



Education Report: Drawdown of operating contingency: targeted support for at-risk ākonga

To:	Hon Grant Robertson, Minister of Finance Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education Hon Peeni Henare, Minister for Youth		
CC:	Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	9 September 2020	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1237925
Drafter:	Jessie Smart	DDI:	439 6462
Key contact and number:	Ben O'Meara	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Messaging seen by Communications team:	N/A	Round robin:	No

Purpose of report

This paper seeks your agreement to the drawdown of the operating contingency for targeted support for at-risk ākonga.

Summary

1. A tagged contingency of \$36 million has been created from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, for targeted support for at-risk ākonga. The Ministers of Finance and Education have been authorised to jointly appropriate this funding when satisfied with the detailed implementation plans for the initiatives.
2. We have proposed seven initiatives that provide a direct response to COVID-19 for at-risk ākonga. These target at-risk ākonga who have high and complex needs, and can be delivered quickly and are all time-limited in nature.
3. We are seeking your agreement to drawdown from the contingency to fund these initiatives for the amounts in the table below. This will ensure that we are able to support the current cohort of at-risk students through the next two years of the COVID-19 recovery.
4. We are withholding \$4.8m of the contingency while we complete additional work on a further initiative to maintain internet connectivity for learners [METIS 1239799 refers]. We will provide advice on the drawdown of the remaining funding shortly.

Initiatives (\$m)	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Support for community programmes supporting rangatahi at risk of disengaging					
MYD Community Fund	11.128	0.601	-	-	11.729
Enhanced Wellbeing Fund for at-risk ākonga					
Enhanced Wellbeing Fund	4.750	2.179	-	-	6.929
Temporary extension for ākonga who are aging out of Alternative Education					
Additional student place funding	1.179	0.590	-	-	1.769
Extension for the Napier Student Managed Moves pilot					
Cost pressures, one year extension	0.105	0.217	0.190	-	0.512
Wraparound transition support for ākonga moving out of at-risk settings					
Transition support	2.646	4.306	-	-	6.952
Professional Learning and Development funding for alternative providers					
At-risk provider PLD fund	0.406	0.203	-	-	0.609
NCEA support					
Te Kura Big Picture programme	2.200	-	-	-	2.200
Te Kura summer school	0.500	-	-	-	0.500
Total	22.914	8.096	0.190	-	31.200

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends that the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education (and, for recommendation (4), the Minister for Youth):

- 1 **note** that on 11 May as part of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund Foundational Package [CAB-20-MIN-0219 refers], Cabinet:
 - 1.1 **approved** a package of initiatives to be charged against the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund;
 - 1.2 **authorised** the Minister of Finance and relevant Appropriation Ministers to approve jointly any changes to appropriations and capital injections, and the establishment of new appropriations where necessary to give effect to a list of initiatives for which financial recommendations were still outstanding

Noted
Minister of Finance

Noted
Minister of Education
- 2 **note** that on 12 May [METIS 1228142 refers] the Minister of Finance and Minister of Education in respect to Operating Contingency: Targeted Support for At Risk Ākonga [Initiative 12536]:
 - 2.1 **agreed** to Targeted Support for At-Risk Ākonga, subject to further work on detailed implementation planning;
 - 2.2 **agreed** to a tagged operating contingency of up to the amount as follows in the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, to provide for the policy in recommendation (1.1) above:

	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 & Outyears
Operating Contingency: Targeted Support for At-Risk Akonga	-	36.000	-	-	-

2.3 **agreed** that the joint approval of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education is needed to draw down the tagged operating contingency funding in recommendation (1.2) above (establishing any new appropriations as necessary), subject to their satisfaction with the outcome of the further work described in recommendation (1.1) above

2.4 **agreed** that the tagged operating contingency will expire on 30 November 2020

Noted
Minister of Finance

Noted
Minister of Education

- 3 **agree** that, as the further work described in recommendation (2.1) above has been satisfactorily completed, the drawdown of the contingency can now proceed

Agree / Disagree
Minister of Finance

Agree / Disagree
Minister of Education

- 4 **approve** the following changes to appropriations to provide for the decision in recommendation (3), with corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 & Outyears
Vote Education Minister of Education					
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Outcomes for Target Student Groups MCA					
Departmental Output Expense:					
Interventions for Target Student Groups (funded by revenue Crown)	1.073	0.550	-	-	-
Non-departmental Output Expense:					
Learning Support	7.963	6.945	0.190	-	-
Total Multi-Category Expense and Capital Expenditure: Outcomes for Target Student Groups (MCA)	9.036	7.495	0.190	-	-
Oversight of the Education System MCA					
Departmental Output Expense:					
Stewardship and Oversight of the Education System (funded by revenue Crown)	0.050	-	-	-	-
Total Multi-Category Expense and Capital Expenditure: Oversight of the Education System (MCA)	0.050	-	-	-	-

