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# Governance, Management and Planning

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**Governance, Management and Planning**

The term governance is used to describe the process by which decisions are made and carried out on behalf of the citizens of a nation. It is the combination of political and institutional authority to provide direction, leadership and control and to ensure the effective administration and management of resources for development.

Applied to education in the Cook Islands, governance refers to the processes by which government makes and implements policy decisions that affect the finance, planning, development and delivery of learning opportunities for all Cook Islanders.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for direct provision of education by government, as well as the regulation of education services provided by private providers and non-government organisations. It is responsible for translation of the vision for education as contained in the Education Master Plan (EMP) into policy.

The MoE will ensure responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management are in place and will develop policies which translate the objectives contained within the EMP into effective education programmes with the required infrastructure and support. To achieve this sound planning processes, both short and long-term, will be established.

Management is about taking action for implementing policy. The MoE is responsible and accountable for oversight of this management function in its governance role within the system.

While MoE provides strategic direction, it is the job of both the MoE and leaders of educational institutions along with their management teams to translate this direction into action. Therefore the management guidelines contained in this policy relate to both the MoE and education providers within the Cook Islands.

1. **Policy Statement**

Governance and management of the Cook Islands education system will provide for the quality delivery of effective and efficient services to meet the outcomes of the Education Master Plan. It will be guided by policy, utilise informed decision making in its planning processes and be accountable both internally and externally through a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework.

2. **Purpose**

Strengthened governance, planning and policy frameworks are an essential requirement for sustained improvement in educational outcomes.

In achieving the outcome and objectives of this policy, the Ministry of Education is responding to

i)     The Education Master Plan (2008-2023) which includes the following relevant foci and goals:
       ***Learning and the Community***
       *Focus: A high level of community involvement in determining quality educational outcomes*
       ***Infrastructure and Support***
       *Focus: The provision of appropriate legislation, research, guidelines and standards which support*

*and enhance opportunities for learning.*
*Goals:*
*• Adequate budget resource for education*
*• Well qualified and resourced teachers, administrators and support staff*
*• High quality management systems*

ii)     Te Kaveinga Nui through its strategic goal of good governance at all levels

iii)    The Public Service Act (2009) which outlines the Ministry's responsibility to central government.

iv)    The Pacific Education Development Framework through meeting the goals of sub sector 6: System Governance and Administration.

v)     The goals of the UNESCO 'Education for All' policy, which includes in its strategies:

*Develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management ...the need for better governance of education systems in terms of efficiency, accountability, transparency and flexibility so that they can respond more effectively to the diverse and continuously changing needs of learners. Reform of educational management is urgently needed to move from highly centralised, standardised and command-driven forms of management to more decentralised and participatory decision-making, implementation and monitoring at lower levels of accountability. These processes must be buttressed by a management information system that benefits from both new technologies and community participation to produce timely, relevant and accurate information.*

Education For All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments   - Text adopted by the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000.

### 3.  SCOPE

This policy applies to all parties who are bound by the requirements of the Education Act.

### 4.  STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES

**Outcome**

There will be responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management in place along with issues and operational policies which translate the objectives contained within the EMP into effective education programmes. To achieve this sound planning processes, both short and long-term, will be established. A process of monitoring and evaluating programmes and outcomes will ensure that decisions are informed and evidenced based.

**Strategic Objectives**
The desired objectives of strong governance and management structures and processes include:

- Quality administration and delivery of education which includes a philosophy of continual

monitoring, evaluation, development and improvement.
- Maximising student achievement.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of resource use.
- National and international recognition.
- Effective and efficient financial processes that result in unqualified audit reports.
- Opportunities to enhance human resources development.
- Fulfilment of objectives fixed by law.
- Use of tenets such as ethics, citizenship, sustainable production and reduction of environmental risks.
- Coherence of all formal learning.
- Shared vision and harmonisation at all levels of the sector.
- Sound health and safety protocols across the sector for all stakeholders.

# 5. POLICY DETAIL

## 5.1 Improving Education Outcomes through Quality Governance

Governance refers to the processes of decision making and implementation. It includes sets of cohesive policy, procedures and responsibilities and must anticipate the needs and goals of an organisation. Good governance in education takes a broad and long term perspective on what is needed for sustainable development of the sector. It is cognizant of the historical, cultural and social context and accountable to those who will be affected by the decisions made. Policy provides the context and framework for governance relationships and frames a structure for operation.

The Cook Islands Ministry of Education is committed to meeting good governance practices, which:

- Are efficient, effective, accountable, transparent and flexible so that they can respond effectively to the diverse and continuously changing needs of systems and learners.
- Ensure adequate control over education strategy and direction, having due regard for the interests of all learners and stakeholders.
- Translate the needs of opportunities of people into policies and establish rules that efficiently and effectively deliver services to all members of Cook Islands society.
- Provide the guiding principles and rules for the management of the organisation and stipulate the boundaries for management's internal actions and their relations with stakeholders.
- Reflect Cook Islands values, beliefs and culture.
- Comply with legislation and regulations and customs of the Cook Islands.
- Define and allocate authority to ensure efficient and prudent management of education processes.
- Increase ownership of education processes by different stakeholders at different levels.
- Ensure systems to assess and inform education policy, provision, and performance are transparent and publicly known and promote quality and effectiveness.

