



Briefing Note: Visit to Newlands Intermediate School to release the Learning Support Coordinator Phase 1 Evaluation Report

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	15 March 2021	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1252266
Drafter:	Leo Trompetter	DDI:	04 463 8257
Key Contact:	Susan Howan	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Messaging seen by Communications team:	Yes	Round Robin:	No

Purpose

This briefing note provides you with information to support your visit to Newlands Intermediate School on Thursday 18 March, 9.00am-10.00am to release the Learning Support Coordinator: Phase 1 Formative and Process Evaluation Report (LSC Phase 1 evaluation report). It includes:

- background information about Newlands Intermediate School - **Annex 1**
- a draft media release - **Annex 2**
- reactive questions and answers (Q&As) - **Annex 3**
- draft talking points - **Annex 4.**

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Agree / Disagree


Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

15/3/2021

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Background

1. On 3 February 2021, the Ministry provided you with an Education Report (METIS 1248435 refers) about the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report findings and a copy of the final evaluation report from Synergia Ltd.
2. In that report we advised you on how the Ministry planned to share the evaluation findings and begin to address some of the issues identified in the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report through online forums for:
 - recently appointed LSCs (after February 2020)
 - principals and tumuaki with an LSC working in their school and kura
 - all LSCs.
3. Due to COVID-19 alert level changes, dates for the forums were rescheduled.
4. A media release of the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report on 23 February was rescheduled to a later date to allow for an event to be held.
5. The two introductory LSC forums for recently appointed LSCs were held on 9 and 10 March.
6. You have agreed to open and address the forum for all LSCs on 25 March. We will provide a Briefing Note to support you at this event.

Planning for release of the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report

7. Your release of the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report is now scheduled for Thursday 18 March at Newlands Intermediate School. This enables the report to be available prior to the LSC forums for principals and tumuaki on 22 and 23 March, and all LSCs on 25 March.
8. The LSC Phase 1 evaluation report will be published on the Ministry's website in English and te reo Māori on 18 March 2021. The executive summary will be available in New Zealand Sign Language. We do not intend to produce any hard copies of the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report.
9. The Ministry's Communication Team will work with your office to confirm arrangements for the media release.
10. As part of the Ministry's communication plan a link to the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report will be:
 - sent to all principals and tumuaki of schools and kura allocated LSCs
 - notified through the Bulletin for School Leaders.
11. The Ministry will brief NZEI | Te Riu Roa, the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association/Te Wehengarua (PPTA) and the Education Review Office (ERO) on the LSC Phase 1 evaluation report.
12. The Ministry will also notify key stakeholders in the disability sector that the report is available online.

Proactive Release

13. 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: Background information: Newlands Intermediate School
Annex 2: Draft media release
Annex 3: Reactive questions and answers
Annex 4: Draft talking points

Annex 1: Background information: Newlands Intermediate School

Newlands Intermediate School (2924)

Contact Name: Angela Lowe
04 9397725

Address: Bracken Road
Newlands

Key People

Board chairperson: Suzie Ellis - 9(2)(a)

Principal: Angela Lowe - 9(2)(a)

Ministry Official/s: Roy Sye, Director of Education - 9(2)(a)

Visit and event information

Runsheets

Below is the run sheet as advised by Newlands Intermediate.

Time	Activity
09.00	School to provide welcome powhiri in school hall
09.15	Minister Tinetti Address
09.25	Time with Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs)
10.00	Minister leaves the school

Profile Information

Authority	State
School Type	Intermediate (Year 7 and 8)
School Gender	Co-educational
Education Medium	English
Decile	9
Electorate	Ohariu

The July 2020 breakdown of roll information is shown below:

July 2020 Roll	Number	Percentage (%)
Māori	41	8%
Pacific	41	8%
Asian	127	25%
Other	18	3%
European/ Pākehā	287	55%
International	3	1%
Total	517	100%

Kāhui Ako | Communities of Learning

Newlands Intermediate School belongs to the Newlands Community of Learning.

Other member schools include Bellevue School, Newlands School, Newlands College, Paparangi School and Rewa Rewa School.

Learning Support Coordinators

Newlands Community of Learning was allocated five Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs). Two of these are based at Newlands College, one at Newlands Intermediate School and two at Newlands School that also work in other schools.

