

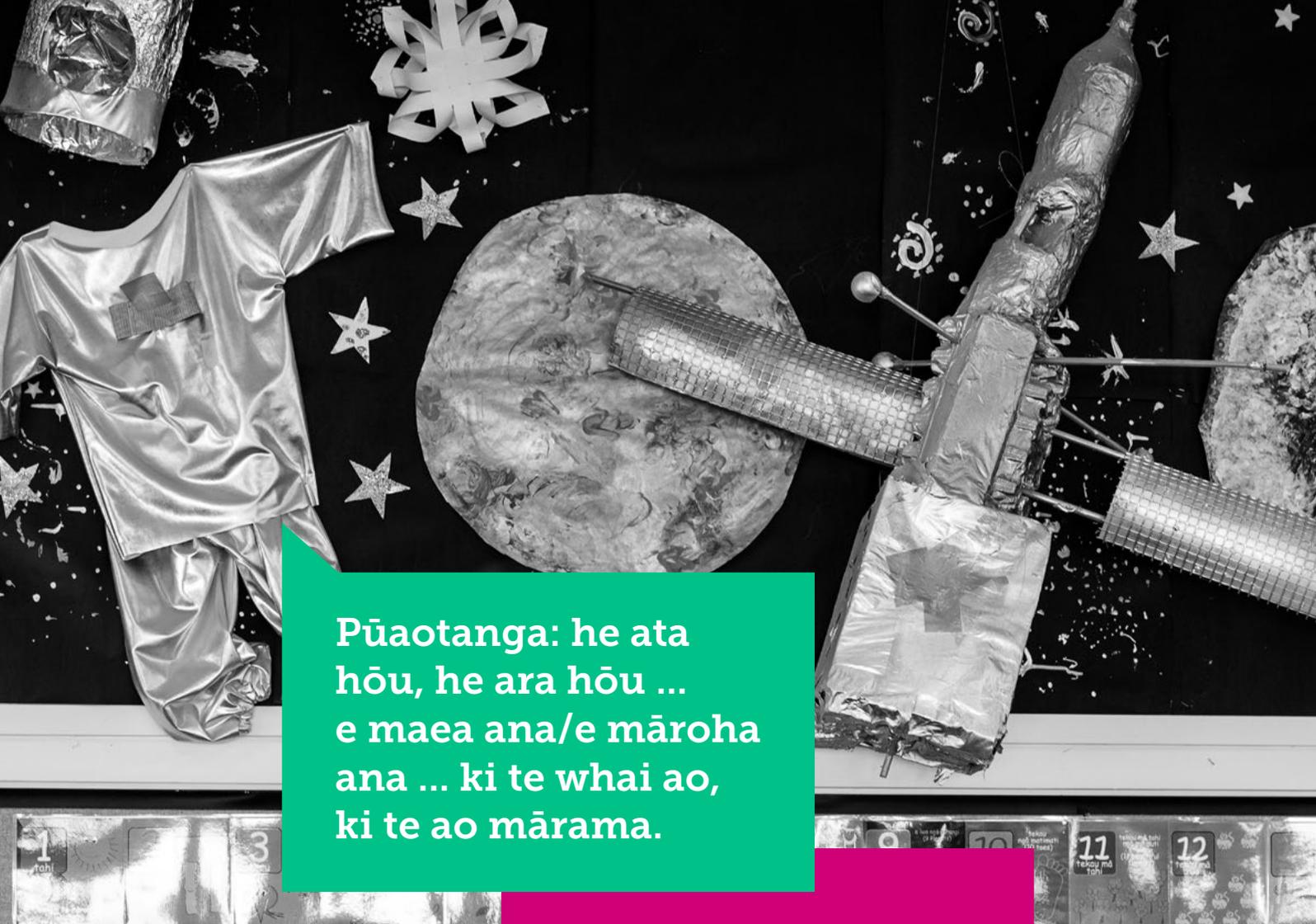


Pūaotanga

Realising the potential of every child

**An independent review of staffing
in primary schools**

*Whakamaua te pae tata kia tina
Take hold of your potential
so it becomes your reality ...*



**Pūaotanga: he ata
hōu, he ara hōu ...
e maea ana/e māroha
ana ... ki te whai ao,
ki te ao mārama.**

**Pūaotanga: a new
dawn, a new pathway
... emerging/
unfolding ... toward
enlightenment.**

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Realising the potential of every child
An independent review of staffing in primary schools

Written by the Pūaotanga Independent Review Panel.

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Foreword

This report, by a group of four independent reviewers, was commissioned by the New Zealand Education Institute (NZEI Te Riu Roa) in response to longstanding concerns among its members about primary school staffing.

Unlike most reports of its kind, it will have immediate use. In June 2021, NZEI Te Riu Roa members who are teachers and principals, will gather ahead of their collective agreement negotiations and this report will inform what they discuss.

The title of the report, Pūaotanga, captures what we believe is urgently needed – a ‘new dawn’, a ‘new pathway’ for primary school staffing in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The people who shared their views and experiences in contributing to this report told us that primary school staffing is not fit for purpose. It cannot ensure that every child will be able to reach their potential.

It might be thought that this point has been made before. It has. But the problem has not been resolved. In fact, it has got worse.

There have, of course, been attempts over many years to improve the situation. But as worthy as they have been, they have not been enough. They have, in effect, modified an old system rather than achieved fundamental change.

What makes this report different is its recognition of, and focus on, the need for fundamental change. While its predecessors identified specific ways to improve different aspects of primary staffing, we draw the outline of an alternative staffing system based on what a ‘good’ staffing model might look like. We then identify actions designed to get us to that end.

There is urgency here. Our goal is that all New Zealand children have opportunities to reach their potential – for themselves and society as a whole. In practice this means primary schools must enable children to learn in the ways that work best for them. It means teachers must be equipped and supported to teach in these ways and principals must be able to lead and manage their schools in the best ways to achieve this goal.

However, as our report demonstrates, achieving this goal has been made increasingly difficult by the diversity, complexity and inflexibility of the current primary school environment.

Of particular concern is the need to ensure that Māori are able to be Māori as they progress through their educational journey; that the Pacific learner can learn as a person of their culture; that children with disabilities have no barriers to inclusion; and that, no matter where a child lives, they can access the best possible educational experience.

To meet this challenge, our primary school sector needs a new dawn, a new pathway – and it is in the interests of all New Zealanders that the change starts now. If this report, and subsequent negotiations between NZEI Te Riu Roa and the Government, can make it happen, we will all have much to gain.

Readers of this report will notice there is no executive summary and the recommendations are placed at the end. This has been done to encourage reading of the whole report. We hope that by the time the recommendations have been read, they will be seen against a background of research, government decisions and what we heard from submitters. It is a matter of seeing both the forest and the trees, the big picture and the specific actions.

Acknowledgements

The review panel has a number of people to thank: Liam Rutherford and Paul Goulter for inviting us to undertake the review; Lyndy McIntyre who coordinated the writing of the report, organised meetings and generally kept the project on task; Scott Sinclair for managing the communications; Shannon Walsh for background research; Isabella Biggs for providing administrative support; and NZEI Te Riu Roa staff in national and regional offices.

We also must thank the thousands of teachers, support staff, principals, parents and whānau, academics, peak bodies from across the sector, and advocacy organisations, who provided us with their views. In the busy world of primary education, finding time to contribute to yet another review would not have been easy. That they did find time is testament to their commitment to the children they are preparing for the future.

Thank you to the fabulous students we met in schools around the country – above all you made it worthwhile.

Steve Maharey, Whetū Cormick, Dr Cathy Wylie, Peter Verstappen
The Pūaotanga review panel.



The review panel: Peter Verstappen, Steve Maharey, Dr Cathy Wylie, Whetū Cormick.

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The Context

Fit For Purpose?

Whatever the future of education might be, there is no doubt it will be shaped by a fundamental shift in our society away from homogeneity, standardisation and scale – to differentiation, diversity and fragmentation.

This shift is not new. It has been going on for decades and public policy makers have done their best to respond. In the case of education, what was once a one-size-fits-all system has been repeatedly modified as one challenge after another has demanded a response.

It is in our early childhood centres and primary schools that the foundation for successful learning is to be found.

In today's schools, teachers and principals know that in the 21st century every learner must acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions they will need for life-long learning in a rapidly changing knowledge-based society. In order for that to happen, schools must be fit for purpose. Staffing is critical to their success.

The need to make changes in education has been the focus of reports for many years. This report – Pūaotanga: An independent review of staffing in primary schools – focuses on the staffing resources needed in the primary sector to enable all children to fulfil their potential.

Many of the current staffing entitlement settings have been in place since they were introduced in 1996. In this review we asked if these settings are still fit for purpose and enable children to fulfil their potential now and looking to the future.

Those who made submissions to the review told us that the staffing of our primary schools has not kept up with the needs created by changes in society, education and schools.

In today's schools, teachers and principals know that in the 21st century every learner must acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions they will need for life-long learning in a rapidly changing knowledge-based society. In order for that to happen, schools must be fit for purpose. Staffing is critical to their success.

It is the opinion of the review panel, based on the evidence we have gathered, that significant staffing changes are needed in primary schools and kura. Small modifications to the system will not suffice. There needs to be a fundamental shift in the way we understand the role of staffing in the modern primary school setting.

The demand for this shift comes from two broad sources.

The first is the model of teaching and learning appropriate to a 21st century primary school. We have seen significant changes in what is taught, how it is taught and how it is assessed. Alongside pedagogical innovation, there have been changes in learning technology, school leadership and management, and community involvement. But there has been no increase in the support needed to ensure that schools can absorb and move with these changes.

In all this time there has never been a decisive shift to enable a consistent and successful approach to teaching and learning. Instead, change has been piled upon change. Policies have been introduced but not comprehensively rolled out or properly supported. Other policies have been introduced and withdrawn.

The second source is the wider social context. It could be and has been argued that schools should not have to deal with the many issues of concern today. What the sector told the review was that they have to deal with these issues because they are closely intertwined with their communities, and because children in schools are affected by societal change, including poverty and inequality.

As schools have sought to grapple with issues as diverse as meeting Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, demographic changes, inclusion, identity, inequality, mental health, behavioural problems, regional differences, family violence and the future needs of the workforce, there have been policy efforts to provide support. The review panel heard that schools have welcomed access to new resources, from teacher aides to health specialists and social workers.

Unfortunately though, we heard that these support policies have been inconsistent, underfunded, inequitable and sometimes inflexible. If this is to change there has to be an understanding that schools are having to deal with these issues and must be staffed and supported appropriately to do so. Not doing so means teachers have to find ways to manage very diverse and complex classrooms with inadequate or inappropriate resources.

Reimagining staffing resources

The review panel heard a similar story again and again. The staff of our schools love what they do and want to meet the needs of all the children they work with – but their efforts are constantly frustrated by the system in which they work. After listening to submitters, the review panel concluded that:

- Teachers do not have the time and support they need to ensure quality learning for all learners
- Principals do not have the time and support to lead and manage the complex organisations that are our modern schools
- Schools are required to deal with a myriad of other issues.

In addition, staffing resources are not fit for purpose and are likely to be less so as change continues. The system needs to be redesigned to handle the contemporary realities of learning and of New Zealand society.

Redesigning the system requires a reimagining of our primary schooling system so that it is fit for purpose for all children in the 21st century. Then we need to reimagine the staffing resources that make 'good' possible.

This is particularly true when we consider the Crown's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. For some Māori the choice to enter a total immersion setting is paramount. Others choose the mainstream setting. Regardless of choice, it should be possible to flourish as Māori in the education system. Aotearoa New Zealand is, after all, uniquely the home of Māori.

Redesigning the system requires a reimagining of our primary schooling system so that it is fit for purpose for all children in the 21st century. Then we need to reimagine the staffing resources that make 'good' possible.

Making the shift

We and others acknowledge that great things are happening in our primary schools. But as long as the roots of policy extend back to the era of one-size-fits-all education the frustration will continue.

Staffing resources would look very different if primary schooling policy were based on an understanding that, in their early years, all children need rich learning that equips them for lifelong learning, to feel secure and that they belong, and to experience wellbeing. Staffing policy should be clear and, over time, move in the right direction to ensure that all children get this kind of education in the primary school sector.

This is what Pūaotanga aims to map out. We're not in search of a simple or quick answer. That is not possible – and not desirable. Change in education should be carefully considered and carefully implemented. Too often new educational policy sweeps through schools, only to be discarded in favour of the next big idea.

Whatever the future of education might look like, it must be fit for the purpose of providing children with what they need for life-long learning in a knowledge-based society. Our future depends on it.



The Review

Staffing issues have long been troubling teachers, principals and others employed in the primary schooling sector. As they have not been resolved, NZEI Te Riu Roa decided to invite an independent panel to review staffing in the sector.

The Pūaotanga review panel comprised Steve Maharey (Chair), Whetū Cormick, Dr Cathy Wylie and Peter Verstappen. Steve is a former Minister of Education, Vice-Chancellor of Massey University and senior lecturer in sociology. Whetū is an educational consultant with extensive leadership experience as a teacher and principal and former president of the New Zealand Principals' Federation. Cathy is a chief researcher at the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, and was a member of the recent Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce. Peter has 30 years' experience as a primary school teacher and leader. He is the principal of Wakefield School, Nelson, and a former president of Hieke–Nelson Principals' Association.

The purpose of the review was to provide NZEI Te Riu Roa with independent advice on staffing in the sector, currently and into the future, from the perspective of what is necessary to enable children to fulfil their potential. That advice would then be taken back to members and used in negotiations with the Government.

The Pūaotanga review panel was convened in January 2021 and asked to consider two questions:

- 1 To what extent is the current staffing entitlement fit for purpose to enable children to fulfil their potential in our schools/kura?
- 2 Looking to the future, what staffing resources do we need to enable children to fulfil their potential in our schools/kura?

The name chosen for the review was 'Pūaotanga', which means a new dawn, a new pathway ... *emerging/unfolding ... toward enlightenment.*

The review panel's first step was to ensure that it had the information needed to form its view. In addition to asking for written submissions, the panel members engaged face-to-face with targeted peak bodies and other organisations and with individuals with particular knowledge and expertise, to hear their lived experiences of, and expert opinions on, current staffing and their ideas for the future.

Written submissions

The review panel called for written submissions on the two open-ended questions on 17 February. The opportunity to submit was available for eight weeks, until 12 April.

More than 2650 completed written submissions were received. Eighty-eight per cent of the submissions were from individuals and 12% were from organisations.

The largest group of submitters was teachers (56%), followed by support staff (13%), principals (11%), school senior leaders (8%) and parents and whānau members (5%).

- Most organisational submissions were from schools and kura (81%), with 6% from teachers' groups, 2% from principals' groups, 2% from Pacific organisations, 2% from disability sector organisations and the rest from a range of national and community organisations.
- 65% of the school responses (both individual and group) came from mid-size schools, 11% from small schools and 23% from large schools.
- Submissions from schools (both individual and group) were well spread across socioeconomic deciles, ranging from 7% coming from decile 2 schools to 13% coming from decile 10 schools.
- 43% of submitters were located in major cities, 17% in rural areas, 15% in small cities, 15% in small towns and 9% in large towns.
- 73% of the respondents were NZ European, 6% other European and 11% Māori. Just over 2% of the respondents were Pacific ethnicities. Many other ethnicities were also represented in the submissions, including Chinese, Indian, South East Asian and people from the Middle East and Africa.

Face-to-face submissions

In order to gain more information and hear the perspectives of peak body organisations and others with relevant experience, the review panel invited a range of organisations and individuals to face-to-face hearings, hui and a talanoa. Nearly 150 people attended these.

Three days of oral hearings were held: at May Road School in Auckland, Paparoa Street School in Christchurch, and Newlands Intermediate School and Berhampore School in Wellington. More than 40 separate submissions were heard at the hearings.

In addition to these hearings, Pūaotanga hui were held in Auckland and Christchurch. The first was at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Mangere. The second was to be at Rehua Marae in Christchurch, but a tangi necessitated another community venue. The hui were attended by Māori principals, teachers, other educators, whānau and parents from kura and mainstream schools, and organisations with a particular interest in tamariki Māori in primary education.

The talanoa was held at Otahuhu Primary School in Auckland and attended by Pacific principals, teachers and parents.

Because of the consistent themes in submissions, it was not necessary to carry through an intention to hold Zoom calls for follow-up questions. However, a Zoom call was convened for small schools to further explore the large number of submissions received on their specific issues.

We report what we heard from submitters and what they thought would make a difference in the section *What We Heard*.

Putting it together

During the submissions process, the panel members also investigated past policy work on staffing and education, and research about staffing. Between them they read every submission, and they also met for a series of workshops to consider what submitters had to say, the underlying issues, and the relevant research and policy history.

This work contributed to the Pūaotanga report, which includes a proposed pathway forward and recommendations.



Why Primary Staffing Matters

In many ways much has changed in the primary education sector since the current staffing model was introduced in 1996. The changes to teaching and leadership have been huge. Societal change has been dramatic. Classrooms look very different.

There have been many reviews and working parties in the sector, and the introduction of numerous policies has added to the constant change. However, this has not resulted in the decisive shift needed to address the change.

This section provides a quantitative picture of the diversity and complex needs of primary students, an outline of the basis for primary staffing entitlement, a picture of teachers' and principals' workloads, a summary of research on class size, and details of current government commitments to staffing.

Can students reach their potential?

Firstly, and most importantly, this section looks at how well primary students are reaching their potential with the current staffing.

Statistics show that many primary students are not reaching their potential.

The last year of primary schooling is Year 8. The National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement has shown that many Year 8 students are performing below the expected curriculum level – more so than at Year 4.¹ Only 35% meet curriculum expectations in writing, 19% in science, 38% in social studies, 41% in mathematics, 51% in health and physical education, 59% in reading and 63% in the arts.

Staffing entitlement ratios (the number of students that generate a full-time teaching position) are higher for Years 4–8 than they are for Years 1–3.

In addition, the international studies in which New Zealand takes part show that 17% of our Year 5 students do not have basic mathematical knowledge and 12% do not have basic scientific knowledge appropriate to their age.²

These studies also show that, compared to other students, a higher proportion of students who are Māori, Pacific and living in low socio-economic-status homes are not reaching their potential.

1. Darr, Charles. (2017). 'The National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement. Wānangatia te Putanga Tauira'. Set 2, pp.57-60, Table 1, p. 58. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.nzcer.org.nz/system/files/journals/set/downloads/set2017_2_057.pdf
2. Rendall, Sarah., Emma Medina, Ryan Sutcliffe and Nicola Marshall. (2020). TIMSS 2018/19: *Mathematics, Year 5*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/205707/TIMSS-2018-Year-5-Maths.pdf; Marshall, Nicola., Sarah Rendall, Emma Medina and Ryan Sutcliffe. (2020). *TIMSS 2018/19: Science, Year 5*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/205708/TIMSS-2018-Year-5-Science.pdf

There is now widespread recognition that education in Aotearoa New Zealand has underserved tangata whenua and those with Pacific identities. This is clear in the new National Education and Learning Priorities and in the Government’s education work programme, including the Curriculum Refresh and the Tomorrow’s Schools reforms. Primary school learning and the work of teachers and principals are on a journey of changes that many welcome, but that will need better support than currently experienced to enable all children to fulfil their potential.

