



Briefing Note: Professional Learning Development supports for the Highest Needs Review

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	28 October 2022	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1298562
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

To provide you with information and advice on what Professional Learning Development (PLD) supports could be packaged up as part of an announcement you make on the Highest Needs Review (the Review).

Summary

- At the agency meeting on 17 October 2022, we discussed the Information Update on Ministry considerations for ITE awareness and improvements for educating new teachers on LS, and immediate actions around LS PLD [Metis 1297356 refers]. This listed several PLD supports currently available.
- You asked for further information and advice on PLD that is being provided within baseline that could be packaged up and included as a part of an announcement for the Review. We have packaged the most relevant PLD, and those that support the outcome of the Review, for your consideration.

Proactive Release

- agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing once it has been considered by you, the Cabinet paper on the Highest Needs Review has been publicly released, and you have made an announcement on this matter.

Agree Disagree.



Susan Howan
Associate Deputy Secretary

28/10/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

30 /10/ 2022

Proactively Released

Background

1. At the agency meeting on 17 October 2022, we discussed the Information Update on Ministry considerations for ITE awareness and improvements for educating new teachers on Learning Support, and immediate actions around Learning Support Professional Learning and Development (PLD) [Metis 1297356 refers]. This information update listed several PLD supports currently available.
2. You asked for further information and advice on these PLD programmes and how they could be packaged up and included as a part of an announcement for the Review. We have considered what could be possible, and our advice is outlined below.

PLD programmes to include in the Review's announcement

3. From the Information Update, we recommend the following PLD programmes are included in an announcement because they most closely link to the outcomes the Review is aiming to achieve.
4. It is important to note that these PLD programmes will not resolve all the issues outlined in the Review relating to the need to ensure a confident and capable workforce. They will also not assist the sector in being able to implement the changes required to effectively achieve the mixed model approach. However, they do set a strong foundation for the Review to build on. The following PLD will enable them to understand what is needed to support the student to thrive. Annex One provides additional detail on the PLD programmes outlined.

PLD to enable inclusive practices

5. The Review has highlighted those learners with the highest need and their family/whānau are still being excluded from school or feel like they are not being accepted or supported to engage in learning. The mixed model approach aims to shift long held attitudes and behaviours about learning support needs across all levels of the education system and to develop the capabilities of the adults around the learner.
6. The PLD outlined below begins to support teachers and school staff in the sector to build on their current skills and competencies to become more confident in being inclusive of learners with specific additional learning needs:
 - a. Planning for diversity through inclusive design: belonging and inclusion for all
 - b. Tilting the seesaw for Learning Support Coordinators
 - c. Learning Support Network

PLD to help adults be more responsive to learners with high needs

7. The Review has acknowledged that not enough teachers and school staff feel confident supporting students with the highest needs within the classroom. The mixed model approach aims to ensure educators have access to the support they need when they need it, so they are confident in planning and delivering an inclusive curriculum.
8. The following PLD aims to support and build capability of support staff and teachers:
 - a. Strengthen New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL)
 - b. Teacher aide professional learning and development fund
 - c. Minimising the use of physical restraint

Sector awareness of PLD programmes outlined

9. The sector already has some level of awareness of the above PL. An announcement that includes PLD will increase awareness and uptake of them and understanding on their contribution to more inclusive education practices.
10. These PLD programmes are being implemented within baseline. If you want to expand, increase capacity, and further promote any current PLD, or develop new PLD, it will require additional or repurposed funding.

Further work to promote and encourage uptake of PLD

11. The Review has made it clear that significant long-term changes are needed to realise the ideal state of learning support delivery. The changes will require time to develop and implement effectively, with significant ongoing new investment.
12. While the mixed model approach for change is being designed and developed, we will be actively encouraging those who work with students with high needs to take up the range of PLD the Ministry has made available.
13. We will specifically support our Curriculum Leads, Service Managers and Education Advisors to identify and help broker access to the PLD services and opportunities that can assist schools to respond to the needs of their high needs learners.
14. The PLD website hosts information on PLD opportunities to strengthen teaching practice and educational leadership. The sector can also easily access it to find out more information on PLD that interests them, including how to apply for programmes and who to contact. We will update this as new PLD opportunities become available.
15. We will explore other collateral that could be developed to help promote available PLD, which Ministry staff can use when they interact with the sector. The Ministry can also support ERO reviewers to alert appropriate PLD to schools when they engage with them and identify a PLD need. We will work with ERO to understand what support would be useful.
16. The Ministry will also be promoting any new resources, modules, webinars and programmes through its other channels and networks to increase uptake of PLD. These include the Te Poutāhū | The Curriculum Centre regular newsletter, School Bulletin, Education Gazette, the Ministry's social media channels, school leaders, Education sector associations and other Ministry websites.