The LSCs have run workshops to upskill teacher aides and are planning for Autism NZ to run workshops soon for all staff.

The LSCs meet regularly to share data and observations, this includes meeting with the Ministry of Education. The LSCs are focused on smooth transitions for students between each school.

Impact of COVID-19

The school has applied for the Urgent Response Fund (URF). The school submitted three URF applications totalling \$8,034. All applications were approved with the school receiving \$6,050 with \$1,984 removed in costs that did not meet the fund's criteria.

9(2)(a)

The Principal and SENCo from Newlands Intermediate School have volunteered their time as sector representatives on the ORS COVID-19 Response Fund panel for the Wellington region to support students who are ORS verified and who may need extra teacher aide support for transitions, attendance, participation and engagement in learning due to COVID-19.

Anything else of note about the school?

The school is experiencing roll growth, the roll has grown by almost 200 students in two years. 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

The school recently implemented an enrolment scheme.

Education Review Office

The school was last visited by the Education Review Office (ERO) in 2018. ERO found that the school's broad curriculum provides extensive opportunities for students to engage in a wide range of cultural, sporting, artistic, academic or leadership activities. ERO is due to return in three years.

Participation in government programmes

School Donations Scheme

The school is not eligible for the Donation Scheme.

Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunch Programme

The school is not taking part in the programme.

Access to Period products

The school is not yet eligible to participate in this programme.

Creatives in schools

The school did not apply for Round 1 or 2 of the Creatives in Schools projects.

Property

EIS (information to come)

Annex 2: Draft media release

draft Media Release

New role supports schools and learners and whānau

The first tranche of 623 Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) are off to a strong start, assisting schools and kura to work with a broad range of students who need some level of additional support for their learning, says Associate Minister of Education Jan Tinetti.

“The evaluation shows great results so far, with excellent work being done by the LSCs within their schools, kura, and across communities.”

“Learners are being picked up who may not have received the help they have needed in the past – for example students with more moderate needs, and who are gifted.”

Jan Tinetti says the education sector has been asking for this extra resource for some time, and it's great to see the first tranche of LSCs are adding capacity and capability in schools and kura.

LSCs are working with school leaders, teachers in the classroom, whānau and other learning support staff to coordinate a team and community-wide approach to support ākonga with diverse learning support needs, including neuro-diverse needs such as dyslexia.

“The findings show LSCs are proving effective in working with whānau as a ‘bridge’ between home and school.”

Jan Tinetti says the evaluation also highlights areas for improvement, to add to the success of this initiative.

“The evaluation results enable us to fine-tune how we assist schools and kura to continuously improve the LSC role, and the team approach needed in learning support.”

The first phase of the evaluation involved interviews with around 100 participants, across 13 clusters, and included surveys of principals of schools allocated an LSC, and a survey of LSCs themselves.

Note: LSCs are registered and certificated teachers, in a dedicated and full-time role. This new learning support role was funded through Budget 2019 as one of six priorities in the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025. The first tranche of LSCs started in 1,052 individual schools and kura, grouped in 124 clusters, in January 2020, serving 300,000 ākonga.

Link to Evaluation report <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/learning-support-action-plan/learning-support-coordinators/release-of-lsc-evaluation/>

Link to Learning Support Action Plan [Learning Support Action Plan \(education.govt.nz\)](https://www.education.govt.nz/learning-support-action-plan/)

Annex 3: Reactive questions and answers

What are Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs)?

LSCs are an in-school role that work to ensure all learners including those with disabilities, neurodiversity and behavioural issues, and those who are gifted, get the support they need to attend, learn and participate.

LSCs are experienced, registered and certificated teachers, in a dedicated and full-time role. The introduction of LSCs is one of six priorities in the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025.

LSCs are at the heart of the Learning Support Delivery Model, which organises learning support around what best meets the needs of all the learners in a school or cluster. This enables more local control, to provide earlier access to more flexible supports, to meet the needs of a greater range of students and their whānau.

What is the purpose of this new additional learning support role?

The purpose of the LSC role is to make sure that children and young people with mild-to-moderate, neurodiverse, or high-and-complex learning support needs receive appropriate help when they need it. The role has been established in response to consistent requests over many years for a dedicated, funded, full-time learning support role in schools.

