

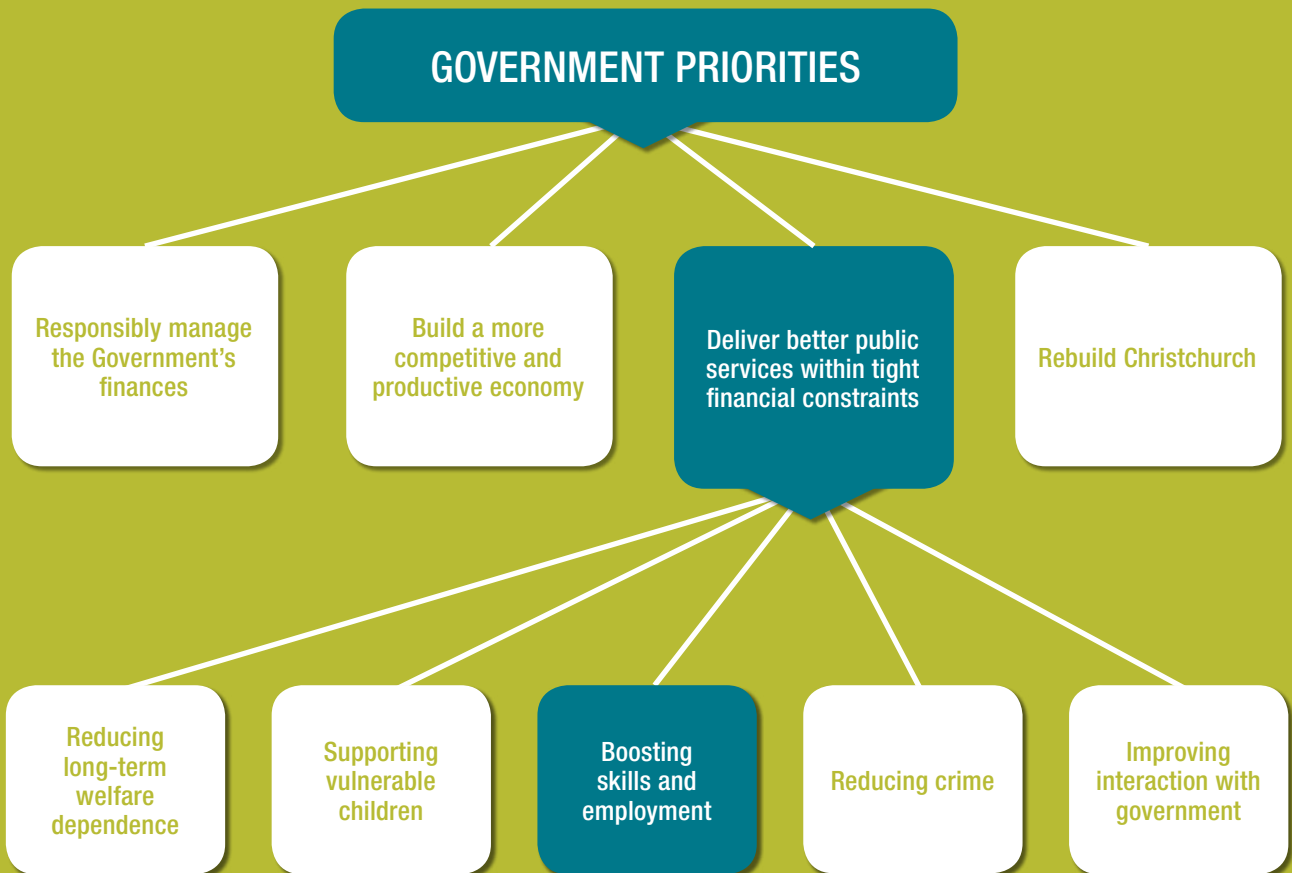
# Delivering better public services

**BOOSTING SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT BY  
INCREASING EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

# CONTENTS

<b>GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT IN NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WHY THIS RESULT IS IMPORTANT FOR NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>3</b>
What's the current state?	3
How can young people achieve this result?	3
Is the issue concentrated geographically or among certain sections of the population?	3
What improvement will be required to achieve the target?	4
<b>A FOCUS ON RESULTS</b>	<b>5</b>
A strong foundation	5
Early attainment of core skills	5
Attainment of qualifications	5
Ongoing skills development	5
<b>WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE RESULTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ACTIONS TO INCREASE EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE</b>	<b>7</b>
1. More young people in school achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification	9
2. More young people in other educational settings achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification	9
3. Young people at risk of dropping out of education or who have dropped out of education are re-engaged	10
4. Galvanise support and empower the community to take action	10
5. Focus the efforts of the Ministry of Education, ERO, the New Zealand Teachers Council and Careers New Zealand and the education sector to lead the reform	11
<b>RESULTS IN CONTEXT</b>	<b>12</b>
Wider government initiatives	12
<b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b>	<b>13</b>
Reporting on progress	13

