



Media information, 12 December 2016

Trust confirms education funding priorities

Priorities for Masterton Trust Lands Trust education funding until 2019 have been confirmed following a review of past funding and consultation with the education community over the last year.

Since 2006 the trust has contributed about \$4.4 million to Masterton's education sector which equates to about 43 percent of total grants made.

Trust chairperson, Leanne Southey said the funding programme had last been reviewed in 2004 and it was time to update the approach to further improve education results achieved with trust funding.

An independent review last year, followed by trust interviews with more than 20 education leaders, review of Education Review Office reports and discussion with the Ministry of Education have produced five education funding priorities.

"Involving the education community in how to use trust funding to deliver the greatest benefit to students has been a valuable exercise," Miss Southey said. "Some highly-common themes emerged from this which form the basis of the funding priorities."

The first of these is funding for early development of children aged 0-5 years to strengthen their foundation for learning. Professional development for teachers, service and resource coordination, and engagement of specialists will address readiness of children starting school, early literacy, social development and support for families.

Another priority is to extend the pool of education knowledge and skills through networking and collaboration between different levels of the education sector – early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary.

The third priority is high-quality future teaching, learning and assessment. This includes critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and leadership, agility and adaptability.

Priority will also be given to promoting a strong sense of identity, culture and language among Māori students through culturally responsive teaching.

Finally, the transition of students between levels of the education sector and on to training and employment will be funded through mentoring, cross-sector forums and parent education.

Masterton education leader, Tom Hullena, said the evidenced-based approach to identifying the priorities had been thorough and involved an extensive range of local and national stakeholders and sources.

"The process the trust followed is certainly a positive step in the right direction and will better ensure that funds are allocated in the most effective way to strengthen our local community – educationally, socially and economically," Mr Hullena said.

Miss Southey said the trust was ultimately working toward strong partnerships with other organisations to achieve a unified approach to supporting education, well-being and economic development in the region.

“We are committed to maintaining education funding at similar levels to previous years. This funding will not be affected by the current issues with some of the trust’s buildings, however community grants are likely to be affected in 2018.”

The MTLT Education Sector Funding Report can be viewed at www.ltm.org.nz

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Background

Established in 1872, Masterton Trust Lands Trust is a significant community-owned asset, governed by its own Act of Parliament.

It manages a \$71 million portfolio of Masterton properties for the benefit of the community. From the trust’s inception, education has been identified within the Act as a key beneficiary of funds generated.

In 2015 the trust commissioned an independent review of its contribution to education – the CORE Report. That review made a number of recommendations including providing a more strategic approach to funding.

Throughout 2016 LTM undertook significant follow-up research, primarily through interviews with education professionals and other key stakeholders, analysis of Education Review Office data, and discussions with the Ministry of Education. It has now defined its vision for education and priorities for funding for the next three years.