LSCs focus on five areas associated with learning support:

- coordinate support for students with disabilities and learning support needs in schools and kura
- work with teachers and kaiako in schools and kura
- work with parents, family and whānau to simplify the system and make it easier for them to access services
- work with other LSCs and the Ministry's Learning Support Facilitator function within the Learning Support Delivery Model to broker and develop more flexible supports through collaboration with the Ministry, other agencies and service providers, and the community
- work with the school or kura leadership team to plan support for all learners.

How many schools and kura received LSCs?

The first tranche of 623 LSCs were allocated to 1052 schools and kura in 124 clusters around the country, covering 300,000 ākonga. The allocation of LSCs took into account cluster characteristics such as having the Learning Support Delivery Model in operation to collectively support the new LSCs, the proportion of rural schools, the proportion of Māori and Pacific students, the number of Māori-medium kura, and the number of students in a cluster.

What are the main findings of the phase 1 evaluation of LSC implementation?

Findings

- The LSC role is adding new capacity and capability into schools and kura with positive benefits emerging for teachers, students and whānau, and across clusters of schools, kura, and early learning services me ngā kōhanga reo.

- LSCs are helping to identify and support students, including those with more moderate needs that may have previously gone unmet.
- Teachers are feeling more supported, and the LSC role is especially valuable in upskilling and supporting beginning teachers.
- LSCs are often the key contact for the schools and kura with families and whānau, and are increasing school and kura capacity to engage with learning support services such as Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLb).
- The role of the principal is critical. Principals pave the way for LSCs to become integrated into the learning support culture of the school and kura, whether this is through meeting key individuals or through being part of learning support teams or relevant initiatives.
- The differing ideas between schools and kura about the scope of the LSC role is an issue for some LSCs working for clusters across multiple locations.
- There is a need for further clarity to understand the LSC role to help build collaborative approaches that improve learning support for learners and whānau. This can help to take advantage of the flexibility in the model and manage the different expectations of the LSC role.

Next steps

- This first phase of the evaluation provides a baseline assessment on LSCs' contribution to support teachers, learners and their whānau and highlights opportunities to improve how the role is implemented.
- Potential improvements indicated in the report include further clarity about functions of the role, particularly in relation to other learning support staff in schools; and better access to supports and services through the Learning Support Delivery Model.
- The Phase 2 evaluation will start in Term 1, 2021 and will support refinement of the role, continuous improvement, and embed ongoing monitoring of the role's contribution. The Phase 3 evaluation will look at the extent to which the new role is leading to better outcomes.

If this is such a successful initiative when will all other schools get an LSC?

- While it is the Government's intention that more LSCs will be allocated in future it will be subject to usual Budget processes.

How many LSCs would be needed for Tranche 2

- It is estimated that a further 1097 full time LSC roles would be needed, based on the current allocation method and ratio.

Annex 4: Draft talking points

Draft Talking Points

- Tēnā koutou tēnā koutou katoa
- I'm delighted to have this opportunity of speaking with you about a subject that is so close to all our hearts – the strengthening of support in schools and kura for the one in five children and young people who need additional support to learn.
- It's now been just over a year since the first tranche of 623 Learning Support Coordinators – LSCs – started work in 1,052 individual schools and kura around the country, grouped in 124 clusters, serving 300,000 ākonga.
- It's great to see from this initial evaluation report which I'm releasing today that the LSC role is adding new capacity and capability into schools and kura.
- We're seeing positive benefits emerging for teachers, students and whānau, and across clusters of schools, kura, and early learning services me ngā kōhanga reo.
- LSCs are helping to identify and support students, including those with more moderate needs that may have previously gone unmet.
- The evaluation shows that teachers are feeling more supported, and the LSC role is especially valuable in upskilling and supporting beginning teachers.
- LSCs are often the key contact for the schools and kura with families and whānau.
- Parents are discovering that LSCs are a real 'bridge' between home and school.
- They appreciate being able to talk with an LSC – rather than having to have individual relationships with every one of their children's teachers.
- LSCs are also increasing school and kura capacity to engage with learning support services such as Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLb).
- We're hearing that principals, as well as families and whānau, are finding that LSCs are really filling that gap that was clearly identified through the 2016 Select Committee enquiry to improve identification and support for children and young people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism, and the engagement on the Learning Support Action Plan.
- The report shows us once again that the role of the principal is critical. Principals pave the way for LSCs to become integrated into the learning support culture of the school and kura.
- The Learning Support Action Plan is the roadmap for how we will be improving and delivering learning support for our ākonga for the next several years to 2025.