# Government priorities



# Education achievement in New Zealand

Our education system performs strongly for many, but not for all. We need an education system that equips all our learners with skills that allow them to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Government has set Better Public Services targets to boost our levels of skill and employment by increasing education achievement for young New Zealanders.

Achieving these targets will benefit all New Zealanders and contribute to the Government’s overall priorities. These targets are ambitious and achieving them will require a significant shift in the way that Government agencies work with learners, families, whānau, aiga, communities and the education sector. Achieving the targets will make a significant difference in peoples’ lives. The progress we make will begin to deliver results within the next 12 months. Achieving these targets will mean:

- more New Zealanders reach their potential through higher education, and improve their quality of life,
- we boost the skill level of the New Zealand workforce, and
- we lift New Zealand’s overall productivity.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN EDUCATION

### WITHIN FIVE YEARS...

Better Public Services target

98% of children starting school will have participated in quality early childhood education

Increase the proportion of learners achieving expected literacy and numeracy standards

80% of schools will be demonstrating highly inclusive practice for learners with special education needs with 20% demonstrating good practice

Better Public Services target

85% of 18 year olds will have achieved NCEA Level 2 or equivalent qualification

Better Public Services target

55% of 25–34 year olds will have a qualification at Level 4 or above

### EDUCATION TARGETS

### EDUCATION SECTOR OUTCOMES

Education provision of increasing quality and value to all

Education success for every learner

Maximising the contribution of education to the New Zealand economy

Higher returns on investment

Improving outcomes for priority groups (Māori learners, Pasifika learners, learners with special education needs and learners from low socio-economic backgrounds)

# Why this result is important for New Zealand

**85%**

OF 18 YEAR OLDS WILL HAVE ACHIEVED NCEA LEVEL 2 OR EQUIVALENT QUALIFICATION IN 2017

Success in education is essential to build a more competitive and productive economy.

Having NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification gives

people the foundation level skills they need to have better opportunities for further education, employment, health outcomes, and a better quality of life generally.



## PEOPLE AGED 18 YEARS WITH A MINIMUM OF NCEA LEVEL 2 OR AN EQUIVALENT QUALIFICATION

	2006	2011 (provisional data)
Pakeha (non-Māori/Pasifika)	69%	74.1%
Māori	34%	49.6%
Pasifika	40%	59.6%
Total population	59%	68.4%

## WHAT'S THE CURRENT STATE?

In 2011, 68.4% of 18 year olds achieved NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification.\*

## HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVE THIS RESULT?

Young people can achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification in a variety of settings, including:

- Secondary Schools
- Service Academies
- Trades Academies
- Industry Training Providers
- Tertiary Providers

An equivalent qualification is an industry recognised qualification of 80 credits, incorporating at least 60 credits at Level 2. A small number of other qualifications not on the New Zealand National Qualifications Framework are also included.

## IS THE ISSUE CONCENTRATED GEOGRAPHICALLY OR AMONG CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION?

There is significant variability across the system, in terms of school and tertiary organisation performance. While socio-economic factors do impact on student achievement, we have evidence that shows that schools in lower socio-economic areas can overcome those factors. Variability also exists within schools, and within classrooms, regardless of socio-economic factors. There is also variability between ethnic groups.

\* Based on provisional data.

## WHAT IMPROVEMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE TARGET?

Achieving the target will require a significant improvement in achievement for all learners and particularly for priority groups who are currently underserved by the system.

We will need to place particular attention on the transition to secondary school, performance of secondary schools, secondary-tertiary programmes and youth guarantee tertiary providers, and re-engaging young people at risk of dropping out of the education system.

The target will not be achieved unless we address the numbers of 15 and 16 year olds leaving school. 15 year old school leavers (and many 16 year olds) will not have achieved NCEA Level 2, and are very unlikely to re-engage with education before they are 20 years old. They are at a greater risk of poor outcomes through disengagement from education, training or the labour market.

