action so young people and whānau had enough money for basics like food and clothing.

The Government has budgeted \$45m for the programme, to evaluate what works best and to measure the impact on student wellbeing and education outcomes. The programme connects with others supporting student wellbeing, such as promoting healthy eating and quality physical activity in schools and kura.

**ENDS**