- And LSCs are the first of the six priorities that we've started with.
- We know there have been young people who have perhaps more moderate learning support needs - and gifted children too - who have in the past slipped through the cracks in the system.
- LSCs are now best placed to help identify all the children and young people in their areas, who need some type of assistance to be able to attend, engage and participate.
- It's truly invaluable having them to do that liaison, and to help connect learners with the resources, and other supports and services they need.
- As a teacher and primary school principal for many years, I appreciate the expertise and experience LSCs bring to these roles.
- And I know many teachers in the classroom – especially those beginning their careers – are gaining excellent skills and confidence from their guidance.
- Looking ahead I can see there's potential to bed-in our tiered approach, within the Learning Support Delivery Model, even further.
- LSCs are uniquely placed to understand what and where the needs are, and to work with teachers, across clusters and communities, to plan the various types and levels of support needed for individual students, groups of students and teachers.
- Their responsibilities include ensuring there are effective processes in place for learners to transition smoothly into school, between schools, and as students prepare to leave school.
- This is one of the aspects of the role that lends itself so strongly to a cluster wide approach. The potential for improved outcomes for learners, teachers and whānau is substantial.
- And it's worth remembering the efforts of LSCs, and all our Learning Support personnel, are being complemented, and indeed are a part of, other major education work programmes underway.
- These include driving improvements for Māori and Pacific learners.
- The Government has released strategies that set the direction on how we will achieve our 30-year vision for an education system that values the culture, identity and language of Māori and Pacific learners.
- These are Ka Hikitia, Tau Mai Te Reo; and the Action Plan for Pacific Education.
- Everyone needs to strive for a learning environment that is free of racism, stigma and discrimination.

- Meanwhile, what this initial evaluation of LSCs is showing us is that it's less clear how the role fits into Kura Kaupapa Māori and other Maori-medium settings, than English-medium environments.
- It seems the role is organically being adapted in kura to suit local needs.
- So we're looking at how we can help improve recruitment, and help to better operationalise the role - in both kura and rural settings.
- This is the benefit of getting feedback early in the implementation – we are able to make the changes necessary.
- Engagement is continuing around implementing the other priorities in the Learning Support Action Plan.
- This includes tools and flexible supports for neurodiverse learners, as well as looking at how we can strengthen early intervention support so that children's learning needs are identified early and responded to promptly.
- A number of hui are timetabled this term with experts and practitioners in the sector, to make sure we get this right.
- Opportunities have already been developed for gifted learners to extend and challenge their learning and support their wellbeing.
- These include Awards for Gifted Learners and events and opportunities outside the classroom.
- We're also taking a close look at the broader area of how to improve education for all children and young people at risk of disengaging.
- It's vital we ensure better support is available to assist our children and young people to stay engaged or re-engaged.

Property notes: Newlands Intermediate School

- Newlands Intermediate is a co-educational intermediate school for years 7 and 8, with a roll of around 517 students.
- The school is in a fair to poor condition overall, and much of the school is aging. We are working with the school to address priority property projects, as well as engaging in master-planning for the longer-term vision for the school.
- 9(2)(f)(iv)

Learning Support Coordinator information (LSCs)

- Property funding is available to all state and state integrated schools that were part of the announced Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) allocation in August 2019 to support LSCs to operate effectively in all schools they service.
- The funding is intended to support schools to make any property modifications needed to create a suitable working space for their LSC.
- A LSC space is non-teaching space, with each LSC allocated 15m². The space needs to provide an office space for the LSC to work out of, and allow them to meet privately with students, staff and whānau as required. The space also needs to provide ramp access or be otherwise fully accessible to all students, staff and whānau.
- Newlands Intermediate School received funding for one LSC space under this scheme.
- The school has repurposed some existing administration space to create the LSC office. The project included removal of a partition wall, installing new wall lining, carpets, lighting, and an acoustic ceiling. The school received around \$23k in LSC funding to undertake this work.
- The project was approved in December 2020. Work was carried out over the Christmas Holidays and the administration space was ready to be occupied in time for the beginning of Term 1 2021.