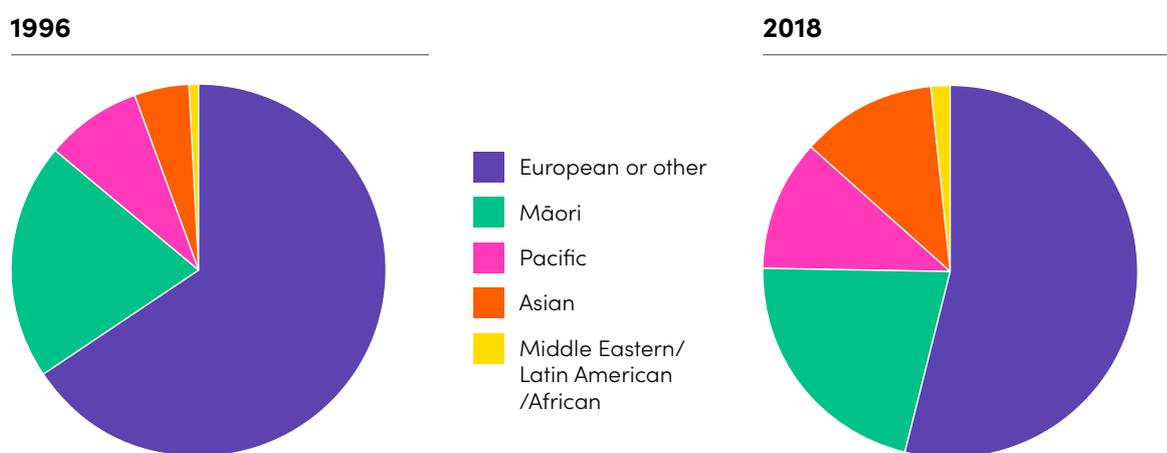
Increased diversity

There is much more diversity among our primary students now. Between 1996, when the current staffing entitlement was put in place, and 2018, there was considerable change in the ethnic make-up of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The number of children of primary school age (5–12 years) increased by 13%.³ In terms of ethnicity, the number of:

- European/Pākehā (or other) children decreased by 1%
- Māori children increased by 28%, or more than 30,000
- Pacific children increased by 64%, or more than 28,000⁴
- Asian children increased by 197%, or more than 51,500⁵
- Middle Eastern, Latin American and African children increased by 213%, or almost 6,500.⁶

Figure 1. Changes in ethnicity 5–12 year olds, 1996 to 2018.⁷



The extent of population change is shown in the graphs above.

- In 1996 the Māori primary-school-age population was 20.4% of the total primary-school-age population. By 2018 this had increased to 21.5%.
- In 1996 the Pacific primary-school-age population was 8.3% of the total. By 2018 this was 11.2%.
- In 1996 the Asian primary-school-age population was 4.9% of the total. By 2018 it was 11.9%.
- In 1996 the European or other primary-school-age population was 65.9% of the total. This decreased to 54.1% by 2018.

3 Statistics New Zealand. 'Estimated resident population (ERP), national population by ethnic group, age, and sex, 30 June 1996, 2001, 2006, 2013, and 2018'.

4 Statistics New Zealand's 'Pacific Peoples' classification includes eight categories that cover a diversity of Pacific communities.

5 Statistics New Zealand's 'Asian' classification includes five categories and a further 16 sub-classifications that cover ethnic groupings originating in and around the Asian continent.

6 Statistics New Zealand's 'Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA)' classification includes three categories and 45 sub-categories that cover a wide range of ethnic groupings. Detailed classification information can be found at: <http://aria.stats.govt.nz/aria/#ClassificationView:uri=http://stats.govt.nz/cms/ClassificationVersion/GK5KrPVgOmWoWY8G>

7 Statistics New Zealand. 'Estimated resident population (ERP), national population by ethnic group, age, and sex, 30 June 1996, 2001, 2006, 2013, and 2018'.

English for speakers of other languages

Aotearoa has a high proportion of primary students for whom English is an additional language, reflecting recent high migration rates and previous migration, particularly from the Pacific. In 2018 English was not always spoken in the homes of 31% of Year 5 students.⁸

Students living in hardship

There is now widespread recognition of the increases in inequality in Aotearoa since the mid-1980s, and of the difficulties experienced by many families with children when adults have low-paid, insecure work, or lack work.

- In June 2019 an estimated 150,000 children (13 in every 100) were living in households unable to afford six or more essential items. An estimated 66,100 (six in every 100 children) were living in households experiencing severe material hardship (unable to afford nine or more essential items).
- In June 2019 8.2% of children (92,300) were living in households experiencing both material hardship and income poverty. There has been an overall decline since 2013, with an estimated 21,500 fewer children experiencing these circumstances.
- However, there has been an increase in the number of hardship grants since 2017, with a marked increase in 2020 showing that many families and whānau in Aotearoa are living in precarious circumstances in which there is little or no capacity to absorb sudden changes in income. High housing costs contribute to income poverty and restrict opportunities for many households with children. More than three in 10 of the lowest-income households with children spend more than half their incomes on housing costs, a state of very high housing stress.⁹

Increased additional and complex learning needs

The inclusion in mainstream classes of students with additional and complex learning needs began in earnest in the 1990s, with greater momentum from 1998 when staffing for 'special needs' units (as they were referred to at the time) was ended.¹⁰ Doing this well remains a challenge, as many of the issues identified in an early review of the Special Education 2000 policy continue.¹¹

That review recommended that staffing entitlement include SENCOs (special education needs coordinators) at a modest 0.2 FTE (full-time teacher equivalent) for primary schools. That amount of time would seem inadequate now to many of those who made submissions to Pūaotanga, given the growth in student need and that more schools are working hard to include all their students in everyday classes. Most schools do have a SENCO role, but this is not included in their staffing entitlement. It is added to other existing roles.

While there is widespread consensus that the prevalence of additional learning needs has increased in the past 30 years, there is less agreement on its nature and cause. This is because learning 'need' is complex and difficult to measure, and our understanding of it has evolved considerably in the past 30 years.

8 Marshall, Nicola et al. (2020). TIMSS 2018/19: *Science, Year 5*.

9 Duncanson, Mavis, Georgia Richardson, Glenda Oben, Andrew Wicken, Hedwig van Asten, and Judith Adams. (2020). *Child Poverty Monitor 2020 Technical Report*. Dunedin: NZ Child and Youth Epidemiology Service, University of Otago. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/handle/10523/10585>

10 The term 'special needs' was generally used in the 1990s. Today the term 'additional and complex' needs is more commonly used. This is a fast-changing area, and some of the terms used are changing.

11 Wylie, Cathy. (2000). *Picking up the Pieces. Review of Special Education 2000*. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/15336/10605-wylie-review---download.pdf

Statistics for the 2013 New Zealand Disability Survey (the most recent available survey) show that 11% of those aged up to 14 years are identified as having a disability, a result unchanged from the 2001 survey.¹² The rate for Māori is higher, at 15%, again unchanged between 2001 and 2013.

A recent report from the Ministry of Education, drawing on the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), states that about “22% of students aged 5–11 years had some record of receiving learning support in the IDI”.¹³ However, the report also suggests that large pockets of unmet need exist. Around 41% of students with disabilities in the 5–11 year age group, including a third of those with learning impairments, have no record of Ministry-funded learning support recorded in the IDI.¹⁴

ORS funding

The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) provides specialist support for students with the highest ongoing levels of need. As at 1 July 2020 there were 10,160 students receiving ORS funding, an increase from 7390 10 years earlier.¹⁵ These students represented 1.2% of the total schooling population. In 2020 there were 1895 applications to the ORS, of which 1281 were successful and 614 unsuccessful, giving a 32.4% rejection rate. This rejection rate is consistent each year; based on data from 2014 to 2020, approximately a third of ORS applications are rejected.¹⁶ Rejected applications have the option for reviews.

Data on these reviews suggests that the ORS application process can act as an unnecessary barrier to the ORS meeting students’ learning needs. In 2020 there were 219 reviews of rejected applications, or 36% of the total rejected applications. Fifty-five (25%) of these were successful. In 2019, 46 of the 127 reviews requested (36%) were successful. In previous years, the percentage of successful reviews was even higher, up to 48% in 2013.¹⁷

Accessing specialist support

The Ministry of Education’s own measures of its performance in responding to schools needing support related to behaviour indicate that it cannot respond quickly enough. The target for the average number of days in which eligible children and young people wait to receive support after requesting support from the behaviour service is 50 calendar days (exceeded in some regions due to issues with attracting specialist staff). For those students needing the communication service, the average wait is 75 calendar days.¹⁸

Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) were introduced in August 2019 to improve responsiveness and support for students with mild to moderate, neurodiverse, or high and complex learning support needs. The first tranche allocated 623 full-time permanent

12 Statistics New Zealand. (2013). Disability Survey 2013 – Tables. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/disability-survey-2013>; Ministry of Health. (2005). *Living with Disability in New Zealand: Summary*. Wellington: Ministry of Health. Accessed 20 May, 2021: [https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/69D5DF3BF07CDC7ECC25704600127C3E/\\$file/livingwithdisability-summary.pdf](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/69D5DF3BF07CDC7ECC25704600127C3E/$file/livingwithdisability-summary.pdf)

13 Mhuru, Mercy. (2020). *He Whakaaro: The Educational Experiences of Disabled Learners*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. p.11. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/199030/He-Whakaaro-The-educational-experiences-of-disabled-learners.pdf

14 Ibid., p.12.

15 Education counts. ORS data, number of students by time series, 2005–2020. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/ongoing-resourcing-scheme>

16 Data received by NZEI Te Riu Roa through Official Information Act request, OIA #1253303.

17 Data received by NZEI Te Riu Roa through Official Information Act request, OIA #1247529.

18 Ministry of Education. (2020). *Annual Report*. p.50. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Ministry/Publications/Annual-Reports/2020/2020-MOE-Annual-Report-with-Erratum-FINAL-WEB.pdf>

positions to 124 school clusters, on a ratio of 1:500 students. Clusters then decided on the schools in which to base them, and they are currently based in 1052 schools.

An evaluation of the first year was positive, but also indicated some areas of concern. These included: limitations to access for intensive and targeted support; long wait times; access for rural schools/kura; a lack of consideration of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori in support service design; and issues with meeting funding criteria (for example for ORS).¹⁹

Insufficient resources to meet children’s needs

Several recent surveys have quantified the problem:

NZEI Te Riu Roa LSC survey: 2020

This survey²⁰ showed that:

- 63% of respondents believed their schools did not have the resources needed for all students to participate fully
- Wait time was a significant issue, with 68% of respondents saying they could not access external support within a reasonable timeframe
- 46% believed that 20–40% of the schools’ students were prevented from full participation due to inadequate funding
- Schools’ own resources were often insufficient to provide the staffing needed to meet these students’ needs.

New Zealand Principals Federation (NZPF) online survey: 2020

In an NZPF survey of its members, which received 682 responses:

- 89% said their schools did not have sufficient funds to meet their level of learning support needs
- 89% also said their schools did not have sufficient funding to employ staff to meet students’ pastoral, wellbeing and mental health needs
- 83% said they did not have sufficient funds to employ the necessary teacher aides to support children’s needs
- 94% thought that every school should have a fully funded SENCO or LSC.

More support needed around mental health

New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) national survey of primary schools: 2019

This survey showed that:

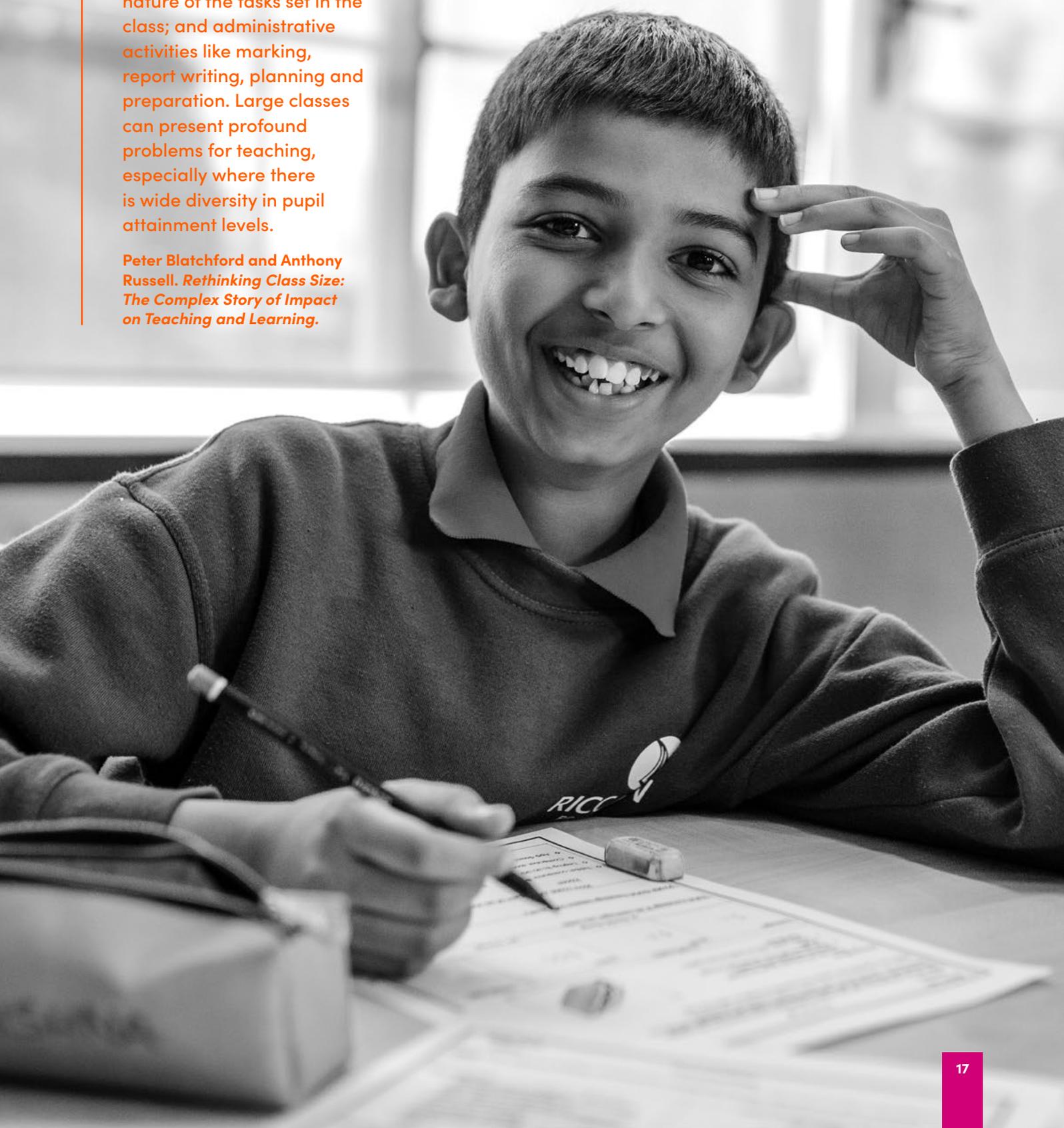
- 63% of principals identified support for students with mental health needs or additional wellbeing needs as a major issue facing their schools
- 77% of teachers had had to deal with at least one incident of extreme behaviour in their classes in 2019, and 69% wanted more help to manage students’ extreme behaviour in ways that kept other students and staff safe
- 25% of primary teachers had often experienced student behaviour that caused serious disruptions in their classes, and 24% occasionally felt unsafe in their classes. These figures were double the 12% who had reported this in 2016.

¹⁹ Andrews, Sarah., et al. (2021). *Learning Support Coordinator Evaluation: Phase 1 Formative and Process Evaluation. Report for the Ministry of Education*. Auckland: Synergia. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/LSC/LSC-review/LSC-Evaluation-final-report-18-March-2021-.pdf>

²⁰ Key findings from this survey were included in NZEI Te Riu Roa’s submission to Pūaotanga.

[Class size] affects the balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching; classroom management of behaviour; the size, number and management of groups in the class; the quality of peer relationships; the nature of the tasks set in the class; and administrative activities like marking, report writing, planning and preparation. Large classes can present profound problems for teaching, especially where there is wide diversity in pupil attainment levels.

Peter Blatchford and Anthony Russell. *Rethinking Class Size: The Complex Story of Impact on Teaching and Learning.*



NZPF online survey of its members, with 682 responses: 2020

- 64% of schools had had to evacuate a class (21% more than six times) because of extreme student behaviour.
- 86% of principals reported that funded counselling services was an urgent need for their students.

What's the history of school staffing entitlement?

Since Tomorrow's Schools introduced self-managing schools in 1989, there have been two major reforms of school staffing entitlement:

- The Ministerial Reference Group (MRG) of 1995, which introduced a unified staffing formula.
- The School Staffing Review Group (SSRG), which led to reforms of staffing entitlement throughout the early 2000s.

The MRG

The MRG introduced the staffing entitlement formula that we still use today. It was formed in 1994 by then Minister of Education Lockwood Smith to pick up on the work of its predecessor, the Schools Consultative Group (SCG), formed in 1992.

The SCG was made up of representatives of the teaching unions, principals' associations, employers and several key ministries and agencies. It was tasked with advising the Government on "a set of principles within the context of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms that should form the basis of an equitable and efficient funding scheme for the management of teacher salaries", as well as the mechanism for introducing that change. The SCG delivered its final report in September 1994 and was then dissolved. Its members had been able to agree on a framework for generating resource entitlements; however, they had not been able to agree on the delivery mechanism. Resource entitlements were primarily linked to student roll numbers; some were through operational grants in dollars for schools to cover their operating costs, and some were through staffing entitlement (positions that were paid centrally).

Before the MRG the staffing entitlement system was highly fragmented and inequitable, as it was based on school type and size and a series of formulae applied unevenly across schools. The MRG simplified and rationalised this system, breaking staffing entitlement into two core components: curriculum delivery and management time.

Previously, schools in poor and fast-growing areas such as South Auckland had had additional staffing entitlement, based on 'notional rolls' that were 15% or 20% higher than their actual rolls. After the MRG, resources to support equity were no longer included in staffing entitlement; they were in operational grants via the new Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement, which related to the new school decile measures. This funding did not make up for the staff losses in schools with notional roll staffing entitlement.

Staffing entitlement since 1996

From 1996 curriculum delivery was based on teacher:student ratios.

