

Pacific Education Briefing for the Incoming Minister

“If education is key, why do our locks keep changing? If knowledge is power, why does it come at a price we can’t afford?”

Aigagalefili Fepulea’i Tapua’i, 2020 Head Girl, Aorere College

Introduction

This briefing outlines key priorities for Pacific learners and families in the education system. This briefing focuses on:

- what’s happening for Pacific learners and families in the education system.
- how the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030 is guiding the education system response in the context of COVID-19.
- key investments into Pacific education through Budgets 19, 20, 21 and 22.

We are available to discuss this briefing with you at your convenience and will provide further information in areas that you would like to be briefed on in more depth.

What’s happening for Pacific learners and families?

“I think the system is failing our Pacific children, not our children failing in their education.”

Adult, Auckland, 2018

Pacific learners and families in New Zealand are diverse, resilient and hold high aspirations for education. Pacific learners make up around 9 percent (around 131,000 learners) of the total learners in early learning, schooling and tertiary education across New Zealand. They are a growing population across New Zealand, with estimates that there will be 225,000 learners of Pacific descent, that is 17% of the learner population in 2028.¹

While Pacific families are creating new communities across New Zealand, most Pacific learners are still concentrated in Auckland. While levels of intergenerational language transmission vary between communities, interest in learning in and through Pacific languages is growing.

There have been significant successes by Pacific learners across the education system, including in early learning participation, National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 2 achievement and growing participation in vocational education. Our understanding of what works for Pacific learners is also growing, with increasing research and regular community engagement.² However, learner, family

¹ This data comes from projected 0-19 year old populations from Statistics NZ projections and compares to 392,800 Māori learners (30% of the total population), 226,000 Asian learners (17% of the total population) and 897,000 Palagi learners (67% of the total population).

² Best practice for teaching Pacific learners: Pacific Evidence Brief 2019
<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/pacific/best-practice-for-teaching-pacific-learners-pacific-evidence-brief>

and community voices and data show that the education system does not always nurture the focus on belonging, inclusion and cultures, languages and identities needed for success in educational attainment.

- Attendance and engagement are being affected for some Pacific learners by systemic barriers, including experiences of racism, discrimination and bullying for some learners, low expectations from some teachers, some young people not feeling that they can relate to teachers and sometimes not having enough food, the correct uniform or money for transport to get to early learning or school.³
- Research shows that there are challenges for some Pacific learners to access National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) opportunities and pathways are not equitable for all learners. This includes low expectations for some Pacific learners from some teachers, not having equitable access to subjects or standards, limited and variable advice and support around subject choices and careers, and some learners being streamed into pathways that do not lead to University Entrance (UE). This has affected NCEA achievement for some Pacific learners.⁴
- While many learners are entering into tertiary education, the tertiary education system is not always supporting all learners to access the pathways to succeed, with reported experiences of low expectations of some Pacific learners, the lack of a Pacific workforce, and a lack of appropriate financial and mental health support and lower retention and completion rates for some Pacific learners compared to other learner groups.⁵

More information on experiences and outcomes for Pacific learners and families is available in the Action Plan for Pacific Education Progress Report [See Action Plan Section on Page 4].

Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030

“A child will feel safe if they are wrapped in their culture”
Tokelau adult, Hutt Valley, 2019

The 30 Year Vision for Education forms the core of the overall approach to education the Government has championed.

30 Year Vision for Education	
Whakamaua te pae tata kia tina	Whaia te pae tawhiti kia tata
Take hold of your potential so it becomes your reality.	Explore beyond the distant horizon and draw it near
We are descendants of explorers, discoverers and innovators who used their knowledge to traverse distant horizons. Our learning will be inclusive, equitable and connected so we progress and achieve advances for our people and their future journeys and encounters.	

³ See Action Plan Progress Report

⁴ See Action Plan Progress Report

⁵ See Action Plan Progress Report

This 30 Year Vision sets up an Education Work Programme to put these aspirations for education into practice, combining key strategic work from early learning via schooling to tertiary education.

