



Education Report: Intensive support for primary students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	4 March 2021	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1251788
Drafter:	Talia Pollock	DDI:	9(2)(a)
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

This paper provides options for spending that will support year 3 – 8 students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others.

Summary

1. The sector has raised concerns about the lack of sufficient intensive provision options to support primary students with behaviour that is highly challenging to others. The Ministry has identified \$17.728 million over four years that could be reprioritised to fund activity in this space.
2. The New Zealand Principals Federation has proposed that the Government funds an expansion of the Napier Managed Moves pilot to additional sites. However, Managed Moves has been successful because it is a locally designed solution. Applying the same model in other locations is not likely to lead to the same success without substantial local effort and buy-in.
3. We recommend allocating funding to each Education Region to work collaboratively with the sector, iwi, other agencies, and local communities to design their own initiatives tailored to their local context. This could include using the proposed funding to deliver programmes such as Huakina Mai and Te Mana Tikitiki in regions or trial approaches such as Managed Moves in new locations. All initiatives would need to align with the key features of best practice for supporting the wellbeing and educational needs of younger students with behaviour that is highly challenging to others.
4. Further work is needed on our broader system level response across the universal, targeted, and individual tiers to promote positive behaviour in schools

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends that you:

- a. **note** that the Ministry has identified \$17.728 million over four years with the potential to be reprioritised

Noted

- b. **agree** to seek Cabinet agreement, as part of Budget 2021, to reprioritise this funding to support regions to develop local initiatives that provide support for students in Years 3-8 with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others

Agree / Disagree

- c. **note** that reprioritising this funding would involve ceasing Kiwi Can and the Regional Mentoring Programme

Noted

d.

9(2)(f)(iv)

Proactive release recommendation

- e. **agree** that this Education Report is not proactively released at this time because final decisions are yet to be made by Cabinet.

Agree / Disagree



Dr Andrea Schöllmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy

04/03/2021

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

___/___/___

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

___/___/___

Background

1. The education sector, and in particular the New Zealand Principals Federation (NZPF), has expressed concerns about reports of increasing incidents of severe behaviour in primary schools that pose a danger to staff and students. NZPF has written to its members telling them to consider refusing the Ministry's directions to enrol students with wellbeing and behavioural needs if they don't consider that the Ministry is providing adequate support.
2. In December last year, the Ministry identified funding of \$17.728 million over four years with the potential to be reprioritised. On 22 February, the Ministry and Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education discussed the possibility of using this funding for initiatives that provide intensive support for Year 3-8 students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others.
3. Current supports for Year 3-8 students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others include the Ministry's Behaviour Supports, RTLB, the Interim Response Fund, Te Kahu Tōi, Intensive Wraparound Service and the PB4L suite.
4. There are also a number of local initiatives that provide intensive support these students, including the Te Tupu Managed Moves (Te Tupu) pilot in Napier and the Riroriro model developed by Fruitvale Primary School.
5. This report provides two options for how the \$17.728 million in funding could be used to expand our intensive supports for Year 3-8 students.
6. While these initiatives may alleviate some of the immediate pressure schools are experiencing, more work is needed on our broader system level response across the universal, targeted, and individual tiers to promote positive behaviour in schools. In our recent briefing to Minister Tinetti on this issue [METIS 1245412 refers], we identified a need to focus on creating inclusive learning environments and building teacher capability to understand and address the environmental and relational factors that influence behaviour. If we do not address these issues, then it will only lead to greater demand for individual intensive supports.
7. This broader work needs to include developing training for school staff to support the implementation of the Rules and Guidelines on Physical Restraint, which are currently being updated following changes to the legislation. 9(2)(f)(iv)

Options

8. We have identified two options for using the \$17.728 million in funding to support Year 3-8 students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others.

Option 1: Creating additional Managed Moves sites

9. NZPF have proposed an expansion of the Te Tupu pilot currently operating in Napier to provide support for primary and intermediate students who are in crisis and display wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others and that are difficult to manage within a classroom environment.

10. Te Tupu is a community-led initiative with a governance group made up of school leaders, the Ministry of Education, iwi and local health and social services providers within Napier. It places students in Years 3-8 who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education in a small group setting for around 10 weeks with support from a co-ordinator, teacher, and two teacher aides.
11. Wraparound support is provided to students and their whānau while engaged in the service, and when transitioning back into school. An individualised plan is developed to support the needs of students.
12. An initial evaluation indicated that the pilot has had some positive impact on the first tranche of students. A final evaluation report on the pilot will be submitted by Te Tupu in June 2022 prior to the end of the pilot.
13. The success of Te Tupu has been dependent on the desire of the community to work together to find solutions, the strength of local relationships, and the disposition and skills of the individuals involved. The model may therefore not be able to be successfully replicated in other locations, particularly if the process of building relationships and getting buy-in from local stakeholders is not undertaken first. In Napier this process took around two years.
14. There is also a risk that, without the right mindset from those involved, the model could be used as a way of excluding students from mainstream education, rather than supporting their reengagement.
15. One Managed Moves site supporting a maximum of ten students at any given time costs \$390,000 per year. Including regional office support, we would only be able to create eight new sites within the funding available (supporting up to 80 students at any one time). This option therefore has limited reach and could not be implemented across all regions. We would need to decide on criteria for site selection, which is likely to be controversial.

