

Media Statement
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PPP's for Schools Should Deliver Better Educational Outcomes

The New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development has welcomed the announcement by Minister of Education, Anne Tolley, that the Ministry of Education and Treasury are assessing the suitability of public-private partnerships (PPP) for building and maintaining new school properties.

"Experience in both the United Kingdom and Australia shows that PPP delivery of school services delivers better educational outcomes by enabling head masters and teachers the time to focus on the needs of the children they are teaching", says NZCID Chief Executive, Stephen Selwood.

"In the UK 'Building Schools for the Future' (BSF) PPP programme is the largest single capital investment programme in English schools for more than 50 years. A recent Pricewaterhouse Coopers review (<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/13240/2ndannualreport.pdf>) completed in December 2008 found "that the majority of head teachers viewed BSF programme as educationally transformational".

"Similarly in Australia post implementation reviews of new schools undertaken by the New South Wales Treasury have found the public-private partnership model to be an improvement on traditional public sector delivery (see <http://www.nzcid.org.nz/downloads/NSW%20New%20Schools%20Privately%20Financed%20Project%20Post%20Implementation%20Review.pdf>).

"The New Schools programme in Sydney was able to deliver better value for money as tested against public sector comparator. Schools have been delivered earlier on average than would have been possible had traditional public sector funding been used. This has enabled a faster response to demographic needs in urban growth areas. Schools have been constructed in a shorter timeframe and enabled an earlier opening than would have normally been possible.

"Private sector has also brought innovation including such things as onsite child care facilities and provision of onsite managers. These initiatives have enabled additional revenue for the schools and released school principals and teachers time that was previously spent dealing with facilities maintenance issues.

"The PPP model provides the best of both worlds. Government agencies continue to own the asset and oversee and control service standards while allowing the private sector to share the risks improve services and reduce costs through good management and innovation.

"It makes sense to evaluate how best we can use the model to improve value for money and achieve better educational outcomes here in New Zealand", Selwood says.