Table 1. MRG ratios, effective from 1 February 1996

Year of schooling	Teacher: Student ratio
Year 1-3	1:23
Year 4-6	1:29
Year 7-8	1:29
Year 9-10	1:25
Year 11	1:23
Year 12	1:18
Year 13	1:17

Most of these ratios have since remained the same, aside from those for Year 1 (which was reduced to 1:15 in 2009) and Year 9-10 (which was reduced to 1:23.5 in 2006).

Management entitlements were introduced to “deliver time for schools to manage the total curriculum process”²¹ using a complex formula that remains in place today. The formula is weighted towards secondary students.

The MRG also introduced:

- A Maximum Average Class Size (MACS) of 28, applying to schools with Year 1-8 students with rolls of fewer than 160
- An additional entitlement for Māori immersion programmes.

Along with unifying the staffing formula in a more simplified and equitable model, the MRG recommendations added 800 FTE to the primary sector, which due to roll growth was 1000 more FTE by the time it was implemented in 1996.

The SSRG

The SSRG was convened in 2000 by then Minister of Education Trevor Mallard. Comprising representatives of the teaching unions, principals’ associations, the New Zealand School Trustees’ Association and Te Runanga Nui ō Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, it was to provide the Government with advice on the teacher staffing needs of the compulsory state school sector.

After 10 months’ looking at existing staffing provisions, issues in the sector, existing research and written submissions, the group released its report in February 2001. Recognising that “increasingly complex individualised curricula and societal problems have made it progressively more difficult for the pastoral and educational relationship between student and teacher to be maintained and developed”,²² it recommended “significant increases” in school staffing, with many aimed at addressing teacher and principal workload levels and the additional workloads in low-decile schools, small schools and schools with teaching principals.

21 Ministry of Education. (1995). *Resource Entitlement for School Staffing: The Report of the Ministerial Reference Group*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. p.16.

22 Ministry of Education. (2001). *Report of the School Staffing Review Group/Te Pūrongo Arotake Ngā Whakaritenga Kaimahi Kura*, Wellington: Ministry of Education. p.6.

The Report of the School Staffing Review Group contained numerous recommendations to be implemented gradually:

Curriculum

- A reduction of MACS for primary students in schools with rolls of fewer than 176 students, from 28 to 25.
- A reduction in teacher:student ratios in Māori medium schools to 1:15.
- An improved base curriculum staffing of 0.2 FTE for Years 9-13.
- A reduction in ratios for Years 1-3, to 1:20.
- A reduction in ratios for Years 4-8, to 1:25.
- A reduction in ratios for Years 9-13, by two students (e.g. 1:25 became 1:23).

Management

- The introduction of a professional leadership component for schools with rolls of fewer than 250, and 1.0 FTE for all schools with rolls of 250 or more.
- Additional base management staffing for secondary schools of 1.0 FTE per school.

The staged implementation of the SSRG recommendations began in 2001, with a staffing increase in small, isolated rural primary, secondary and area schools. The professional leadership component was introduced in 2002. Staffing increases continued in the years that followed. A 1:20 ratio for Māori medium schools was introduced in 2004, and Year 9-10 ratios were reduced to 1:23.5 in 2006. The MACS was reduced in stages until it reached 25 in 2007.

By 2006 the implementation of the SSRG recommendations had put about 3040 additional FTEs into the schooling system.²³ Year 1 ratios were reduced to 1:15 in 2009, but the recommended ratio reductions for Years 1-3, from 1:23 to 1:20, and Years 4-8 to 1:25 were never implemented. They remain at the same level as they were in 1996.

By 2004 there was some recognition of the increased complexity of primary school teaching and the need for teachers to have non-teaching time. In that year a classroom release time of 10 hours a term was negotiated by NZEI Te Riu Roa as part of the primary teachers' collective agreement, instead of it being covered in the school staffing entitlement. Primary teachers have had 10 hours a term since late 2005, in contrast to the five hours a week, or a day's teaching time each week, that is included in the secondary teachers' collective agreement.

Shortfalls in staffing entitlement

In 2019 68% of primary principals thought their teaching staff entitlements were inadequate.²⁴ Almost all used their operational grants and locally raised funding to hire one or more additional teachers, mainly to take classes, support students with learning support needs, or provide literacy or numeracy support. This is a consistent pattern in NZCER's national surveys of primary schools since 2013. Staffing levels and class sizes have been major issues for principals, with the percentage identifying these as major issues increasing from 34% of principals in 2010 to 53% in 2019.

23 New Zealand Government. (2005). *Extra Teachers to Target Secondary Class Sizes*. Scoop. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0508/S00368/extra-teachers-to-target-secondary-class-sizes.htm>

24 Wylie, Cathy and Jo MacDonald. (2020). *What's Happening in our English-medium Primary Schools. Findings from the NZCER national survey 2019*. Wellington: NZCER. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.nzcer.org.nz/research/publications/what-s-happening-our-english-medium-primary-schools-findings-nzcer-national-0>

The issues

Many teachers have large classes

National data on class sizes is not routinely collected, so we asked teachers making online submissions to Pūaotanga to state their class sizes. Just under half had 25 students or more, increasing to 70% of teachers of students in Year 4 and above. A third of the Year 7 and 8 teachers had classes of more than 30 students.

Table 2. Class size x year level %

	Year 0-1	Year 2-3	Year 4-6	Year 7-8	Total
<15	22%	4%	2%	3%	7%
15-20	37%	12%	4%	5%	14%
20-25	25%	49%	25%	15%	30%
25-30	7%	26%	53%	42%	33%
30+	9%	9%	17%	34%	16%

Class size matters

A recent comprehensive review of research on class size showed that it does matter because it affects teaching and learning processes and teacher workload.²⁵

“[Class size] affects the balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching; classroom management of behaviour; the size, number and management of groups in the class; the quality of peer relationships; the nature of the tasks set in the class; and administrative activities like marking, report writing, planning and preparation. Large classes can present profound problems for teaching, especially where there is wide diversity in pupil attainment levels. It adversely affects the amount and quality of individual support and feedback, the setting up of practical and investigative tasks, and time for marking and preparation. It often leads to more whole-class teaching than teachers would like.

“Our research has also shown how large classes can affect teachers themselves, who in a sense soak up the negative consequences, for example by more demanding classroom management, the need for extra individual support, and excessive marking in their own time. This can in turn affect their wellbeing and teacher retention more generally.

“... Children in larger classes show less on-task and more off-task behaviour, and this is particularly marked for low-attaining pupils. Moreover, for many teachers the effects of class size on pupil development are more broadly defined – for example, in terms of creative work, investigative skills and independent working.”²⁶

A 2014 review of large-scale statistical research on the effects of class size on children’s learning showed that student learning gained from class size reductions, and this was seen in higher test scores and greater effort, motivation and engagement.²⁷

25 Blatchford, Peter and Anthony Russell. (2020). *Rethinking Class Size: The Complex Story of Impact on Teaching and Learning*. London: UCL Press. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/166006>

26 Blatchford, Peter. (2020). *Blog Post: Rethinking Class Size: The Complex Story of Impact on Teaching and Learning*. London: BERA blog. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/rethinking-class-size-the-complex-story-of-impact-on-teaching-and-learning>

27 Schanzenbach, Dianne Whitmore. (2014). *Does Class Size Matter?* Boulder: National Education Policy Center. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/pb_-_class_size.pdf

Time matters

Teachers and school leaders need more time to work together and teachers need time to plan, evaluate, and learn themselves.

The 1996 staffing entitlement formula, coupled with the high number of teaching hours included in the primary teachers' collective agreement, goes against the now substantial research evidence on improving schools and teaching. For example, the core practices described in the Ministry of Education's best evidence synthesis series²⁸ and in the Educational Leadership Capability Framework,²⁹ require teachers to have time to work together, analyse and discuss student progress and identify areas to tackle in their teaching, and more experienced teachers to observe and support those less experienced.

Salary units for additional school responsibilities give money, but not time.³⁰

High workloads

Principals

The 2019 NZCER national survey showed that 72% of primary principals thought too much was being asked of schools, up from 42% in the 2013 survey, and that around two-thirds of principals were working 56 hours a week or more. The 2020 Deakin survey of principals and other school senior leaders showed that 70% worked 50 hours a week or more in term time, and all but a few worked during school holidays, with almost half putting in more than 25 hours' work a week.³¹

The sheer quantity of work and a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning were the biggest sources of stress for primary principals and other school senior leaders (8.1 and 7.7 on a scale of 10), followed by resourcing needs (6.9), staff mental health issues (6) and teacher shortages (4.5).

The 2019 NZCER national survey showed that:

- 29% of primary principals thought their workloads were manageable
- 28% could schedule enough time for the educational leadership parts of their jobs
- 23% thought their workloads were sustainable.

Primary principals' morale was the lowest it had been since 2010 (when the strongly opposed National Standards were made mandatory), with 36% reporting only satisfactory or poor morale.

Stress levels had also increased, from 37% of principals reporting high or extremely high stress levels in 2010 to 59% in 2019. Tiredness was more of an issue in 2019 than it had been in previous national surveys.

79% of primary principals wanted more time to focus on educational leadership, up from 62% in 2010.

28 See: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2515>

29 See: <https://teachingcouncil.nz/professional-practice/rauhuia-leadership-space-home/rauhuia-leadership-space/leadership-resources/#educational>

30 Salary units are roll related, with a formula that gives more to secondary schools than primary schools. Middle management and senior management allowances are only available to secondary schools.

31 Riley, Philip, Mark Rahimi and Ben Arnold. (2021). *The New Zealand Primary Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey. 2020 Data*. Melbourne: Research for Educational Impact (REDI). Deakin University. Accessed 31 May, 2021: https://www.nzei.org.nz/UploadedFiles/HWSurvey_Primary_Principals.pdf

Teachers

Primary teachers in New Zealand are required to teach for 922 hours a year, compared to an average 794 hours a year in other OECD countries.

In 2020, almost half of the 2415 primary teachers who took part in the New Zealand Primary Teacher Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Survey³² said they worked more than 50 hours a week during the school term, and most worked at least 10 hours a week during school holidays. This was a much higher workload than outlined in their collective agreement.

The same survey showed how they rated sources of stress out of 10, putting lack of time to focus on teaching and learning and the sheer quantity of work at the top (7.5 and 7), closely followed by student issues relating to learning needs and behaviour (6.5 each), then lack of support for dealing with students with additional learning needs (5.7), student issues relating to mental health (5.4), wait times for support (5.2), lack of classroom resources (4.8), and physical environment (3.5).

The 2019 NZCER national survey showed that while most primary teachers enjoyed their jobs, less than half thought their workloads were manageable or fair, or that they could manage the levels of work-related stress they experienced. A quarter thought their workloads were so high they could not do justice to all the students they taught, and a further 26% gave neutral answers here.

Two-thirds of teachers taking part in the 2019 NZCER survey had roles beyond the classroom. A third received some monetary recognition for these essential roles through management units.

Teacher aides have become essential

Support staff are funded through operational funding rather than staffing entitlement. Teacher aide numbers increased by 33% between 1999 and 2009, and they have since increased further.³³

In May 2020 the Ministry of Education and NZEI Te Riu Roa settled an historic pay equity claim for teacher aides, recognising the past undervaluation of this workforce. As part of this settlement a career path for teacher aides is currently being developed by a sub-group formed under the Education Accord. The career path will be available to all teacher aides and will provide time and resourcing for professional learning and development (PLD) to support their career progression.

Access to PLD and qualifications is supported by the teacher aide pilot PLD fund, which is also part of the pay equity settlement. The \$2.29 million pilot runs until February 2022 (the expiry of the Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement). It gives teacher aides access to a range of PLD opportunities. The fund is being well utilised, with more than \$1 million spent and more than 2000 teacher aides benefiting as of 18 March 2021.³⁴

The existing research shows that teacher aides are more effective if they have PLD opportunities and time to work with teachers.³⁵

32 Riley, Philip, Mark Rahimi and Ben Arnold. (2021). The New Zealand Primary Teacher Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey. 2020 Data. Melbourne: Research for Educational Impact (REDI). Deakin University. Accessed 31 May, 2021: https://www.nzei.org.nz/UploadedFiles/HWSurvey_Primary_Teachers.pdf

33 Support Staff Workforce Strategy Working Group. (2010). Report of the Working Group.

34 NZEI Te Riu Roa submission to Pūaotanga.

35 See: Sharma, Umesh and Spencer J. Salend, (2016). Teaching assistants in inclusive classrooms: a systematic analysis of the international research. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(8). Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/193039589.pdf>

The vision for 2032 is that “Aotearoa New Zealand will have a strong, culturally competent, education workforce that drives a world leading, learner-focused education system”, including one that “plays a significant role in fostering Māori and Pacific identity, language and culture with the confidence and capability to support te reo and te ao learning for all”.

Draft Education Workforce Strategy

Public support for primary staffing improvements

In online surveys in 2018–2019, which provided views representative of the New Zealand public in terms of age, gender and region, over three-quarters thought that: primary class sizes should be reduced; primary teachers should be given more time in their working days to do things like planning, preparation and assessments; and primary teachers were bogged down in administration, which was getting in the way of their teaching.³⁶

The National Party’s 2019 education discussion document included a policy to reduce teacher:student ratios, “to help reduce class sizes and to give children more teacher time... Reducing the ratio will mean teachers can be more effective in their work, address excessive workload and increase their sense of well-being”.³⁷

Government plans to address primary staffing

The Government has long signalled the need to address primary staffing.

In 2018 work began on a comprehensive Education Workforce Strategy co-designed with the education sector, setting out a vision for the Education Workforce 2032.³⁸ The first draft was made available in early 2019.³⁹

An analysis of the need for change included:

We have expected more and more of schools and teachers without providing the support and resources to deliver on these expectations. Teaching and learning has become more complex and data and evidence driven. Many new functions are expected of schools and teachers.

The vision for 2032 is that “Aotearoa New Zealand will have a strong, culturally competent, education workforce that drives a world leading, learner-focused education system”, including one that “plays a significant role in fostering Māori and Pacific identity, language and culture with the confidence and capability to support te reo and te ao learning for all”.

36 The Navigators. (2019). *Public Attitudes to the Level of Support Being Provided to New Zealand Primary and Secondary Teachers*. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://www.nzei.org.nz/UploadedFiles/Media/Teachers_Public_Attitudes_Survey_The_Navigators_May_2019.pdf

37 New Zealand National Party. (2019). *Education Discussion Document*, p.15. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/nationalparty/pages/15182/attachments/original/1611196346/Education_Discussion_Document.pdf?1611196346

38 Education Workforce Strategy Group. (2009). *Vision for the Education Workforce 2032: EWSG Co-Designed Vision*. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Vision-for-the-Education-Workforce-2032.pdf>

39 The co-construction of a draft Education Workforce Strategy is mentioned among other pre-COVID-19 commitments and priorities being advanced in the Secretary for Education’s introduction to the Ministry’s *Annual Report*, and it is included as a component in the Education Work Programme 2021.

The Education Workforce Strategy also emphasises the importance of “clear and accessible pathways for professional growth” for all roles, sufficient people in the workforce who reflect the diversity of our ākonga/students, the wellbeing of the workforce as a priority, the kaiako/teacher as a high-status role that is valued by the community, with attractive terms and conditions of service, and a workforce that is supported.

The Māori Medium Education Workforce Group added a specific goal of 30% of Māori learners to be in Rāngai Māori⁴⁰ education by 2032, and drew attention to the rapid increase in fluent te reo-trained kaiako who would be needed to reach this goal.

Tomorrow’s Schools Review recommendations

Several of the recommendations made by the Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce that have a direct bearing on the provision of primary sector staffing were accepted by the Government in late 2019 to progress.

Improve management staffing and provide guidance counselling

The Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce final report (2019)⁴¹ (pp.68–69) drew attention to the importance of having strong leadership teams in every school and the discrepancy between primary staffing entitlement for school management and the number of management units, which were both lower in primary schools than in secondary schools. It also noted the importance of primary schools having entitlements to guidance counselling, particularly in light of reported increases in anxiety and mental health issues in young children.

In 2019 the Government accepted the taskforce’s recommendation for improved staffing entitlement for primary school management, as well as guidance counselling staffing entitlement, giving these ‘Priority C’ status and committing to progress “within 4+ years”.⁴²

Reduce management load for school leaders

The Government also accepted a recommendation from the Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce that: “Responsibility for five year property agreement (5YA) and major capital works is removed from boards of state schools/kura with an option for some schools to retain responsibility based on national criteria”, and “property maintenance, financial, and procurement services are made available to boards that wish to use them by the Education Support Learning Network office [now ESA]”.

The Government gave this ‘Priority A’ status, committing to progress “within the next 18–24 months”.

Increase equity funding to include staffing

The Government accepted this recommendation, also with ‘Priority A’ status, to be progressed “within the next 18–24 months”:

40 Total immersion, with more than 81% of learning in Te Reo Māori (Level 1). Currently around 10% of Māori learners are in Māori medium immersion levels 1 or 2.

41 Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce. (2019). *Our Schooling Futures: Stronger Together Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinini Final report*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. pp.68–69. Accessed 20 May, 2021: https://conversation-space.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/Tomorrows+Schools+FINAL+Report_WEB.pdf

42 Ministry of Education. (2019). *Supporting All Schools to Succeed. Reform of the Tomorrow’s Schools system*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Accessed 20 May, 2021: <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/assets/TSR/November-2019/TSR-Government-Response-WEB.pdf>

“The new Equity Index is implemented as soon as possible and equity funding is increased to a minimum of 10% of total school resourcing (operational and staffing) in relation to the level and concentration of disadvantage of the learners/ākonga enrolled in a school/kura”.

Develop a workforce strategy

Finally, the Government committed to the development of an education workforce strategy:

“A comprehensive workforce strategy is implemented, monitored, reviewed and publicly reported annually, with priority given to ensuring that the diversity of the learner/ākonga population is reflected in the workforce”.

This was given ‘Priority A’ status, with a commitment to progress “within the next 18–24 months”.





What We Were Told

The themes and issues of over 2600 written submissions and the oral submissions at hearings, hui and talanoa told the same story. Principals and teachers are dedicated to the profession they love and committed to playing their part in ensuring all children receive the teaching they need to fulfil their potential. They want to embrace the child-centred learning that is at the heart of today's primary schooling system. They are flexible and innovative and work hard to overcome the challenges they face.

But their dedication and commitment are not enough. The challenges in today's classrooms and schools are overwhelming. Over and over again – whether they were from small towns or large cities, from decile one or decile 10 schools, from principals or parents – submitters told us that the challenges for our primary schools and kura have multiplied, and current staffing does not meet those challenges.

These challenges were repeated throughout the submissions:

- Increased diversity of students.
- Increased complexity of learning needs.
- More student-centred teaching, sometimes in flexible learning spaces.
- A broader and more complex curriculum.
- Insufficient time to do the job.
- Unmanageable workloads.
- A sense that children are missing out, because teachers cannot do the jobs they signed up for.

Teachers and principals told us they are exhausted by the challenges. The current staffing entitlement in primary schools and kura no longer supports the learning environment required to provide the foundation every child needs to take their place in the Aotearoa of the future.

