



## Briefing Note: Update on the Gifted Package

<b>To:</b>	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
<b>Cc:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	9 September 2022	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1295003
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<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to:

- provide an update on the Ministry's work around Gifted Education.

### Summary

- Te Mahau is focusing on aligning the gifted provision with Ministry priorities such as Ka Hikitia – Ka Kāpaitia, the Action Plan for Pacific Education and the Curriculum Refresh.
- Te Mahau is evaluating the new initiatives in the gifted package, and learnings from the evaluation will inform future work with schools.
- Equity for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners is a priority.

### Proactive Release

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

**Agree** Disagree



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09/09/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education**

10/09/2022

## Background

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1. The Learning Support Action Plan (LSAP) and the Curriculum Refresh are our main vehicles to drive changes on how we think about gifted learners.
2. The LSAP is much broader than our previous perspective on education and encourages us to have a more holistic view of learners. Gifted is Priority five in the plan. In 2020 Te Mahau aligned gifted with neurodiversity, using the rationale that giftedness is another form of neurodiversity. There was some concern from some members of the gifted community at that time that this associates giftedness with learning disabilities.
3. The gifted package is focused on direct provision to learners, in line with the wishes of the previous Associate Minister for Education. Since implementation in 2019, the package has been used to trial multiple initiatives with learners. While these initiatives deliver to a small portion of gifted learners, we will find out more about what learners respond well to. Feedback from learners and whānau is generally good, and we will find out more through the evaluation of the gifted package. The challenge is getting resources where they are needed most. A description of the different initiatives in the package is included in Annex 1.
4. Te Mahau is focusing on aligning work for gifted learners with the Curriculum Refresh, support for changes in teaching practice and changes to learning supports. This approach will provide gifted learners with a satisfying learning experience within their school and class environments alongside their peers, rather than being singled out.
5. Priorities for the gifted package in 2022 are:
  - i. Increasing access to resources for gifted ākonga Māori and Pacific learners and learners from low income or geographically isolated areas.
  - ii. An improved approach for identifying gifted learners. This will have a direct impact for gifted learners within the school system.
  - iii. Aligning gifted work with Te Mahau priorities, including Ka Hikitia – Ka Kāpaitia, the Action Plan for Pacific Education and the Curriculum Refresh.

## Ākonga Māori and Pacific learners

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6. Provision for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners is a key focus of the gifted package, however, we know from our data that access to the package initiatives is not equitable. Steps we are taking to increase their participation and to learn how to be more inclusive are listed below.
  - Targeting promotion for the Gifted Learners Awards by featuring ākonga Māori in the social media advertising has increased applications from that group from 17 to 43. We are focussing social media advertising on Pacific learners for round 7, which is open now.
  - Events and Opportunities providers are required to focus on provision for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners. The Ministry has facilitated informal online peer learning sessions where the kaupapa Māori and Pacific providers share how best to meet the needs of Māori and Pacific learners. Providers have

responded well by targeting schools who have high Māori and Pacific populations for referrals and designing courses specifically for those learners.

- The Early Learning project was reoriented to better provide for ākonga Māori and reprocurd with a new provider to ensure this. Early reporting from this project is very positive.
- The New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education (NZCGE) is developing and testing an innovation called YourSchool to provide better access for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners. This involves offering Mindplus to learners within their own schools rather than attending offsite. It is being tested in four schools, three of which have high numbers of ākonga Māori and/or Pacific learners.

The independent evaluation of the new gifted initiatives has a strong focus on provision for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners. The evaluation team chosen includes expert evaluators who bring a Māori world view and expert evaluators with a strong Pacific lens.

- The identification work is still in the formative stages. Ka Hikitia – Ka Kāpaitia and the Action Plan for Pacific Education are foundations for this work and will be reflected in the procurement of the provider.