Key Risks and Benefits

17. Most of the PLD we have mentioned is already available. There is a risk of looking like we are re-announcing PLD that the sector knows about and their additional PLD needs are not being considered. If an announcement includes existing PLD, it would be worth emphasising the collective contribution that increased uptake can make to lifting the overall confidence of the teacher workforce, which has been highlighted in the Review.
18. There is limited funding for some PLD, such as the Teacher Aide Professional Learning and Development Fund. Increasing awareness and uptake could mean the programmes are oversubscribed. Communication on these should make it clear that places are limited to avoid disappointment. We could also look at prioritising to greatest need if required.

Next Steps

19. We plan to further discuss and investigate viable options for how we could encourage uptake and awareness of programmes available with the Te Mahau takiwā. This could be included as part of the upcoming workshops scheduled to progress the design and implementation of the future system of learning support.
20. We would also be happy to discuss this information update at our next weekly meeting with you.

Annexes

Annex One: Detail on the PLD programmes proposed to be included as part of the Review's announcement

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Planning for diversity through inclusive design: Belonging and inclusion for all

21. This is an online resource designed to grow teachers, whānau, resource teachers and Ministry specialists' confidence in meeting the learning and wellbeing needs of diverse learners, and for strengthening inclusive practices.
22. There are 3 modules being developed. The modules will be tested over Term 1, 2023. Modules will be available on the Inclusive website on Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI). TKI will be promoted via the bulletin, NZEI and PPTA newsletters, the Learning Support Network and through Managers Learning Support

Tilting the Seesaw for Learning Support Coordinators

23. This programme equips LSCs with a combination of strength-based, practical strategies to support the everyday inclusion of Autistic students between the primary school and home settings.
24. It is anticipated that funding from the LSC salary underspend will be shifted to this programme to allow it to run for a further two years from 2023. It will cover the remaining 56% of LSCs yet to complete the programme. Depending on funding, it could also be extended to SENCOs.

Learning Support Network (LSN)

25. The LSN provides a network of expertise for Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs). It provides opportunities for engagement, learning, participation in discussion and attendance at webinars on current topics of interest. We are currently working with the provider to review and align the network with the Learning Support Delivery Model, Te Tūāpapa o He Pikorua, and the findings of the LSC Phase 3 Evaluation Report.
26. The LSN has been available since September 2020 and is being funded through to 2025.

Teacher aide professional learning and development fund

27. This fund will contribute to a more confident and capable workforce by supporting teacher aides to upskill and improve their practice to better support learners with high needs. It covers course fees, materials, and paid hours to undertake the PLD.
28. It is part of a second phase of increased PLD funding for teacher aides over 2022/23 and 2023/24. It follows a successful pilot launched in July 2020, with uptake that was greater than expected.
29. Applications for funding will be available for the 2023 school year. Applications will be sought from teacher aides early in Term 1, 2023.

Strengthen New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL)

30. This programme will raise the capability of teachers to support the education of Deaf or Hard Hearing (DHH) students and reduce the barriers to accessing New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. Teachers are enabled to promote wellbeing and foster a more inclusive school culture for DHH students to learn in.

31. The service will be available to eligible schools who currently access the NZSL@School service (150 schools) by Term 1, 2023.

Minimising the use of physical restraint

32. Those with disabilities or learning support needs are disproportionately affected by the use of physical restraint. The new Physical Restraint Rules and Guidelines will be published and Gazetted in Term 1, 7 February 2023. There will be a series of online learning modules that will guide schools through the updated guidelines and their practical application in the classroom and school.
33. The first module focuses on socialising the changes to the framework for using physical restraint. It will be available from 7 February 2023 and is mandatory for all teachers and for any other school staff authorised by their employer to use physical restraint (approximately 75,000 staff members).
34. Further rollout of online learning modules, webinars and resources for schools will be staged across 2023 and 2024. Other activities to support teachers and other school staff include:
- a. Podcast or webinar discussion panel on physical restraint
 - b. Webinar on Learning Support Network website.
35. All existing training and support will still be available and will continue to be available to schools. This includes existing training in safe physical holds (for teams around learners who have the use of physical restraint as part of their existing safety and support plans) and Understanding Behaviour, Responding Safely.