"The world has changed but the way we run schools has not!"

Submission after submission painted a clear picture of a daily struggle to cope with the overwhelming workloads created by the diversity and complexity of today's classrooms:

“Last year I had 32 children. Three were diagnosed with autism. Four more children with psychological issues. This was year two – seven-year-olds. No teacher aide. No extra support. Children are beginning school with no language, no speech therapy available. The funding model is not equitable and it is broken. There is a huge continuum of need in ESOL, behaviour, not enough pre-school. We don't have adequate support. Schools across New Zealand are dealing with this. My wellbeing is significantly affected by the stress. It's exhausting. I live and breathe this every day.”

“We have groups of students who need extra learning support but I feel I never have the time to devote to helping them make progress. Like many teachers, my evenings and weekends are spent preparing and planning lessons because my days are spent resolving playground issues, attending meetings or PD sessions, completing assessment or administrative requirements. Our days feel so time pressured and I feel that in the 20 years I have been teaching there is so much more pressure on teachers and our workload has increased dramatically.”

Teachers told us they cannot do the jobs they signed up to and love. One submitter summed up the feeling shared across submissions: *“I feel overwhelmed by the number of children in my Year 1 class and would love more support so I could meet the needs of every child.”*

We heard from principals about the challenges of providing leadership in schools while running increasingly complex organisations. Principals in large schools are running the equivalent of medium-sized businesses, while those in small schools struggle to address a multitude of issues of their own.

We heard from Māori that we have a racist education system, that is broken and failing tamariki Māori. For those working in both Māori medium and English medium, every day is a battle to keep te reo and tikanga Māori alive. There are huge problems in recruiting teachers with te reo and tikanga skills, understanding and competency. Māori leaders across the schooling system face crippling workloads as they undertake multiple commitments in their communities and schools.

We heard from Pacific submitters that their children thrive when they have access to their culture and language, but there is little support for providing this in our primary schools.

We heard pleas for a bold plan that addresses children's learning support needs, the teaching challenges and the leadership requirements – and the deeper needs of Māori and Pacific.

One submitter summed up the need for systemic change: *“The world has changed but the way we run schools has not!”*

To describe and summarise the submissions we grouped them into five themes:

- Learning support.
- Teaching.
- Leadership.
- Māori.
- Pacific.

We chose these themes because they best reflected the weighting of submissions. Table 3 provides a snapshot of the major points of each theme, displayed across five dimensions, beginning with the child and moving across an expanding range, from the classroom to the school, the system and the wider community.

Figure 2.

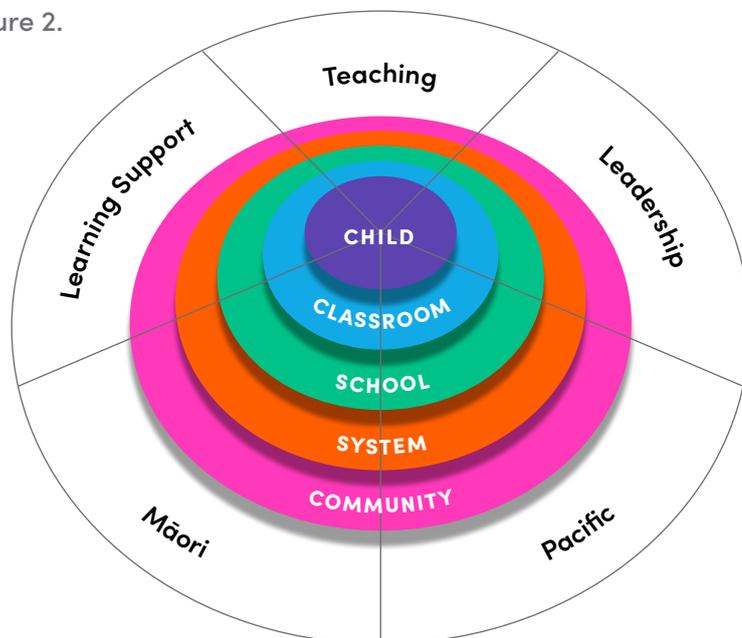
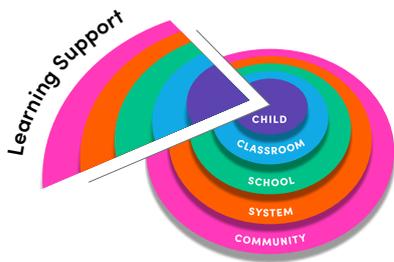


Figure 2 illustrates the interplay of themes and dimensions. The child, at the centre of the model, is both the end point and the origin of multiple forces that determine educational outcomes. The child is the subject of decisions and actions taken at all other levels – from how the community and family connects with education, through to system, school and classroom dimensions and individual acts of teaching the child experiences – and the source of further decisions and actions that flow through the levels in response to the child’s needs and capabilities. The model reminds us that the shortcomings exemplified in Table 3 cannot be addressed in isolation from each other. Reform must be fundamental and comprehensive. This is addressed in the final section of the report, *The Pathway Forward*.

Table 3. What stops schools ensuring that every child reaches their potential? What we were told

DIMENSIONS →	CHILD	CLASSROOM	SCHOOL	SYSTEM	COMMUNITY	
← THEMES →	Learning Support	Many more children with high or complex needs.	Too few teacher aides and hours and too little teacher time to maintain high-quality programmes and positive environments for all children.	Limited SENCO resources. Local funds papering over the cracks in central resourcing at cost to other areas.	Fragmentation of delivery, too many demanding applications to be made, often without success. Few specialists to support schools adequately.	Societal trends leading to a rise in needs. Families turn to schools for support that is lacking from other agencies.
	Teaching	The challenge of more differentiated teaching that aims to build learner confidence and capacity to learn, as well as acquiring specific skills and knowledge.	'Robbing Peter to pay Paul': students miss out because of class size and needs. Over-large workloads and not enough non-contact time.	Not enough non-contact time for teachers to fully implement school-wide development initiatives and curriculum PLD. Limited access to external PLD support.	Curriculum breadth and sophistication needs more specialist advisory support. Insufficient Initial teacher education and support for new teachers. Teacher supply is variable.	High expectations of partnership between home and school increase responsibilities and workloads for teachers. Teaching has lost status as a desirable career.
	Leadership	The challenge of ensuring school staff and resources are aligned and able to meet the New Zealand Curriculum vision for every child: "confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners".	Insufficient time for leaders to actively engage with teachers' classroom practice. Workload issues prevent principals giving teachers the support they want and need.	High and stressful workloads, running complex organisations with insufficient leadership team roles and administrative support. Leaders in small schools are 'everything to everybody'.	Inadequate support from government agencies. Excessive burden of administrative and compliance tasks in a highly devolved system.	Very high expectation that leaders are actively engaged with all parents and whānau. Communities look to principals for leadership beyond their schools.
	In addition to the themes and issues above, there are further pressures for Māori and Pacific					
Māori	The challenge of ensuring every Māori child experiences educational success, and succeeds as Māori.	Insufficient te-reo-speaking staff. Finding and retaining trained staff in Māori and English medium settings. Lack of culturally and language-appropriate resources and specialist support for students with additional needs.	Pressure of multiple roles, particularly for tumuaki. Challenges for leaders to maintain culturally safe environments. Too few capable and experienced middle leaders to sustain and grow leadership in Māori medium settings.	Structural racism. Models that do not fit well and are inflexible. Insufficient PLD provision that is culturally responsive, competent and sustainable.	Complex relationships between communities and schools place additional roles and expectations on staff. English medium staff not knowing how to engage appropriately with whānau, iwi and hapū.	
Pacific	The challenge of meeting the rising demand for children to learn in their Pacific languages. Ensuring every Pacific child experiences educational success, while their identity is well supported.	Finding and retaining trained Pacific staff and maintaining bilingual units. Lack of culturally and language-appropriate resources and specialist support for students with additional needs.	Too little support for Pacific bilingual units. Challenges for leaders to maintain culturally safe environments.	Structural racism. Insufficient PLD provision that is culturally responsive, competent and sustainable.	A need for schools with Pacific students to respect and reflect Pacific culture. English medium staff not knowing how to engage appropriately with Pacific communities.	



What we were told about learning support

Submitters described a ‘tidal wave’ of diversity and challenges. Teachers are overwhelmed by an increasing number of children experiencing societal problems, anxiety and trauma and with complex behavioural and learning needs; an unprecedented diversity of cultures; and a huge span of curriculum levels.

Many more children are arriving at primary schools with low, or extremely low, levels of oral communication and preparedness for literacy. These submissions epitomise what we heard:

“We have a tsunami of children arriving who are not school ready, have significant complex learning difficulties, deep seated trauma and major behaviour problems.”

“Our new entrant class has over fifty per cent tamariki who cannot speak in sentences, have never held a pencil, cannot use scissors.”

“I have noted a steady decline in students arriving at school ready to start learning. Where once children were capable of self-managing and doing things for themselves, for many new entrants these abilities are not there and basic hygiene habits are lacking for many.”

“Our new entrant class has over fifty per cent tamariki who cannot speak in sentences, have never held a pencil, cannot use scissors.”

Social needs

As societal trends lead to a rise in needs, families are turning to schools for support that is lacking from external agencies. Children are arriving at school with trauma and anxiety and needing counsellors, social workers and nurses. These services are difficult to access: there are not enough people and too many hoops to jump through. The growing range and severity of social needs among students requires teachers to take on roles of other specialists – roles for which they are neither trained nor resourced.

Submitters called for: *“in-school counsellors to help deal with the large number of children coming with high social and emotional needs,”* saying: *“The need for in-school social workers and counsellors is becoming increasingly obvious”* and *“Families require more support, not just with their learning but with health and wellbeing, hauora: more nurses, social workers and agencies to be readily available for all tamariki.”*

Demand for ESOL

As the number of ESOL children continues to rise, there are not enough ESOL teachers and not enough funding to provide this service, including for New Zealand-born children from homes where English is not the first language.

One submitter with more than 40 years' teaching experience told us: *"I have seen how the New Zealand demographic has changed considerably. The new ESOL students bring a richness and diverse cultural aspect to our students' experience of life. However, the lack of support for the non-English speaking student has an immense impact on the time and quality of targeted learning in the classroom."*

Behavioural issues

We heard that teachers are overwhelmed by the increasing number of children with behavioural issues. One submission epitomised the challenge: *"We see more and more students coming into school with social and behavioural issues than I've ever seen in my twenty plus years in the profession and we are drowning. Experience has not taught me how to deal with the new behaviours that are arriving."*

Additional and complex needs

We heard about the very wide range of additional and complex needs in today's classrooms. Many more students need adaptations and health support, are arriving unprepared for the classroom and are displaying violent behaviours.

We heard stories of children with support in early childhood education (ECE) not taking that support to their primary schooling. One Christchurch teacher aide told us: *"I had a new entrant boy who had a lot of support in ECE. None of the funding followed him and he is traumatised."*

We heard of barriers and inequity in accessing ORS and other funds. As with specialist services for social issues, there is fragmentation of delivery and too few specialists to support schools. There is a sense that teachers are putting in application after application, many of them unsuccessfully, leaving children with unmet needs and teachers without support.

One submitter summed it up: *"Staffing to support specialist programmes to meet the needs of priority learners is required. If I go to a GP and need to see a specialist, I will be referred to someone with those specific skills and knowledge. Teachers in primary schools are expected to be both GP and specialist."*

Disability advocates

Disability advocacy organisations and parent advocates told us that children with disabilities are siloed from the community of children. One submitter said: *"The experiences of too many disabled students and their families evidence a damaging, discriminatory, and mana detracting relationship with education systems and schools."*

We heard that too many children with disabilities are discriminated against on a daily basis, and too many schools are struggling to do their best by them and their whānau, without the knowledge and staff time they need.

There was a call for funding issues to be addressed, with one submitter referring to the many *"buckets of funding, each with their own assessments or processes for application, some with staffing entitlements attached"*.

Submitters said that, in order to address the funding issues, data collection needs to be prioritised to determine what staffing resourcing is needed, and the criteria for ORS need to be fair and equitable.

In order for children with disabilities to fulfil their potential, staff in the sector need to have the capacity, knowledge, skills and the support to teach all children. They called for greater consideration of how teachers are trained and supported, training of teacher aides, and sufficient hours for teacher aides to provide teachers with support so that all students can enjoy their classes and playtimes.

Today's classrooms

In today's schools it is expected that children will receive differentiated teaching and support. But the size and diversity of our primary classes make it impossible to achieve this. Teachers painted a very clear picture of the challenges. Typical submissions were:

"I teach a class of 28 beautiful year three and four children. My class is made up of 17 boys and 11 girls, from a number of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Some of my children come from very dysfunctional families, where drugs, alcohol, crime and abuse are prominent factors in the child's everyday life. I have a number of 'priority learners' and 'behaviour kids' in my class. I also have children who come from affluent but sometimes 'time poor' families. I have several boys with very high but undiagnosed learning needs, who are just below the threshold for a teacher aide. I worry because I am not able to give every child anywhere near the time and input to help them truly realise their potential. I feel I am able to barely scrape the surface but I try to go deeper, to make a difference."

"It has become increasingly difficult to manage the workload (paperwork, data, assessment, planning, support, meetings with both internal and external agencies as well as whānau) and still not lose sight of what is at the heart of the profession – the children, their learning, their wellbeing and their potential. Class sizes are large and student needs within these classes are incredibly complex and varied across academic, social, emotional, behavioural and health. As classroom teachers we are responsible for it all."

Learning support: what would make a difference?

There was overwhelming consensus among submitters on the call for increased learning support. Teachers cannot attend to every child as they would like to, because of the time and attention needed to address complex needs in their classrooms and because their class sizes are too large. This leaves them feeling they are neglecting the needs of other children.

One submitter summed up what we heard: *"We don't have enough time to manage everyone and the ones that float in the middle are starting to fall through the cracks as they aren't getting the help they need. Priority always goes to those that are high needs."*

Reduced teacher:student ratios

Reducing class sizes or year-level ratios was identified by submitters as the single biggest way to meet the demands of classes where the children are diverse, the needs are complex,

and the curriculum range is wide. We heard that class sizes are too large for teachers to give children the attention they need to reach their potential. Typical submissions were:

“Our tamariki do not have the support needed for them. They are fighting for attention from a teacher who cannot adequately meet all of the complex needs. Our tamariki need connection and sometimes even just a moment to connect with them in the day is not possible. They deserve more.”

“We need more teachers in schools to meet the complex needs of our children.”

“Reducing class sizes will allow our tamariki to grow better connections with their teachers, allowing for more one-to-one interactions.”

Improving staffing entitlement ratios would help address many of the workload issues identified by teachers by providing schools with more staffing resource. Most of all, it would help provide more teacher time for each child, enabling teachers to achieve the child-centred learning that parents and whānau and the Government expect in today’s classrooms.

Teacher aides in every classroom

We heard that teacher aides have an essential role across the primary education sector. Teacher aides make a real difference in supporting teachers and supporting children’s learning. With a teacher aide in the classroom, the teacher is free to teach every child. Typical submissions were:

“All classrooms should have the support of a teacher aide who is not directly tied to the needs of any particular child, but who is there to support all the children and the teacher in the classroom.”

“More students need to be funded to be provided with teacher aides. This means lowering the thresholds which students must meet to receive teacher aide funding. Teacher aides make a huge difference to those with high needs.”

The recent teacher aide pay equity settlement was welcomed, but submitters said that teacher aides need secure employment, career pathways, PLD and release time for meetings and planning, and the role needs to be centrally funded.

Fixing the funding was seen as essential. A typical submission from a principal was: *“I am not able to hire a teacher aide through to the end of the day. This means I require a teacher to change a special needs child’s nappy/pull up. We require two teachers to be there – one*

“Reducing class sizes will allow our tamariki to grow better connections with their teachers, allowing for more one-to-one interactions.”

to change the child, one to watch for safety. The children in the hub are left unattended. There is one teacher in the hub when this occurs with 70 children. Therefore the children without special needs are not able to reach their full potential because teachers are having to do the work of a teacher aide and leave the children.”

Many principals are making a significant effort to provide the teacher aides they feel are necessary to support their teachers and students, taking much-needed funding from other areas. They are “robbing Peter to pay Paul”. A board of trustees’ submission said: “Every decision that is made to provide support in one area has an opportunity cost of not providing much-needed support in another area. We feel the needs could be better met with more equitable staffing allocation across the system.”

SENCOs in every school

We heard a strong call for SENCOs in every school.

The need to have a coordinator who addresses the complexity of needs assessments and optimises the use of available resources has dramatically increased. This role requires the leadership of a designated senior staff member. As the overall coordinator of the responses to all of a school’s children with additional learning needs, a SENCO assesses these children, identifies strategies and suitable support, advice and programmes, and liaises with staff, whānau and external agencies and specialists.

Having a SENCO ensures that the time and stress of ORS and other funding applications are removed from teachers, and children’s needs are identified and addressed where there are resources and adequate external support. Having a SENCO reduces the time teachers spend on liaising with parents, whānau and specialist services. It removes stress for teachers and provides them with more time to teach every child. It makes a considerable difference to children with additional learning needs because someone has the designated time and relevant experience to cater to their needs.

The provision of leadership for learning support is uneven and inequitable. We heard many stories of difficulties in allocating the SENCO role to members of stretched leadership teams, and of principals taking the SENCO role because there was no one else. We heard that management units were not enough to get people to take on this role – or other school leadership roles. What teachers wanted was time.

One Christchurch principal told us: “I have a DP who doubles as a SENCO. This compromises her position. She is a fully released DP but at what a cost.”

The limited resources for SENCO and similar leadership roles means local funds are used to paper over the cracks in central resourcing. A further inequity has been created by the delay in extending the rollout of the LSC resource. Some schools enjoy the benefits of LSCs for additional support while others miss out and have no indication of when, or if, they will ever receive LSCs. This is particularly galling for schools that cannot afford to resource SENCOs.

A centrally funded SENCO in every school would make a considerable difference.

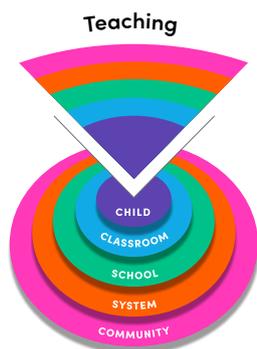
Access to specialist support

We heard that improved access to specialist services in our primary schools, such as speech-language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists would make a real difference through addressing the needs of children whose learning depends on this support and enabling teachers to get on with teaching.

Access to social services

There was a strong call for counsellors, nurses and social workers in every school. Teachers described how the growing range and severity of needs among students requires them to take on such roles – roles for which they are neither trained nor resourced. The provision of such roles would make a clear difference in addressing the social needs of children. Reducing the level of social needs in classrooms and lifting the responsibility from teachers to take on these roles would make a significant difference in enabling teachers to focus on teaching.

“All classrooms should have the support of a teacher aide who is not directly tied to the needs of any particular child, but who is there to support all the children and the teacher in the classroom.”



