Briefing Note: Learning Support Action Plan: Arrangements and Supporting Material

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<tr>
<th>To:</th>
<th>Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education</th>
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<td>Cc:</td>
<td>Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>11 July 2019</td>
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<td>Priority:</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Level:</td>
<td>In Confidence</td>
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<td>METIS No:</td>
<td>1198566</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drafter:</td>
<td>Sally Jackson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Contact:</td>
<td>Susan Howan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Messaging seen by Communications team:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Round Robin:</td>
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**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this briefing note is to:

Provide you with the communications plan to support the launch of the Learning Support Action Plan (the Action Plan) on Friday 26 July 2019 [METIS 1194964 refers], for your consideration;

Note that we will continue to work with your office on arrangements for the public release of the Action Plan;

Agree that this briefing will not be proactively released at this time. It will be released following the public release of the Action Plan with any necessary redactions.

[Agree/ Disagree]
Summary

- You have agreed to publicly release the Action Plan on Friday 26 July 2019 [METIS 1194964 refers] at Green Bay High School.

- A strong media presence and interest is expected.

- A final communications plan to support the launch has been developed following feedback from you on a draft communications plan [METIS 1177780 refers]. The communications plan includes: Key messages, draft media release, talking points and FAQs.

Katrina Casey  
Deputy Secretary  
Sector Enablement and Support  
11/7/2019

Hon Tracey Martin  
Associate Minister of Education  
23/7/19
Background

1. You have agreed to publicly release the Action Plan on Friday 26 July 2019 [METIS 1194964 refers].

2. You have indicated your intention to launch the Action Plan at Green Bay High School, Auckland.

3. A strong media presence and interest in the Action Plan is anticipated.

4. The final communications plan has been developed based on your previous feedback [METIS 1177780 refers].

5. Following the release of the Action Plan, the Ministry of Education will continue to:
   • maintain communication with key stakeholders about the Action Plan; and
   • identify further channels and opportunities for updates and/or future engagement.

Next Steps

6. The Ministry of Education will continue to work with you and your office on the arrangements for the public release including updated talking points.

Proactive Release

7. We recommend that this Briefing is not released at this time because final arrangements about the launch are still to be confirmed. It will be released following release of the Action Plan with any necessary redactions.

Annexes

Annex 1: Communications plan to support the release of the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025, including
   • Annex 1 – Key messages
   • Annex 2 – Draft media release
   • Annex 3 – Talking points
   • Annex 4 – FAQs
Communications plan to support the release of the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025

Background
The Minister and Associate Minister of Education have Cabinet’s agreement to the release of the Learning Support Action Plan (the Action Plan), subject to final amendments.

The Action Plan is expected to be released on 26 July. This announcement could also be used for a post-Budget announcement to cover the $29.6m for increasing learning support funding in line with population and demand growth, (if this has not already been announced at that time), and to highlight the overall Budget provision for learning support.

Related announcements include:
- Post-Budget announcements about learning support, from mid-June
- Allocation of the first tranche of approximately 600 full-time equivalent Learning Support Coordinators, in late July/early August TBC. This announcement could also include a post-Budget announcement about the $95m capital funding provision for Learning Support Coordinators. (The announcement is proposed to be after the Action Plan is released).

Communications objectives
- Inform key stakeholders about the priorities in the Action Plan
- Build understanding of the Learning Support Delivery model as the foundation for the Action Plan
- Continue to build strong relationships with stakeholders and demonstrate that their feedback has been heard
- Continue to develop effective communications channels that support collaboration, co-design and information sharing
- Increase understanding of learning support by a broader audience.

This communications plan includes:
- draft key messages (annex 1 page 4)
- draft media release for the Action Plan launch (annex 2 page 6)
- draft talking points (annex 3 page 7)
- draft Q & As (annex 4 page 13).

The Action Plan is expected to be available in a range of languages as well as English, te Reo Māori, New Zealand Sign Language, and accessible format versions including Easy Read in time for the launch.

Key audiences
- All parents,
- All children and young people
- All early learning services, schools, kura, special schools
- Teachers and educators
- Boards of Trustees
- Specialist providers
- Other government agencies: Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki, Education sector agencies: ERO, NZQA, Teaching Council, NZEI, PPTA, NZSTA
- Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs)
- Learning Support NGOs and other sector organisations
- Specialist support staff
- MAGs/ Reference groups/ taskforce for other parts of Education work programme

Launch event
We are working with your office to support the launch at Green Bay High School which is part of a cluster that is well advanced with implementing the new learning support delivery model.

Proposed communication approach
The Ministry will directly email the comprehensive list of stakeholders1 who were notified about consultation on the draft Action Plan to advise them that the final Action Plan has now been released, including a link to the Minister’s announcement.