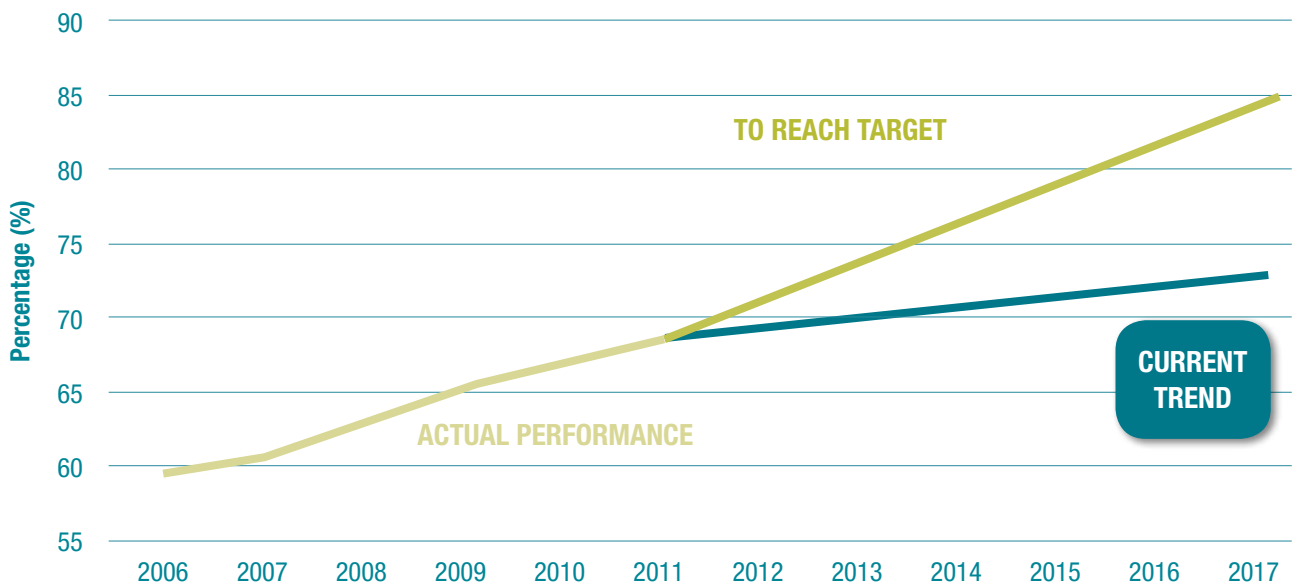
While a specific focus is needed to achieve the Government’s target in 2017, it must be done in ways that ensure achievement is sustained and improved further over time.

The following chart shows actual achievement of NCEA Level 2 or equivalent by 18 year olds from 2006 to 2011, and then projected achievement based on the additional improvements that will be necessary to achieve the Better Public Services target of 85% by 2017.

The average increase required over the next six years to achieve the target is 2.6 percentage points a year. Based on current trends, 72.9 percent of 18 year olds will achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification in 2017. To reach the 85 percent target an additional 7,300 18 year olds, above what is predicted based on current trends, will need to achieve NCEA Level 2 in 2017. And using the same assumptions:

- An additional 2,400 Māori 18 year olds would need to achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification to reach an 85 percent goal for Māori.
- An additional 1,100 Pasifika 18 year olds would need to achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification to reach an 85 percent goal for Pasifika.

## ACHIEVEMENT OF NCEA LEVEL 2 OR EQUIVALENT: PERCENTAGES



# A focus on results

The learner must be the focus of policy, funding and regulatory decisions to improve the performance of the education system as a whole. Achieving education success requires learners to get the best possible start, experience high-quality teaching and have opportunities to attain qualifications that lead to employment and a higher quality of life.

## A STRONG FOUNDATION

Participation in high-quality early childhood education sets a strong foundation for engagement and achievement in the early years of school. Evidence also shows that this lasts into a child's teenage years.

## EARLY ATTAINMENT OF CORE SKILLS

Early attainment of core skills such as literacy and numeracy is essential for learners to be able to engage in all areas of the curriculum. This is a key step on the pathway to attaining qualifications.