## What is happening for teachers?

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### Gifted focus

7. Current direct gifted provision for teachers includes:
  - Gifted Study Awards for Post Graduate Specialist Teaching Diploma: Gifted Endorsement. This initiative supports leadership of gifted education within schools and the wider sector. We are already seeing teachers undertaking the diploma providing leadership in the Network of Expertise: Gifted (NEX) online sessions. Applications are currently open and being promoted through Ministry channels and social media.
  - Awards for Teachers of Gifted Learners are smaller flexible awards for individuals, groups, or a whole school to be able to undertake learning in their own location. Round 6 opens on 1 October.
  - Gifted NEX provides online learning and network opportunities for teachers. They can participate without gifted being a school priority, which would need to be the case for formal PLD.
  - Schools are able to access PLD in gifted education and inclusive design for learning through regionally allocated PLD.

### Inclusive curriculum support

8. The inclusive approaches of the Learning Support Action Plan and the Curriculum Refresh requires changes in teaching practice.
9. The pedagogical practice shift for teachers to deliver an inclusive curriculum involves planning for all learners in the classroom from the outset, while being responsive to individual needs and working out what is needed to be successful within the context of the curriculum and the classroom.

10. During the curriculum refresh, Te Mahau will provide resources and professional learning to strengthen teacher capability so that inclusive curriculum, pedagogy and assessment become standard practice.
11. Support for change also comes from within the school sector through Learning Support Co-ordinators, Curriculum Leads and growing numbers of specialist teachers.

## Current work

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### Evaluation

12. Te Mahau has begun an evaluation of the initiatives in the gifted package that are new to Aotearoa New Zealand. These are the Events and Opportunities projects, the awards for learners and teachers and the early learning project. Te Mahau will share the learning from these initiatives with the school sector. The evaluation has a focus on provision for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners and includes learner and whānau voices
13. The evaluation team includes experienced Pacific and Māori evaluators. The evaluation plan was developed with Te Mahau and a member of the Gifted Expert Group who has current research experience and brought a Pacific view to the work.

### Identification of Gifted Learners

14. The work on identification of gifted learners was scheduled for 2021 but has been rescheduled to 2022/23 due to COVID-19 disruption. It is in the planning stages and the Gifted Expert Group have provided advice on the skills and knowledge a provider will need to do this work. Some Expert Group members may tender for this work, so the group's input is being carefully managed to prevent conflicts of interest.
15. The identification work can now be done alongside key parts of the education work programme. For example, it aligns well with the Curriculum Refresh's focus on inclusion and equity. It is also useful that the identification work coincides with the development of the Online Curriculum Hub. We anticipate this will improve access for teachers to gifted resources and raise interest in giftedness and related PLD.
16. The identification guidance and supports will encourage schools to respond to gifted learners within their own learning environments rather 'othering' them and separating them from other learners.

### Gifted Expert Group

17. Te Mahau has consulted the Gifted Expert Group on each of the new gifted initiatives. Rather than meeting regularly as a large group, Te Mahau is working with smaller working groups of Expert Group members. This approach makes it easier to manage the work to achieve outcomes. Group members are also on the selection panels for learners and teachers awards.
18. The two large group meetings in 2022 have been used to communicate the Group's views to Learning Support about the LSC PLD and role, to seek feedback on the approach to the curriculum refresh and to inform the upcoming procurement for identification work.

19. 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]  
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20. 9(2)(g)(i) [Redacted]  
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21. Short- to medium-term work for the group will include:
- Ongoing advice on the Curriculum Refresh
  - 9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]
  - Advice on information on gifted for the Curriculum Hub, including identification of gifted learners.

22. 9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]  
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## Key Risks and Benefits

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23. Expert Group members may have a conflict of interest if tendering for any of the upcoming resource work. We are mitigating this by taking care with the levels of input we request.

## Next Steps

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24. Next steps for gifted work package for FY 2022/23 are in the table below.

