



**Oral submission to the Education and Workforce Select Committee  
on the Education and Training Bill 193-1  
By Beryl Anderson and Suzanne Manning at 9.15 am on 11 March 2020**

**Education and Workforce Committee**

**Members Present:** Chairperson Parmjeet Parmar, ( Nat); Simeon Brown (Nat); Golriz Ghahraman (Gre); Clare Curran (Lab)

**Members Not Present:** Jan Tinetti (Lab); Nikki Kaye (Nat); Denise Lee (Nat); Marja Lubeck (Lab); Jo Luxton (Lab); Mark Patterson (NZ First); Nicola Willis (Nat)

**Introduction**

Kia Ora, Good morning, my name is Beryl Anderson and my colleague is Suzanne Manning.

Our submission was prepared jointly by the National Council of Women based on related NCWNZ policy decisions and resolutions after consultation with members and Graduate Women New Zealand GWNZ which is an affiliate of Graduate Women International and advocates for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality secondary and tertiary education and training up to the highest levels.

NCWNZ has always lobbied for the rights of women and their families to have access to high quality education and training. In 1905, the NCWNZ membership resolved that there should be an organised system of education from kindergarten to specialist college!

We welcome and mostly support this Bill. An effective and efficient education system at all levels is critical for New Zealand's thriving economy and the well-being of its people. The system needs to be designed for the current New Zealand economic and social context including the lifelong role education plays in developing the social, cultural, intellectual, and technical capabilities of individuals. It also needs to have the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing global environment and the nature of the Future of Work in New Zealand.

**Comments on the Bill**

We mostly support the Bill, which is simpler, more modern, and less prescriptive than the current education legislation and in particular the:

- recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the practical changes to our schooling system that directly benefit the lives of Māori students and their whānau
- Licensing and certification of early childhood education and care centres which will allow the Government to decline/grant licences based on demographics and demonstrated community need

- provision for ERO to enter homes where home-based early childhood education is taking place to “review and evaluate curriculum delivery and health and safety performance”
- the right for enrolled students and those with learning difficulties<sup>1</sup> to attend the school in which they are enrolled for all the hours that the school is open for instruction. This is enshrined in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, all of which New Zealand has ratified
- the opt-in nature of religious instruction, as a move away from the current opt-out system. Religious instruction should be respectful, open, and part of a wider curriculum on diversity of culture and society, with the aim of fostering a more tolerant and understanding future

We wish to highlight the following for your consideration:

NCWNZ and Graduate Women NZ are active supporters of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>2</sup> and urge the government to integrate SDG 4 (Education) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Sustainable development) within the development of the Education and Training Bill. We also wish to draw attention to the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (**the CEDAW Committee**)<sup>3</sup> which in 2018, made specific recommendations to the New Zealand Government about ways that they could improve education and work outcomes for women, and better meet its commitments under **CEDAW**.

### **Subpart 3—Teaching, learning, and well-being**

The CEDAW committee commended the Government for its efforts aimed at increasing opportunities for women in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology (ICT) industries. However, it was concerned about the limited access to secondary and tertiary education for many girls and women living in rural areas due to growing transportation costs, the closing of rural schools, and the reduction in government financing for community education services.

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<sup>1</sup> Submission [S15.24 Inquiry into Special Needs Education](#)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. About the Sustainable Development Goals.  
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<sup>3</sup> Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 2018. Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of New Zealand. CEDAW/C/NZL/CO/8.  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fNZL%2fCO%2f8&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fNZL%2fCO%2f8&Lang=en)

### **Subpart 3—Teaching, learning, and well-being Clause 86**

It is essential that every effort is made to reduce gender bias in curricula and raising awareness of the likely consequences of male and female choices of fields of study in their careers and earnings. Good career advice has the potential, for example, to encourage girls to consider trades as a career option, and boys to consider roles in the caring and health sectors. The breaking down of gender segregation in different types of studies and subsequent employment is a necessary part of addressing the gender pay gap that is large and persistent in Aotearoa New Zealand. NCWNZ's vision of a gender equal New Zealand requires elimination of the gender pay gap.

### **Part 4 Tertiary and vocational education and training - Subpart 4—New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology**

NCWNZ has made several submissions in recent years on Tertiary and Vocational education matters.<sup>4 5 6 7</sup>

As outlined in our previous submissions, access to vocational, work-based training and sub-degree education is important for the wellbeing of many women, not only on leaving school but also later in life.

#### **Clause 258 Matters to be considered when appointing council members**

Both NCWNZ and Graduate Women NZ have been calling for a gender impact analysis of proposed legislation for almost two decades. We would like to see this as a standard part of policy development. Unless gender impact analysis is a regular part of policy development, work to eliminate 'stereotypes and structural barriers' can be easily overlooked. We urge the Select Committee to request a gender impact analysis of the legislation before it is passed into law.

NCWNZ and GWNZ advocate for regulation to ensure that governance bodies have a gender balance. The proposed legislation for the NZ Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST) includes representation of staff, students and Māori, which we support. However, again, we do not believe that the legislation goes far enough when it says that "it is **desirable that**, insofar as possible, NZIST's Council should reflect the...gender diversity...of NZ's population. We believe that the gender balance on the NZIST and Workforce Development Councils should be made mandatory.

In conclusion, NCWNZ and GWNZ support this legislation in principle as an effective and efficient education system that meets the needs of the diversity of learners is critical for New Zealand's thriving economy and the well-being of its people. We would encourage the Select Committee to ask for a gender impact analysis of the legislation before it is passed into law to ensure it meets the goals of the SDGs and recommendations of the CEDAW committee. NCWNZ has always been concerned with the effect of education on women's future life opportunities and employment, as well as the way education changes affect women's roles as parents. It is a citizenship right that the education system in Aotearoa New Zealand is broad based, inclusive, accessible to all New Zealanders and provides lifelong learning opportunities for all.

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<sup>4</sup> Submission to the Education and Workforce Select Committee on the Education (Vocational Education and Training Reform) Amendment Bill <https://www.ncwnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/S19.23-Education-Vocational-Education-and-Training-Reform-Amendment-Bill.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [Oral Submission on Education \(Vocational Education and Training Reform\) Amendment Bill](#)

<sup>6</sup> [S19.02 Reform of Vocational Education](#)

<sup>7</sup> [S16.26 Draft report New Models of Tertiary Education](#)

**Questions:**

Simeon Brown: Thank you for your submission. In your submission you support the opt-in change for religious instruction but also say it does that it does not go wide enough. Can you explain your view?

Suzanne: We think that religion should be a subject discussed in schools, it should not be a taboo subject. But not necessarily just in religious instruction – we support discussion about religion, in subjects such as social studies, English, media studies.

Our written submission said (para 5.3):

**Clause 56** We support an inclusive, diverse education for all students in State schools. Therefore, we support the opt-in nature of religious instruction, as a move away from the current opt-out system. Anecdotally, much religious instruction is of Christian faith which does not wholly reflect New Zealand's growing non-Christian and non-religious demographics. As noted in the explanatory note of this Bill, often there is little opportunity for parents to opt-out of such instruction. We are not opposed to religious instruction in schools *per se*, but it should encompass many religions and cultures. Religious instruction should be respectful, open, and part of a wider curriculum on diversity of culture and society, with the aim of fostering a more tolerant and understanding future.