

HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

KIA MAU KI TE WHAKAAKO

NZEI · TE RIU ROA
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE



20 May 2010

Budget launches attack on quality teaching for youngest learners

Today's 2010 Budget is a nice-looking parcel with some nasty surprises wrapped inside when it comes to education, according to the country's largest education sector union.

Overall the Budget threatens to dumb down the early childhood by punishing the services most committed to improving quality. The \$280 million removed from funding for centres with 80% or more qualified teachers will mean centres will have to absorb an extra cost of around \$1.50 an hour per child, or pass it on to the parents of young children. This decision will impact 92,000 children in 2000 ECE centres.

Centres will not be allowed to pass on the additional cost to children receiving 20 hours ECE, so NZEI says this will mean the cost will fall disproportionately on children under 3 and children in ECE for more than 20 hours a week.

"This is going to be costly for children and their families, and it's a kick in the guts for the people who have worked hardest to provide quality for our youngest citizens," NZEI Vice President Judith Nowotarski says. "While we welcome the boost of \$ \$91.8 million over four years for Maori and Pasefika children, this shouldn't be at the expense of quality teaching and learning for all."

NZEI says recognising primary teacher qualifications for ECE is an acknowledgement that "a teacher is a teacher is a teacher" – that there needs to be a united teaching profession.

Judith Nowotarski says primary schools, particularly in the light of increases in GST, would have been hoping for more than the 4% increase in the operations grant, but will see it as realistic.

She says NZEI welcomes as common sense the Government's decision to cancel proposed cuts of \$45 million in the teacher staffing budget next year. However, NZEI is disappointed that there are cuts to teacher study grants and other professional development and support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

NZEI VICE PRESIDENT: Judith Nowotarski

MEDIA CONTACT: Liz Brown