

**NZEI
TE RIU ROA**



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

Consultation on the review of how schools are resourced for teacher aides

December 2022 – April 2023

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How to have your say

If you want to provide feedback on the proposals in this document, you can complete an online survey [here](#). You can also send a more detailed written submission to teacheraide.accordreview@education.govt.nz.

Feedback is required by 6 April 2023 (the final day of Term 1).

The education sector reference group leading the review of how schools are resourced for teacher aides will reconvene in late April 2023 and use the feedback acquired through consultation to inform whether any changes are made to the proposal. The group will then submit their final recommended proposal to the Minister of Education to consider in mid-2023.

Process

The information provided in submissions will inform the sector reference group's final recommended proposal to the Accord Governance Group and the Minister of Education.

Your submissions will become public information. This means that a member of the public may ask for a copy of your submission under the Official Information Act 1982. Any submission summary we create as a result of this consultation may also mention your submission.

If you wish to submit a more detailed submission by email, please also set out clearly if you have any objection to the release of any information in the submission. It would also be helpful if you outlined which part you consider should be withheld, together with the reasons for withholding the information.

Introduction

The Accord agreed between the Ministry of Education, NZEI Te Riu Roa and PPTA Te Wehengarua included a commitment to review how schools are resourced for teacher aides. This work is an opportunity for the education sector and the Ministry to work together and consider improvements to the resourcing model for teacher aides that strengthens outcomes for learners and their whānau.

An education sector reference group (the group) was established in March 2021 to conduct the review and provide a set of recommendations to the Accord Governance Group (the Accord). The Accord invited peak bodies and organisations to nominate members for the group using a skills-based nomination process.

The group has had 10 meetings across 2021 and 2022 to develop its proposal on how schools are resourced for teacher aides, contributing expertise and knowledge from across the education sector. It is chaired by the Honourable Tracey Martin.

The following peak bodies and organisations have had representation on the group:

- New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools
- NZEI Te Riu Roa
- PPTA Te Wehengarua
- Secondary Principals' Association New Zealand
- Special Education Principals' Association New Zealand
- New Zealand School Trustees Association
- New Zealand Pasifika Principals' Association
- New Zealand Principals' Federation
- Te Akatea Principals' Association
- Ministry of Education

The group submitted a paper on their proposal for how schools are resourced for teacher aides to the Accord Governance Group in July 2022. The report can be found [here](#).

Important context for the proposal

This proposal focuses on English-medium education settings, and it is important that the proposal works for bilingual and Māori medium in otherwise English-medium schools. The Ministry engages separately with Kaupapa Māori peak bodies and stakeholders to strengthen and grow Kaupapa Māori education settings, kura and pathways. Our ways of working are adjusting as we improve our understanding of Kaupapa Māori needs, contexts and priorities. The Ministry is committed to considering support for teacher aide provision and related resourcing in Kaupapa Māori, but this will be progressed separately and will take a different approach.

The group have also specified that the Ministry of Education should work separately with specialist schools and Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu to develop bespoke teacher aide resourcing models for them.

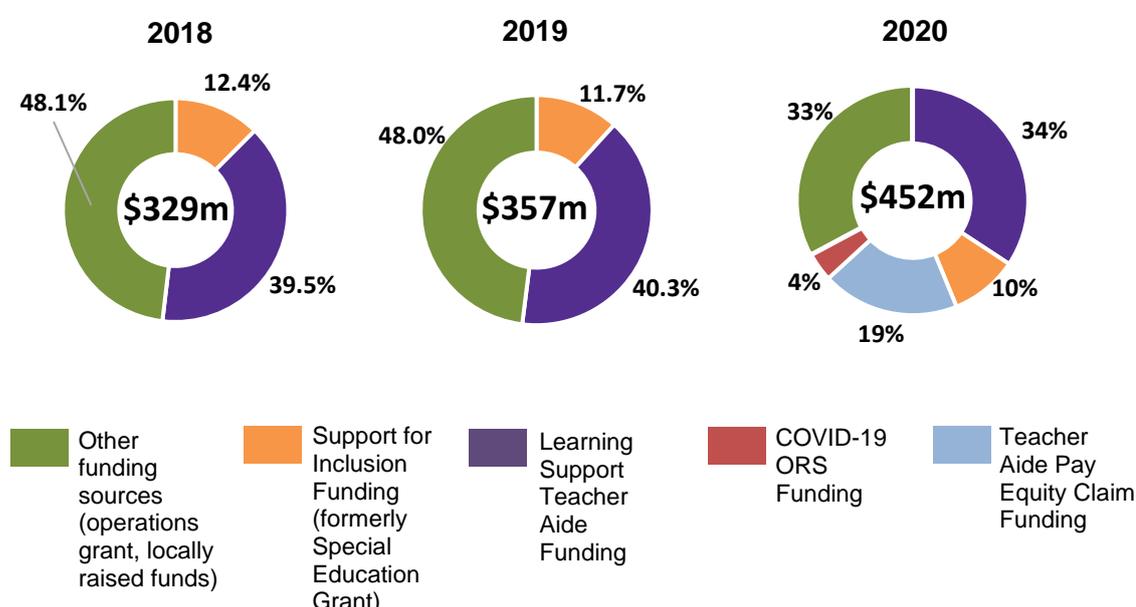
Any changes that result from this proposal will need to be implemented through redistribution of existing funding, rather than with additional funding. The group has worked to develop their proposal within this context.

