

Media Release	November 30th, 2009
From NZEI Te Riu Roa	For Immediate Use

WHERE'S THE INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION FOR 2025?

The lack of investment in public education and failure to address low pay are glaring holes in the first report of the 2025 Taskforce, says the education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa.

The Don Brash-led Taskforce has released its first report into how to close the income and productivity gap with Australia by 2025 and deliver the growth needed for a stronger, more prosperous economy.

NZEI says the report is anything but visionary in that it fails to recognise the importance of education.

“Investment in public education is what makes the difference in giving people skills and raising economic value. It is the centerpiece of economic policy in high performing OECD countries, yet this report chooses to completely undermine it,” says NZEI National Secretary Paul Goulter.

One of the proposals is to make cuts to entitlements to 20 Hours early childhood education as part of a bid to slash government spending.

Paul Goulter asks “where is the logic in that?”

“The 20 Hours policy has significantly boosted participation rates in early childhood by making it more affordable. There is a wealth of research showing that quality early childhood education has a long lasting effect on educational outcomes for children. Surely that is not only an educational investment, but an economic one as well.”

The Taskforce report also tramples on low paid workers. NZEI represents thousands of frontline school support staff who are stuck in a government wage freeze while the state sector is being told to raise its productivity.

Paul Goulter says lifting real wages is the key to closing the income gap with Australia and increased productivity will follow naturally.

“The proposals in this report do not set out an enlightened path for the future. The National Party sidelined Don Brash in 2005 and this government would be wise to do the same with his report.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NZEI SPOKESPERSON: National Secretary Paul Goulter 04-3822724(w) or
0272081087

MEDIA CONTACT: Liz Brown 04-3822703(w) or 0272683291