



26 February 2021

John Luke

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Tēnā koe John

Thank you for your email of 28 January 2021 to the Ministry of Education, and for your continued interest in dispute panels.

Implementation of the Tomorrow's Schools review, including new ways to resolve disputes, was agreed by Cabinet in 2019 (the Cabinet paper can be found [here](#)). The framework for the establishment of dispute panels was then included in the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), which came into law in August last year. We anticipate that Ministers will make further decisions on the implementation of dispute panels during this parliamentary term.

Until implementation decisions are made, we are unable to answer your queries about when and where panels will be established, the terms of reference, or the pay rates for panel members and the Chief Referee.

The Chief Referee has not yet been appointed. Regulations will need to be passed before any panel members can be appointed, including the Chief Referee. The regulations are likely to cover matters such as:

- further criteria for appointing the Chief Referee (the Act already provides that the Chief Referee must hold a law degree or equivalent), such as life experience and expertise;
- the criteria for appointing other members of panels;
- how many members are required to sit on panels when resolving disputes; and
- powers and procedures of panels.

If you wish to be informed of when public consultation on the regulations begins, please provide your contact details to Georgie Handley at Georgie.Handley@education.govt.nz.

Once implementation decisions are made, we will be able to begin the recruitment process for the members. Panels will be made up of local members to reflect local communities, as well as expert members to provide nationwide consistency. An open recruitment process will be run to appoint skilled members to panel roles. There will also be a recruitment process for the Chief Referee (and any deputies).

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Nāku noa, nā



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