Primary and Secondary Education MCA Non-departmental Output Expense: Secondary Education	2.700				
Total Multi-Category Expense and Capital Expenditure: Primary and Secondary Education (MCA)	2.700				
Vote Social Development Minister for Youth Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Partnering for Youth Development MCA Departmental Output Expense: Administering Youth Development (funded by revenue Crown) Non-departmental Output Expense: Delivering Youth Development	0.661 10.467	0.601 -	- -	- -	- -
Total Multi-Category Expense and Capital Expenditure: Partnering for Youth Development (MCA)	11.128	0.601	-	-	-
Total Operating	22.914	8.096	0.190	-	31.200

Approved Not approved
Minister of Finance

Approved Not approved
Minister of Education

Approved Not approved
Minister for Youth

- 5 **agree** that the proposed changes to appropriations for 2020/21 above be included in the 2020/21 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increases be met from Imprest Supply

Agree Disagree
Minister of Finance

Agree Disagree
Minister of Education

- 6 **agree** that the expenses incurred under recommendation (4) above be charged against the Operating Contingency – Targeted Support for At-Risk Ākonga described in recommendation (2) above

Agree Disagree
Minister of Finance

Agree Disagree
Minister of Education

- 7 **note** that after the changes to appropriations, there will be \$4.8m remaining to allocate in the Operating Contingency – Targeted Support for At-Risk Ākonga, which must be drawn down by 30 November 2020

Noted
Minister of Finance

Noted
Minister of Education

- 8 **note** that we will provide further advice on the drawdown of the remaining \$4.8m in the Operating Contingency – Targeted Support for At-Risk Ākonga once we have completed additional work on a further initiative to maintain internet connectivity for learners

Noted
Minister of Finance

Noted
Minister of Education

- 9 **note** that the Ministry of Education will report to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education by 30 November 2020 on the Ministry's progress in implementing all Vote Education initiatives funded by the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, including the Operating Contingency – Targeted Support for At-Risk Ākonga

Noted
Minister of Finance

Noted
Minister of Education

- 10 **agree** to forward a signed copy of this report to the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Youth

Agree **Disagree**
Minister of Education

Proactive Release Recommendation

- 11 **agree** that this Education Report is proactively released once the initiatives have been announced.

Agree **Disagree**



Dr Andrea Schöllmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy

09/09/2020



Hon Grant Robertson
Minister of Finance

15/09/2020



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

12/9/2020



Hon Peeni Henare
Minister for Youth

16/9/2020

Background

1. On 11 May 2020, Cabinet agreed to a tagged operating contingency of \$36 million from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, to be used for targeted support for at-risk ākonga. The Minister of Finance and Minister of Education have been jointly authorised to draw down this funding, subject to your satisfaction with the completion of further work on detailed implementation planning. The contingency is allocated to 2020/21 and will expire on 30 November 2020.
2. The work on detailed implementation planning has now been completed and we are seeking your agreement to draw down from the contingency, in order to progress a package of seven initiatives that provide a direct response to COVID-19 for at-risk ākonga. The proposed initiatives are targeted to those at-risk ākonga who have high and complex needs, are all time-limited in nature (mainly happening over the next two years) and can be delivered quickly.
3. The Minister of Education and Associate Minister of Education, Hon Tracey Martin, have agreed to six of the seven proposed initiatives (METIS 1235061 refers). We are also recommending an additional initiative to support senior secondary students to attain NCEA following the recent COVID-19 disruptions to schooling in Auckland. To fund this additional initiative, we have reduced the proposed funding for support for initiatives by \$1.35m each: support for community programmes (initiative A) and the Enhanced Wellbeing Fund for ākonga in at-risk settings (initiative B).
4. We have withheld a further \$4.8m from the Enhanced Wellbeing Fund while we complete additional work on a further initiative to maintain internet connectivity for learners [METIS 1239799 refers]. Subject to Ministerial decisions, we may seek to use the remaining \$4.8m to increase the funding for the Enhanced Wellbeing Fund (initiative B). We will provide advice on the drawdown of the remaining funding in due course.

The seven initiatives focus on at-risk ākonga, particularly those in alternative settings.