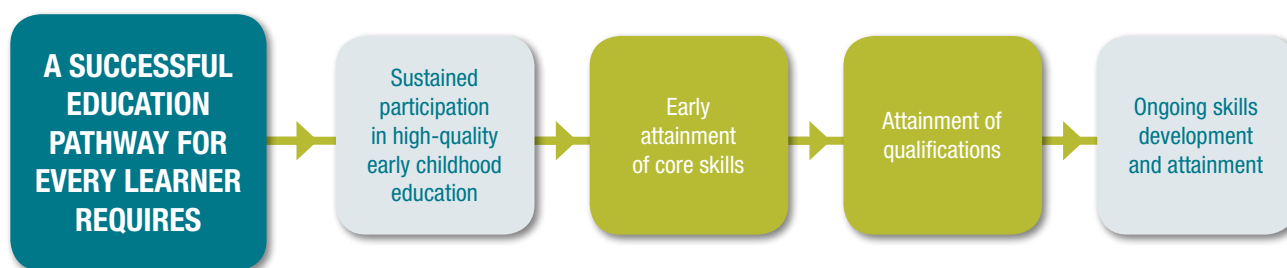
## ATTAINMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification is considered the minimum qualification needed to succeed and progress in further education or the workplace.

## ONGOING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Tertiary education and skills training must provide young New Zealanders with the skills and knowledge to actively participate in the economy and support innovation. This requires the education system to be more responsive to labour market needs and better aligned with economic growth goals.

### SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION PATHWAY



# Working together to achieve results

Education sector agencies are focused on ensuring the education system delivers on the Government's key goals – better public services that deliver improved outcomes for all New Zealanders, and stronger economic growth for New Zealand.

The Ministry of Education will work with the Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Corrections, and through the skilled and safe workplaces group, to:

- share information and best practice
- develop innovative joint initiatives, e.g. pooling resources, linking up services and trialling new approaches to service delivery
- take innovation from conception to implementation
- use our collective knowledge to advise on emerging skills issues.

## THE SKILLED AND SAFE WORKPLACES GROUP MEMBERS ARE:

MINISTER  
FOR TERTIARY  
EDUCATION,  
SKILLS AND  
EMPLOYMENT

MINISTER  
FOR ACC

MINISTER  
OF  
EDUCATION

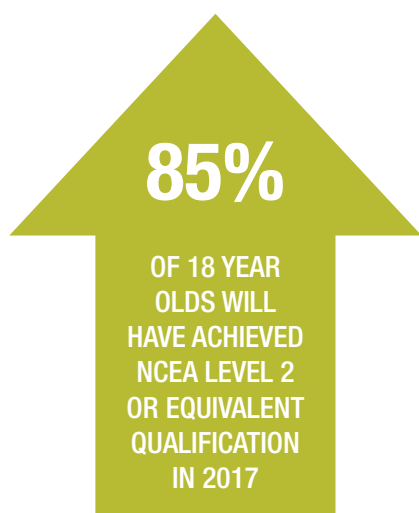
MINISTER  
FOR SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT

MINISTER  
OF LABOUR

MINISTER OF  
IMMIGRATION

MINISTER  
OF MĀORI  
AFFAIRS

# Actions to increase education achievement for young people



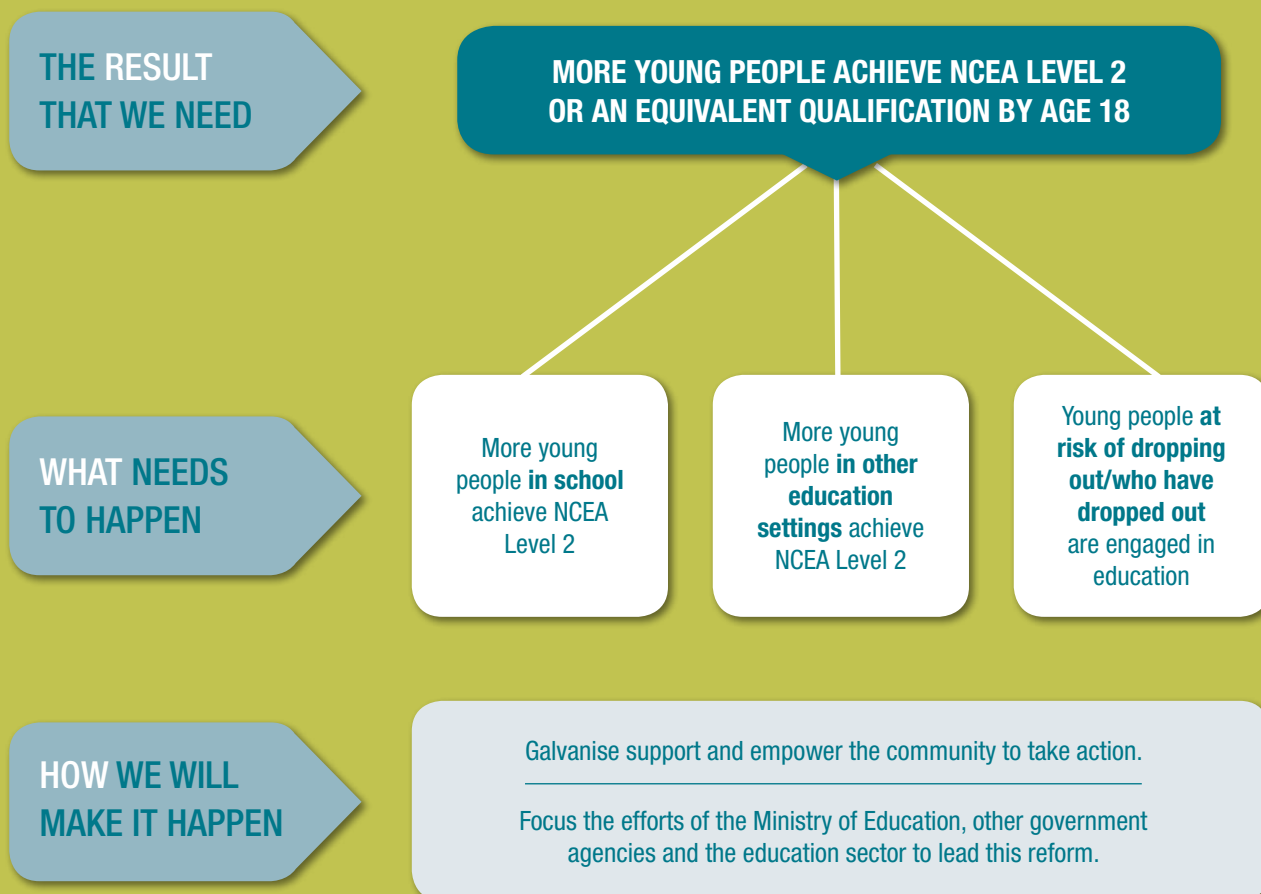
This is an ambitious target but the Government is determined to see more of our young people succeed when they leave school.

Our strategy to achieve this target will focus on:

1. ensuring that young people in schools achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification
2. ensuring that young people in other educational settings achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification
3. identifying and engaging learners at risk of leaving education or who have already left education.

Evidence shows that to achieve successful education reform we need multi-level engagement with strong leadership and cross-sector collaboration. Underpinning all our actions will be a strong community and sector engagement strategy which will build leadership capacity and capability, galvanise support, and empower the community to take action.

## INCREASING EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Achieving this target within five years is challenging and cannot be done alone.

It will require:

- engagement and commitment from parents, families, whānau, aiga and communities
- Government to join up and work effectively across agencies
- system improvement from schools and tertiary providers
- support from the private and not-for-profit sectors.

We need to work together to ensure that every young person has the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

## ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE TARGET

1

**More young people in school achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification**

New Zealand's school system has many strengths and is world leading in some respects, but we face major challenges to lift student achievement for all learners. To ensure that more young people in school achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification we will:

- Strengthen the relevance of qualifications for young people through the implementation of vocational pathways, skills based learning and stronger linkages and networks between schools, other providers and employers. Up to 20 networks will be established that will be committed to progressive implementation of vocational pathways and other measures.
- Ensure that schools support young learners, their families, Whānau and aiga to make informed choices, particularly at points of transition, including through the review of career information, advice and guidance.
- Work with schools to improve the quality of teaching and leadership to drive rapid improvement, particularly for Māori and Pasifika learners, beginning with additional support being provided to priority schools.
- Strengthen accountability by setting expectations with schools of what they will need to do to achieve the target and working with them to ensure there is a robust plan in place.
- Recognise and celebrate growth in achievement for students and teachers.

2

**More young people in other educational settings achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification**

Secondary schooling is not always the best option for some students. We need to ensure that students in other educational settings have a high quality learning experience that enables them to achieve at least an NCEA Level 2 or equivalent qualification. To achieve this we will:

- Review the role of Te Kura/the Correspondence School.
- Extend secondary-tertiary programmes such as Trades Academies, and through Service Academies and fees free tertiary places.
- Support Youth Guarantee providers to incorporate vocational pathways into their qualifications and to develop high quality learning programmes linked to NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification.
- Strengthen accountability of Youth Guarantee providers by setting expectations of their contribution to the target; expanding fees free places with providers who demonstrate strong performance; and publish more information in an accessible format.