Based on this, in 2018 and 2019, the Ministry of Education went out to co-design a strategy for Pacific education with Pacific communities and the education sector. Through these fono, the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030 was developed and was launched in July 2020. This Action Plan is underpinned by four principles that describe what is needed within the education system for Pacific learner success

Reciprocity	Pacific diversity	Sustained effort	Collective action
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The Action Plan sets a vision for Pacific education and identifies five shifts required in the education system to achieve the vision and to address the underlying barriers to Pacific learners and families succeeding in the education system. It aligns and connects to key work across education and government agencies, including the goals of the:

- Ministry of Pacific Peoples' Pacific Aotearoa Lalanga Fou, Pacific Wellbeing Strategy and Pacific Languages Strategy
- the Ministry of Health's Ola Manuia Pacific Health and Wellbeing Plan, and
- the Ministry of Social Development's Pacific Prosperity | Our People, Our Solutions Our Future Plan.

Vision for Pacific Education: Diverse Pacific learners and their families are safe, valued, and equipped to achieve their education aspirations				
Shift 1 Work reciprocally with diverse Pacific communities to respond to unmet needs, with an initial focus on needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.	Shift 2 Confront systemic racism and discrimination in education.	Shift 3 Enable every teacher, leader and educational professional to take coordinated action to become culturally competent with diverse Pacific learners.	Shift 4 Partner with families to design education opportunities together with teachers, leaders and educational professionals so that aspirations for learning and employment can be met.	Shift 5 Grow, retain and value highly competent teachers, leaders and educational professionals of diverse Pacific Heritages.
These shifts align to the five Objectives for Education				
Barrier-Free Access: Great education opportunities and outcomes are within reach for every learner.	World class Inclusive Public Education: New Zealand education is trusted and sustainable.	Quality Teaching and Leadership: Quality teaching and leadership make the difference for learners and their whānau.	Learners at the centre: Learners with their whānau are at the centre of education Future of learning and work: Learning that is relevant to the lives of New Zealanders today and throughout their Lives.	Quality Teaching and Leadership: Quality teaching and leadership make the difference for learners and their whānau. Future of learning and work: Learning that is relevant to the lives of New Zealanders today and throughout their lives.

We also heard from Pacific learners and families that how we measure success isn't always meaningful. We asked communities what success looks like for them and six outcomes stood out as the most important:

- Pacific learners and their families feel accepted and included;
- Pacific learners' cultures, faith and beliefs are valued in education;
- There are no financial barriers to accessing education for Pacific learners

- and families;
- Pacific learners and families are free from racism and discrimination in education; and
- Pacific families feel confident supporting their children in education.

These success outcomes provide the basis for the Measurement Framework for the Action Plan. The framework provides sources of Pacific data and information linked to each of the shifts in the Action Plan and associated indicators.

A range of key indicators have been identified to better acknowledge what Pacific communities have told us matters to them and how progress is being made towards achieving the system shifts. Key indicators include Ministry of Education sources of education data, Ministry and government funded evaluations of education initiative implementation and national and international studies that monitor Aotearoa learner progress.

The framework enables us to monitor progress on the action and shifts of the Action Plan, and to share with communities how progress is going. The first public progress report on the Action Plan is underway. The first report will serve as the baseline report for monitoring and measuring progress on the Action Plan and includes:

- a progress summary of the actions undertaken by Government and other agencies to improve outcomes for Pacific learners; and
- progress on bringing the five key system shifts to life.

The Progress Report is expected to be released in February 2023 [TBC]. You will receive an update on the full findings of the report and the expected release [See Key Decisions section on page 9].