5. Young people in alternative education settings are some of the most vulnerable in the system. These settings include Alternative Education Centres, Activity Centres, Te Kura at-risk gateways and Teen Parent Units. They are already likely to experience multiple disadvantage and face significant barriers to engage with learning. COVID-19 is likely to have deepened disadvantage for many students who were already in these settings. Because of this, the costs of support for at-risk ākonga in alternative settings are expected to be higher on average than the costs of support for students who are in school.
6. Work on the redesign of alternative education has identified a number of serious issues with the system of support for this cohort. Alternative settings can be disconnected from standard schooling, and providers can struggle to access many resources and supports that may benefit their students.
7. These issues have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. During lockdown, we heard that alternative providers were sometimes finding it difficult to access support and information provided to schools.
8. The experience has made it clear that accountable Managing Schools did not always look after the interests of those in alternative settings in addition to the other pressures they were managing through the COVID-19 alert levels. Providing dedicated funding for at-risk ākonga will signal to schools (and others) the importance of a specific focus on this disadvantaged cohort, and mitigate the risk that this cohort misses out because schools may not seek support on their behalf.

9. Five of the seven initiatives are specifically targeted at alternative settings for the reasons set out above. Two initiatives are designed to mitigate the risk of disengagement more broadly – these include support for community programmes that support rangatahi at risk of disengaging from education, and responses to support senior secondary students to attain NCEA following COVID-19 disruptions in Auckland.

Proposed initiatives

A - Support for community programmes who support rangatahi at risk of disengaging from education

10. The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) administers a contestable funding stream each financial year called the Youth Development Funding Stream (YDFS). This aims to support the wellbeing of young people aged 12 to 24 through a youth development approach (METIS 1217686 refers).
11. We will provide a temporary increase of \$11.729m during the COVID-19 recovery period to the existing YDFS contestable fund. This will provide programme funding for two years and includes \$1.262m for 4.5 FTE administrators at MYD. A detailed implementation plan, including timelines, eligibility criteria and outcomes can be found in Annex 1.

B - Enhanced Wellbeing Fund for ākonga in at-risk settings

12. There is an Urgent Response Fund (URF) for schools and early learning centres of \$50m in 2020/21 to improve attendance, and to help manage any learning, social, emotional, mental or other wellbeing needs directly related to COVID-19.¹
13. Given the vulnerable nature and need for specialist and intensive support, a dedicated response fund for at-risk ākonga will be established. Assuming a high level of disadvantage and the need for a more intensive level of response, we will use \$6.929 for an Enhanced Wellbeing Fund (EWF) for ākonga in at-risk settings, available until the end of the 2021 school year.
14. Estimating a total of 5532 student places² across at-risk settings per year, the fund will provide approximately \$550 per student place per year. Funding would be allocated based on the distribution of student places in at-risk settings in the system.
15. The EWF funding will be used flexibly to support individual or groups of students for costs relating to meeting the immediate wellbeing needs of ākonga and their whānau, and overcoming barriers to learning that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. This could include the following, which providers have told us they find difficult to cover within existing funding:
 - a. Support to access health, mental health and broader social services;
 - b. Tutoring and coaching services for students to catch up on lost learning during lockdown; and
 - c. Transport costs to help students to get to and from alternative settings, including costs associated with provider transport vehicles.

¹ This initiative is a discretionary fund to enable centre-based early learning services (kohanga reo, playcentre, kindergarten, education in care services) and State and State-integrated schools (including Māori medium kura) to fund immediate support for any learning, social and emotional, mental, behavioural, or other wellbeing issues which children and young people have directly as result of the COVID-19 lockdown or lockdown-related hardships.

² This estimates a total of approximately 5532 students in Teen Parent Units (TPUs), Alternative Education, Activity Centres and Te Kura at-risk gateways, using notional rolls for TPUs (725) and Activity Centres (260) and the total number of funded places for Alternative Education (1888). For Te Kura (2659), student numbers are based on full-time enrolments through at-risk gateways as at 31 July 2020.

16. We will include funding for 3 FTE at national office to develop monitoring and reporting frameworks across the at-risk contingency package, at a total cost of \$0.845m.
17. For accountability requirements providers will be asked to provide reports on the use of the funding and the outcomes achieved.

