

6. WORKING PARTY REPORT ON LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY AND THE SCHOOL YEAR

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Corporate Plan Output: Policy Advice	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the Working Party Report on the Length of the School Day and School Year.

INTRODUCTION

The Working Party on the Length of the School Day and the School Year released its report, including recommendations, in June 1999. The Council made a submission to the Working Party in May 1999. This report compares the Council's Submission with the Working Party's recommendations.

BACKGROUND

The Review of the Length of School Day and the School Year Discussion Paper and a questionnaire based on the discussion paper were released in late April 1999 for consultation.

The Terms of reference of the Working Party included considering issues such as:

- Engaged time needed to deliver to students quality education that meets national curriculum requirements relevant to the needs of the 21 century
- The terms, holidays and school day lengths for different age groups and other factors relating to schools' needs to provide quality education
- Parental, community and workforce requirements and expectations of students' attendance at school.
- The balance between national consistency and local flexibility

The Council made a submission to the Working Party in May 1999. The submission focused on the proposals discussed in the document which would have a direct affect on the Council's role and activities. A copy of the submission is attached.

WORKING PARTY REPORT

The Working Party released a full report with 38 recommendations (a copy of the Executive Summary and Recommendations is attached).

The report and recommendations are generally consistent with the Council's submission, however, the Working Party made no recommendations regarding childcare options, after school and holiday programmes (recommendations 4, 5, 6 of Council submission).

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council made seven recommendations in its submission. The related submission from the Working Party are in italics.

1. Dividing academic and social activities is not appropriate to holistic quality teaching/learning environments (*Working Party recommendation number 2*).
2. The Ministry should instruct or advise Board of Trustees to encourage the use of school facilities out of school hours by the community. Priority should be given to public and community activities rather than private organisations (*Working Party recommendation number 33*).
3. It is important to protect a national education system and consistent term times for all schools (*Working Party recommendation numbers 8, 12, 13, 26*).
4. Provision should be made for the provision of a range of childcare options and holiday programme options available for unoccupied or unsupervised children during out of school hours and holidays
5. Central Government should provide core funding for Out of School and Holiday Programmes including funding for staff salaries.
6. Central Government has a responsibility for establishing and monitoring national standards for Out of School Programmes.
7. Conditions of service such as the length of the working week or the holidays should not be determined by the general public but negotiated as part of their CEC negotiations (*Working Party recommendation number 4*).

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.