The Action Plan outlines the key actions currently underway to achieve the vision for Pacific Education and shift the system. It uses a two-pronged approach to embed change:

- delivering specific, targeted actions to support Pacific learners and families directly, through Budget investment.⁶
- ensuring the strategic focus of the Action Plan is applied to all items of the Education Work Programme, such as the refresh of the New Zealand Curriculum and the NCEA Review, and the vocational education reforms, so that they respond to the needs and aspirations of Pacific learners and families.

The Government cannot implement the Action Plan and achieve change alone. Commitment and support from the education sector and communities is crucial to success.

The Action Plan, appended in Annex 2, is a living document that is to be updated regularly, to identify new actions and changes needed to give effect to the shifts and vision for Pacific education. The vision and key shifts of the Action Plan are intended to be enduring, while the work programme should be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect progress with implementation. After two years of implementation (2020 to 2022), we are scheduled to update the work programme in 2023, to respond to key priority areas for 2023 [See Priority Areas for 2023 section on page 9].

⁶ More information on these key actions from Budget investment is outlined in Annex 1.

Ongoing impact of COVID-19

"The social and economic ramifications of the lockdown have made our vulnerable community even more vulnerable."

Kiri Turketo, Principal, Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate School

The national lockdowns in March 2020 and August 2021 and the Auckland lockdowns in August 2020 and February 2021 and the implementation of the Traffic Light System have had significant impacts on education, employment and health for many Pacific learners, particularly in the Auckland region.

Some Pacific learners' education experiences have been disrupted by:

- falling early learning attendance due to impact of COVID-19, including concerns around family health, safety and wellbeing and changing working arrangements for families.
- initial falling primary attendance, likely due to concerns around family health, safety and wellbeing ⁷.
- While aggregate data suggests growing secondary attendance (fewer secondary students are leaving than in any year since 2011 due to the employment situation), some communities are reporting some learners needing to leave school to work to financially support their families.
- inconsistent access to appropriate learning opportunities throughout Alert Levels 2-4 and experiences of digital exclusion that have limited learners effectively engaging in distance learning. ⁸
- concerns around achieving NCEA, particularly for Auckland learners, due to disrupted learning and lack of consistent access to learning and teaching. ⁹
- difficulty re-engaging with on-site learning for some groups of learners, as positive learning experiences and relationships have been negatively affected. ¹⁰
- changing and stressful home and family situations for some learners, leading to mental health challenges. ¹¹

These experiences are not new for some Pacific learners, whose basic needs were not always being met prior to COVID-19.

The Ministry is supporting some immediate solutions to meet the wellbeing needs of Pacific learners and encourage participation, attendance and engagement, through universal and targeted support, including:

⁷ <https://pacificmedianetwork.com/articles/auckland-alert-levels-taking-toll-on-pacific-parents-and-children>

⁸ <https://www.mz.co.nz/news/national/414632/covid-19-principals-warn-students-could-fall-behind-with-remote-learning>; <https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/300093059/coronavirus-covid19-exposes-digital-divide-internet-havenots-further-cut-off>

⁹ <https://www.mz.co.nz/news/national/414632/covid-19-principals-warn-students-could-fall-behind-with-remote-learning>; <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/students-falling-through-the-gaps-during-lockdown>

¹⁰ Reporting from Urgent Response Fund and Pacific Education Support and Innovation Funds

¹¹ Reporting from Urgent Response Fund

- providing support through the Pacific Education Support Fund and Pacific Education Innovation Fund to support students to reengage with learning and sharing examples of good practise.
- using communication channels and resources to promote effective practice and approaches to learning, specifically within a COVID-19 disrupted education environment.

