



Briefing Note: Update on Ongoing Resourcing Scheme COVID-19 Response Fund

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	13 May 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Purpose of Briefing

This briefing updates you on the distribution of the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) Covid-19 Response Fund (Response Fund). It also provides:

- Analysis of the distribution of funding to date; and
- An update on the remainder of the fund to be allocated.

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Agree Disagree

Summary

- The ORS Covid-19 Response Fund provides \$31 million in 2020/21 to support ORS verified children and young people's attendance and engagement with learning and wellbeing following the COVID-19 lockdowns. Over \$24 million of the Response Fund has been distributed to date.


Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

13/5/2021



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

16/05/2021

Background

1. The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) provides support for students with the highest ongoing levels of need for specialist support. The scheme enables students to attend school and participate alongside other students. Approximately 10,281 students (1.2% of the school population) are supported by ORS.
2. ORS provides services and support, including:
 - specialists such as speech-language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, advisers on deaf children, special education advisors, orientation and mobility instructors and others
 - additional or specialist teachers who coordinate the student's learning programme with the class teacher
 - funding for teacher aides to support the student's learning programme in the classroom and to include the student in class programmes and activities
 - consumables – small items such as computer software, extra-size pens and pen grips, disposable gloves, Braille machine paper, laminating pouches, or CDs and DVDs.
3. Approximately two thirds (66%) of all New Zealand schools currently have one or more students enrolled who are supported through ORS. ORS is managed at a regional level by the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) and by 56 delegated schools known as fundholders. The table below shows the number and percentage of students managed by the Ministry and fundholder schools.

Table 1: Number of students who are ORS verified broken down by Ministry and fundholder schools¹

	Number of students	Percentage of students
Ministry of Education	5,698	55%
Fundholder schools	4,583	45%
Total	10,281	100%

ORS COVID-19 Response Fund

4. Through Budget 20 two initiatives provided additional funding to increase teacher aide support for students who are ORS verified:
 - a Wave 2 COVID-19 response bid of \$144.222 million over four years, \$12.004 million of which from year one went to the ORS COVID-19 Response Fund, and;
 - an ORS cost pressure bid of \$19.013 million, for the current year only (2020/21).
5. Together these initiatives fund an average, ongoing increase of three additional teacher aide hours per week for students who are ORS verified. In addition, \$31.017 million has been made available in the 2020/21 year for additional teacher aide hours. A decision was made to create a response fund with this time-limited funding to support ORS verified students' attendance, engagement with learning and wellbeing following the COVID-19 lockdowns.
6. The Response Fund has been allocated in two phases. In phase one, 60 percent of the available funding (\$18.6 million) was distributed to all schools with students who are ORS verified through a lump sum payment in the 1 October 2020 operational grant funding payment, to provide additional teacher aide hours. This allowed schools to

¹ Data in table is as at 12 May 2021

respond to students' immediate COVID-related needs in returning to school and re-establishing learning routines.

7. For phase two (starting November 2020), the remaining 40 percent (\$12.4 million) of the fund is being allocated based on plans submitted by individual schools or clusters of schools to support the emerging or ongoing COVID-related needs of ORS verified students. Schools can opt into phase two to seek additional teacher aide support in Terms 1 and 2 of the 2021 school year. This includes support for transitions including the transition back to students' usual funded teacher aide hours after 30 June 2021.
8. Through the Learning Support Delivery Model (LSDM) we have been working in new ways to tailor support to meet the needs of individual and groups of students. The Response Fund provided an opportunity to encourage schools to think differently and creatively about how they use teacher aide capabilities to support their ORS verified students in response to COVID-19, which may influence ongoing practices.
9. Phase two funding has been allocated to regions based on the number of students who are ORS verified. The Ministry's regional teams work with schools to co-construct a plan tailored to the needs of their students. Plans are approved by the Director of Education and funding is allocated to support implementation.
10. Each region has the flexibility to determine how the co-construction process works. Regions have facilitated discussions and workshops to identify needs, to brainstorm ideas for projects and innovative practices and to provide opportunities for schools to work together on cluster or individual plans.

Key ORS COVID-19 Response Fund metrics to 30 April 2021

11. Annex 1 provides a national summary of the allocation of funding to 30 April 2021. The summary includes an overview of phases one and two of the fund.

Phase one

12. In phase one, 10,155 students who are ORS verified in 1668 schools received support from this fund. The \$18.6 million allocation provided a total of 738,524 additional teacher aide hours.
13. School allocations were based on the total number of enrolled students who are ORS verified. The table below shows the breakdown of additional teacher aide hours per student used for the school calculation process.

Table 2: Breakdown of phase one per-student allocation of additional teacher aide hours

Number of additional teacher aide hours	Region	Fundholder / Ministry fundholder
96 hours per student	Auckland	Ministry fundholder
73 hours per student	Auckland	Fundholder schools
69 hours per student	All other regions	Ministry fundholder and fundholder schools

14. At the time of the phase one calculation the Auckland region had entered their second lockdown. To account for this added pressure, Auckland schools where the Ministry is the ORS fundholder received a greater number of additional hours per student. These schools tend to have lower numbers of students who are ORS verified, therefore have less flexibility and fewer economies of scale, and were likely to need more support.

Phase two

15. For phase two, a total of 818 plans have been submitted by schools since the process started in November 2020.
16. Ministry regional offices have approved 592 plans totalling \$5.4 million. This is equivalent to 213,184 teacher aide hours. Currently 226 plans are still under consideration.
17. Together these 592 plans support 4,202 students in 540 schools at an average cost of \$1,280 per student. This means each student has received an additional 51 teacher aide hours on average.
18. Of 4,202 students who have received support in phase two, 30% are Māori and 13% are Pacific (as reported by the schools in their applications).

9(2)(f)(iv)

Next Steps

20. We will continue to update you fortnightly in the EWU on key metrics for the Response Fund and will provide a wrap up report in July 2021.

Proactive Release

21. 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: National summary of ORS Covid-19 Response Fund (Phase one and phase two)