Summary of the current state of teacher aide resourcing

There are two main sources of government funding for teacher aides:

1. **Learning Support funding**, including Ongoing Resourcing Scheme, School High Health Needs Funding, In-Class Support, Communication, and Behaviour Scheme teacher aide funding.
2. **Operational grant funding**, mainly Support for Inclusion Funding (formerly the Special Education Grant) provided to support schools to furthering inclusion for ākonga with learning support needs. Schools spend other operational grant funding and their locally raised funds on teacher aides.

Figure 1: Total teacher aide payroll spend in 2018, 2019 and 2020



The majority of schools spend more than the Learning Support teacher aide funding allocated to them on teacher aides, i.e. a portion of their operational grant funding and locally raised funds.

Primary schools employ the most teacher aides and fund the most hours of support from teacher aides for learners. This is in part because there are more students in Y1-8 than Y9-15, but also because many of the learning support interventions are aimed at primary school year levels.

Key issues identified

- The application process for funding is time consuming and administrative,
- Schools rely on funding for individual students and lose this funding when the student moves on,
- Funding is unpredictable, contestable and time-limited (often short term),
- This may lead to:
 - frequent use of fixed-term contracts,
 - precarity of employment for teacher aides,
 - lack of investment in career development,
 - damage to the mana of teacher aides, and
 - impacts on well-being and achievement outcomes of learners.

The group's process

The group received training in Interest-Based Problem Solving (IBPS) and used the IBPS process as a structure for this review. IBPS is a collaborative approach for addressing problems, issues and opportunities. The approach focuses on identifying all stakeholders' interests whether they are shared, competing or different, and then working together to develop a solution to meet everyone's interests. The four steps in the process are:

1. Define the issue
2. Identify the interests
3. Develop options
4. Craft a solution

The steps in this process were informed by the views and insights of sector reference group members. While the group's current membership is reflective of a range of different perspectives and expertise, we acknowledge that there are gaps and therefore views that may not be reflected in the proposal. However, the group is committed to consulting with a wide range of groups on this proposal to ensure their issues, perspectives and interests are voiced before any final recommendations on the future of the work are made

Define the issue

An issue statement was developed by the group to jointly define the issue, opportunity, and purpose for the work.

The issue statement

How do we ensure that the way schools are resourced for teacher aides supports all students in achieving their potential and is simplified, predictable and enhances the mana of the teacher aide workforce?

Identify interests

The IBPS process requires that each stakeholder outline the interests and objectives they are seeking to achieve through the review. An interest is the underlying need, motivation or concern that may have to be addressed in order to reach a solution. Each member shared their respective interests with the wider group and then seven critical success factors were agreed on for which options could be measured against.

Critical success factors

1. Align with Moku Te Ao approach and Ka Hikitia
2. Greater permanency of employment
3. Predictable and responsive resourcing
4. Simple, clear and consistent
5. Supports teacher aide career pathways
6. Adaptable to unique school characteristics
7. Affordable and achievable

Develop options

The group developed a range of options for how schools could be resourced for teacher aides and considered the key benefits and risks of each. The group considered four key questions which would inform the preferred option.

- How should teacher aide resourcing be allocated?
- Who should be the recipient of teacher aide resourcing?
- Who should be the employer of teacher aides?
- In what medium should teacher aide resourcing be provided (e.g. cash-based allocation, staffing entitlement)?

Craft a solution

After considering all the potential options, the group then crafted a preferred option by assessing which option measured best against the critical success factors and could achieve the objectives of the work.

Overview of the proposed teacher aide resourcing model

The group developed a preferred solution for the teacher aide resourcing model by using the concept of a wharenui. Schools currently receive their teacher aide specific resourcing from responsive, application-based funding streams. To maximise the amount and proportion of overall teacher aide resourcing for schools that is predictable, the group proposes that teacher aide resourcing is delivered via a two-part “hybrid” resourcing model.

Predictable, formula driven resourcing

All schools would receive a core base of teacher aide resourcing in the form of a fully funded staffing entitlement.

Responsive, individualised resourcing

All schools would be able to apply for additional teacher aide resourcing on an individual needs’ / application basis.

Questions

1. Do you agree with the group’s issue statement? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree with the group’s critical success factors? Why or why not?

Predictable teacher aide resourcing

The opportunity

Currently, teacher aide resourcing is contestable and can be unpredictable. Providing schools with a core base of teacher aide resourcing every year could increase predictability and certainty for schools, teacher aides and the support they provide to learners. Increasing predictability could flow through to:

- provide schools with reasonable certainty so they can plan and budget
- reduce precarity of employment for teacher aides
- support a well-trained, skilled and secure teacher aide workforce
- improve educational and wellbeing outcomes for learners.