C - Temporary extension for ākonga who are aging out of Alternative Education

18. Students are able to stay enrolled in Alternative Education until the end of the year that they turn 16.³ The process for further extending a student's stay beyond this is outlined in the guidelines.⁴ This process is not widely used, particularly where place funding is fully allocated and there are younger students waiting to fill places.
19. Given the disruption of the lock-down period and the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, it is likely that there are a number of students who will be over 16 at the end of this year but would benefit from remaining in these settings. Additional time in Alternative Education will be important to ensure these ākonga can successfully reengage in education and achieve their learning goals, and transition on to their best next step.
20. We will provide funding for an additional 100 student places, increasing the total number of funded places from 1888 to 1988 until the end of the 2021 school year. This is approximately a quarter of the students who are currently attending AE who will age out between now and the end of 2021. The total number of additional places is based on what we know about capacity in the system, understanding that not all providers will be able to take on more students even with extra funding due to limitations around workforce and physical space.
21. While we are unable to predict with certainty how many ākonga will decide to stay on, or the age of new students, these additional places in the system will allow providers who have capacity to have added flexibility. This will mean students can stay on longer, without preventing new students from moving into Alternative Education.
22. This initiative will be a pool of \$1.769m, to be used until the end of 2021. Costings are based on current per place funding of \$11,792 per student place. We will allocate places based on a per student placement model. We will put in place separate contracts for the students included, with targeted outcome requirements to track the students' achievement, transition to employment, and other learning.

D - Resourcing to extend the Napier Student Managed Moves pilot for one year

23. Managed Moves is a new approach to supporting tamariki in Years 1-8 who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from their learning. This approach is currently being piloted in Napier, by Te Tupu Managed Moves. The pilot provides temporary out of classroom learning and wellbeing support for tamariki through positive and tailored intervention for students.

³ Activity Centres, TPUs and Te Kura are not been included in this initiative because ākonga are able to stay in these types of provision until the end of Y13.

⁴ The enrolling and managing school must make an application to the Ministry for the student to remain in Alternative Education. The Ministry evaluates applications on a case-by-case basis, and applications are signed off by the relevant Director of Education.

24. There is some early evidence to suggest that the pilot is having a positive impact on tamariki. An initial evaluation was completed, reporting on the outcomes from the first group of ten children in the trial. The evaluation found by focusing on the emotional and social wellbeing of tamariki first, tamariki were successfully reengaged in learning and experienced a positive transition back to their classroom. Learning at Te Tupu was not a substitute for the literacy and numeracy focus of school learning, rather, there was a stronger focus on belonging and identity, which was complemented by literacy and numeracy.
25. The Napier Managed Moves pilot has been directly impacted by COVID-19 school closures. This has meant significant disruption to the pilot, jeopardising its successful completion. Extending the Napier pilot by an additional year will ensure the viability of the evaluation by allowing time to run to its full term.
26. We will use \$512,000 to extend the pilot for an additional year, with a new end date of December 2022.⁵ This will also cover cost pressures in 2020/21 arising from updates to collective agreements and refinements made to the pilot during its first two terms in operation.
27. COVID-19 continues to pose a risk of causing further disruption. To mitigate this risk, we will work with the regional office and provider to put planning into place for the possibility of shifts in alert levels in the future.

E - Wrap-around transition support for ākonga moving out of alternative settings

28. Ākonga leaving at-risk provision to begin training, employment or further education would benefit from a supported transition on to their best next step. This is another area where COVID-19 has intensified an existing need for support. We will work with existing providers to improve and fund transition support. This will enable us to leverage existing capability in the system and will enable faster delivery of the support.
29. We will provide funding of \$6.174m⁶ over 18 months to providers with the capability to utilise this effectively to scale up their transition support activity. They will be able to use this funding to build increased transition support provision into their service, either by developing their own provision, or by purchasing this support from other organisations. We will identify suitable providers through an expression of interest process. This support will be in place from term 1, however we will seek to identify opportunities to have support in place before the summer holidays where possible. We will work with Oranga Tamariki to identify opportunities for collaboration with the transition support service they are rolling out for their cohort.
30. In addition, we will provide the opportunity to work with providers and other stakeholders to co-design a transition model specifically for AE/AC providers, building on evidence and experience of what works. We will use this to understand how to best develop this capability in the system and embed increased transition support for at-risk students as part of BAU practice. We will use \$0.778m⁷ to co-design how to best develop this capability in the system and embed increased transition support as part of BAU practice. This funding would provide scope for discrete co-design projects for this purpose, preferably in two different regions. This would not interfere with the 18 months support described above. This will build on the work we are currently doing with employment services in the Ministry of Social Development for disabled young people, and progresses one component of the overall redesign of at risk provision.

⁵ This includes funding to also extend the evaluation of the pilot.