We expect that the impacts of COVID-19 will continue in the short to medium term (1-5 years) and may be exacerbated by further local, regional, national or Pacific-regional outbreaks occurring. We expect to see:

- financial barriers to getting to school or early learning, such as cost of travel, cost of uniforms, to continue for some Pacific learners and these may be exacerbated by further outbreaks or a greater economic downturn.
- financial barriers to regular attendance, such as looking after siblings and family members or moving into employment, may continue for some Pacific learners and will likely be exacerbated by the increasing cost of living.
- an increase in internal migration with families relocating within and between regions for employment reasons.
- changes in employment impacting on early learning and schooling participation, particularly impacting participation for the Pacific early learning sector, with services experiencing challenges in retaining and growing the number of learners in services.
- changing interest in tertiary education and employment opportunities from school leavers as an economic downturn may increase interest in further study and pathways to employment, but the cost of pursuing this may be a barrier to accessing full or part time study.
- continued wider impact of broader Government agency work, including social welfare system, housing market and access to community supports, and unintended impacts on families, such as intensive Auckland housing re-development disrupting families by relocating families to areas outside of their children's schools.

For the education system this means:

- ongoing challenges to support regular attendance and wellbeing in early learning, primary and secondary schooling.
- potential greater demand for curriculum and wellbeing supports
- changing demand and participation for tertiary education, including longer time spent in tertiary education and training.

Priority Areas for 2023

“Equity [needs to be] a priority for the government. We need an honest commitment from the government to where the resources are needed.”

Adult, Lower Hutt, 2018

The Government response to the COVID-19 outbreak and increasing cost of living, combined with existing system inequities, provides the opportunity for a new way of working with Pacific learners and families and the education sector, to build trust and work together collectively towards common goals for education.

The Ministry is committed to maintaining ways of working that strengthen relational trust in the system and that build opportunities to co-construct solutions. A key learning through COVID-19 is that, to embed sustained system change, we need to focus on a small number of priorities. The Action Plan for Pacific Education, and other key strategic documents including Ka Hikitia and Tau Mai Te Reo, identify that educationally powerful connections with family and whānau, employers and communities are essential to transforming educational outcomes.

While the evidence to support this has been with us for a long time, we have not, as a system, focused on getting these relationships genuinely connected with learning. To focus on these educationally powerful connections, there are three big reform programmes underway that contribute to the vision of the Action Plan:

- curriculum reform and workforce supports in early learning and schooling, so Pacific learners can access the learning and supports they need, when and how they need it to progress and achieve across the national curriculum. This includes local curriculum contexts that are meaningful to Pacific learners and their families, alongside communities, the education sector and employers.
- improving pathways between education and employment so that Pacific learners' and families' aspirations for education are met. This includes reforming vocational education and training and the careers system, in partnership with families, communities and employers.
- the allocation of decision rights to ensure the right balance of tight (at the centre) and loose (devolved) decision rights to engage education professionals, provide voice for Pacific learners, families and communities, and maintain high expectations across the system, consistent with the intent of many of the Tomorrow Schools' reforms.

Ensuring these work programmes explicitly consider the impact and effect on Pacific learners and families is key to the success of the Action Plan.

We have also identified three key priorities for 2023:

1. Enabling Pacific early learning services to succeed;
2. Strengthening Pacific bilingual and immersion education and languages in education; and
3. Supporting transitions into tertiary education.

These wider work programmes interconnections and three priorities have informed an initial draft of the refreshed Action Plan. We have identified three strands of work to update the Action Plan:

- *Updating the Work Programme:* The progress reporting on the Action Plan provides the basis for identifying the next suite of actions required to maintain and extend momentum across the five key shifts over the period 2022-2024. In addition, we will update resources and exemplar actions for education services and communities.
- *Updating the strategic direction of the Action Plan to capture commitment to Pacific Languages in Education:* The Action Plan will be updated to revert back to the original wording for Key Shift 1 and to include a new section on commitment to Pacific Languages in Education in the Action Plan [as committed to as an action in the 2020 Action Plan].
- *Editorial Changes and an updated Foreword:* The introductory sections of the Action Plan will be updated to reflect progress since 2020 and to align this content across the published Action Plan and various education websites.