The proposal

Any changes that result from this proposal will need to be implemented through redistribution of existing funding, rather than with additional funding. Within this context, the group proposes the following:

- a. The following teacher aide funding streams are consolidated, creating a pool of funding to allocate in the form of a fully-funded staffing entitlement to schools:
 - i. Behaviour scheme teacher aide funding
 - ii. Communication teacher aide funding
 - iii. In-Class Support
 - iv. RTLB learning support funding for teacher aides
 - v. Support for Inclusion Funding (formerly the Special Education Grant)
 - i. TAPEC / Collective Agreement funding (in part)
- b. The following formula is used to establish a form of staffing entitlement for the predictable teacher aide resourcing:

base rate per school

+ *flat rate per student*

+ *variable rate per student (weighted towards primary aged students and schools with higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage using the Equity Index)*

= *funding per school (provided as full-time teacher aide equivalent (FTE))*
- c. Resourcing is provided in the form of a fully funded FTE teacher aide staffing entitlement. This would work in a similar way to teacher staffing entitlements currently in place.
- d. As any changes would need to be funded through redistribution of existing funding in the immediate term, these proposed changes would affect school funding. The group recommends support is provided to schools to transition them to their new level of resourcing, and that the transition arrangements are like other school funding transitions (for example, the Equity Index). The exact arrangements would be determined after school funding impacts are known and will be subject to future budget decisions as they would require additional funding.

Questions

3. Do you agree that improving predictability of resourcing and having fewer application-based teacher aide resourcing streams could deliver better outcomes for learners? Why or why not?
4. Do you agree with the proposed formula to allocate predictable teacher aide resourcing? Why or why not?
5. Do you agree with the funding streams proposed to be consolidated? Why or why not?
 - Are there any funding streams that you think you be consolidated into predictable teacher aide resourcing that have not been included?
6. Do you agree that the predictable portion of teacher aide resourcing should be in the form of a fully funded staffing entitlement? Why or why not?

Responsive teacher aide resourcing

The opportunity

The group supports that some teacher aide resourcing should continue to be allocated on an individual needs' basis to ensure that resourcing is both predictable and responsive to individual, more complex needs. However, the group proposes that simplifying and streamlining responsive resourcing and reducing the regularity of reapplying for teacher aide support could flow through to:

- provide more certainty for parents and whānau about support and resourcing available for learners
- reduce the administrative burden of applying for and assessing applications for teacher aide resourcing
- reduce precarity of employment for teacher aides and support a well-trained, skilled and secure teacher aide workforce.

The proposal

- e. The following interventions would continue to allocate teacher aide resourcing on an individual needs' / application basis:
 - i. Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS)
 - ii. Interim Response Fund
 - iii. ESOL Funding
 - iv. Intensive Wraparound Service
 - v. School High Health Needs Funding
- f. The regularity of reapplying for responsive teacher aide resourcing would be reduced and resourcing guaranteed for a longer period of time where appropriate.
- g. The group's preferred direction of travel is that responsive resourcing is provided in a form of fully funded FTE staffing entitlement wherever possible. This is consistent with the approach taken for predictable, formula driven resourcing.
 - The group recognises that there is existing work underway to review supports for children and young people with the highest levels of need. It is important that decisions regarding responsive teacher aide resourcing are aligned with the future design of the highest needs supports, arising from the Highest Needs Review. Additionally, delivering responsive resourcing as a fully funded FTE staffing entitlement within existing funding may have implications on either the system level costs, or the level of teacher aide support delivered.
 - The group notes that further exploration and work is required before any changes to the interventions above are undertaken.

Questions

7. Do you agree that the regularity of reapplying for teacher aide support should be reduced to create greater predictability and stability for students? Why or why not?
8. Do you agree that resourcing should be provided in the form of a fully-funded staffing entitlement wherever possible? Why or why not?

Teacher Aide Pay Equity Claim funding

The opportunity

TAPEC funding is delivered to schools through a complex manual process using schools actual and forecast teacher aide hours and pay information. The key benefit with this process is that it ensures schools are provided funding based on their individualised teacher aide data, however it is not sustainable long term as it has a range of complexities and limitations.

This review has considered how TAPEC funding could be allocated through the proposed teacher aide resourcing model outlined in this document in a simplified, sustainable way that is also more predictable for schools.

The proposal

- h. TAPEC funding would be apportioned across the predictable, formula driven resourcing and the responsive, individualised resourcing.
 - Whilst further work is in progress to assess the impact of a fully funded staffing entitlement for responsive teacher aide resourcing, TAPEC funding would be allocated in the same way it is currently as a top-up to schools accessing responsive funding.
 - The remaining TAPEC/CA funding would be incorporated into the funding pool for the predictable, formula driven resourcing delivered as a fully funded staffing entitlement.

Questions

- 9. Do you agree to the changes to TAPEC funding proposed by the group? Why or why not?
- 10. Do you foresee any issues in changing how TAPEC funding is allocated from how it is currently? Why or why not?