



Briefing Note: Address to Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour Lead School Forum on 17 August 2021

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	9 August 2021	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1266703
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	Yes	Round Robin:	No

Purpose

This briefing note supports your attendance and opening address at the Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) Lead School Forum on 17 August 2021 at the James Cook Hotel from 9.00 to 10.15 am. It provides information about the forum and participants, current issues for the RTLB service, a run sheet for your address, draft talking points and questions and answers.

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Agree / Disagree

Summary

- Your participation includes being present for the mihi to open the forum from 9.00 to 9.30 am. You will make your address from 9.30 to 9.50 am, followed by questions and answers with forum participants from 9.50 to 10.15 am.
- The attached speaking notes and questions and answers focus on the contribution of the RTLB service, current achievements and system priorities with a focus on realising the full potential of the service.



Susan Howan
Associate Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

9/8/21



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

15.08/2021

Background

1. The RTLB service provides itinerant specialist teachers to respond to learning and behaviour needs across the schooling network in Years 0-10. The total RTLB service investment in 2020 was \$96.6 million¹ and the 2021 workforce is just under 1000 FTTE RTLB and 40 cluster managers.
2. RTLB lead schools value and are proud of their close links to the schools they serve and their strengths-based, inclusive and culturally responsive ways of working. RTLB and the Ministry have a continued focus on system improvement and are committed to working together within the Learning Support Delivery Model, the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025 and He Pikorua (the shared practice framework for RTLB and Ministry specialists).
3. In a previous Education Report and Briefing Note provided to you in May and July 2021 we have informed you about the RTLB service and the process underway to renew the RTLB Funding Agreement including a copy of the final draft agreement from 2022 (Metis 1256639 and 1264892).
4. You recently met with the RTLB Executive on 1 July and 5 August 2021 and this briefing includes some of the topics discussed at those meetings.

The RTLB Lead School Forum

5. The forum is a two-day event and will be held on level 16 of the James Cook Hotel, 147 The Terrace, Wellington. The annual forum is a key opportunity for the Ministry and cluster leaders to come together, share views and future direction, and strengthen relationships and ways of working in partnership within the sector. Due to COVID-19 the forum was not held last year.
6. Your office has advised you will arrive at the forum at 9.00 am and leave at 10.15 am on 17 August. From 9.00 to 9.30 am you will be present for the mihi to open the forum. You will make an opening address from 9.30 to 9.50 am and have time for questions from 9.50 to 10.15 am.
7. The 2021 forum whakatauki is *Hui te mārama hei purapura ora: Working together to nurture and support the growth and wellbeing of our mokopuna*. This comes from He Pikorua.
8. You will be speaking to an audience of approximately 100 people. This will include 40 RTLB cluster managers, 40 lead school principals and 20 Ministry representatives including 10 regional Managers Learning Support, and National Office representatives.

Issues for RTLB Lead Schools

9. As they work locally to implement He Pikorua, RTLB are working closely with Ministry Learning Support teams to align systems and processes. The RTLB service has identified the need for them to have stronger connections with the Ministry's Early Intervention and Behaviour Services.
10. Questions about possible future changes to the RTLB service are frequently raised by RTLB, particularly concerns that RTLB might become Ministry employees in the future rather than continuing as a specialist teacher workforce employed in lead schools. As previously advised, RTLB's do not support the recommendation made by NZEI in June

¹ \$96.5 million is exclusive of GST and does not include the year 11+ grant for secondary schools previously distributed by the RTLB service.

2021 to merge RTLB and Ministry Learning Support services into a single service within Te Mahau (Education Service Agency). NB. the recommendation to merge RTLB and Ministry Learning support services was made in the Pūaotanga report, which was independent (not NZEI)

11. Clusters also note changing trends in the type of requests for support they receive and the challenges of responding to these needs. Changing trends include:
 - o more requests related to anxiety and mental health or wellbeing
 - o frequency and severity of behaviour needs
 - o increasing prevalence of some types of need including Autism Spectrum Disorder and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
 - o age of referral with more requests for support for younger ākonga.
12. Linked to the increase in referrals, some RTLB also report difficulty in accessing Ministry Learning Support Behaviour Services in a timely way including access to Te Kahu Tōi Intensive Wraparound Service. This places pressure on the RTLB service and results in concerns about RTLB managing complexity of need that may sit outside of their level of skill and experience as specialist teachers.
13. Balancing responsiveness, workloads and caseloads is also a common challenge for clusters. Cluster managers report on the tensions they face as they work to balance responsiveness to the requests for support received, individual RTLB workloads, and other demands and opportunities such as new projects and pilots and commitments to build teacher capability such as the delivery of the Incredible Years Teacher programmes.
14. The ongoing impact of numbers of RTLB in training at any point in time is another workload related theme. There are typically 20% of the total workforce in training at any one time (200 RTLB) across years one and two of the post graduate programme with approximately one day per week dedicated to study leave. While this builds service capability, it also impacts on capacity particularly in clusters with higher numbers enrolled in training.
15. Staffing and funding issues are raised by Lead Schools. While RTLB staffing levels are linked to school population in Years 1-10 each year, decisions about where the new FTTE positions are located are made nationally taking into account growth and other factors. This means that some clusters feel their staffing should have increased more than it has and other clusters without population growth feel their staffing should increase because of increasing service demand.
16. We have initiated some exploratory work with the RTLB Executive on cluster size, geographic spread and alignment with Ministry regions and/or Kāhui Ako. For example, one of the largest clusters is based at Freyberg High School which employs 42 RTLB FTTE. Their large mixed rural and urban cluster spans two Ministry regions adding complexity for the Cluster Manager and Lead School.
17. The Ministry also works actively with the RTLB Executive on a range of issues including property related matters and property occupancy agreements.

Proactive Release

18. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Annexes

Annex 1:	Run sheet for Minister's address
Annex 2:	Draft speaking points
Annex 3	Questions and answers

Proactively Released

Annex 1: Run Sheet for Minister Tinetti's address at the RTLB Lead School Forum at the James Cook Hotel on 17 August

Time	Activity
8.55am	On arrival at the James Cook Hotel take the lift to Level 16. You will be met on level 16 and seated for the forum opening.
9.00-9.30am	Hakopa Ashdown from the Ministry will open the forum with a mihi to welcome you and guests. Dr David Wales will also welcome forum participants.
	John Bangma the RTLB Executive Chair will introduce you
9.30-9.50am	Your opening address for the forum
9.50-10.15am	Question and answer session
10.15am	John Bangma will thank you for your address and there will be a waiata