Initiative	Next steps	Key dates
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Evaluation	Underway, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events &amp; Opportunities projects</li> <li>- Early Learning</li> <li>- Awards</li> </ul>	Completes December 2023
Identification	Procurement	December
9(2)(f)(iv)		
Awards for Gifted Learners	Awards close Panel meets Learners informed	30 September October November
Awards for Teachers of Gifted Learners	Awards open Panel meets Applications informed	1 October November November
Awards for Teachers post graduate diploma	Applications close Panel meets Applicants informed	30 September October November
Early Learning Project	New procurement New project commences	November January 2023
9(2)(f)(iv)		
Gifted Expert Group	Whole group meeting to discuss ideas and feedback on curriculum refresh	October
	9(2)(f)(iv)	
	Panel participation for three sets of Awards Panel member participation on evaluation advisor group	October  Ongoing to December 2023

**Gifted Package progress to date – September 2022.**

	Progress to date
Evaluation	<p>The purpose of the evaluation is to gather new learning about what works for gifted learners and what doesn't so we can feed this back into the school sector. We can share what gifted learners find appealing and relevant as well as their views on the barriers to participation.</p> <p>We have engaged evaluators chosen through a robust procurement process. The evaluators developed an evaluation plan based on workshops with the Ministry and a Gifted Expert Group member who brings a Pacific view and is a current researcher.</p> <p>The evaluations approach will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• iterative evaluation of the content, processes, and impact of the three components new to the gifted sector, that is, the Awards, Events and Opportunities and the Early Learning project. We are not seeking to prove what we already know.</li> <li>• a focus on improving delivery for ākonga Maori and Pacific learners.</li> <li>• an emphasis on ākonga and whānau voices, using a “with us, not about us” approach.</li> <li>• a summative evaluation of the content, processes, and impact of the three components.</li> </ul> <p>The Events and Opportunities projects will be the first aspect evaluated as this will inform up-coming procurements.</p>
Mindplus	<p>Mindplus one day school is provided by the New Zealand Centre of Gifted Education. The Ministry funds curriculum development and more online provision for learners who cannot attend in person. Mindplus provides extension, challenge and social connection with students with like minds.</p>
Awards for Gifted Learners	<p>The Awards for Gifted Learners are monetary grants that support learners who are seeking challenge and extension outside their regular classroom learning. They can apply as individuals or as groups. Past awards have supported learners with art supplies and lessons, leadership development, cultural development, science camps, STEM fees, an environment club, chess tournaments, sports tournaments, coaching, and music, dancing and theatrical performances.</p> <p>We continue to focus on making the awards more appealing to Māori and Pacific learners by promoting through Ministry channels.</p> <p>There have been six award rounds to date. We have recently changed the award process from two rounds per year to one round per year to better manage the increased demand. We still allocate the same amount of funding each year. Applications for round seven are open now and will close on 30 September.</p>

Awards for Teachers of Gifted Learners	<p>The Awards for Teachers of Gifted Learners are monetary grants that support access to learning opportunities for teachers to increase their skills for supporting gifted learners. Teachers can apply as individuals or as groups. The funding is flexible to enable learning opportunities that are more accessible for busy classroom teachers, fitting in with their timetables and locations.</p> <p>This has moved to one application round per year. The next round opens on 1 October.</p>
The Teachers Awards for the Massey University Post Graduate Diploma of Teaching: Gifted Endorsement	<p>The inaugural Awards were made in October 2020, and the course commenced in 2021. Five new teachers will come online each year for the first year of the two-year course. This means there will be ten teachers receiving the Award at any given time from 2022 onwards.</p> <p>Applications are currently open and close on 30 September.</p>
Events and Opportunities	<p>These are community-based projects that offer learners the opportunity for challenge and extension outside of the classroom and in a group environment. Providers deliver project-based learning to enable gifted learners to connect and collaborate with each other in a range of forums and settings, in person or online. These often take a practical workshop and competition format.</p> <p>The Events and Opportunities will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifted learners are achieving their potential.</li> <li>• Gifted learners experience success and are challenged.</li> <li>• Gifted learners feel welcomed and valued in their environment.</li> <li>• Gifted learners are able to engage in a range of learning opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>As a result of their participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifted learners report improvements in their emotional/social and overall well-being.</li> <li>• Gifted learners who are Māori and Pacific report that they are supported as Māori or as Pacific.</li> <li>• Parents, communities and whānau are empowered to make positive decisions about learning options for their gifted tamariki.</li> <li>• Schools and kura use tools and planning resources to improve their in-setting responses to gifted learners.</li> </ul>
The Events and Opportunities projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORE Education HiAko – Māori medium – South Auckland. Online and in-person. Digitally based enquiry into finding solutions to real life issues within their own whanau, hapu and iwi. HiAko draws on traditional Māori knowledge and promotes Māori values, practices and principles.</li> <li>• CORE Education Inventionator – online, NZ wide</li> </ul>



