

AIDE MEMOIRE

Implementing a free and healthy school lunch prototype for Year 1–8 students: Speaking notes and information to support your paper at Social Wellbeing Committee

Date:	24 June 2019	Priority:	High
To:	Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for Child Poverty Reduction Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education Hon Tracey Martin, Minister for Children	METIS: DPMC Briefing:	1196722 2018/19-1387
From:	Kristie Carter, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Damian Edwards, Ministry of Education	Security Level:	Sensitive

Purpose

1. You are taking a paper to Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (SWC) on Wednesday 26 June, which seeks Cabinet agreement to prototype a free and healthy school lunch programme, and to draw down some of the funding that was set aside in Budget 2019 for this purpose.
2. This aide-memoire provides you with **attached** draft speaking notes and proposed responses to possible questions, to assist you when introducing and discussing the paper at SWC. It also provides additional information on the implementation of the prototype in composite schools, which was raised during Ministerial and party consultation.

Comment

3. Following your agreement, the Cabinet paper “Implementing a free and healthy school lunch prototype for Year 1-8 students” has been lodged with the Cabinet Office and is on the agenda for the SWC meeting on 26 June. It seeks agreement to the objectives, parameters and approach to implementing the prototype, and an initial drawdown of contingency funding as follows:

Funding sought from contingencies to support school lunch prototype (\$m)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & out years
Total Operating Contingency	9.281	6.618	-	-
Unit price of free and healthy school lunches	9(2)(f)(iv)		-	-
Departmental staff			-	-
Monitoring and evaluation			-	-
Initial Implementation			-	-
Total Capital Contingency	0.360	-	-	-
Minor capital items	0.360	-	-	-

4. In addition, the paper seeks delegated authority for the Minister of Education (after consulting with the Ministers for Child Poverty Reduction and Children) to:
 - a. jointly with the Minister of Finance, approve further draw-downs from the contingency
 - b. make policy and operational decisions within the objectives and parameters agreed to by Cabinet.

Additional information about funding arrangements for composite schools

5. During Ministerial and party consultation on the Cabinet paper, concerns were raised about the application of the programme in composite schools (area schools, Year 7–13 secondary schools, and kura), as these schools will only receive funding to provide lunches to Year 1-8 students.
6. Of the just under 500 eligible schools nationally, about 74 are composite schools (which are funded for around 5600 Year 9–13 students). Within the three regions initially targeted (Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty, Otago/Southland), there are around 30 composite schools (funded for around 2100 secondary school-aged students).
7. Recommendation 3.2 seeks Cabinet agreement to all Year 1–8 students in participating schools receiving a daily free and healthy lunch, and that funding be calculated on this basis. This reflects existing agreement to prioritise addressing food insecurity amongst children, rather than adolescents during the testing period.
8. Note that there are numerous precedents for providing resources to schools on the basis of year level (which composite schools are subject to). These include, for example, almost all formulae for calculating staffing entitlements (which vary by year level), the Careers Information Grant (which starts in Year 9 only), and Kiwisport (which provides funding at different rates for primary and secondary years).
9. There may be sufficient funding available in contingency to extend the prototype to include Year 9–13 students in selected eligible composite schools, as it was initially costed on the basis of a slightly faster and larger initial rollout in 2019. However, there is a risk that funding Years 9–13 students in composite schools could raise other issues (e.g. lack of access to the programme by Year 9-13 students enrolled in other secondary schools).

Proactive Release

10. The Ministry of Education and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet will not proactively release this briefing or its attachments, in order to preserve the constitutional conventions which protect the confidentiality of Cabinet discussions, and individual and collective ministerial responsibility.

Attachment

- Attachment One: Speaking notes to support Cabinet discussion
- Attachment Two: Possible questions and proposed responses