What we were told about teaching

We heard that teaching today means coming to grips with different pedagogies and a broadened curriculum. In recent years, teachers have been exhorted to shift their pedagogy to a more fit-for-purpose model. It is no longer desirable or acceptable for teachers to deliver a 'one size fits all' learning programme. Teachers are expected, and want, to be much more sophisticated in their teaching and learning. They see the value of differentiated and group teaching, inquiry learning and fostering student independence. They are much more conscious of the importance of respecting students' own knowledge and cultures, and drawing on these to identify learning opportunities. These models of practice are more time-consuming and need significantly greater skillsets than the traditional approach to teaching. They are practices that teachers need to learn slowly and carefully over time and with support.

The curriculum

Changing expectations of teachers' roles include delivering an increasingly complex curriculum. Traditional curriculum areas are continually being expanded to include new teaching methods and content, while new curriculum areas regularly appear. In recent years teachers have had to incorporate a digital technology curriculum, including teaching and monitoring online safety and constantly updating their personal knowledge and skills in information technology. The new Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories curriculum is another major development. Schools are also focusing on designing local curricula with their communities and local hapū. The recently-signalled Curriculum Refresh will add to the changes teachers and schools need to make.

There are numerous other additions to the curriculum from government and NGOs that schools are encouraged to adopt.

There are also many innovative methodologies, or ways of teaching, that schools feel under pressure to adopt or that are too useful to be ignored. At present these include programmes like DMIC maths, the Better Start to Literacy Approach, trauma-informed practice, and various kinds of inquiry-based and play-based learning.

This all makes the modern school curriculum a highly engaging but equally a highly complex structure that increases teacher time and workload.

"Right-size my job, don't super-size it"

The challenges are magnified considerably in Māori medium and Pacific settings, where there is a chronic shortage of qualified and capable teachers who can speak Te Reo Māori or Pacific languages, and a dearth of curriculum resources.

Flexible learning spaces

At the same time as pedagogy shifts towards differentiated teaching, the Ministry of Education has conducted a strategy of moving from single-cell to flexible learning environments. The move to flexible learning spaces means teachers must learn to work collaboratively, moment by moment with one other or in small groups of colleagues.

Flexible learning environments promise improved learning, but this can only happen if there is a considerable investment in the appropriate pedagogical training and team-building to match the new spaces. Too often it is left to resource-strapped schools or individual teachers to find the time, money and support to adapt their teaching practice.

Parent expectations

Today's parents are more engaged with what happens at school and have higher expectations. Teachers are under greater pressure to measure student progress and achievement, to provide constant and meaningful feedback on learning and to foster a close relationship with every student and their parents, whānau and community. Teachers value the positive outcomes of this approach but say it has added considerably to their workloads, through meetings, emails, texts and other contact. Submitters said:

“Effective secure partnerships with children and their whānau will build a strong foundation for children’s growth and development and if whānau feel included in this process they will have ‘buy in’ to their child success.”

“Today’s learning environment is not just about teaching students but providing additional services – wellbeing, counselling, welfare, parent advice. Partnership with parents and whānau can be very difficult. It requires extra time by teachers (to get parents to come into school or just communicating regularly with the teacher).”

“My workload for reporting, communicating with parents, setting up resources, planning, assessing is entirely unmanageable and it will be the thing that drives me away from teaching.”

Time to do the job

These shifts have not been matched by increases in staffing resources. Large class sizes make all these demands more difficult. A teacher with a class of 25–30 struggles to deliver the child-centred education expected, let alone an expanding curriculum across a wide span of performance levels. The sheer number of students often puts the delivery of child-centred learning out of reach.

We heard repeatedly from teachers about the lack of time they have to do their jobs. As one submitter said: *“Teachers are time poor. There is never enough time to do all the workload, let alone to the best of the teacher’s ability.”*

Teachers are expected to work in teams but there is not enough time to plan to work effectively together and benefit from the exchange of ideas and practice, let alone enough time for the planning and reflection that are essential to enhancing the quality of their own teaching.

We also heard how a lack of classroom release time has made it difficult to have meetings with specialists, social workers, and Oranga Tamariki in school hours, which is when these people want to meet. This difficulty in scheduling time adds to the difficulty of responding quickly and well to children's needs.

Many submitters talked about the gap between classroom release time in the primary and secondary sectors. Nowhere is this anomaly more obvious than in Years 7-10, where teachers at the same year level are entitled to widely varying amounts of release time, depending on whether they work in intermediate schools, middle schools, area schools or junior high schools.

One submitter told us: *"When I began teaching, Classroom Release Time did not exist. We celebrated when this was introduced. CRT has helped immensely. However as the job has grown, so has the call on our time. CRT days (or for some schools, hour-and-a-half timeslots), are now routinely taken up with one to one assessments, working on funding applications, catching up on the ever-increasing emails, and other tasks."*

Another said: *"Two CRT days a term are not nearly enough to be able to get a class lot of reading, writing and maths assessments completed or reports written, or all the million and one tasks we are expected to do. I had my CRT today and spent the majority of the morning block unpacking a behaviour incident from yesterday, setting up a student with high needs and then comforting and resettling a child who became extremely upset. Thank goodness I was on release so I could deal with these issues, but suddenly there is half of my release days gone."*

We also heard that teachers have insufficient time to access PLD opportunities. We heard that mentor teachers working with first- and second-year teachers struggle to find time for their mentoring. Submitters told us that, although teachers rely heavily on teacher aides to deal with challenges in their classrooms, there is often too little time for planning to support the teacher aides or meet with their teacher aides to share planning and reflect on progress. Schools often cannot afford to pay teacher aides to work with teachers in this way, which makes their work less effective than it should be.

We were told by one teacher aide that when meetings with teachers cannot occur: *"We are placeholders, babysitters"*. This is demoralising for teacher aides and teachers. It does not benefit students.

PLD

One submitter at a face-to-face hearing told us: *"Much of the modern pedagogy has been introduced to teachers without access to high quality and sustained professional development, or time and support to learn how to implement it."*

Submitters painted a picture of PLD as fragmented and under-resourced. We heard that PLD is difficult to access, particularly for Māori. Principals reported that the present contestable model is a barrier to providing timely and useful PLD. The application process is onerous and the range of services is limited. Local providers are not available in many regions, with submitters referring to the expensive and wasteful practice of flying in facilitators from around the country who, despite their good intentions, are unfamiliar with local needs and contexts. Others spoke of losing valuable face-to-face time because allocated provider time is soaked up in travel. PLD programmes supporting the introduction

of new curricula are insufficient to enable staff to teach them confidently. Consequently the important work done to develop a new curriculum area or improve an existing one is compromised by a failure to ensure teachers are well trained and supported to deliver it.

Workload

Time and time again submitters told us that teacher workloads are overwhelming, creating burnout and mental health issues. Teachers are swamped with tasks that they cannot get to during the school day, necessitating long hours during the week and regular weekend work. Typical submissions were:

“Workloads have increased and we are often working at home after hours or on the weekends to stay on top of it.”

“Teachers are exhausted, dispirited and many are close to burn out, most don’t see any way forward or anything getting better.”

“Workloads for teaching staff are extremely high and burnout is a real problem. They work long hours – face-to-face with children, before/after school, meetings, professional learning, planning, and producing resources. Their hours extend into the night and into the weekend – family life gets pushed out. There is insufficient time in the week for planning together with other teachers as time after school is needed to reflect on the day, prepare feedback on children’s work, care for the physical environment of the classroom, plan the next day, prepare, prepare, prepare... etc. Student wellbeing and the lack of staffing to support this (often one to one needed and hours of time) and provide counselling, means that teachers ‘fit’ this into the day, often during their breaks. It often is rushed and limited time to follow up”.

One teacher with 20 years’ experience said: *“I am stretched like a rubber band every day. In one class children are writing one sentence, writing paragraphs. Meanwhile we’re wiping noses, teaching online, tying shoelaces, juggling diversity, managing behaviour none of us were taught to deal with, dealing with meltdowns. As teachers we say yes. Like the rubber band we will snap. What about our mental health and wellbeing?”*

Another submitter succinctly summed up what we heard about workload: *“Right-size my job, don’t super-size it”.*

Teacher supply

We heard repeatedly that more teachers are needed – more of the right people in the right place at the right time and more teachers with a diversity of culture and language to match the diversity of students.

Ultimately, the teaching profession sells itself as a desirable career. Every student has a close-up view of what it’s like to be a teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand, so we should not be surprised when too few of them opt to join a workforce that is so obviously overworked and undervalued. Fixing the staffing issues will reduce stress and lift teachers’ performance, and therefore, in the long run, improve the desirability of teaching among our school leavers.

One submitter epitomised what we heard about raising the status of primary teachers: *“You’re not going to get the teacher supply right until we change the way we think about teachers. We don’t value teachers like many parts of the world. We don’t promote teaching.*

We need to change the way we think about the profession. We perpetuate a narrative around the teaching profession which isn't good. There's no celebration in it. No other group in our society can have the influence of teachers."

Teaching: What would make a difference?

Increased classroom release time

The current classroom release time is not adequate. Increasing it would make a difference. It would mean that teachers can get on top of much of the work needed for their day-to-day roles with students, and allow them time for the ongoing professional sharing and development that is essential.

Improved teacher:student ratios

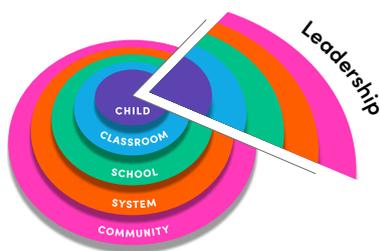
Very simply, class sizes in primary schools are too big to allow teachers to teach well with fair workloads. Class sizes need to be reduced through improved staffing ratios.

Specialist curriculum support

Teachers are feeling overwhelmed by the ever-expanding curriculum they are expected to teach, and can lack confidence in their capacity to deliver the whole curriculum. Submitters called for greater support for their delivery of the curriculum through the provision of curriculum advisory roles or specialist teachers in areas such as mathematics, science, the arts, technology, health and physical education, te reo and tikanga Māori, and Pacific languages.

Professional development

Submitters called for greater access to PLD that is relevant and supports them to deliver the curriculum well. This would make a difference by increasing their skills, understanding and confidence and equipping them to teach effectively.



What we were told about leadership

Leadership in New Zealand schools is a huge job. Principals are expected to prioritise being ‘leaders of learning’, which is defined in the Kiwi Leadership for Principals (KLP) framework as “setting strategic goals”, and “leading change, problem solving, building relational trust, and managing the complex issues that occur in any school community”.⁴³ The KLP also acknowledges the unique challenges of being a principal in a New Zealand school: “The New Zealand system of self-management is one of the most devolved in the OECD. This presents special obligations, opportunities, challenges and responsibilities for principals”. Principals “are ultimately responsible for the day-to-day management of everything that happens in their schools”. And, of course, around 10-15% of New Zealand principals are also teachers, often on a daily basis.

“Principals are not worried about what they’re being asked to do. We simply want the resources to meet these goals. Workload: that is the question.”

We heard from principals that they are happy to step up to their challenging roles. As one principal from a large school told us: *“Principals are not worried about what they’re being asked to do. We simply want the resources to meet these goals. Workload: that is the question.”*

Principals across the country told us they are overworked, unsupported and undervalued and have operated on goodwill for a long time. One principal told us: *“Goodwill has run out.”*

Principals overwhelmingly told us there is insufficient time to fulfil their leadership roles. One principal summed up the feeling in submissions: *“We have to have time to lead schools. We have to have time to focus on learning.”*

Overloaded principals are frustrated that constantly juggling their many roles leaves them feeling that they do none of them well. Too often their time is spent on administration, crisis management, and paperwork while strategic matters and the ground-shifting work of supporting and growing their teachers are pushed to the fringes.

An Auckland principal echoed the views of countless others when he told us: *“If we were a business, we would have dedicated HR and other roles.”*

⁴³ Ministry of Education. (2008). *Kiwi Leadership for Principals: Principals as Educational Leaders*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Accessed 19 May, 2021. <https://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leadership-development/Key-leadership-documents/Kiwi-leadership-for-principals>, p.7.

Staffing entitlement for management

Overwhelmingly, submitters in leadership roles referred to the inadequacy of management staffing entitlements. This was true for both principals and senior leaders.

One submitter told us that schools manage their current management staffing entitlement by: strictly adhering to the entitlement, leaving senior leaders such as deputies, associates and assistant principals to fit their leadership roles around their classroom responsibilities; using some of their curriculum staffing to provide leadership release, making classes larger as a result; or relying on locally raised funds to provide additional staffing for leadership release. None of these solutions is satisfactory or sustainable.

A typical submission was: *“Leadership management entitlements need to be increased to ensure consistency of provision across schools. High quality leadership is essential to the success of all children. Provide leadership entitlements based on roll size and equity indexes.”*

Again and again submitters compared the management staffing entitlements for primary and secondary schools. Typical submissions were:

“If we were a high school we’d qualify for 4.2 leadership staffing. We get 2.2. We have to scaffle leadership from other sources.”

“Primary schools need the same amount of funding for management that a secondary school receives. It is not that they get too much. It is that we do not get enough.”

Small and rural schools

We received a high number of submissions from principals of small and rural schools, with very consistent themes and messages. A principal of a school with 49 children told us that becoming the principal of a small school had been a *“baptism of fire”*, saying the location of her school is remote enough to make finding relievers impossible but *“not remote enough for anyone to care”*. She is: *“the teacher, the office person, the principal”*. We were also told: *“The nature of a small school is where the principal is everything,”* and *“Everything lands on me.”* A principal of a small kura kaupapa Māori summed up what we heard: *“Teaching principals need another teacher full-time and somebody to unblock the loo/pool etc and admin support.”*

Teaching principals experience the greatest pressure: not only do they have the additional responsibilities of teaching, but they lead small schools, with fewer staff to share the many other complex tasks. Consequently, teaching principals are often their schools’ SENCOs, curriculum leaders, part-time caretakers, office administrators and many other roles. There was a strong call for improved staffing to reduce, or even eliminate, these principals’ teaching loads. We heard of the need for full-time staffing in front of every class, irrespective of school size: *“Every school has to have a full-time teacher and a principal”*.

While the MACS entitlement for small schools is designed to ensure that their teacher:student ratios stay within reasonable levels, submitters pointed to sudden changes in staffing as their rolls hit particular numbers. *“The way teacher staffing works in schools smaller than 100 is ridiculous with ‘magic numbers’ (26, 51, 76,101) causing big increases in staffing, rather than even graduations for increases in roll.”*

Principals of small schools were adamant that a minimum of 2 FTE was necessary in all schools at all times. One principal told the story of what happens when there is a 'runner', a student absconding from the school. The teaching principal can be faced with leaving the class unattended to bring the runner back, while knowing that *"it's not safe to leave the class"*.

The issues for small and rural schools are compounded by factors unique to their settings. For example, the issue of highly transient populations in dairying districts, especially around the 1 June sharemilker changeover, can cause wildly fluctuating roll numbers that are difficult to predict. There were calls for greater protections of guaranteed staffing to manage these fluctuations.

Specialist services are hard to access for rural schools, but are needed just as much as they are in larger schools. One principal observed: *"Many small schools attract children with diverse needs, because of our small size, yet we are inadequately resourced for them."*

Counselling is an example of this. One principal of a small school recounted her school's recent experience of being able to access a counsellor through the Covid-19 Urgent Response Fund administered by their kāhui ako. She said: *"This has created phenomenal change. Every family offered it has taken it up. We've got to find some way to get counsellors in schools because it makes an amazing difference."*

Another factor is the role that rural school principals take in their communities. One said: *"I'm seen as the core support person, especially as changing socio-economic trends mean industry has vanished from smaller and rural areas."* Another described this responsibility as a *"crushing weight"* of leadership in the community.

One submitter epitomised the issues for small schools: *"Running a small rural school has many obstacles to student achievement. Release time of one and a half days a week is inadequate. As a sole charge principal I have to carry out all principal duties, follow up on attendance, communicate with my community, report to my board, have a handle on property development and ensure we keep within our budget restraints. As a teacher I carry out all assessments, planning, accelerated programmes and ensure the full curriculum is covered. I identify our target students and set up programmes to meet their needs while collecting and assessing data to set future goals. I put student and staff wellbeing above my own. I am unsure how long I can do this."*

Specialist schools

We also heard strong submissions from principals of specialist schools. Specialist schools face specific challenges, including the additional administration loads of managing high numbers of staff such as teacher aides and non-teaching staff and extensive liaison with specialists, agencies and parents and whānau. Leaders of specialist schools told us that more administrative support would make a real difference in terms of freeing up their time to lead and teach.

Specialist school principals also called for recognition of the leadership time required to lead their paraprofessional workforces, such as teacher aides and administration staff.

A specialist school principal said: *"The personnel component for principals is huge. Admin and property support don't take account of staff numbers. It doesn't work. A lot of admin work sits on the principal. The issue is property allowance and admin."*

This principal pointed out that her staffing and funding entitlements are calculated on her nominal roll plus the ORS weighting. With a roll of 150 students, the staffing and funding do not reflect the reality of running a school that employs nearly 130 staff. The administrative staffing she can afford falls far short of what is required to meet the workload.

Leadership: What would make a difference?

Increased staffing entitlement for management

School leaders made a strong plea for improved management staffing. Many referred to the commitment already made by the Government to address the longstanding differential between secondary and primary schools that has not taken into account what is needed in primary schools.

Increased staffing entitlement for management is needed to strengthen leadership in schools. This would avoid the current ad hoc situation where principals need to juggle existing resources to free up those in leadership roles to perform those roles.

Administrative support

We heard a strong call from school principals for the provision of a centrally funded staffing entitlement for administrative support in every school, including small schools. The provision in all schools of dedicated administration support was seen as making a significant difference as it would reduce the paperwork and administrative workloads and free principals to lead their schools.

Principal release time

There was also a call for all principals to have full release from teaching so they can lead their schools effectively. Principals called for greater recognition of the time required to be leaders of learning, not just for their teaching staff but also for support staff such as teacher aides and administrators.

Increased PLD

Principals need to be able to take professional development leave to equip them to better fulfil their leadership roles. This would make a difference to principals, schools and children.

Additional staffing entitlements for small schools

Principals from small and rural schools made a strong plea for increased administration support and greater access to specialist teaching staff and services.

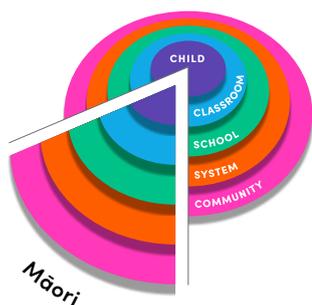
Overwhelmingly we heard a call to increase the minimum staffing entitlement in all U1 and U2 schools and for greater flexibility in how the roll growth staffing formula is applied.