### 5.1.1 Priority Policy Instruments and Actions - Governance

In meeting its responsibility for the design, implementation and coordination of national educational development the Ministry of Education will ensure:

- Policies and priorities provide for balanced educational development, matched by the provision of sound, transparent and evidenced budget submissions.
- There is medium-term Statements of Intent for education in place supported by credible financial forecasts.
- Capacity development of human resources is in place for planning and management, and educational service provision.
- A process for the anticipation, identification and filling of critical gaps in terms of technical, human or financial resources.
- Non-formal education is recognised as a relevant component of education provision.
- Effective and transparent communication, including reviews of local and central roles in service provision, and increased community voice and participation.
- The capacity for planning, development and management of education programmes ensures the effective use of resources and enables other stakeholders, including the community, to contribute to the provision of quality education.
- The regular review and evaluation of education performance and the reporting of this to stakeholders.
- Efficient, effective and coherent Ministry activity through the use of internal quality management systems and audit.
- Current, relevant legislation is in place.
- The provision of appropriate facilities to support changes to structure and functions.

## 5.2 Improving Education Outcomes through Quality Management

Management has the responsibility to implement the systems of governance. It is the mechanism through which compliance and service delivery is achieved.

Education management can broadly be categorised into the following interdependent areas:

- Strategic management refers to the process of defining the frameworks which will facilitate the effective structuring and planning of education through the allocation of resources.
- Pedagogical management involves those issues related to the nature and objectives of the educational process. These are translated into the curriculum and teaching and learning practices of the staff.
- Operations management refers to the managing of daily operational processes involving policy, planning and co-ordination, human resource management and financial management. Operations management is the day-to-day administrative processes and management systems which have a direct impact on the quality of delivery of outputs in the education system overall.

### 5.2.1 Priority Policy Instruments and Actions - Management

Key aspects of quality management will include:

- Quality guiding policy.
- Clear lines of responsibility, authority and communication.
- Effective infrastructure and working environment.
- Effective and appropriate programme planning, design, development, delivery and evaluation.
- Financial goals set for the education sector and the strategies to be followed will be aligned with education planning policies and planning frameworks.
- Financial resources for education will be allocated in such a manner that they support the realisation of the objectives of education as prioritised in the Statement of Intent and annual business plan in an efficient and effective manner
- All funds received and expended through education bank accounts and the day to day management and control of financial resources will be dealt with in accordance with the Cook Islands Government Financial Policies and Procedure Manual, MFEM Act, PSC Act and PERCA Act.
- A focus on matching the skill sets of personnel with the competencies and minimum qualification requirements for positions.
- There are policies and practices which provide clear pathways and which facilitate professional development to enable greater staff effectiveness within current roles or career progression
- Staff performance is enhanced through policies that promote the recruitment, selection, transfer and allocation of adequately trained staff, offering appropriate performance incentives and providing effective accountability mechanisms
- On-going up-skilling and resourcing of management (administrators, teachers, parents) to meet changes in education.

### 5.3 Improving Education Outcomes through Quality Planning

Planning is the process of setting goals, on the basis of objectives, for organisational performance. Planning also requires identification of tasks, actions and resources required to attain those goals. Planning takes place within the context of a legal framework and ratified mandates and agreements.
To be effective the planning process must:
- Be informed by valid, reliable and relevant information
- Assess needs and expectations of learners and other stakeholders.
- Establish quality objectives and policy.
- Define the process and necessary responsibilities to achieve the quality objectives including an identification of the necessary resources.
- Have a process by which to monitor progress towards the outcomes of any plan.
- Systematically report on progress to a range of stakeholders and over a range of time periods.
- Consider mid and long term shifts in stakeholder ownership and accountability for education outcomes

### 5.3.1 Priority Policy Instruments and Actions - Planning

The Ministry of Education's planning documents for education will:
- Directly relate to the achievement of the goals of the EMP and relevant midterm planning documents.
- Set out goals and objectives for education.
- Aim to increase effectiveness and efficiency including the appropriate use of government resources and funds generated by the public.
- Plan for progressive improvement in the education system.
- Foster improved networks and partnerships between the Government and Non-Government sectors.
- Respond to government priorities and utilise government processes as required.

## 6. Risk and Mitigation

Should this policy not be implemented to its fullest intent, the Ministry will need to mitigate a number of risks that could arise. These are outlined in the table below:

| *Issue/Risk - examples* | *Mitigation - examples* |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Lack of continuity in progressive goal setting</li><li>Lack of harmonisation</li><li>Lack of central agency capacity including training opportunities for senior staff</li><li>Limited internal succession planning</li><li>Lack of compliance with MoUs</li><li>No unified pathway for learners.</li><li>Inefficient and inequitable provision of resources.</li><li>Disjointed skills progression for learners.</li><li>Employers cannot access potential employees with the relevant skills.</li><li>Limited parental input into what and how learners are taught.</li><li>Poorly performing teachers and school managers.</li></ul> | <ul><li>A clearly defined strategic and mid term plans supported by relevant policies</li><li>A shared vision at all levels of education.</li><li>High levels of administrative coordination.</li><li>Efficient and effective management of resources.</li><li>Appropriate human resources development.</li><li>Effective communication and interaction within the sector and with all stakeholders</li><li>Coordinated and relevant training programmes.</li></ul> |

## 7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Monitoring is keeping track of the workings of a policy -noting whether the policy is referred and adhered to during the development of education processes and programmes.

Evaluation involves making careful judgements about the worth, quality and benefit of a policy. It provides feedback on the efficiency, effectiveness and performance of policy and is critical to policy improvement and innovation.

Review refers to implementing any required changes that have become apparent during the monitoring and evaluation processes.

- The Planning and Development Division will monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of this policy and report as required.

- The policy will be reviewed as per the policy register on an ongoing basis by the Director, Planning and Development.

- Feedback will be presented to key stakeholders in a range of modalities.

This policy will be reviewed 24 months after implementation and thereafter every 36 months.

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Secretary of Education

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