



Briefing Note: Zoom meeting with Conor Twyford (NZEI) and representatives of Education For All, 3 March

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	25 February 2022	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1281542
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to provide you with information on the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) to support your Zoom meeting with Education for All (EFA) on 3 March.

You have requested information on ORS criteria, process and access, especially for Māori and Pacific students.

The meeting will be hosted by Conor Twyford (NZEI) and representatives from the Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA) Rachel Noble and Paul Brown, the IHC, Trish Grant, and Rebekah Corlett (MNZM).

Proactive Release

a **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**



Dr David Wales
Poutohu Matua Te Hāpai Ō Rāngai
Te Pae Aronui

25/02/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

26/02/2022

Background

1. The Zoom meeting has been requested by Education For All (EFA) to discuss the High Needs Review and to establish an ongoing relationship with them.
2. The meeting follows your attendance and address at the NZEI and EFA on-line forum – *Oho Ako – mokopuna as rights holder forum* on 1 March. (Metis 1281843 refers)
3. Detailed information on Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) criteria, process and accessibility relating to Māori and Pacific students is annexed.
4. At the meeting EFA wish to discuss their two suggestions to amend ORS, in the context of the High Needs Review. We have provided you information to support your conversation if these matters are raised.
5. **If you are asked about emerging understandings or proposed changes to ORS as a result of the Review**, we suggest you say that the current service will remain in place until the Review is completed toward the end of this year (2022), and recommended options and solutions for change are determined. The Ministry is not yet in a position to comment on the direction of change for ORS.

Specific Suggestion 1 (“Ask 1” in the meeting outline)

- *Expand the ORS criteria so that more children can access it and it is not a competition.*
6. The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) was established in 1998 with criteria agreed by government and the sector. The ORS was designed for approximately 1% of the school population who have the highest ongoing levels of need for specialist support. Currently as at 1 February 2022, including those ākonga verified but not enrolled, 1.29 % of the ākonga are supported by the ORS.
 7. The provision of learning support across the education system is a tiered approach, with the ORS being the highest level of support available. The ORS criteria are very specific and designed to identify those students with the highest levels of need who need ongoing specialist support
 8. Ākonga are eligible for ORS when they meet 1 or more of the 9 criteria for high or very high needs, in the areas of learning, hearing, vision, physical, language and social communication or have a combined moderate need.
 9. Written applications can be submitted by educators and specialists at any time during a student’s schooling, from 4 years 8 months of age, and support can be in place until the end of the year in which a student turns 21. ORS is not a contestable process. All ākonga who are eligible have been supported.
 10. Applications are considered against the ORS criteria by a panel of specialists (including psychologists, speech language therapists, early intervention teachers, physio and occupational therapists and specialist teachers) as verifiers, who consider each application independently, before entering into a discussion to reach a unanimous decision.
 11. Verifiers want to ensure that all students who meet the criteria are verified into the fund and often seek further information from whānau and the team supporting the child, or may complete an observation in the education setting, to provide further clarification. All unsuccessful applications are advised of a review process.

12. The Assurance and Eligibility team that manages the ORS process continually reviews the application process to ensure accessibility of ORS to ākonga with the most complex needs. To support educators to provide robust applications, fact sheets and a guide have been developed, which are available online. Workshops are also available to groups of educators, including Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCos), and specialists to upskill and support them to provide the key information needed for the current process.

Specific suggestions 2 (“Ask 2” in the meeting outline).

- *Simplify the ORS process so that it is more accessible, especially for Māori and Pacific.*
13. Data relating to the ORS process is regularly reviewed especially ORS support for Pacific and Māori ākonga. A recent comparison with whole school population data, available through Education Counts, shows that the percentage of both Māori and Pacific ākonga supported in the ORS are at a slightly higher percentage of the school population enrolled. School and Early Childhood ORS applications are available in Te Reo, and we are receiving a small but increasing number of these.

Annexes

Annex 1: ORS Criteria and Process

Annex 2: Accessibility of ORS especially for Māori and Pacific ākonga

Annex 1: ORS Criteria and Process

Ākonga must meet the 1 or more of the 9 criteria for high or very high needs, in order to be eligible for the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS).

Need Area	Very High need level	High need level
Learning	Criterion 1	Criterion 5
Hearing	Criterion 2.1 and 2.2	Criterion 6.1
Vision	Criterion 2.3	Criterion 6.2
Physical	Criterion 3	Criterion 7
Language use and appropriate social communication	Criterion 4	Criterion 8
Combined moderate needs		Criterion 9

ORS Process

Verifiers consider the information in an ORS application against the ORS criteria, applying them consistently regardless of where the child is to attend or attends school.

The verification process usually takes 15 working days but can be longer if the verifiers request more information to help them make a decision, or at peak period times.

Three verifiers independently consider each application.

Each verifier records their independent decision. The three verifiers then discuss the application and make a unanimous decision.

The verifiers record the consensus decision on a national database and advise the educator and the parents/whānau or caregiver of the outcome of their application in writing.

If the verifiers don't have enough information to reach a decision, they ask the educator to provide more information.

When the information is received the decision process is repeated with each verifier independently considering the additional information.

If the three verifiers are unable to reach an agreement, the application is considered independently by the full panel of available verifiers.

Annex 2: Accessibility of ORS especially for Māori and Pacific ākonga

ORS supports Māori and Pacific ākonga and the ORS verified ākonga are proportionate to the school population as detailed below.

Source		
MOE ORS data	ORS verified and enrolled at school as at 1 July 21	10,443
Education Counts	School population as at 1 July 21	820,977*
Education Counts	School population Māori as at 1 July 21	204,814
Education Counts	School population Pacific as at 1 July 21	81,177
Education Counts	Number of Māori ORS verified ākonga as at 1 July 21	2,739
Education Counts	Number of Pacific ORS verified ākonga as at 1 July 21	1,224
	Percentage Māori of school population as at 1 July 21	24.95%
	Percentage Pacific of school population as at 1 July 21	9.89%
	Percentage of ORS verified Māori ākonga as at 1 July 21	26.23%
	Percentage of ORS verified Pacific ākonga as at 1 July 21	11.72%

(*Excluding International fee paying students)