



## MP for Manukau East

Minister for Building and Construction

Minister of Customs

Minister for Ethnic Communities

Associate Minister of Education

Associate Minister of Health

**14 NOV 2019**

Louisa Jones  
Assistant General Secretary  
FIRST Union

[louisa.jones@firstunion.org.nz](mailto:louisa.jones@firstunion.org.nz)

Dear Louisa

The Minister of Education, Hon Chris Hipkins, has asked me to reply to your letter of 22 October 2019 about the school bus tender process. I am responding as the matters you raise fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

I acknowledge the concerns raised by FIRST Union, and by members of the bus industry, about aspects of the tender process. The Government and the Ministry of Education have been listening to this feedback. The Ministry is now working to incorporate feedback into procurement planning, and as a result, the tender was not opened in October as planned.

I note the concerns you raise about safety, and I can assure you that safe school transport is a key priority for the Government and the Ministry. Ministry-contracted transport providers must meet all health and safety requirements set out in New Zealand legislation, and this will remain the case for any future contracts awarded. In addition, we set many standards and requirements above those set out in legislation. If you are aware of any specific safety issues with Ministry-contracted services, please ensure these are passed on to the Ministry for investigation.

Further updates on the final tender specifications and timeframes will be available through the Government Electronic Tender Service at [www.gets.govt.nz](http://www.gets.govt.nz). You can also contact the tender team directly at [bus.tender@education.govt.nz](mailto:bus.tender@education.govt.nz).

Thank you for raising these issues on behalf of your members, and please be assured that the matters you raise are being considered.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Salesa'.

**Hon Jenny Salesa**  
**Associate Minister of Education**

cc Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education