⁶ Expenditure will depend on proposals from providers. Depending on these proposals, it may be used to hire additional staff, or provide other types of resources to support transition. If the total funding were used to employ additional staff, we estimate that this would provide around 30 to 50 FTE transition support workers for 18 months, depending on the salary band they are employed at.

⁷ This will fund 4 departmental FTE to conduct/support co-design and associated travel/meeting costs.

F - Professional Learning and Development (PLD) funding for alternative providers

31. Alternative providers have told us they are seeing increasing instances of anxiety and challenging behaviour in students returning to face-to-face provision. Providers need help to build staff capability to respond to student wellbeing needs.
32. The Ministry currently provides some PLD funding for Alternative Education providers, held regionally. Other alternative providers cannot access this funding, nor can they easily access PLD funding for schools. This funding has not been fully utilised, however we have concluded that this is due to lack of awareness of its availability rather than a lack of need. In response to feedback from the sector, we will pull this funding back to be managed and monitored by national office, as part of a dedicated PLD fund for at-risk providers.
33. We will use an additional \$609,000 to provide a boost to this fund during the COVID-19 recovery period. This will be available until the end of the 2021 school year.
34. The Ministry will identify and promote existing courses relating to the above priorities, and work with providers to develop existing options into bespoke courses where needed. At-risk providers will be able to apply for funding of up to \$3,000 for costs associated with PLD programmes aimed at dealing with stress, anxiety, and challenging behaviour. Costs could include travel, course costs and release time.

G - Responses to support senior secondary students to attain NCEA following COVID-19 disruptions

35. COVID-19 disruption has made it more difficult for some senior secondary students to earn the credits they need to attain an NCEA qualification this year, particularly in Auckland where students have faced additional disruption. Students are facing a range of different challenges. Some may have functionally disengaged from schooling and / or will be significantly behind and at risk of disengaging. Some will have missed teaching and learning this year and may fall short of an NCEA qualification. Other students will only need a few additional credits, without which they may struggle to gain NCEA Level 3 or University Entrance to continue with their pathway.
36. We are proposing two funded components to ensure that students who are disengaging are supported to re-engage with the education system, and that students can still reach their NCEA goals this year, particularly if they're planning to transition from school to further study or employment.
 - a. Delivering an expanded Te Kura Big Picture Programme and dual-tuition offering in Auckland; and
 - b. Temporarily lifting the cap on the Te Kura Summer School numbers to support students who need to gain less than 10 additional credits to gain an NCEA or University Entrance.

G (a) - Te Kura Big Picture Programme and dual-tuition offering

37. For students who have had significant disruption to their learning this year, who are at risk of disengaging, or who have already disengaged, we will look to build on the Big Picture Programme and dual enrolment offering to deliver an expanded service offering by the start of Term 4, at a total cost of \$2.2m. This would include:
 - a. The establishment of 'pop-up' sites for wrap-around educational support, to ensure students have access to key face-to-face learning and support;
 - b. Learning opportunities for students to build on what they know already and fill gaps in their learning, including foundational skills, important National Curriculum learning, and specialised education opportunities as appropriate;

- c. Hiring additional teachers to ensure a low teacher-student ratio (Te Kura is scheduled to put out an EOI for teachers in the coming weeks, as a part of their business as usual);
 - d. Working with Iwi and providers with specialised Māori and Pacific capabilities to ensure sound Culturally Responsive and Relational Pedagogy;
 - e. Activating local networks of providers (e.g., TEOs) to partner with them to provide a fuller range of pathways and to support transitions;
 - f. An Individual Learning Plan for each student, that acknowledges their prior learning and their next steps, including transition plans to full time education (secondary or, if appropriate tertiary) or meaningful employment in 2021;
 - g. Pastoral support and mentoring; and
 - h. Transport to the sites, and access to digital devices as required.
38. We anticipate that students would be involved in this programme up to five days a week, and that this would focus on a mixture of learning and wellbeing support, as most appropriate to the student. There would be flexibility built in so that students working part-time are still able to engage.
39. To identify students who would best benefit from participating in this programme, we will work with Iwi, churches, schools, and Whānau Ora. We would also work with youth workers in the Auckland region, MSD, and other government agencies to ensure a joined up approach, and that the students most in need of support are accurately identified. We have costed \$200,000 in funding to support this cross-agency/stakeholder work.
40. We estimate that up to 400 students would likely participate in this programme from October to mid-January (0.25 EFTS). We anticipate that funding this for 400 students will cost up to \$2 million. Given the services required are somewhat bespoke to the Auckland context, we will work with Te Kura to agree the specific package of services, including potential sub-contracting arrangements with specialist teachers, other providers (e.g., TEOs), transport operators, and sites as required.
41. We will work with Auckland schools, the attendance service, Iwi, churches, Whānau Ora, and other community groups and other government agencies in the next two to three weeks to ascertain how many students might participate.
42. A risk that we will need to manage is supporting students who benefit from this approach in the long-term, as students who remain enrolled may put pressure on Te Kura's capacity, including to enrol new students, in 2021. We will discuss this with Te Kura in advance and agree a plan to manage how we wrap up this short-term support.