There were strong arguments for greater flexibility in how staffing is assigned. The current formulae are viewed as a blunt instrument, unable to accommodate the particular needs and contexts of small schools. We were told: *“There are quite a few criteria we could have for rural schools – based on need not size.”*

While the call for improved staffing entitlements that are responsive to need came from schools of every size, small and rural schools face unique challenges. One principal from a small school said: *“Size matters. The bigger you get, the better you get with everything. Our staffing and resourcing needs to be based on need. There should be an entirely different formula for funding for U1 and U2 schools.”*

One submitter summed up the difference that increased staffing entitlement for management and increases in curriculum staffing would make for principals, schools and children: *“Primary schools, to be their most effective for all children need to be staffed comparably with secondary schools of the same size. Comparable management and curriculum staffing would enable primary schools to meet the needs of their tamariki, to address priority learners’ holistic progress whilst allowing leaders to lead the profession, and grow future leaders. More people would mean more opportunities to hit the needs, to work the magic, to care for our whānau, to work with our iwi and hapū, to truly make a positive difference. It would lighten the load of the few and create a positive ‘many’ and genuinely allow us to be as effective as we want to be and as Aotearoa deserves us to be.”*

“Increased staffing entitlement for management is needed to strengthen leadership in schools. This would avoid the current ad hoc situation where principals need to juggle existing resources to free up those in leadership roles to perform those roles.”



What we heard from Māori

Nowhere is the inadequacy of the current staffing resource more evident than for Māori. Submitters in both Māori medium and English medium settings told us that the education system in Aotearoa is racist, that it does not deliver for tamariki Māori and that tumuaki and kaiako feel unsupported and alone. They shared powerful and current stories of tamariki experiencing racism in mainstream schools. We heard:

“The system of education in 1840 was put in place to colonise us. We haven’t had a Māori experience until the eighties. The system was not built for us. It was set up to destroy us. The system did its job.”

“We need to be very clear our system is racist. It discriminates and stigmatises our children. We staff what we value. Irrespective of whether you’re Māori medium or English medium, we don’t have the opportunities. Māori can’t do it on our own, because we don’t have enough of us.”

A Māori principal of a large mainstream school with over 40% Māori students told us: *“We need to be very clear our system is racist. It discriminates and stigmatises our children. We staff what we value. Irrespective of whether you’re Māori medium or English medium, we don’t have the opportunities. Māori can’t do it on our own, because we don’t have enough of us.”*

We heard that in addition to providing education, primary schools need to provide a range of support to ākongā, whānau and communities who experience poverty and social deprivation stemming from the long-term impact of colonisation and racism.

Submitters expressed concern that previous government strategies to address longstanding disparities, such as Ka Hikitia, have not been supported with the resourcing and priority needed. They raised questions about the lack of action to address the stark shortfall in Māori teachers with fluent te reo identified in the draft Education Workforce Strategy, and how this would undermine the Rāngai Māori goal identified in that strategy of 30% of Māori learners being in full immersion schooling by 2032.

The battle for te reo

Māori submitters painted a clear picture of the battle for the survival of their culture and reo and the urgent need to increase the number of fluent te reo speakers in both Māori medium kura and English medium schools.

Typical of the submissions from tumuaki, kaiako and whānau were: *“We need to ensure our Te Reo survives. We need to be thinking about where we live and exist and are not defaulted against everyone else”, “We need funding so our children can have access to their language”* and the passionate plea: *“We need language support”*.



Submitters were clear that all tamariki Māori should have access to te reo. But there are too many barriers. We heard strong and consistent calls for support for kōhanga reo and for the increasing number of tamariki without te reo wanting to enter Māori medium schools. We heard that Māori immersion for tamariki Māori with additional and complex needs is non-existent. One submitter said: *“Māori medium for those with special needs – they’re not even knocking on the door.”*

Again and again we heard: *“We don’t have enough trained teachers to deliver.”*

Submitters consistently told us that there is a need for Māori to do things their way. One submitter said: *“There’s a Māori way that Māori provide learning experience.”*

Identity and heritage

We heard that tamariki Māori are coming out of school not knowing who they are. Repeatedly we heard of the vital right of tamariki Māori to have their own identity. One Māori submitter said: *“We’ve been told the Kiwi identity is about one identity. Our education system is based on assimilation. Māori have to leave their identity at the door.”*

A principal from a kura a iwi said: *“We don’t just have a financial commitment. We have a whakapapa commitment. We are ensuring the survival of our iwi. Our investment is [in] the survival of my iwi in that town. Unless we do it there, there will be no hapū left.”*

Māori children are over-represented among those who are deaf. But *“Māori deaf kids have a double whammy. Deaf Māori children don’t know any of their own narrative and culture. In the current system we are not developing their Māori words. Māori deaf don’t fully know themselves as Māori or deaf. So Māori children are falling through the cracks.”*

Over and over we heard about the urgent need for all teachers to be culturally responsive and competent in their practice. One submitter said this is not just a *“nice to have. It has to be seen as essential.”* Ongoing teacher training is needed that covers the breadth of existing competency in te reo.

Learning support

Māori submitters called for much stronger resourcing for Māori students with additional or complex needs: more teacher aides, more RTLB support and more SENCOs, who could work with them in culturally responsive ways.

We heard of frustration that the recent Urgent Response Fund could not be used by Māori medium kura in the way that they knew would work best.

One submitter whose application to employ community members under the Urgent Response Fund scheme was turned down said: *“Children needed to feel aroha, we wanted to bring nanas and papas with life experience into the kura to support them, to engage families, check wellness, heal families and children, not psychologists at \$130 an hour.”*

We heard there are virtually no learning support specialists who speak Te Reo Māori, and specialist service assessments are also in English, making them unsuitable for te reo. That means children can be misdiagnosed and miss out and kaiako are taken out of the classroom to support them.

“When the speech language therapist, tester arrives, it is in English. Across the board we are really lacking in services.”

“Speech language therapy is all in English. We have a whole lot of kuia who could do it. The ministry said they need four years’ training. Why can’t you take a teacher or TA and train them?”

Teachers

One submitter epitomised what we heard about the intensity of teaching today and how it is accentuated for Māori teachers. *“I have a multi-cultural akomanga of thirty year 5 and 6 tamariki. Three have SEN folders, two I am receiving support with from RTLB, one who missed out on ORS funding. Many students are below and well below their expected working levels across the curriculum. The diversity across their levels is challenging. I currently have two part-time teacher aides but their time is attached to one student. I need more support to ensure all tamariki have the hauora and academic support they require. I have hui with different whānau weekly, if not more, generally to support our vulnerable tamariki. On top of this I am challenged to provide educational opportunities for all areas of the curriculum. I am the lead kaiako for Te Ao Māori. I want to dedicate more time to supporting our staff, myself and our tamariki with Te Ao Māori, but I struggle to do so.”*

We heard about the acute shortage of te-reo-speaking teachers for Māori medium, and fears that this shortage will only worsen as it has become harder to retain fluent te-reo-speaking kaiako in the face of better-paid and less-demanding work elsewhere.

We heard about the lack of curriculum resources appropriate for Māori medium and culturally appropriate for Māori. Resources on Te Kete Ipurangi are out of date, and few compared with those available in English.

We heard: *“We ask for resource but we don’t get what we need. We have to work out how to use it. Everything we need is what we need. It’s not a want.”*

PLD provision through the current application system seemed like a lottery, both to get some that was appropriate, and to get sufficient time allocated.

Leadership

The workload for tumuaki and kaiako is often overwhelming, particularly in Māori medium schools, which are often not large enough to have additional management staffing. Tumuaiki who met with us often worked six or seven days a week, with long hours each day. They are the backstops in their schools for everything from teaching and cleaning to driving buses (as there are insufficient kura to meet local needs, children have to travel by bus). The shortage of kaiako and relievers fluent in te reo means that tumuaki are often teaching classes as well as leading the schools and undertaking their administration.

One tumuaki said her daughter told her: *“You might have to live at the school because we never see you.”*

A typical comment was: *“We want to be leaders of learning but we can’t be”.*

Tumuaki also play key roles in their communities. *“I have to get to a lot of hui. Our kaiako are run down. Whether you’re run down or not, you have to stand anyway.”*

“Māori principals are on marae committees, doing treaty claims, kapahaka etc. We’re the only ones that have those extra roles.”

Tumuaki are driven by their commitment. One submitter summed it up: *“Why do we do it? It’s the survival of our people. You are expected to do this. Your mana and dignity resides on the work you do: writing an education response to our treaty claim, chair of kapahaka because it is important for us to be seen to do this.”*

Māori: What would make a difference?

Māori submitters told us the system must look radically different and fundamentally changed to work for tamariki Māori, whānau and educators. We heard: *“It can’t just be tweaked to allow a Māori space.”*

Submitters called for much greater support to retain te reo and tikanga and uphold our Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitment. Submitters told us that initiatives such as iwi partnerships, appropriate PLD, Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori, Te Hurihanganui and stronger initial teacher education would all make a difference if they were firmly within a Māori perspective. As a Māori principal of a large mainstream school said: *“If opportunities are scaffolded in Māori knowledge, they will work.”*

We heard clear anger and frustration in submissions from Māori, born of having these issues continually raised and addressed only on paper, without the resources and different framing to bring about lasting positive change.

Despite this, there was also an acknowledgement that we need to get started and make changes now.

One submitter called for a start to be made, to get some *“crucial gains well and early”*. She told the Christchurch hui: *“There are things we can invest in to get a different outcome. We need to understand the cost of not doing it. We need to start here but this is not the end-game.”*

Rangai Māori workforce strategy

We heard from submitters that the Rangai Māori education workforce group’s goals need to be enacted with urgency to attract and retain kaiako Māori in full immersion Māori medium, including units within English medium schools. Without this, it will be difficult to staff full immersion properly, thus endangering the future of te reo. It is also crucial to ensure sufficient te reo speakers in English medium schools.

Particular pathways are also needed, for example to develop whānau who start as teacher aides, and innovative solutions must be found to the challenges of those who cannot afford tertiary fees or forego the incomes they depend on to support their tamariki and whānau.

Māori also want improvements in staffing entitlement and classroom release time, and teacher aides to be seen as part of the staffing entitlement, with time for PLD and work with kaiako. The current PLD application process and allocation is a barrier and needs to change.

Initial teacher education

Submitters called for appropriate and relevant initial teacher education fit for Māori, in both Māori and English medium schools, with one submitter saying: *“We need a dedicated ITE system that’s fit for kura Māori – not from university”*.

There was a call to require basic competencies in Māori culture for all teachers, and for ongoing teacher PLD in te reo and tikanga. *“This should not just be a nice to have. It has to be seen as essential.” “In other areas we expect people to keep up to date, but when it comes to Te Reo and cultural competency, it is not a requirement.”*

Leadership

Māori principals need recognition of the additional time required to fulfil community responsibilities, and additional support to be professional leaders in the development of Te Ao Māori. This includes a need for intensive PLD opportunities to develop their te reo and tikanga as well as necessary iwi relationships.

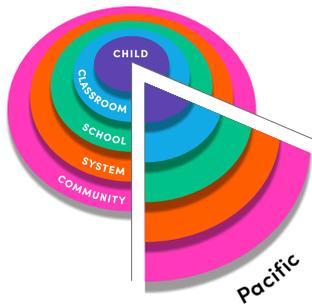
Māori medium principals need improved management staffing so that they can lead their schools properly, without their currently intensive and additional workloads.

Support for Māori medium education and Te Reo Māori

We heard that Māori medium education, including the units in English medium schools, enables Māori children to take pride in who they are and their own language. However, that cannot be sustained unless the staffing issues are addressed and broader changes are made. Much greater support for the maintenance of te reo must be identified and put in place.



“We need language support.”



What we heard from Pacific submitters

Pacific principals, teachers and parents also told us the system is racist. We heard anguish and anger at the statistics. One submitter said: *“You only have to look at the stats. The system works against our children.”*

We heard a strong call for more Pacific teachers and principals and more support for bilingual learning. One submitter said: *“When kids come into our schools, do they see themselves in the staff around them?”*

A Pacific principal said, about Pacific children for whom English is not their first language: *“You can’t learn in a language you damn well don’t know.”*

We heard many stories of the commitment and passion driving Pacific principals and teachers to ensure the survival of bilingual classes, and the benefits of learning in bilingual settings for Pacific children and their parents and communities. But we heard there are huge and *“heart-breaking”* barriers.

One Auckland principal said his school had established its own bilingual class, along with a Māori immersion class. He said: *“Pasifika language nests work. But what incentives are there for principals? What incentive is there to do this?”*

Many submitters spoke about the lack of Pacific language resources and the previous government’s decision to stop producing these resources. Some told us that this had been a racist decision.

Initial teacher education was identified as inappropriate for Pacific teacher trainees. One teacher with an existing master’s qualification described her postgraduate one-year initial teacher education experience as *“the worst in my life”*, the most *“stink”* training she had ever had and a waste of money. *“What we were learning was not fit for purpose.”*

We also heard a call for cultural advisors, to advise on Pacific issues across the primary schooling system.

“When kids come into our schools, do they see themselves in the staff around them?”

Pacific: What would make a difference?

Support for bilingual classes

Many solutions were suggested to enable Pacific children to achieve their potential. Overwhelmingly, submitters called for support for Pacific language bilingual units. There was a call for smaller ratios for bilingual settings, and much more work on creating a teacher supply. One Samoan principal epitomised the submissions: *“We’ve got to incentivise our Pacifica people to become part of this beautiful profession.”*

Introduce a Pacific Immersion Teaching Allowance

Submitters also called for a Pacific version of the MITA (Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance). One submitter said: *“We are doing the same job. We are doing assessments in both languages. We are overloaded. We need that unit.”*

Pacific language resources

Since the previous government’s decision to cease producing learning resources in Pacific languages, teachers have been left with the job of producing them.

To support Pacific bilingual programmes, submitters were clear that it is the Government’s responsibility to produce curriculum resources in Pacific languages, with these resources urgently needed in sufficient quantity for their students.

Pacific cultural advisors

Perhaps one of the most innovative ideas to emerge was the provision of staffing entitlement to employ cultural advisors across the schooling system. This initiative would support teachers and leaders to better meet the needs of Pacific learners.

Underlining all this was a need to have real resources and action put into realising the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030.

“We’ve got to incentivise our Pacifica people to become part of this beautiful profession.”





What Good Looks Like

Throughout the Pūaotanga review, the many voices of submitters told a story, often grim, of New Zealand schools in 2021. They described a primary school system where staffing and funding fall far short of being good, or even adequate.

So what would a 'good' staffing model look like? Let's imagine.

Imagine that in 2021 the Government is persuaded by NZEI Te Riu Roa's members to listen to the voices in Pūaotanga, and during the next decade those voices and vision guide it through changes that make our primary schools genuinely 'good' – even world leading.

Imagine it's 2030 and you're visiting a typical New Zealand primary school – any school, anywhere in the country. Except there's no longer a 'typical' school; the staffing and funding models of 2030 support the character and needs of each school, including the one you're visiting.

As you walk around the school you notice many changes from the way things used to be. You step into a Year 7/8 classroom: you notice the teacher moving calmly among 23 highly engaged students. It's very evident that this teacher has the confidence and skills that come from a great initial training programme.

Her teaching partner is doing the same in the other half of this modern learning space. Both are focused on their teaching, well supported by a couple of teacher aides working with small groups, and a third working one to one in a comforting break-out space with a student who's been struggling with anxiety.

In an adjacent office another teacher is meeting with the school's speech language therapist from the local Education Service Agency (ESA), something she's been doing regularly on her weekly release day as she learns how to support the language development of a small group in her junior class.

Soon afterwards, you join these teachers and others at morning tea, where you hear an enthusiastic discussion among staff about how they're contributing to their ESA-supported network of Year 3–4 teachers and curriculum advisors, and the progress they're seeing in their students as a result.

Strolling past the administration block you notice the school executive officer is also meeting somebody from the ESA, a business support manager. They're running over the annual accounts he's prepared for sending to the auditor.

The principal checks in on them for a moment, but she's not needed so continues to her daily briefing with the SENCO, where they discuss the transition plan for a new-entrant boy with complex health needs. These days the principal, along with others in the leadership team, is free to focus on being a leader of learning. They discuss the SENCO's recent meetings with the boy's parents and ECE teachers, and with the school's dedicated specialist from the merged RTLB and learning support service. It's a routine case, the boy's funding and support transition seamlessly into the school – right down to his familiar teacher aide.

The SENCO goes on to join a group of teacher aides doing a training webinar during their PLD release time, part of their degree studies.

You're drawn towards the uplifting sound of a kapahaka group practising outside the Māori immersion classrooms for the school's upcoming multi-cultural festival. They're working with a couple of local kaumātua, whose previously volunteered time is now paid thanks to the Government's fund for community supporters in Māori immersion settings. They enjoy being rewarded for their time and experience – and the kids love them.

You notice there are a lot more students in the Māori immersion stream, thanks mainly to the availability of teachers fluent in Te Reo Māori since the Government's significant investment several years ago. One of the Māori immersion teachers who left teaching to work for a corporate has returned this year, drawn by the time he now gets to teach well, better pay, great resources, tons of support and the status of the job. Hira, the school's Māori co-principal, tells you he said to her, "Everybody out there wants to be a teacher these days. I'm stoked to be back in the best job in the world".

Then you see a group of children from the neighbouring school's Samoan bilingual class arriving to join the kapahaka group for the multi-cultural festival practice. Talking to their teachers you're pleased to hear that the Pacific Immersion Teaching Allowance introduced back in 2022 has helped attract and keep teachers in bilingual classes, and that the huge improvement in curriculum resources in Pacific languages makes teaching and learning more rewarding. They're excited to see that the system changes have led to a steady rise in student achievement. "I think our Pacific kids are really contributing to that rise in student achievement that's happening across our primary schools," one of the teachers beams.

Smiling, you head for the front gate, knowing that every child in this school, and in every school in New Zealand, is getting the best shot at reaching their potential. Just as you're leaving a little girl runs up and hands you a piece of paper. It's an invitation. Tomorrow afternoon the parents and kids are hosting one of their regular afternoon teas for all the staff – just to show their appreciation.

*We could go on with this vision, but you get the picture. It will take a lot more than imagination, but New Zealand's primary schools could be this good, or even better. How we get there is the subject of the next section – *The Pathway Forward*.*



The Pathway Forward

Things have changed in the past 30 years. Our society has been transformed, along with expectations of our education system. The staffing model used in our primary schooling sector has not kept up with these changes and expectations.

In this review we heard from submitters that the staffing model is a barrier to achieving the goals of a modern education system. These barriers are most acute in those sectors that experience the greatest inequities, including Māori and Pacific.

We heard that schools are doing their best, but the current system is not working and tinkering around the edges will not fix it. We need systemic change, with a clear pathway towards staffing in primary schools/kura that is fit to support every child to reach their potential.

We have envisaged what a 'good' staffing model – one that is truly fit for purpose – would look like. To make the shift to 'good', we need more staffing for learning support, teaching, and leadership.