	<p>Digital based enquiry into finding solution to real life issues. This was originally face-to-face and is now online due to learner preference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Aurora Education Foundation Charitable Trust – Tairāwhiti Working with local schools, iwi and community organisations to provide a range of activities for gifted ākonga, including environmental protection, creative writing, drama, chess, leadership, digital design.</li> <li>• Faith City Trust Project Y – South Auckland The project has three integrated approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Front Foot apps development competition</li> <li>- STEM week with MOTAT</li> <li>- Pasi IT Mentoring.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Game Lab, Wellington After-school game-based approach with in-person workshops in the Wellington area. Designed for learners 13–18 who are predisposed to technology interfaced thinking and learning. It is a crash course in game creation.</li> <li>• Nga Potiki a Tamapahore Trust, Bay of Plenty Project for ākonga Māori based mainly in Papamoa. This project has developed overtime focusing on leadership development and ākonga extension by exploring their philosophical, creative narratives within Te Ao Māori. The most recent contract included a strong arts focus..</li> <li>• Kiwa Digital Ltd, Auckland Introducing gifted learners to new media technologies in a real-world environment. They work alongside industry professionals with wrap-around support to encourage engagement and exploration.</li> <li>• VLN Primary – online Video Learning Network (VLN) provides an online programme specifically designed for gifted learners that involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Going deep in learning</li> <li>○ Being part of an online social network with like-minded students</li> <li>○ Individual inquiries and mentoring support</li> <li>○ Support for teachers of the learners.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>VLN is a newer project than the other projects.</p>
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9(2)(f)(iv)

The Early Learning project	<p>This project provides coaching and resources for teachers in early learning centres in how to best identify and respond to gifted young learners. This involves in-person and online workshops, depending on centre availability and preferences.</p> <p>The original project was developed by the New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education (NZCGE). The second phase is being delivered by CORE with NZCGE participating on the advisory group.</p> <p>The Early Learning team are having discussions about the next phase with members of the Expert Group who specialise in Early Learning.</p>
Gifted Expert group	<p>The group provides advice to the Ministry on request. This has included working in small groups to contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria for Awards – learners and teachers</li> <li>• Panels for all the Awards</li> <li>• Content of the Early Learning Project</li> <li>• Online presentations for the Events and Opportunities providers</li> <li>• Input into the curriculum refresh</li> <li>• the procurement of identification information for Ministry channels.</li> </ul>
Identification and Training	<p>This work involves developing an approach for schools, teachers and whānau to identify gifted learners. This work was disrupted with COVID and will occur in FY 2022/23.</p> <p>The Ministry sought advice from the Gifted Expert Group on the knowledge and skills needed to undertake this work.</p> <p>The next step is to work internally to ensure the approach and procurement processes reflect the Ministry's key strategies, in particular Ka Hikitia – Ka Kāpaitia, as the framework for the work and using a format that can be used on the new Curriculum Hub.</p>