## 3

### Young people at risk of dropping out of education or who have dropped out of education are re-engaged

Students who will turn 18 in 2017 are 12 or 13 years old now. If they drop out of education in the next three years they are very unlikely to achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification. We need to ensure that they are engaged in a learning pathway that is right for them. We will:

- Work with schools to identify young people at risk of dropping out of school or who have dropped out of school and share information with other government agencies such as the Ministry of Social Development, the Department of Corrections and the Ministry of Health to put in place the support needed to re-engage them in education.
- Identify learners in other settings such as youth justice and corrections, and use those institutions to re-engage learners with education.
- Explore introducing incentives for tertiary providers to re-engage learners and ensure they achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification.
- Consider policy and regulatory options to improve the engagement, participation and retention of learners, including policy around exclusions and alternative education.
- Work with schools and communities to ensure that there is collective responsibility and accountability for young people at risk of disengagement from education and training.

## 4

### Galvanise support and empower the community to take action

Community engagement will be central to lifting achievement. Communities will need to be empowered to become demanding and well informed consumers; support their learners, their local schools and kura, and other education settings; and understand how they can contribute to raising achievement. We will:

- Seek to build community and sector understanding and buy-in that every learner has the capability to achieve NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification and everyone has a role to play in achieving this goal.
- Launch an intensive community engagement approach in a number of regions that have the potential to make significant improvement, starting with three in 2012 and progressively rolling out to other localities in 2013 and beyond.
- Identify and support local champions who can lead change in community expectations and education provision.
- Establish meaningful local level targets with Iwi Strategic Partners and Pasifika communities to assist in raising achievement of Māori and Pasifika learners.

## 5

### Focus the efforts of the Ministry of Education, ERO, the New Zealand Teachers Council and Careers New Zealand and the education sector to lead the reform

Achieving this result will require collaboration across agencies and across the education sector to share knowledge and expertise, to align resources and improve effort, to ensure that no young person falls between the gaps and is left behind. This result will require focus and leadership right across the education and public sector.

To generate this focus and leadership we will:

- Establish a taskforce within the Ministry of Education to drive focus on the result. The taskforce will draw on expertise from practitioners and community representatives to improve the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of Education.
- Identify senior leaders in education to establish learning networks to drive change across the system and provide mentoring to others.
- Work with other agencies to provide seamless support to learners and their families, for example by increasing school based health services in decile 1 and 2 schools.
- Establish a cross-sector forum on raising achievement.

# Results in context

## 85% of 18 year olds will have achieved NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification in 2017.

This Better Public Service result will be delivered alongside other work to improve the performance of the education sector.

The lead minister for this result is Education Minister, Hon Hekia Parata. The accountable chief executive is Lesley Longstone, Secretary for Education.

## WIDER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

There are a range of cross-government programmes that link to and support the long-term achievement of Better Public Services education targets, including:

- Youth Guarantee
- The Prime Minister's youth mental health initiatives
- Business Growth Agenda
- The White Paper on vulnerable children
- Wha-nau Ora
- Welfare reform
- The Greater Christchurch Education Renewal Recovery Programme
- Drivers of Crime
- Youth Crime Action Plan

# Measuring success

## 85% of 18 year olds will have achieved NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent qualification in 2017.

The target will measure the proportion of people that turn 18 in 2017 and achieve a level 2 qualification by the end of 2017. The target refers to the year in which the students complete their qualification and not when they receive their results, which may be later. The data for the previous year is available annually in May, so we will report on achievement of the target in May 2018.

The NCEA Level 2 (or equivalent) target is set for an age group (before 19th birthday). It is inclusive of school and tertiary attainment. An 'equivalent' qualification is an industry recognised qualification of 80 credits, incorporating at least 60 credits at Level 2. As the Vocational Pathways and the targeted review of qualifications are implemented, the need for equivalent tertiary certificates will reduce and be replaced by learning programmes linked to NCEA Level 2. A small number of other qualifications not on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework have also been incorporated in baseline target measurement.

## REPORTING ON PROGRESS

Progress against the target will be reported to the Minister of Education annually, as the previous year's results become available. We are developing interim indicators and a performance measurement framework so that we can continually monitor and evaluate the impact of our actions against student achievement.

The monitoring of progress against the Government's target will be broken down into learner cohorts to specifically identify Māori and Pasifika achievement. Progress reports will also feed into the work to engage schools and communities and will inform our engagement strategies.

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