Option 2: Supporting regions to develop local initiatives

16. Under this option, each Education Region would develop evidence based local initiatives to support students and their whānau as part of inclusive practice. Regional office staff would work collaboratively with the school sector, iwi and other agencies, and local communities to identify the particular needs of their community and develop initiatives that utilise local relationships and expertise. Regional offices will provide advice and guidance on current best practice to help guide regionally led decision making.
17. The initiatives would be required to have a focus on providing intensive support for the educational and wellbeing needs of Year 3-8 students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others, and who are at risk of exclusion from mainstream settings. The initiatives would need to align with the key features of best practice for supporting these students:
 - a. maintaining strong connections between children with wellbeing and behavioural needs and their peers at mainstream school;
 - b. focusing on the development of social-emotional skills first;
 - c. empowering family and whānau to exercise authority and agency during decision-making and implementation of support;
 - d. focusing on retaining the learner in mainstream education and empowering and upskilling the school to fulfil their role in this process; and

- e. involving wider whānau, community and other agencies to create positive change.
18. The funding could be used for one-off solutions for individual children as well as more substantive initiatives, and initiatives could be developed that bring together a combination of funding sources. However, the funding would not be able to be used for activities that the Ministry or schools are already specifically funded for.
 19. This option could involve expanding existing initiatives such as the Kaupapa Māori evidence-based programmes that are part of the PB4L suite of initiatives: Huakina Mai and Te Mana Tikitiki (detailed further in Annex 1), as well as other evidence-based initiatives. By investing in these kaupapa Māori programmes we would be building our partnerships and relationships with iwi and whānau. However, together these two programmes operate across all three tiers, so would be less targeted towards students with wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others.
 20. Regions could implement initiatives similar to Te Tupu Managed Moves if the community decided that they wanted to take this approach, but would also be able to try different approaches tailored to their particular context. Research evidence suggests that the solutions to the most complex and challenging behaviours are more likely to be found in creative, adaptive local solutions.¹
 21. We would also require each region to include an evaluation component so that we can understand the impact of each of the initiatives and build our evidence base about what works in this space.
 22. Each of the ten Education Regions would receive a base funding amount of \$200,000, with the remaining funding distributed based between regions based on the number of students, number of schools, and the Equity Index.

Table 1: Indicative distribution of funding by region

Education region	Funding per annum
Tai Tokerau	\$347,000
Auckland	\$919,000
Waikato	\$458,000
Bay of Plenty/Waiariki	\$419,000
Hawke's Bay/Tairāwhiti	\$374,000
Taranaki/Whanganui/Manawatū	\$394,000
Wellington	\$455,000
Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast	\$281,000
Canterbury/Chatham Islands	\$436,000
Otago/Southland	\$349,000
Total	\$4,432,000

Financial Implications

23. The \$17.728 million that has been identified for reprioritisation is currently held across four programmes that sit across three different appropriations.

¹ Sharp, C. (2020). Practising change together – where nothing is clear, and everything keeps changing. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 17(1), 10–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767333.2020.1712838>

Vote Education Minister of Education	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 & Outyears	4 Year Total
Non-Departmental Output Expenses: Support for Early Learning Providers (M26)	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	8.000
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Primary and Secondary Education MCA		1.599	1.599	1.599	6.396
Non-Departmental Output Expense Secondary Education	1.599				
Improving Quality Teaching and Learning MCA	0.833	0.833	0.833	0.833	3.332
Non-Departmental Output Expense Curriculum Support					
Total Operating	4.432	4.432	4.432	4.432	17.728

24. Two of the potential funding sources would involve not renewing contracts or ceasing particular activities, Kiwi Can and the Regional Mentoring Programme, a Cabinet decision is required to reprioritise this funding.
25. Treasury are exploring the option of Cabinet agreement being sought through the main Budget 2021 paper as a savings initiative. This would involve the development of a fiscally neutral budget bid to shift the funding held in the different appropriations and categories above into a single non-departmental component in the Learning Support Category of the Outcome for Target Groups MCA.
26. An important first step will be ensuring the Minister of Finance is comfortable with the proposal in the context of wider Budget priorities.

Annexes

Annex 1: Huakina Mai and Te Mana Tikitiki

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1. Huakina Mai is a school-wide initiative that has been piloted in primary schools at tier one (universal) but can be adapted for all three tiers of support. It uses a restorative, mana-enhancing approach to managing ākonga experiencing learning and behavioural challenges. It supports schools to build strong partnerships with whānau, local iwi and the wider community to develop a culturally responsive teacher pedagogical framework, and the systems and processes to improve educational outcomes for ākonga Māori.
2. Te Mana Tikitiki is implemented across tiers two and three (targeted and individual). It is facilitated by two Kaimahi Māori in collaboration with whānau, iwi, Ministry staff and/or RTLB. It can be facilitated in the school or a marae, with regular check-ins from the rest of the team.
3. The programme is delivered to one ākonga who is receiving support from Learning Support and/or RTLB, two to three other ākonga who would benefit from additional support around wellbeing and behavioural challenges, and a group of their peers who are viewed as tuākana and good role-models (group of up to 10 ākonga). The initiative combines te reo and tikanga Māori, activity-based learning, and tuakana/teina approaches (peer support) to improve ākonga confidence, self-esteem, and social skills.
4. Te Mana Tikitiki has not run since 2017. Two evaluations in 2011 (Auckland) and 2017 (in the Bay of Plenty) showed positive outcomes for ākonga Māori including significant changes in attitude, increased positive behaviour, positive risk-taking and engagement in the classroom, learning levels, and whānau involvement in the education of their tamariki. There continues to be strong interest from the six iwi who were involved in the earlier delivery, and from schools who have seen this within the PB4L suite.