G (b) - Te Kura Summer School

43. For students who only need a few additional credits (up to 10 credits) to gain an NCEA or University Entrance and continue with their planned pathway, we recommend expanding the Summer School (Option C). To do this, we would need to temporarily lift the cap on the number of students (currently limited to 1,000) through amending the Te Kura Enrolment and Dual Tuition Policy.
44. A student enrolled in two subjects over the summer period (two months) would generate 0.03 EFTS, equating to around \$280 in funding. We are proposing providing additional short-term funding of \$500,000. This will add an additional 120 EFTS (a 45% increase on the 2019/20 year), allowing the equivalent of 4,000 additional students to be enrolled in two subjects for two months.

45. Currently, Te Kura's Summer School is predominantly used by students in Decile 8-10 schools. This also has the potential to support students who come from schools that don't have the capability or resourcing to deliver their own additional tuition programmes e.g. students from low decile schools who aspire to go to University. Without this option, these students are at risk of not proceeding with their planned pathway. We would recommend deliberately marketing Te Kura's Summer School option at lower decile schools if you choose to lift the cap on Summer School places.

Recommended approach

46. The Minister of Education and Associate Minister of Education, Hon Tracey Martin, have agreed to the proposed initiatives A to F (METIS 1235061 refers). We are also recommending an additional initiative to support senior secondary students to attain NCEA following COVID-19 disruptions (G). This proposal has been urgently developed following the additional disruption from Auckland's recent Alert Level 3 status.
47. We are now seeking your agreement to draw down from the contingency to fund these initiatives for the amounts in the table below. This will ensure that we are able to support the current cohort of at-risk students through the next two years of the COVID-19 recovery.

Initiatives (\$m)	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Support for community programmes supporting rangatahi at risk of disengaging					
MYD Community Fund	11.128	0.601	-	-	11.729
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Enhanced Wellbeing Fund	4.750	2.179	-	-	6.929
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Additional student place funding	1.179	0.590	-	-	1.769
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Cost pressures, one year extension	0.105	0.217	0.190	-	0.512
Wraparound transition support for ākonga moving out of at-risk settings					
Transition support	2.646	4.306	-	-	6.952
Professional Learning and Development funding for alternative providers					
At-risk provider PLD fund	0.406	0.203	-	-	0.609
NCEA support					
Te Kura Big Picture programme	2.200	-	-	-	2.200
Te Kura summer school	0.500	-	-	-	0.500
Total	22.914	8.096	0.190	-	31.200

48. These initiatives will impact the following appropriations:
- Partnering for Youth Development MCA under Vote Social Development (A)
 - Outcomes for Target Student Groups (B, C, D, E (delivery) and F)
 - Oversight of the Education System MCA (E evaluation)
 - Primary and Secondary Education MCA (G).

Next steps

49. We will complete additional work on a further initiative to maintain internet connectivity for learners [METIS 1239799 refers]. We will provide advice on this in due course.
50. Subject to your approval, we will develop a communications plan for the initiatives and distribute the funding through contract variations or departmental expenditure. We will be aligning the operation of the Enhanced Wellbeing Fund (B above) with the existing URF fund.

Treasury consultation

51. We have provided Treasury with detailed implementation plans for the initiatives in this paper and they have indicated they support the proposals. f

Annexes

- Annex 1: Support for community programmes who support rangatahi at risk of disengaging from education – implementation plan

Annex 1: Support for community programmes who support rangatahi at risk of disengaging from education – implementation plan

Building resilience to achieve better education outcomes for ākonga Community Fund

Purpose

To support and empower ākonga⁸ (aged 12 to 21 years) in need of additional support to stay engaged in their education journey due to the impact of COVID-19, through community-based youth development programmes that are delivered outside of traditional education settings (e.g. schools).

Target group

Ākonga (aged 12 to 21 years) who:

- have had their learning impacted as a result of COVID-19 and Alert Level changes in Aotearoa New Zealand.⁹, and/or
- are at risk of disengaging from their education.