We have worked with partner agencies in the education sector and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples to prepare:

- an updated work programme, highlighting current workstreams that were established as part of the first tranche in 2020 or subsequently developed (including new investments in Budget 2021 and Budget 2022)
- an overview of our proposed approach to *Growing Pacific Languages in Education* as part of the update to Key Shift 1 in the Action Plan
- A preliminary draft of the overall Action Plan, to provide you with some sense of the 'look and feel' of the refresh. This includes content that has been maintained from the original Action Plan, as well as commentary on progress since then, the update of Key Shift 1 and the Ministerial Foreword and potential next steps.

We will provide you these documents as soon as possible [See Key decisions section on page 9].

9(2)(f)(iv)



Key decision points for you as Minister are:

Key decisions		Key Updates	
Review of draft refresh of Action Plan	February 2023	Update on Action Plan Progress Report	February 2023
Finalisation of new section on Pacific Languages in Education	February 2023		
Review of Cabinet paper on refresh of Action Plan	February 2023		
Cabinet date for refresh of Action Plan	March 2023		
Budget 23 decisions	March 2023-TBC		

Annexes

Annex 1: Budget Investment in Pacific Education

Annex 2: Te Poutāhū: Pacific Work programme

Annex 3: Pacific Aotearoa demographics A3 [Powerpoint]

Annex 4: Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030 [PDF and hard copy provided]

Annex 1: Budget investments in Pacific Education

Action Plan Key Shift	Budget 19	Budget 20 [COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund]	Budget 21	Budget 22
Shift 1- Work reciprocally with diverse Pacific communities to respond to unmet needs, with an initial focus on needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic	<p>Develop bilingual resources in gagana Sāmoa, lea faka Tonga and te reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani (\$0.3m over two years, time limited funding)</p> <p>Development and delivery of Action Plan for Pacific Education (\$5.1m over four years, ongoing funding)</p>	<p>Translate and distribute key education materials in 10 Pacific languages to digitally excluded Pacific families. (\$1.5m over 2 years, time limited funding)</p>	<p>Introduce additional operational funding and further curriculum resources for Pacific bilingual units in schools (\$12.413m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p> <p>Deliver targeted Professional Learning and Development (PLD) to Pacific bilingual teachers (\$7.2m over 4 years, time limited, through reprioritisation)</p> <p>Develop two new Pacific language subjects, gagana Tokelau and vagahau Niue as NCEA Achievement Standards subjects (\$5.1m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p>	
Shift 2- Confront systemic racism and discrimination in education				
Shift 3- Enable every teacher, leader and educational professional to take coordinated action to become culturally competent with diverse Pacific learners	<p>Extend the Pasifika Early Literacy Project (PELP) to early learning services and more English medium primary schools and to communities with Pacific realm heritage (\$4.6m over four years, ongoing funding)</p> <p>Deliver targeted provision of the Developing Mathematical Communities of Inquiry (DMIC) programme for up to 50 additional schools (\$7.2m over four years, ongoing funding)</p> <p>Develop professional learning and development resources for implementing Tapasā, a cultural competencies framework for teachers of Pacific learners (\$1m over 1 year, time limited funding)</p>	<p>Introduce a Pacific Education Innovation fund to support innovative Pacific education initiatives to respond to curriculum and wellbeing needs exacerbated by COVID-19 (\$28.5m over 4 years, time limited funding)</p> <p>Expand the delivery of Tautai o le Moana, an educational leadership collaboration which seeks to strengthen the capabilities of those in leadership, to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of Pacific learners. (\$2.9m over 4 years, time limited funding)</p>	<p>Provide Professional Learning and Development (PLD) focused on Tapasa: cultural competencies for teachers of Pacific learners (\$5m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p>	<p>Provide additional funding for Professional Learning and Development (PLD) focused on Tapasa: cultural competencies for teachers of Pacific learners (\$5m over 4 years, time limited funding, through reprioritisation)</p>
Shift 4- Partner with families to design education opportunities together with teachers, leaders and educational professionals so that aspirations for learning and employment can be met	<p>Strengthen delivering of Talanoa Ako (\$9.2m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p>	<p>Fund Pacific community organisations and groups to respond to the education and wellbeing needs of Pacific families from COVID-19 and to support them to maintain strong relationships with education providers (Pacific Education Support Fund) (\$39.7m over four years, time limited funding)</p>		<p>Maintain and grow the Tulī Takes Flight and Pacific Education Foundation Scholarships, to Pacific education scholarships to address education system inequities (\$2.048m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p>
Shift 5- Grow, retain and value highly competent teachers, leaders and educational professionals of diverse Pacific heritages		<p>Provide professional development and learning (PLD), guidance and support to strengthen the governance and management of Pacific early learning centres (\$7.6m over 4 years, time limited funding)</p>		<p>Purchases support to meet English language requirements and develop further Pacific bilingual curriculum resources to support the growth of the Pacific bilingual and immersion schooling workforce (\$12.953m over 4 years, ongoing funding)</p>