In this section we lay out a pathway towards 'what good looks like' through recommendations for change grouped around the main themes that emerged in the review. We offer a timeframe for progressively introducing the changes we believe are a balance between the urgency for system reform and the reality that system change cannot happen overnight.

The benefits to Aotearoa of children reaching their full potential in our primary schools and kura will be immeasurable. As one submitter said: *"If children are the future of New Zealand, invest in the future of New Zealand."*

Our recommendations

The Government has already made numerous acknowledgements of the need to address the changing environment in the primary schooling sector, and commitments to make changes.

A new pathway must be underpinned by a clear workforce strategy. The existing Vision for the Education Workforce 2032 describes that strategy. The vision is the right basis for the new pathway, but implementation cannot wait another 11 years.

We believe the Education Workforce Strategy must be designed and implemented now, and within that, priority must be given to both the Rāngai Māori Strategy to focus on teaching and learning in full immersion Māori medium settings (Level 1), and the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030. The recommendations in this report are

made with the expectation that these major strategies will be advanced and implemented, and that the Pūaotanga outcomes will complement and be embedded in broader improvements for the sector.

Some things need to happen now, but to get to ‘what good looks like’ we need a new pathway set with clear milestones towards the goal of a primary education system that is fit for purpose and enables all children to reach their full potential. Below is our recommendation for that pathway, with three milestones:

- Stage 1: By the end of 2023.
- Stage 2: By the end of 2025.
- Stage 3: By the end of 2030.

Learning Support

Teacher aides

One of the most urgent and effective improvements will be to increase the number and quality of teacher aides. We acknowledge the recent gains made in teacher aide pay and conditions in the pay equity settlement, and the commitment of all parties to bring teacher aides into a centrally funded staffing model. This should happen quickly. We believe the goal of having a teacher aide in every classroom is necessary and achievable over time.



Recommendation 1.1

Stage 1 Teacher aides are employed through centrally funded staffing entitlement.

All schools will receive a core roll-based entitlement on a formula of 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) for every 50 students, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every five students.

Stage 2 This will rise to 1:40 students, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every four students.

Stage 3 This will rise to 1:24, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every 2.4 students.

Recommendation 1.1 will provide a core learning support resource for all schools. In addition to this, teacher aide funding must continue for those children with additional needs who qualify for it through the usual funds and programmes. Potentially, some ‘contestable’ funding (for example, Interim Response Funding) may be reduced or removed as the core learning support provision is increased.

Recommendation 1.2

Stage 1 Additional teacher aide resource continues to be available for students with specific needs through existing provision (e.g. ORS, HCN, IRF, external agencies).

Stage 2 Additional teacher aide resource continues to be available for students with specific needs through existing provision (e.g. ORS, HCN, IRF, external agencies).

Stage 3 Needs-based funding is retained for highest-need students (e.g. ORS, Te Kahu Tōi, Intensive Wraparound Service).

To get the best from learning support resources, teachers and teacher aides need time together to plan and report on children’s learning. At present this is difficult to do because

teacher aides are usually paid only for student contact hours. We recommend that teacher aides receive paid release time and, to avoid the risk of release time being swallowed up in student contact time, that the release time is funded through additional staffing entitlement, the same as applies to teachers' classroom release time. We recommend one hour per week for every full-time teacher aide and a portion of this for part-time staff, in place by the end of stage 2.

Recommendation 1.3

Stage 2 Teacher aides receive release time funded through an additional staffing entitlement, at a rate of one hour per week for full-time staff, prorated for part-time staff.

Upskilling teacher aides is the second leg of developing a high-quality, fully professional learning-support service for schools. We acknowledge the PLD provision for teacher aides through the pay equity settlement and believe this should be expanded to become an individual entitlement for all teacher aides. We think the goal of every teacher aide having a recognised qualification is necessary and achievable in the timeframe envisaged in our recommendations. A key part of this will be developing a framework for the recognition of skills and knowledge held by teacher aides currently employed.

Recommendation 1.4

Stage 1 Every teacher aide receives an individual professional learning development entitlement to be used on NZQA-accredited training.

Stage 2 Newly appointed teacher aides are required to undertake a course of tertiary study in an NZQA-accredited qualification programme. Schools receive funding to support the release to undertake study.
Existing teacher aides undertake a recognition of prior learning process towards a tertiary qualification.

Stage 3 Every teacher aide has a relevant qualification (supported by recognition of prior learning).

Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs)

Providing adequate learning support for the growing number of students with additional needs poses a huge administrative burden on schools. We believe every school should receive a centrally funded staffing entitlement for a SENCO. We recommend that this be established as a separate staffing category, alongside the current provision for curriculum and management, using a roll-based formula to provide base staffing, with additional weighting for schools that meet specific criteria, including high levels of need, isolation, vulnerable populations and the top quartile of the Equity Index. We recommend a reallocation of the LSC funding to pay for this. We believe LSCs will no longer be needed in a merged learning support service (recommendation 1.7).

Recommendation 1.5

Stage 1 Every school has a designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). SENCO staffing is allocated as an additional roll-based entitlement: 0.2 FTE for the first 50 students, increasing by 0.1 FTE for every additional 25 students, with an additional weighting for high-need schools. This initiative is partially resourced by disbanding the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) service.

Counsellors

The Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce highlighted that one of the inequities in the existing staffing entitlement is the absence of staffing for counsellors in the primary sector. We believe this must be urgently remedied. There is a huge need to support the mental and emotional health of our tamariki. Investing in counsellors for primary schools will build 'fences at the top of the cliff' that should reduce the need for as many 'ambulances at the bottom' as children progress through the schooling system.

We recommend that counselling be provided as a separate line in the primary staffing entitlement, as it is for secondary schools. For efficiency, we recommend that counsellors be staffed through kāhui ako or clusters, with some of our largest schools being able to employ counselling staff directly. The entitlement should be weighted, using the Equity Index, towards schools with the greatest needs.

Recommendation 1.6

Stage 1 All schools receive roll-based staffing entitlement for counsellors. The entitlement will be set at 1 FTE for every 700 students and weighted so schools with high needs receive greater entitlement. Staffing is allocated through kāhui ako or clusters.

Specialist services: education

Accessing appropriate learning support in a timely way is crucial for schools. Their ability to do so is hindered by their having to work with multiple agencies with unclear demarcations of responsibility. This is most apparent, and most frustrating for schools, in the relationship between the RTLB service and Ministry of Education Learning Support. We recommend these two services be merged and relocated to the planned Education Service Agency (ESA). We think it would be sensible if other learning support services are also moved to the ESA over time, providing a one-stop shop for schools.

Recommendation 1.7

Stage 1 RTLB and Ministry of Education Learning Support are merged into a single service within the Education Service Agency (ESA).

Stage 2 Other services as appropriate are also managed through the ESA. Large schools may have some of these services located in-house.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

More time and support is needed for teachers and teacher aides to meet the needs of ESOL students.

A rapid acquisition of English for these students supports all aspects of their education and socialisation into schools and communities.

Recommendation 1.8

Stage 1 Additional staffing is provided to fund specialist teachers for ESOL support in a wraparound service to schools. The service is based in local ESA offices.

Stage 2 ESOL specialist teaching roles are fully staffed.

Teaching

Release time

To get the best outcomes for students, primary teachers need more classroom release time to do the many tasks expected in an increasingly complex job. We recommend that classroom release time be progressively increased to one day per week for full-time teachers, prorated for teachers working at least 0.8 FTE.



Recommendation 2.1

- Stage 1** Every full-time permanent teacher, or long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives five days' classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week, who is either permanently employed or a long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of five days' classroom release time per term.
- Stage 2** Every full-time permanent teacher, or long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives seven days' classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week, who is either permanently employed or a long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of seven days' classroom release time per term.
- Stage 3** Every full-time permanent teacher, or long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives 10 days' classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week, who is either permanently employed or a long-term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of 10 days' classroom release time per term.

Class size

Apart from a reduction at Year 1, primary teacher:student ratios have remained unchanged since 1996. At present the primary school year-level ratios are: Year 1 = 1:15, Years 2-3 = 1:23 and Years 4-8 = 1:29. Reducing year-level ratios will have an immediate and positive effect on class sizes and teacher workloads, enabling teachers to meet students' needs more fully. We recommend progressively lowering the ratios to a level where they align with the lower secondary school years.

Recommendation 2.2

- Stage 1** Curriculum staffing is increased to improve year-level teacher:student ratios. Year 1 = 1:15, Years 2-3 = 1:23 and Years 4-8 = 1:27.
- Stage 2** Curriculum staffing is further increased to: Year 1 = 1:15, Years 2-3 = 1:20 and Years 4-8 = 1:25.
- Stage 3** Curriculum staffing is further increased to: Year 1 = 1:15, Years 2-3 = 1:20 and Years 4-8 = 1:23.

Small schools

Schools with rolls up to 176 currently receive assured staffing levels under the MACS formula. As class sizes reduce overall under recommendation 2.2, we recommend that the MACS thresholds also drop. Furthermore, we recommend that the MACS formula be adapted to allow incremental increases, replacing the 'magic number' thresholds currently required to secure any additional staffing. For example, using the current MACS threshold of 1:26, the staffing level in a very small school moving towards employing a second FTE teacher may

grow to 1.3 FTE at 19 students, 1.6 FTE at 22 students and reach the full 2.0 FTE at 26 students. This will ease significantly the workloads of teachers and teaching principals in small schools.

Recommendation 2.3

Stage 1 The MACS threshold is lowered to ensure that schools with fewer than 176 students have curriculum staffing of one teacher to every 23 students (1:23). The MACS is adapted to be more flexible, with additional staffing provided incrementally around the roll-number thresholds.

Stage 3 The MACS threshold is further reduced to ensure that schools with fewer than 176 students have curriculum staffing of one teacher to every 20 students (1:20).

To ensure the safety of staff and students, and to enable effective learning, it is imperative that all schools have at least two curriculum/management staff onsite at all times. At present this is not assured for some of our smallest schools, and this situation must be remedied urgently. Note: this will not preclude these schools from receiving additional centrally funded teacher aide staffing (recommendations 1.1 and 1.2).

Recommendation 2.4

Stage 1 U1 schools are guaranteed a minimum staffing of 2.0 FTE for curriculum and management, plus the additional learning support staffing entitlement in recommendations 1.1 – 1.3.

Schools with high needs

We believe that the growing diversity of our primary schools calls for greater flexibility in the way staffing is calculated. We recommend that schools with high levels of need receive additional curriculum staffing, with the Equity Index used to calculate the additional entitlement, and that this fund be available to schools in the quartile of highest need on the Index.

Recommendation 2.5

Stage 2 An additional weighted curriculum staffing component is introduced for schools in the highest quartile of needs, as defined by the Equity Index.

Curriculum support and professional learning and development

The current curriculum support and PLD model is fragmented, inadequate and highly variable in quality. Applying for PLD is onerous and frustrating, and its provision is inequitable. Consequently the education workforce is under-trained and under-supported. New curricula and methodologies fail to gain momentum in schools due to insufficient time and resources for effective PLD. We believe a more effective model is built on close working relationships between schools and knowledgeable advisors and PLD providers, ensuring that good practice percolates through the system. We recommend moving all resourcing for PLD to the ESA, provisioned through a comprehensive advisory service based in regional offices and staffed with a mix of permanent ESA employees, expert teachers and principals seconded from schools and independent local contractors. We recommend phasing in this change in stages 1 and 2.

Recommendation 2.6

Stage 1 Specialist curriculum support (advisory) services are established within the ESA. A commitment is made to bring all PLD provision under the authority of the ESA and a process is started to locate this within the ESA. Advisory and PLD services are

free and on demand, and cover the entire range of curriculum and teaching delivery.

Stage 2 Specialist curriculum support (advisory) services are fully operational within the ESA, partially staffed by teachers and principals on secondment from their schools. Some PLD services continue to be provided by independent advisors contracted to the ESA.

Initial teacher education and beginning teachers

We recommend a comprehensive review of initial teacher education programmes, with the purpose of improving their quality and consistency. The review should include the views of teachers and principals. It should inform the Education Workforce Strategy and address the serious issue of teacher shortages in key sectors, especially Māori medium and Pacific bilingual settings. It must also consider the balance between the theory and practice components of initial teacher education, and the minimum qualifications for entry to the primary teaching workforce. We recommend a strengthening of beginning teacher advice and guidance programmes to better support graduating teachers to transition successfully from training to work.

Recommendation 2.7

Stage 1 A review of the initial teacher education (ITE) system is conducted that includes direct consultation with primary teachers and leaders, Māori, tertiary providers and the wider sector.

Stage 2 ITE programmes show improved outcomes. Graduating teachers are better prepared to manage and teach.

Stage 3 ITE programmes demonstrate consistently high quality. The supply of skilled graduates matches demand.

Recommendation 2.8

Stage 2 The beginning teacher advice and guidance programme is increased to three years. Every beginning teacher has a mentor teacher with dedicated release time and an allowance for three years. Beginning teachers continue to be eligible for full registration after two years.

Pay and conditions for the middle years

Schooling in the 'middle years' has grown to include a range of models, and some significant inequities have arisen as a result. Teachers in middle schools, area schools and junior high schools, teaching the same year levels, have significantly different pay and conditions, mainly due to variances between PPTA and NZEI collective agreements. We recommend that this situation be addressed as a priority. This work could be done within the Accord between NZEI, PPTA and the Ministry of Education.

Recommendation 2.9

Stage 1 A commitment is made to address the inequities in pay, allowances and release time between middle schools, area schools and junior high schools.

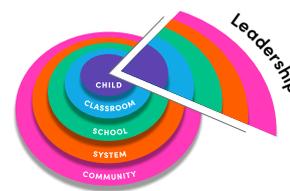
Stage 2 Teachers in middle schools, area schools and junior high schools move towards equivalence.

Stage 3 Teachers in middle schools, area schools and junior high schools receive equivalent pay, allowances and release time.

Leadership

Management staffing entitlement

Primary school leadership is under-resourced. We recommend significant improvements in both components of the management staffing entitlement formula: professional leadership staffing and roll-generated staffing. To improve equity for leaders in the most challenging and vulnerable roles, we recommend adding a third component, an additional weighting for schools that meet specific criteria. The criteria will include remoteness, Māori medium schools and the numbers of students on the Equity Index. School size may also be considered as a weighting criterion, but we expect principals of U1 and U2 schools to receive significant benefits from increased staffing in other recommendations (1.5, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 3.3).



Recommendation 3.1

Stage 1 Schools receive increased management staffing entitlement, comprising:

- A guaranteed minimum 0.5 FTE professional leadership staffing.
- An increased weighting for roll-generated management staffing, from 4.0 to 6.0 in Years 1-3, and from 3.5 to 5.0 in Years 4-8.
- An additional weighting for roll-generated management staffing based on specific equity criteria: remoteness, proportion of students on the Equity Index, Māori medium.

Stage 3 Weightings for roll-generated management staffing increase to 7.0 for all Years 1-8.

Leadership support

The Leadership Centre and Leadership Advisor roles in local ESA offices are essential to ensuring that principals and their leadership teams are well supported.

Recommendation 3.2

Stage 1 The Leadership Centre is operating and is a useful resource for school leaders. Local leadership advisors employed by the ESA provide free professional support to principals. The current support programme for beginning principals is managed through the ESA, using in-house and independent providers.

Administration support

Principals in the primary sector are hindered in their roles as educational leaders by an excessive administration workload. Improving administration staffing and support in schools will significantly improve principals' ability to be leaders of learning, with positive effects on teaching and learning. We recommend improvements to administration capacity that are a mix of additional within-school resources and out-sourced services, principally held within the ESA.

Anticipating a positive outcome to the current pay equity campaign for school administration staff, we recommend that the same goal currently being pursued for teacher aides, of funding through a roll-based staffing entitlement, not operational grants, be pursued for administration staff. Entitlements for administration staffing should be set at levels that increase the administration resource in all schools.

We recommend that U1 and U2 schools receive a minimum of 0.5 FTE administration staffing.

Specialist schools face additional administration challenges that come with very high staffing levels. We recommend that specialist schools receive administration staffing based on their actual staff requirements, not their roll numbers as currently happens.

Recommendation 3.3

Stage 1 In the administration staff pay equity settlement a commitment is made to centrally fund administrators through staffing entitlement. This work is undertaken to be completed by the end of 2025.

Administration staffing in specialist schools is calculated according to actual staff numbers, not roll-based.

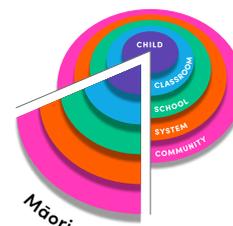
Stage 2 Administration staffing is centrally funded through roll-based staffing entitlement. U1 and U2 schools receive assured minimum staffing of 0.5 FTE.

Recommendation 3.4

Stage 1 Some financial and business management services are located in the ESA. Schools can opt in to these services at low, or no, cost.

Māori

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the problems and challenges experienced in the entire primary schooling sector are amplified for Māori students and staff, in both Māori medium and English medium settings. All the recommendations in the Learning Support, Teaching and Leadership themes apply equally to Māori, but some additional recommendations are needed to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori learners.



Recommendations in this section are split into two divisions: those intended mainly for Māori medium settings, and others applicable to the entire primary sector. 'Māori medium' includes both total immersion schools (kura kaupapa Māori, kura a iwi) and Māori immersion classes in largely English medium schools.

Teacher supply

We urgently need more teachers who are fluent in Te Reo Māori, trained and capable to teach in Māori medium settings and well supported to be successful and sustainable in their jobs. We recommend that targeted financial support, additional to the current provision, be introduced for people on low incomes who are training to become teachers in Māori medium settings.

Recommendation 4.1

Stage 1 Comprehensive initiatives are taken to boost the number of teachers fluent in Te Reo Māori, including: generous funding support through grants, scholarships and low-interest loans; and investment in ITE programmes for teachers intending to work in Level 1-3 Māori immersion settings.

Stage 3 Teacher supply in Māori immersion settings matches the demand and is sustainable.

Class size

Class size matters. We recommend that teacher:student ratios be improved in Māori medium settings. We believe this should be a priority but it will take time for the workforce improvement strategy in recommendation 4.1 to grow the teaching workforce. For this reason our recommendation is for stage 3, to be reviewed if teacher numbers rise sooner.

Recommendation 4.2

Stage 3 Curriculum staffing is increased to improve year-level teacher:student ratios:

2020	BY END OF 2030
Year 1 = 1:15	Year 1 = 1:12
Years 2-3 = 1:18	Years 2-3 = 1:15
Years 4-8 = 1:18	Years 4-8 = 1:15

Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance (MITA)

Attracting capable teachers to Māori medium settings is challenging; retaining them is often harder. Principals of Māori medium schools told us that their teachers fluent in Te Reo Māori are increasingly lured away to better-paid jobs elsewhere in the public sector, or to the corporate world. To ensure that the initiatives to recruit and train more teachers for Māori medium settings are not wasted, we recommend significant improvements to the MITA.