In line with the Government's Youth Plan, the fund will also have a particular focus on the following cohorts:

- Rangatahi Māori
- Pacific young people
- Rainbow young people
- Disabled young people.

Criteria

Who is eligible to apply?

Applications will be sought from community providers who:

- are legally recognised Aotearoa New Zealand-based organisations, with the appropriate level of Social Service Accreditation prior to being contracted
- have a proven history of local and/or regional programme delivery to at risk communities
- are skilled at connecting with disengaged ākonga and their whānau and/or ākonga at risk of disengaging and their whānau, to ensure ākonga have holistic and coordinated support on their education and wellbeing journey for up to two years.
- can identify needs of local young people who are at risk of disengaging from education, since the COVID-19 alert level lockdown.

Collaborative applications from community and education providers/practitioners are encouraged to ensure ākonga and their whānau build positive relationships with community and education providers, receive the right information, and support to help them on their education journey.

What programmes will be funded?

Application categories

- A legal entity (i.e. provider) who applies to deliver a programme in one region will be considered in the **local/region programme category**.

⁸ Ākonga is used to mean student or students in this context.

⁹ Refer to the Youth Plan 2020-2022: Turning Voice into Action – Rebuilding and Recovering, and Webb, S, Kingstone S, Richardson E, Flett J. Rapid Evidence and Policy Brief: COVID-19 Youth Recovery Response 2020-2022. 2020. Wellington: Te Hīringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency, regarding the impacts of COVID-19 on rangatahi.

- A legal entity (i.e. provider) who applies to deliver a programme in two regions or more (including collaborative proposals) will be considered in a **national programme category**.

Providers can only submit one proposal for one of the above categories. Collaborative proposals must be led by one provider, adhering to the above conditions.

Programmes (including programme delivery) must be no less than ten weeks and must satisfy 1 to 4 below:

- Include **holistic support to ākonga** through building self-esteem, belonging and identity, mental wellbeing and healthy relationships all of which support young people to engage in their education. For example,
 - support young people who have shown increases in anxiety, mental distress, verbal and/or physically aggressive and/or challenging (violent, truant or anti-social) behaviour since lockdown, and/or
 - develop pathways to re-enter education for young people who have disengaged since lockdown due to high levels of anxiety.
- Work with **ākonga and their whānau, the wider community and education providers** (e.g. schools, alternative education, education training providers, kura) to identify additional engagement barriers for individual ākonga, and must build the following protective factors:
 - quality relationships (ākonga engaged for at least ten weeks) and/or
 - support young people to develop/learn skills and experience success with aspirational goals and/or
 - strengthen ākonga community connections, mana and sense of identity and/or
 - improve supports that safeguard and promote ākonga wellbeing, in some cases reflecting a Maori world view of wellbeing and responding to the barriers to wellbeing experienced by ākonga.
- Support ākonga through a **strengths-based youth development approach** to stay in education and/or support transitions to further training or employment to leverage off other initiatives that support the All of Government recovery response to COVID-19, and
- **Must commence** either by Term 4 of the 2020 academic year (if funded through closed/selective procurement) or by Term 1 of the 2021 academic year (if funded through the contestable open tender).

Due consideration will be given to programmes that are:

- readily available, or able to start operating or expand quickly to ensure that ākonga receive the support as soon as possible to meet immediate demand; and/or
- have the ability to connect to other government funded initiatives to support ākonga (aged 16 to 21 years) to transition to further training and or employment; and/or
- innovative in its approach to meet local needs of ākonga who are engaged or at risk of disengaging as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (for example, collaborative partnerships, programme design and delivery, new programme or component meets an existing gap and need within the community etc)
- being delivered in areas where ākonga who are disengaged and/or ākonga at risk of disengaging are high as a result of the impact of COVID-19, as identified by Ministry of Education
- targeted at rangatahi Māori, Pacific young people, Rainbow young people and disabled young people.

The areas identified above will be included in the assessment criteria for applications.

Examples of existing programmes that could be scaled up to commence in Term 4 of the 2020 academic year

The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) administers a contestable funding stream each financial year - the Youth Development Funding Stream (YDFS). YDFS supports diverse community-based providers to deliver outside of school youth development initiatives, ranging from national programmes like the University of Otago Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival and the *Nga Kapa Haka Kura Tuarua o*

Aotearoa, to targeted programmes such as Sistema Aotearoa in South Auckland, rangatahi and whānau focused mentoring in Porirua and a community-based youth development leadership and mentoring programme for rangatahi aged 13+ in Christchurch.

