



1 July 2022

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 1 June 2022 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

*[For the whole period since Hon Chris Hipkins first became Minister of Education, please provide:]*

1. *Details of all discretionary grants paid for the purpose of establishing a licensed early childhood service or certified playgroup.*
2. *Details of any discretionary grants made to a service provider where the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the grant related to:*
  - a. *Capital works to extend or to refurbish an existing licensed early childhood service, and/or*
  - b. *Purchasing land on which to build or extend or refurbish a licensed early childhood service.*
3. *Details of all applications for such discretionary grants that were turned down during the period in question, together with the reasons given.*
4. *Section 548(3)(a)(i) of the Act discusses “grants of different classes or descriptions”. Please provide details of the different classes and/or descriptions of discretionary grants that relate to establishing, extending or refurbishing licensed early childhood services, together with the application process for such grants.*
5. *If no discretionary grants of the types described have been made by Hon Chris Hipkins, please provide details of the last five discretionary grants of the types described made by any Minister of Education.*
6. *For the period that Hon Chris Hipkins has been the Minister of Education, please provide details of all loans, for any purpose, made under s549 of the current Act or the similar section in the 1989 Act. If no loans have been made by Hon Chris Hipkins, please provide details of the last five loans made by any Minister of Education to licensed early childhood services.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

**1. Details of all discretionary grants paid for the purpose of establishing a licensed early childhood service or certified playgroup.**

Early learning service providers may be granted Targeted Assistance for Participation (TAP) funding to undertake property works to support either the establishment of a new service or an extension to an existing service. Details of all funding granted through the TAP initiative are provided in **Appendix A** attached to this response. More information regarding the TAP funding is provided further on in this response.

I am withholding the names and exact locations of the early learning providers who have been granted TAP funding under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act, as releasing this information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

**2. Details of any discretionary grants made to a service provider where the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the grant related to:**

- a. **Capital works to extend or to refurbish an existing licensed early childhood service, and/or**
- b. **Purchasing land on which to build or extend or refurbish a licensed early childhood service.**

This information is provided in **Appendix A** attached to this response.

**3. Details of all applications for such discretionary grants that were turned down during the period in question, together with the reasons given.**

We are refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as there is no central database from which to source this information, and substantial collation would be required to pull and check the information from various locations. Some of the information may not exist, as it is dependent on optional input fields being completed, while the remainder of the information sits across multiple teams and sites.

To provide context to how TAP applications are reviewed and granted, most TAP funding is awarded through an open tender process led by the Ministry's National Office, with support from the Ministry's regional offices. Some contracts are direct-sourced based on regional needs.

TAP applications are considered where:

- Participation rates are low and there is a lack of sufficient early learning child places. This may include where there is a lack of culturally-responsive child places for the community.
- The service will support Māori, Pacific and/or low socio-economic communities.

Consideration is given to the capability and capacity of the early learning provider. The Ministry seeks providers who:

- Can deliver quality early learning that is responsive to the needs of the tamariki, whānau and community they will be supporting.
- Have knowledge, experience, and involvement within the target community they will be supporting.
- Can demonstrate how they will identify, address, and support unmet need in the community.
- Can provide the Ministry with a project plan for the intended work, which includes information on the timeframe of the project and a breakdown of the budget.

Due diligence is also conducted on potential providers early learning licensing history with the Ministry.

Information supplied is checked against regional data and knowledge to ensure that the TAP project will address unmet demand in the sector and will meet the needs of the community it intends to support. Applications may be declined if regional data and knowledge indicates that a need does not exist in the area.

- 4. Section 548(3)(a)(i) of the Act discusses “grants of different classes or descriptions”. Please provide details of the different classes and/or descriptions of discretionary grants that relate to establishing, extending or refurbishing licensed early childhood services, together with the application process for such grants.**

TAP is an early childhood education property works funding stream that supports participation in high-quality early learning that is responsive to the needs of tamariki. Funding is provided in areas where early learning participation rates are low and/or where there are insufficient early learning child places available. There is a focus on contributing towards establishing new child places in Māori, Pacific, low socio-economic (inclusive of migrant and refugee communities) and rural/isolated communities.

TAP funding is to be used for the purpose of undertaking property works to support the establishment of a new service, or extension to an existing service. There are no funding initiatives to support the refurbishment of early learning services.

TAP has two different funding streams:

1. TAP 2 is a partial funding stream that funds up to \$12,000 (excluding GST) per new child place being established, or 50% of total project costs, whichever is the lesser of the two. This funding stream is typically used to support the establishment of new early learning services. Total annual funding for TAP 2 was \$8.7 million until the 2020/2021 financial year. This funding was decreased in the 2021/2022 financial year to \$6.7 million per annum.
  2. TAP 3 is a low-cost, high-value funding stream that funds up to \$100,000 (excluding GST) per project. TAP 3 is typically used to support the expansion of existing early learning services. Total annual funding available for TAP 3 is \$2.5 million.
- 5. If no discretionary grants of the types described have been made by Hon Chris Hipkins, please provide details of the last five discretionary grants of the types described made by any Minister of Education.**

Grant applications are not considered or approved by Minister Hipkins on an individual basis – rather, funding is paid by the Ministry dependent on eligibility.

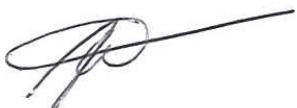
- 6. For the period that Hon Chris Hipkins has been the Minister of Education, please provide details of all loans, for any purpose, made under s549 of the current Act or the similar section in the 1989 Act. If no loans have been made by Hon Chris Hipkins, please provide details of the last five loans made by any Minister of Education to licensed early childhood services.**

The Minister may, on any terms and conditions the Minister thinks fit, lend to the service provider of any licensed early childhood service money appropriated by Parliament for the purpose. However, no such loans have ever been provided.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes official information responses on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Karen Walfisch  
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**Te Mahau | Te Pae Aronui (Operations and Integration)**