



## **OECD Education Policy Forum: Investing in skills for the 21st Century**

Paris, 4 November 2010

### **Co-Chair's Summary**

**The Honourable Anne Tolley, Minister of Education, New Zealand**

*Yesterday morning I was pleased to co-chair with Minister Alonso Lujambio from Mexico the OECD's Education Policy Forum.*

*The Forum was an opportunity to discuss issues which challenge us in current education and training systems. The panel participants and more the 200 participants engaged in discussing options to advance education and by so doing to improve society.*

*Three issues emerged that need special reflection.*

*What is the balance between traditional school classroom learning and new innovative approaches and how can they complement each other. How do we make use of mobile phone technology to reach potential learners? In this age of Wikipedia and facebook how do learners wade through the vast amounts of material to find relevant information and check its validity? As young people become experts in textspeak and twitter, how do they learn when to use such informal language, and how to communicate effectively in more formal social settings?*

*The 3 R's still matter – reading writing and arithmetic unlock the potential for further learning, and when supplemented by the 4 Cs – critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication, they multiply their effects. But either the Rs or the C's on their own will get our children nowhere.*

*The second issue discussed referred to motivators for learning and teaching – for students, for teachers, for ourselves as lifelong learners. In some cases the motivators may be financial, but this*

*may not be enough or indeed the best option. For students – what makes them enthusiastic about learning? For teachers – what keeps them passionate about sharing their love of learning?*

*Our keynote speaker, Charles Leadbeater, spoke of options for developing nations and communities. He said that there education plus technology equals hope.*

*The third issue raised was the role of the education systems in addressing social issues – equity and equality of opportunity in education, the development of a moral perspective, social skills, and emotional intelligence. But how do we ensure that teachers have the time to address these needs, often unique to each student.*

*It was clear that no generic ‘one size fits all’ solutions exist. By bringing together the panellists and participants and providing the opportunity to share ideas and learn about options which work successfully, the Policy Forum provided a positive step toward equipping our societies with the skills they may need for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*