These programmes include voluntary based activities that take place outside of school hours in the local community. Youth development programmes are designed to develop strong connections, cultural identity, identifying opportunities for learning, growing leadership and giving back to others. Programmes also focus on the essential skills required to support rangatahi to make a healthy transition into adulthood. Examples of potential programmes include:

- Junior and Senior Clubs Program, Tane and Wahine.
- Home visits and whanau engagement
- Camps and weekend events
- After School Programme for rangatahi transitioning into high school.

Funding

The temporary increase of \$10.467m to the existing YDFS contestable fund will have a narrower focus, targeting specifically rangatahi at risk of disengaging from education due to the impact of COVID-19.

Depending on the scale and reach of each programme, a range of 50% to 100% of programme costs will be considered.

All providers will be required to declare other government funding they receive for similar programmes and/or similar cohorts and provide information on how the proposed programme will differ. This could include scaling up the initiative to include a wider cohort/whānau and communities/other geographical locations where the initiative can be undertaken safely during different COVID-19 Alert Levels, through the development of online platforms or other innovative approaches.

Performance measures

Year on year MYD funded youth development initiatives successfully meet key performance measures including young people reporting improvements in their wellbeing and/or preparedness for the future work environment. We will leverage off what we know works to ensure the additional funding targeting education outcomes is clear.

The focus for younger participants (aged 12-15 years) will be on increasing their confidence in their learning environments; for older participants (aged 16-21 years) it will be on having a clear plan and pathway for their futures.

Programmes will be measured through participant surveys (pre and post) and community provider feedback. Providers will be required to survey participants at the beginning of the programme and again at the end. The survey will measure how participant's attitudes toward their education and wellbeing indicators have changed during their time in the programme.

Outcomes

The measure of success for ākonga will be different and dependent on the level of support needed, their engagement in the programme, and their aspirations.

Overall, programmes supported by this fund will be measured against the following outcomes:

1. Ākonga will have an increased level of engagement in their learning and aspiration for their future or will have transitioned to further training or employment.
2. Ākonga will have stronger connections with community (e.g. youth and support services).

Implementation timeline (indicative)

NOTE: The timeframes below are indicative only. Final timeframes will be subject to approval for a drawdown from the Contingency Fund.

Timeframe (approx.)	Event
September 2020	Title of fund, funding criteria, and implementation plan agreed and confirmed by Ministry of Education and MYD for <i>Building resilience to achieve better education outcomes for ākonga Community Fund</i> .
	Confirmation regarding draw down from Contingency Fund
	Seek procurement approval as per MSD procurement policies and processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 70% of the Fund will be contestable open tender • Approx. 30% of the Fund will be for closed/selective procurement to enable programmes to be in place by Term 4 of the 2020 academic year
October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Tender via Government Electronic Tendering System (GETS) • Closed/Selective Procurement to ensure some funded programmes can commence in Term 4
12 October 2020	Term 4 commences
November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Assessment Panel (Ministry of Youth Development – Te Manatū Whakahiato Taiohi, Ministry of Social Development – Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora and Ministry of Education) – early November • Confirm successful applicants and commence negotiations for two-year contracts (to cover the 2021 and 2022 academic years) – late-November.
Post-November 2020	Contract management processes in place.
February/March 2021	Second open tender funding round will be undertaken for uncommitted funding. The 2021 funding round will focus on initiatives that can be implemented/commence in Term 2 of the 2021 school year. The conditions and criteria used for the previous round will also apply here.

Potential risks and mitigation strategies

Potential risks	Proposed mitigation strategies
National community providers versus local/regional community providers and the risk that there will be a perceived disadvantage for smaller community providers.	We will create separate categories to ensure a more equal/equitable spread and assessment of applications.
Innovative proposals and/or new community providers may be disadvantaged if they don't have a proven history of programme delivery.	We intend to include an innovative approach criterion as part of the assessment criteria to ensure new innovative programmes aren't excluded. We will also assess applications on a case by case basis.
Lack of funded programmes in place to meet demand	As noted above, the split funding allocation will enable dual approach to ensure that services can commence as soon as possible.

The Fund is undersubscribed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will utilise Ministry of Education and MYD extensive networks to ensure regular communications for the Fund • We have factored into the implementation plan a second open tender funding round in 2021 for any uncommitted funds.
Targeted groups are under represented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on these groups are included in the assessment criteria and will be weighted appropriately • We will utilise existing channels and networks across Ministry of Education, MYD, Te Puni Kokiri, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Pacific Peoples to get information out to communities and the wider sector.