Recommendation 4.3

Stage 1 The Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance (MITA) is increased:

- From \$4,000 to \$6,000 for the base allowance.
- From \$2,000 to \$4,000 for teachers of Level 1 with three years' experience.
- From \$4,000 to \$8,000 for teachers of Level 1 with six years' experience.

These increases also apply to full-time principals teaching in immersion classes.

Community and iwi support

Kura kaupapa, kura a iwi and Māori immersion classes in English medium schools rely heavily on the support of their whānau, iwi and communities – to a greater degree than general schools do. This reflects the strong ties of identity, culture and aspiration invested in these schools by their people, and the bonds of te ao Māori. The criteria and accountability for this funding will be defined.

Recommendation 4.4

Stage 1 Schools receive additional funding through their operations grants to compensate community members who regularly work in the schools.

Stage 2 Funding is extended to English medium schools with high Māori roll numbers that also meet the criteria.

Curriculum resources

Curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori are insufficient in number, scope and quality. We recommend a considerable investment is made over time to improve resources in Te Reo Māori. Further investments should be made in partnerships with iwi to create or expand resources specific to iwi and rohe.

Recommendation 4.5

- Stage 1** Commitment is made to significantly increase funding for curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori.
- Stage 2** Significant improvements are made to curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori.
- Stage 3** Curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori match the number, quality and scope of resources in English.

Learning support staff and resources

Māori medium settings have little or no access to learning support materials in Te Reo Māori, or to Māori specialist staff, such as speech language therapists, educational psychologists and teachers of hearing-impaired students. Applications for learning support are only available using English forms and with English-speaking staff. We recommend that strenuous efforts be made to translate all learning support materials into Te Reo Māori, and to train specialist learning support staff who are fluent in Te Reo Māori and can work capably with staff and students in Māori medium settings.

Recommendation 4.6

- Stage 1** Initiatives are launched through the ESA and other appropriate agencies to adapt and/or develop learning support materials and services that are both culturally and language appropriate for Māori.
- Stage 2** Training programmes are provided for specialist learning support staff who speak Te Reo Māori. Learning support materials are translated into Te Reo Māori.
- Stage 3** Māori medium settings receive all learning support services provided by Te Reo Māori speaking specialists.

Community/iwi leadership

Principals in Māori medium settings take on roles and responsibilities for their profession and among their communities, iwi and hapū that are considerably greater than other principals. They are frequently the interface between Māori and non-Māori worlds, and their schools are beacons for sustaining the identity and history of their iwi and rohe, as well as rejuvenating te reo. These responsibilities place enormous demands on this group and, unsurprisingly, make the principal's job less attractive to other potential leaders. We recommend that an additional management funding be provided to kura in recognition of their additional roles and as an incentive to attract and maintain high-quality principals in Māori medium settings.

Recommendation 4.7

- Stage 1** Māori medium schools receive additional management funding to support their work with communities, iwi and hapū.

We also recommend that additional management funding be provided for English medium schools with high numbers of Māori students. Roll thresholds are to be established for this.

Recommendation 4.8

- Stage 1** English medium schools with high Māori rolls receive additional management funding to support their work with communities, iwi and hapū.

Training and support

To improve educational outcomes for Māori children, all teachers in the primary sector must be culturally-capable and confident users of Te Reo Māori. For this they need support and training, considerably more than has been available until now. Programmes like Te Ahu o te Reo Māori must be well funded and sustainable for many years to come. We recommend several initiatives to support the development of our primary school workforce in these crucial areas. Key to these is increasing the number of Resource Teachers of Māori (RTMs). At present there are just 53 RTMs, a number unchanged for many years. We recommend doubling that number by 2030.

Recommendation 4.9

Stage 1 A Māori advisory service is established within the ESA to provide support and training for all teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies. The service incorporates and extends the existing Resource Teachers of Māori (RTM). Funding and incentives are in place to increase the number of advisors.

Stage 2 The Māori advisory service is fully operational in the ESA. Numbers are increasing.

Stage 3 The number of advisors is doubled from 2021 RTM figures.

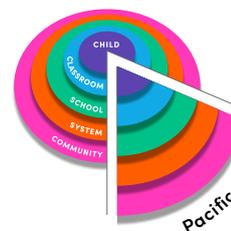
Recommendation 4.10

Stage 1 All teachers can access Te Reo Māori PLD through Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori or other programmes.

Stage 2 Teachers receive tagged release time to attend PLD in Te Reo Māori.

Pacific

Teachers working in Pacific bilingual classes, or generally in schools with high Pacific rolls, face pressures of too few qualified language speakers and too few resources. They are also experiencing growing demand from parents to have their children educated in Pacific-language settings.



Pacific Immersion Teaching Allowance

To attract and retain teachers capable of teaching and qualified to teach in Pacific language immersion settings, we recommend introducing a Pacific Immersion Teaching Allowance (PITA).

Recommendation 5.1

Stage 1 A salary allowance is provided to teachers working in Pacific immersion settings. The allowance matches the Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance.

Community support

Schools with high Pacific rolls rely heavily on community supporters and volunteers, like their colleagues in Māori medium schools. We recommend they also receive funding to compensate these people. Criteria and accountability for this funding will be defined.

Recommendation 5.2

Stage 2 Schools with Pacific bilingual classes or high numbers of Pacific students receive additional funding through their operations grants to compensate community members who regularly work in the schools.

Curriculum resources

Curriculum resources in Pacific languages are insufficient in number, scope and quality. We recommend considerable investment is made over time to improve resources in Pacific languages.

Recommendation 5.3

Stage 1 Commitment is made to significantly increase funding for curriculum resources in Pacific languages.

Stage 2 Significant improvements are made to curriculum resources in Pacific languages.

Stage 3 Curriculum resources in Pacific languages match the number, quality and scope of resources in English.

Training and support

Teachers and principals who work in schools with high Pacific rolls, especially those working in bilingual classes, need more training and support. This is crucial to improving educational outcomes for Pacific students.

Recommendation 5.4

Stage 1 A Pacific advisory service is established within the ESA to provide support and training for teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies.

Stage 2 The Pacific advisory service is fully operational.

Stage 3 The Pacific advisory service provides support and training for teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies for Pacific students.

Community leadership

Principals of schools serving Pacific communities undertake additional roles and obligations with Pacific communities. We recommend that schools with a high Pacific roll receive additional management funding as recognition for this work.

Recommendation 5.5

Stage 1 Schools with high Pacific rolls receive additional management funding to support their work with Pacific communities.

Table 4. Recommendations

	STAGE ONE: END OF 2023	STAGE TWO: END OF 2025	STAGE THREE: END OF 2030
Learning Support			
1.1	Teacher aides are employed through centrally funded staffing entitlement. All schools will receive a core roll-based entitlement on a formula of 1 FTE for every 50 students, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every five students.	Core roll-based entitlement for teacher aides increases to 1:40, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every four students.	Core roll-based entitlement for teacher aides increases to 1:24, increasing incrementally at 0.1 FTE for every 2.4 students.
1.2	Additional teacher aide resource continues to be available for students with specific needs through existing provision (e.g. ORS, HCN, IRF, external agencies).	Additional teacher aide resource continues to be available for students with specific needs through existing provision (e.g. ORS, HCN, IRF, external agencies).	Needs-based funding is retained for highest-need students (e.g. ORS, Te Kahu Tōi, Intensive Wraparound Service).
1.3		Teacher aides receive release time funded through additional staffing entitlement, at a rate of one hour per week for full-time staff, prorated for part-time staff.	
1.4	Every teacher aide receives an individual PLD entitlement to be used on NZQA-accredited training.	Newly-appointed teacher aides are required to undertake a course of tertiary study in an NZQA-accredited qualification programme. Schools receive funding to support the release to undertake study. Existing teacher aides undertake a recognition of prior learning process towards a tertiary qualification.	Every teacher aide has a relevant qualification (supported by recognition of prior learning).
1.5	Every school has a designated SENCO. SENCO staffing is allocated as an additional roll-based entitlement: 0.2 FTE for the first 50 students, increasing by 0.1 FTE for every additional 25 students, with an additional weighting for high-need schools. This initiative is partially resourced by disbanding the Learning Support Coordinator service.		
1.6	All schools receive roll-based entitlement staffing for counsellors. The entitlement will be set at 1 FTE for every 700 students and weighted so schools with high needs receive greater entitlement. Staffing is allocated through kāhui ako or clusters.		
1.7	RTLB and MoE Learning Support are merged into a single service within the Education Service Agency (ESA).	Other learning support services as appropriate are also managed through the ESA. Large schools may have some of these services located in-house.	
1.8	Additional staffing is provided to fund specialist teachers for ESOL support in a wraparound service to schools. The service is based in local ESA offices.	ESOL specialist teaching roles are fully staffed.	

	STAGE ONE: END OF 2023	STAGE TWO: END OF 2025	STAGE THREE: END OF 2030
Teaching			
2.1	Every full-time permanent teacher, or long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives five days' classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week, who is either permanently employed or a long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of five days' CRT per term.	Every full-time permanent teacher, or long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives seven days' classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week, who is either permanently employed or a long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of seven days' CRT per term.	Every full-time permanent teacher, or long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives 10 days classroom release time per term. Every part-time teacher employed for at least 0.5 FTE per week who is either permanently employed or a long term reliever employed for at least a term, receives a prorated amount of 10 days classroom release time per term.
2.2	Curriculum staffing is increased to improve year-level teacher:student ratios 2020 Yr 1 = 1:15 Yrs 2-3 = 1:23 Yrs 4-8 = 1:29 By end of 2022 Yr 1 = 1:15 Yrs 2-3 = 1:23 Yrs 4-8 = 1:27	Curriculum staffing is further increased to: improve year-level teacher:student ratios. By end of 2025 Yr 1 = 1:15 Yrs 2-3 = 1:20 Yrs 4-8 = 1:25	Curriculum staffing is further increased to improve year-level teacher:student ratios. By end of 2030 Yr 1 = 1:15 Yrs 2-3 = 1:20 Yrs 4-8 = 1:23
2.3	The Maximum Average Class Size (MACS) threshold is lowered to ensure that schools with fewer than 176 students have curriculum staffing of one teacher to every 23 students (1:23). The MACS is adapted to be more flexible, with additional staffing provided incrementally around the roll-number thresholds.		The MACS threshold is further reduced to ensure that schools with fewer than 176 students have curriculum staffing of one teacher to every 20 students (1:20).
2.4	U1 schools are guaranteed a minimum staffing of 2.0 FTE for curriculum and management, plus additional learning support staffing entitlement in recommendations 1.1 – 1.3.		
2.5		An additional weighted curriculum staffing component is introduced for schools in the highest quartile of needs, as defined by the Equity Index.	
2.6	Specialist curriculum support (advisory) services are established within the ESA. A commitment is made to bring all PLD provision under the authority of the ESA and a process is started to locate this within the ESA. Advisory and PLD services are free and on demand, and cover the entire range of curriculum and teaching delivery.	Specialist curriculum support (advisory) services are fully operational within the ESA, partially staffed by teachers and principals on secondment from their schools. Some PLD services continue to be provided by independent advisors contracted to the ESA.	
2.7	A review of the initial teacher education (ITE) system is conducted that includes direct consultation with primary teachers and leaders, Māori, tertiary providers and the wider sector.	ITE programmes show improved outcomes. Graduating teachers are better prepared to manage and teach.	ITE programmes demonstrate consistently high quality. The supply of skilled graduates matches demand.
2.8		The beginning teacher advice and guidance programme is increased to three years. Every beginning teacher has a mentor teacher with dedicated release time and an allowance for three years. Beginning teachers continue to be eligible for full registration after two years.	
2.9	A commitment is made to address the inequities in pay, allowances and release time between middle schools, area schools and junior high schools.	Teachers in middle schools, area schools and junior high schools move towards equivalence.	Teachers in middle schools, area schools and junior high schools receive equivalent pay, allowances and release time.

	STAGE ONE: END OF 2023	STAGE TWO: END OF 2025	STAGE THREE: END OF 2030
Leadership			
3.1	<p>Schools receive increased management staffing entitlement, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guaranteed minimum 0.5 FTE professional leadership staffing. • An increased weighting for roll-generated management staffing, from 4.0 to 6.0 in Years 1-3, and from 3.5 to 5.0 in Years 4-8. • An additional weighting for roll-generated management staffing based on specific equity criteria: remoteness, proportion of students on the Equity Index, Māori medium. 		Weightings for roll-generated management staffing increase to 7.0 for all Years 1-8.
3.2	<p>The Leadership Centre is operating and is a useful resource for school leaders. Local leadership advisors employed by the ESA provide free professional support to principals. The current support programme for beginning principals is managed through the ESA, using in-house and independent providers.</p>		
3.3	<p>In the administration staff pay equity settlement a commitment is made to centrally fund administrators through staffing entitlement. This work is undertaken to be completed by the end of 2025.</p> <p>Administration staffing in specialist schools is calculated according to actual staff numbers, not roll-based.</p>	<p>Administration staffing is centrally-funded through roll-based staffing entitlement. U1 and U2 schools receive assured minimum staffing of 0.5 FTE.</p>	
3.4	<p>Some financial and business management services are located in the ESA. Schools can opt in to these services at low, or no, cost.</p>		

Staff in Māori and Pacific school settings receive all the above improvements in a form appropriate to their needs, cultures and languages, plus the following additional recommendations.

	STAGE ONE: END OF 2023	STAGE TWO: END OF 2025	STAGE THREE: END OF 2030
Māori			
Māori medium settings			
(Note: throughout this section 'Māori medium' includes both total immersion schools [kura kaupapa Māori, kura a iwi], and Māori immersion classes in largely English medium schools)			
4.1	Comprehensive initiatives are taken to boost the number of teachers fluent in Te Reo Māori, including: generous funding support through grants, scholarships and low-interest loans; and investment in ITE programmes for teachers intending to work in Level 1-3 Māori immersion settings.		Teacher supply in Māori immersion settings matches the demand and is sustainable.
4.2			Curriculum staffing is increased to improve year-level teacher:student ratios: 2020 By end of 2030 Yr 1 = 1:15 Yr 1 = 1:12 Yrs 2-3 = 1:18 Yrs 2-3 = 1:15 Yrs 4-8 = 1:18 Yrs 4-8 = 1:15
4.3	The Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance (MITA) is increased: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From \$4,000 to \$6,000 for the base allowance. From \$2,000 to \$4,000 for teachers of level one with three years' experience. From \$4,000 to \$8,000 for teachers of level one with six years' experience. These increases also apply to full-time principals teaching in immersion classes.		
4.4	Schools receive additional funding through their operations grant to compensate community members who regularly work in the schools.	Funding is extended to English medium schools with high Māori roll numbers that also meet the criteria.	
4.5	Commitment is made to significantly increase funding for curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori.	Significant improvements are made to curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori.	Curriculum resources in Te Reo Māori match the number, quality and scope of resources in English.
4.6	Initiatives are launched through the ESA and other appropriate agencies, to adapt and/or develop learning support materials and services that are both culturally and language appropriate for Māori.	Training programmes are provided for specialist learning support staff who speak Te Reo Māori. Learning support materials are translated into Te Reo Māori.	Māori medium settings receive all learning support services by Te Reo Māori speaking specialists.
4.7	Māori medium schools receive additional management funding, to support their work with communities, iwi and hapū.		

	STAGE ONE: END OF 2023	STAGE TWO: END OF 2025	STAGE THREE: END OF 2030
English medium schools			
4.8	English medium schools with a high Māori roll receive additional management funding, to support their work with communities, iwi and hapū.		
4.9	A Māori advisory service is established within the ESA to provide support and training for all teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies. The service incorporates and extends the existing Resource Teachers of Māori (RTM). Funding and incentives are in place to increase the number of advisors.	The Māori advisory service is fully operational in the ESA. Numbers are increasing.	The number of advisors is doubled from 2021 RTM figures.
4.10	All teachers can access Te Reo Māori PLD through Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori or other accredited programmes.	Teachers receive tagged release time to attend PLD in Te Reo Māori.	
Pacific			
5.1	A salary allowance is provided to teachers working in Pacific immersion settings. The allowance matches the Māori Immersion Teaching Allowance.		
5.2		Schools with Pacific bilingual classes or high numbers of Pacific students receive additional funding through their operations grants to compensate community members who regularly work in the schools.	
5.3	Commitment is made to significantly increase funding for curriculum resources in Pacific languages.	Significant improvements are made to curriculum resources in Pacific languages.	Curriculum resources in Pacific languages match the number, quality and scope of resources in English.
5.4	A Pacific advisory service is established within the ESA to provide support and training for teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies.	The Pacific advisory service is fully operational.	The Pacific advisory service provides support and training for teachers and leaders in culturally responsive, competent and sustaining pedagogies for Pacific students.
5.5	Schools with high Pacific rolls receive additional management funding to support their work with Pacific communities.		

The Pūaotanga Review Panel



Review Panel Chair: Steve Maharey CNZM

Steve Maharey is currently an independent director, serving as a chair and member of public sector boards. Previously he was the Vice-Chancellor of Massey University. From 1990 to 2008 he was the Member of Parliament for Palmerston North, and from 1999 to 2008 he was a senior Cabinet Minister holding a variety of portfolios including Education, Research, Science and Technology, and Social Development. Earlier in his career Steve was a junior lecturer in business administration and a senior lecturer in sociology at Massey University. He served as a city councillor in Palmerston North. He was awarded the Companion of New Zealand Medal (CNZM) in 2009.

Whetū Cormick — Tainui, Raukawa ki Wharepūhunga, Scotland, Ireland

Whetū Cormick is a descendant of his tūpuna, Raukawa, from Tainui waka and his Irish and Scottish ancestors. He is a proud father of his 27-year-old son Arana Whetū and his 25-year-old daughter Tira Rangimārie Hauiti. Whetū has had extensive educational leadership experience. He has been a school teacher, a school leader for 24 years in a number of Auckland, Far North and Dunedin schools and the President of the New Zealand Principals' Federation (2017 to 2019). Whetū works as an educational consultant.

Dr Cathy Wylie MNZM

Dr Cathy Wylie is a chief researcher at the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, and was a member of the recent Independent Taskforce to Review Tomorrow's Schools. She is well known for her research on educational policy and its impacts for teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand. She is particularly interested in how to better support school leadership, teaching and learning to tackle longstanding inequities in our schooling system, and the newer challenges it faces.

Peter Verstappen

Peter Verstappen has been a primary school teacher and principal for 30 years. He is the Principal of Wakefield School, Nelson, and immediate-past president of Hieke–Nelson Principals' Association. Previously, Peter has been Chair of the NZEI Te Riu Roa Principals' Council and a member of sector working groups developing career pathway models for primary teachers and a framework for leaders of Communities of Learning. He has longstanding research interests in professional supervision for primary teachers, student-led learning and improving home-school partnerships for marginalised students and families.