The table below sets out further proposed communications activity to support the release of the Action Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product/Channel</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with stakeholders</td>
<td>Minister Martin could invite key stakeholders to a meeting the evening before the launch, to share the plan's content with them and thank them for their contribution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone/email</td>
<td>Early advice to key stakeholders an hour ahead of release (if necessary, depending on which stakeholders are attending the launch event or have already been advised)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister’s Media release</td>
<td>Draft media release is attached as Annex 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Websites</td>
<td>• Main content hosted on Education Conversation website</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• News stories on home pages of education.govt.nz and parents’ portal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Link to Education Conversation pages from learning support content on education.govt; parents’ portal and tki websites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>• Retweet Minister’s announcement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facebook post</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directors of Education</td>
<td>Key messages, Q &amp; As, link to Minister’s announcement for disseminating through regional networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder email</td>
<td>Include link to Minister’s announcement. Refer to opportunities for ongoing involvement, and ask to forward the link through their channels.</td>
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<td>MoE Publications</td>
<td>Early Learning Bulletin</td>
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<td>School Leaders’ Bulletin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Internal channels – Te Tāhuhu, Manu Taki, Confluence</td>
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Ongoing engagement post launch
Some components of the Action Plan will benefit from further engagement about detailed design or implementation.

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1 We will provide the list of stakeholders to your office.
The Ministry is also due to hold a Building on Success for All forum in September and this would be an opportunity for Minister Martin to discuss the Action Plan and the Learning Support Coordinators directly with key stakeholders from the education and disability sectors and parent groups. This forum will also provide an opportunity for us to begin work with stakeholders on aspects of implementation planning.

It will also be useful to actively maintain communications with key stakeholders about the Action Plan. Suggested channels to consider for updates and/or future engagement with interested parents and whānau, educators, Māori, Pacific peoples, students, disabled people, NGOs and advocacy organisations could include:

- Updates on the latest developments on the ed.convio website
- Updates through existing regular meetings of groups such as the Early Childhood Advisory Council, Bullying Prevention Advisory Group, NZSL Sector Advisory group, PE4L Advisory Group
- A series of articles in the Education Gazette that highlight good practice examples relevant to learning support and the Action Plan
- New Twitter hashtag that we include consistently on relevant tweets
- Regular meetings with existing stakeholder groups related to the overall Action Plan or specific priorities in it, e.g. Gifted Children NZ Council meeting, DPO Coalition meetings.
Annex 1:
Key messages
- New Zealanders want an education system where all children and young people can take part, and can learn and achieve, whatever their needs or differences.
- We want to build the world's best education system for all New Zealanders and provide a range of different types of learning environments and settings to meet the needs of children and young people and their parents and whānau.
- Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.
- One in five children and young people need some kind of learning support, and we want them to get the right support at the right time.
- The Learning Support Action Plan addresses key findings of the 2016 Select Committee Inquiry to improve identification and support for children and young people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism.
- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 - 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support from early learning through to the end of secondary school:
  - introduce the first tranche of Learning Support Coordinators in schools and kura
  - develop new screening tools to strengthen the early identification of learning support needs
  - strengthen early intervention
  - design and implement a flexible set of services and supports for neurodiverse children and young people
  - better meet the learning needs of gifted children and young people
  - improve education for children and young people at risk of disengaging.
- These priorities will strengthen learning support in both the early learning and schooling sectors. They provide a wider range of flexible support for neurodiverse children and young people with moderate needs who don't qualify for the highest level of support and resourcing (such as the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme).
- The Action Plan builds on the approach to providing learning support that is being implemented across New Zealand, the Learning Support Delivery Model
- The Action Plan reflects the feedback and submissions received as part of the Kōrero Mātauranga Education Conversation, and from consultation on the draft plan.
- To achieve the priorities in the Action Plan, we will need to work closely with parents and whānau, educators, Māori, Pacific peoples, students, disabled people, NGOs and advocacy organisations.
- The priorities in the Action Plan will be delivered within available funding, and sequenced and phased over time.
- This plan will continue to be reviewed and revised, to ensure it delivers the best possible outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and learning support needs.
• Wider changes are proposed within the education system as part of the Government’s Education Work Programme, which will further improve learning support.

**Learning support delivery model**

• The Learning Support Delivery Model organises learning support around what best meets the needs of local children and young people, including learners with moderate needs, such as those who are neurodiverse, gifted, or at risk of disengaging from education.

• Education providers in a learning support community – early learning services, kōhanga reo, schools and kura, and Kāhui Ako – work with other agencies and providers. The learning support community takes an inquiry approach to identify local needs and resources, and plan support based on what they know works.

• Support is more flexible and joined-up, and tailored around the needs of local children and young people. It values the contribution whānau can make, and reflects their identity, language and culture.

• The Learning Support Delivery Model is being rolled out nationally. The model will be in all communities at various stages of implementation by the end of 2019.

**Messages for specific audiences**

**All parents**

• Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.

• One in five children and young people need some kind of learning support, and we want them to get the right support at the right time.

• This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support for children and young people, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.

• To achieve the priorities in the Action Plan, we will need to work closely with parents and whānau, educators, Māori, Pacific peoples, students, disabled people, NGOs and advocacy organisations.

