

Special Education Update

Update action plan



The Ministry of Education is working with others to improve the education system for children and young people who need additional learning support.

We're looking at the whole education system - not just the Ministry's responsibilities.

We've made good progress since 2010 but we want to build on improved inclusivity to achieve much more for learners who need extra help.

Engagement findings

During 2015 the Ministry engaged widely about proposed improvements. We held 156 engagement forums with over 3650 people across New Zealand, including parents, whānau, educators, specialists, the disability sector, government partners and others.

Most of the feedback from the engagement forums was about six areas for improvement:

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| 1 Better guidance and training for teachers - from early childhood education onwards | 4 Better interagency coordination |
| 2 Greater involvement of parents and whānau and better information for them | 5 Better transparency and more joined up services across the education system |
| 3 Much simpler and more transparent access to support | 6 Streamlined support when a child moves - to primary or high school or to another school |

You can find a full report of the engagement findings on the Ministry's website together with a summary report: www.education.govt.nz

Update action plan

From 2016 the Ministry will lead a programme of work that will significantly redesign the system of education for students with additional learning needs.

The programme will:

- ✓ Design a recognisable, simple system of additional learning support
- ✓ Re-design the service delivery model to remove fragmentation, inflexibility and other barriers to effective service delivery
- ✓ Implement the revised service delivery model
- ✓ Undertake an ongoing programme of work to ensure the best use of funds and examine the return on investment for all system components

Working with others

The new system of additional learning support that we're developing will benefit from close and iterative collaboration, supported by central analysis and support.

The Ministry will continue to engage with parents, whānau and colleagues across the education and disability sectors, including with Communities of Schools and Learning.

We'll also work closely with Child, Youth and Family and health sector colleagues so that educational progress and achievement become a key element in all health and wellbeing plans developed for children and young people who need additional learning support.

Improving services

The Update will help us achieve the Ministry's vision to see *all children and students succeed personally and achieve educational success*. The Update will:

- 1** Improve support for teachers and parents as the primary providers of additional learning support.
- 2** Deliver child centred, easy to access, prompt, early and uninterrupted additional learning support, for as long as it's needed.
- 3** Strengthen collaboration between specialists, educators, students, parents and whānau.
- 4** Provide quality information about additional learning support to inform sound, timely decisions.

Initiatives to support the new national service model will be informed by local Update Projects and include achievement and wellbeing indicators, a practice framework and universal set of practices, service standards and processes.

Teacher training and ongoing professional development

The Ministry will work with the Education Council of New Zealand to assess initial teacher education and the use of inclusive education resources. We'll work with others to develop a nationally consistent approach to inclusive education as an integral part of all ongoing professional development for educators.

Investment stewardship

The system of additional learning support evolved over time and has become complicated and fragmented. Multiple funds set up for particular needs at different times makes the view of total funding difficult and we're working to improve this.

We'll continue budget analysis work to examine the comparative return on investment of key components of additional learning support. We want to make the best use of the funds invested and identify any opportunities for moving funds to areas of greater need and/or best use.



Reporting progress and achievement

Future investment decisions are best informed by a strong understanding of how funds are used together with evidence of best practice and the results achieved.

The Ministry will establish how teachers and schools can best monitor and demonstrate progress and achievement for all children, in a way that's meaningful for parents and that informs next learning steps.

We'll then establish mechanisms for nationally aggregated reporting to inform future developments and resourcing.

Better information for parents, whānau and others

Parents and whānau want to be heard and respected as active and equal participants in their children's learning.

We'll be exploring options in the coming months about how to improve the information we provide, including about educational progress and achievement and where to go with any enquiries or concerns. Information about additional learning support must be easy to access and understand.

More information

For more information about the Special Education Update, including reports about Update engagement findings, please visit www.education.govt.nz

If you have any questions please email the Special Education team at the Ministry of Education: special.education@education.govt.nz