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Are partnership schools more trouble than they are worth?

When National fundamentally altered the Education Act to provide for a new, non-accountable, category of schools, the justification was that these schools needed to be freed from the shackles of government regulation in order to provide excellent education to high risk students.

Today it was revealed in the House that no Partnership/ charter School has included a single high needs student, leaving the state schools in those areas to grapple with the most challenging students. It appears that these schools have found ways to cream off the best students among high needs groups, leaving the rest for state schools to tackle.

“QPEC has been tracking charter schools internationally for years, and one of the clearest trends is that children with disabilities are discouraged from attending charter schools” says Liz Gordon, QPEC spokesperson.

“We predicted that this would happen with Partnership Schools in New Zealand too. QPEC is opposed to charter schools in New Zealand because there is not a jot of evidence that they are effective in educating our highest needs children.

“The Minister now apparently agrees. In putting the next Partnership School round on hold, she is indicating a failing faith in the model. This, in particular, is a slap in the face for Undersecretary David Seymour, whose sole justification for being in Parliament is to oversee the implementation of charter schools.”

Liz Gordon

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