



The Ministry is developing Literacy and Maths (Mathematics and Statistics including numeracy) strategies – what does this mean for me and why?

The big picture

The world, our country and how we live is changing and education needs to change to reflect this. Globalisation, increasing diversity, new technologies, social media, and digitisation have created both challenges and opportunities. To nurture the wellbeing of all children and young people and allow them to live successfully, being literate and numerate remain crucial in combination with a range of capabilities. We want all children and young people to reach their full potential and have a good life today and into the future.

Our context

Aotearoa New Zealand is the only place where tamariki and rangatahi Māori are tangata whenua. This means ensuring that our approaches and resources work better for Māori by giving practical effect to a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi to help achieve wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. At the same time, Aotearoa New Zealand is becoming increasingly diverse in identities, languages and cultures. Our education system needs to respond, support and celebrate this diversity.

Why literacy and maths?

Literacy and numeracy are vital to lifelong learning and the wellbeing of all tamariki and rangatahi, especially in our continually changing context. The concept of literacy is widely understood, however, numeracy is often associated with the number aspect of maths. A widely accepted definition is that numeracy is the ability to use mathematical concepts and ideas in everyday life.

Foundational literacy and numeracy unlock learning across the wider curriculum. Literacy supports ākonga to make sense of, create and express oral, visual and written language and symbols across curriculum areas. We need to ensure that all ākonga develop this foundation and can relate to and make sense of the resources and texts we provide.

The maths strategy includes supporting ākonga to progress their learning in the Mathematics and Statistics learning area and in numeracy across the curriculum. Numeracy across the curriculum is about the way ākonga access, use, interpret, and communicate mathematical ideas and information across different disciplines. Ākonga must be supported to employ mathematical skills such as logical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving across their learning.

What about equity?

Our system is not working well for all ākonga. While many perform well against national and international benchmarks of literacy and mathematics achievement, an increasing number are struggling, and achievement has dropped for all groups. There is variation in achievement across diverse groups of ākonga; in fact we have some of the largest variations in achievement when compared to other countries. Variation in achievement starts early and persists. This variation also shows a strong relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and achievement in New Zealand

What do we need to do?

The literacy and maths strategies are focussed on strengthening ākonga learning within *Te Whāriki* and *The New Zealand Curriculum* along the education pathway, from early learning to Year 13 and beyond. We want to support all ākonga to progress, achieve and thrive with their whānau and communities.

We know we need to do things differently.

We need fresh thinking.

We need to learn from the past.

We'd like to work together to explore aspects of the education system inclusive of partnerships with whānau, to create coherent, robust and future-proof literacy and maths strategies.

Alongside the literacy and maths strategies

Parallel strategies are being developed for te reo matatini and pāngarau for ākonga learning within *Te Marautanga a Aotearoa*.

The New Zealand Curriculum is being refreshed to ensure it is bicultural, inclusive, and clear and easy to understand and teach. The literacy and maths strategies will be developed in 2021 alongside the initial refresh work. The refresh includes making learning progress for numeracy and the Mathematics and Statistics learning area clear.

As part of the NCEA Change Package, new Unit Standards are being developed to assess foundational literacy and numeracy. From 2023, ākonga will be required to meet the standards to attain NCEA at any level. The standards will assess foundational literacy and numeracy. This is at approximately Level 4/5 of the Curriculum. The new co-requisite aims to ensure that rangatahi have the foundational skills they need to be successful in further learning, life and work.