**Early Learning Services and educators**

• Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.

• One in five children and young people need some kind of learning support, and we want them to get the right support at the right time.

• Intervening early to provide the right support makes a real difference to children’s development and learning. This is one of the priorities in the new action plan.

• We will identify improvements that can be made to existing early learning support services, and where new supports might be needed.

• We will also work to reduce waiting times for services.

• Everyone involved, parents and whānau, educators, learning support specialists, and other agencies, will work together to make sure children and their whānau get the support they need.

**Schools – Principals and Trustees; primary and secondary teachers**

• New Zealanders want an education system where all children and young people can take part in education, and can learn and achieve, whatever their needs or differences.

• Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.
- One in five children and young people need some kind of learning support, and we want them to get the right support at the right time.
- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.
- The Action Plan includes a wider range of flexible support for neurodiverse children and young people with moderate needs, who don't qualify for the highest level of support and resourcing (such as the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme).
- The first tranche of 600 Learning Support Coordinators will start work in schools from January 2020.
- We want to make sure that trustees and school leaders build knowledge and understanding of the rights of all children and young people to enrol in and receive an education from their local school.

**ITE and PLD providers**

- New Zealanders want an education system where all children and young people can take part in education, and can learn and achieve, whatever their needs or differences.
- Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.
- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.
- A greater focus on teachers' professional learning will improve teaching practice for children and young people with disabilities and learning support needs.
- We will also explore options to strengthen the capability of teacher aides.

**Neurodiverse groups and community**

- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.
- The Action Plan includes the development of a wider range of flexible support for neurodiverse children and young people with moderate needs, who don't qualify for the highest level of support and resourcing (such as the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme).
- The first tranche of 600 Learning Support Coordinators will start work in schools from January 2020.
- We also want to make sure that trustees and school leaders build knowledge and understanding of the rights of all children and young people to enrol in and receive an education from their local school.

**Kōhanga reo and Māori communities**

- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.
- We will work with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust on an awareness campaign to ensure that kaikō, parents and whānau are aware of (and confident to access) learning support.
- We will also work with the Trust on resources to build capability for staff, whānau and kiako to support children with learning support needs.
- We will explore and remove the barriers to professional development and further training for Māori-medium teachers, kaikō and other educators.
Deaf action groups and community
- We want to build the world’s best education system for all New Zealanders and provide a range of different types of learning environments and settings to meet the needs of children and young people and their parents and whānau.
- Sensory schools, including deaf education supports and services, are an important component of the national network. We plan to continue to support New Zealand Sign Language in families with a deaf child, in early learning services, schools and among educators. Over time, we aim to expand immersion hubs so this is an option for more deaf children in more areas.

Blind/low vision groups and community
- New Zealanders want an education system where all children and young people can take part in education, and can learn and achieve, whatever their needs or differences.
- Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive in a welcoming environment.
- One in five children and young people need some kind of learning support, and we want them to get the right support at the right time.
- This Action Plan sets out six priority areas for the period 2019 – 2025 that will make the biggest improvements to learning support, from early learning through to the end of secondary school.

Disabled groups and community
- We are committed to ensuring that disabled children and young people receive the support they need to learn and achieve.
- We received feedback from a small number of respondents, mostly parents, that the word ‘disability’ suggests a focus on a child or young person’s deficits. Accordingly, we have removed disability from the title of the plan but not from its intent.
- Support for those with disabilities is woven through the plan and the priority actions.
- The first tranche of 600 Learning Support Coordinators will start work in schools from January 2020.
- We will also work with education and disability sector groups, and parent groups, to build the knowledge and understanding of boards of trustees and school leaders regarding the rights of children and young people who are disabled or have learning support needs, to enrol in and receive an education from their local school.
- We want to improve the alignment of services across agencies for disabled children and young people and those with learning support needs, and their whānau.

Gifted action groups and community
- Meeting the learning needs of gifted children and young people is one of the priorities in the Action Plan.
- The new Learning Support Coordinators will work to build the learning support capability of kaiako/teachers, and to identify and plan for the learning support needs of children and young people, including those who are gifted.
- We are also working with sector experts to build a group of flexible supports for gifted children and young people.
- We will also develop screening tools to identify learning support needs earlier, including for gifted children.
Rural communities
- The first tranche of 600 Learning Support Coordinators will start working in schools and kura kaupapa from January 2020. Decisions on how these roles will be allocated will include consideration of the distances involved in travelling to rural schools and accessing services.

Providers for ‘at risk’ students
- Improving education for children and young people at risk of disengaging from education is one of the priorities in the Action Plan.
- We are working with educators and others to co-design a more adaptable, flexible system of at risk provision that better meets individual needs and is integrated with schools.
- We will also review the stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions guidelines.
What's next

- The actions under each priority must be achieved within available funding, and sequenced and phased in over time.

- To deliver the priorities in the Action Plan, we will need to work closely with parents and whānau, educators, Māori, Pacific peoples, students, disabled people and relevant organisations.