Budget 19 and Budget 20 actions are included in the 2020 Action Plan. Budget 21 and Budget 22 actions will be included in the 2023 Action Plan.

Annex 2: Te Poutāhū Pacific work programme

The refresh of *The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)*

- The NZC (working title: Te Mātaiaho) is being refreshed to be clearer about the most important learning and progress through the stages of the curriculum from years 1-13.
- Throughout the refresh of the NZC, we are partnering with Pacific peoples to understand how the Curriculum and associated supports reflect and value all ākonga, guided by the *Action Plan for Pacific Education (APPE)*. We are working with Curriculum Leads and other regional staff, who have existing relationships with groups who bring diverse Pacific perspectives. \
- We will work collaboratively with teachers to design local curriculum experiences that draw on the linguistic and cultural strengths of Pacific ākonga and align with the development of an inclusive refreshed NZC.
- The work to refresh the schooling curriculum documents is intended to make clear the place and value of Pacific languages in the official curriculum and will support Pacific languages to be heard, spoken and celebrated in classrooms and schools in Aotearoa.
- We also expect to provide guidance for Pacific bilingual units on how to implement the refreshed NZC in the specific context of Pacific bilingual and immersion education (see below). This will help strengthen pathways and resources for learning, and learning in, Pacific languages.
- The resources, guidance, and tools to support culturally and linguistically diverse ākonga will be informed by current initiatives that give prominence to biliteracy and bilingualism including the Pacific Early Literacy Project and Reo Moana (Pacific Bilingual and Immersion Education) PLD.
- Between September and December 2022, the Ministry sought feedback on the draft of Te Mātaiaho | the Curriculum Framework, and the draft English and Mathematics & Statistics learning areas. During this period, we engaged with Pacific communities including Pacific Bilingual educators so that this feedback could be integrated into the final framework and content of Te Mātaiaho. Further engagement will be taking place on Te Mātaiaho and the English and Mathematics & Statistics learning areas in term 1 2023, and we will update you and your fellow Ministers when this is complete.
- The Learning Languages learning area of the NZC will be refreshed in 2024. This will be underpinned by key government priorities including those outlined in the APPE, the statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP) and the Pacific Languages Strategy. This would include aligning with the new content on Pacific languages in education in the refreshed APPE.

Pacific Bilingual Resources

Budget 22 provided funding to support the growth of the Pacific bilingual and immersion schooling workforce and the retention of the current workforce. The initiative supports further development of curriculum resources that align with key government priorities. This is expected to contribute to increased delivery of quality Pacific bilingual and immersion education. The development and distribution of further Pacific bilingual curriculum resources that are underway includes:

i. **Instructional Series**

Contract negotiations with a provider are underway for the development of a reading series in Lea faka Tonga and Gagana Sāmoa. This will include a levelling framework and an assessment tool to equip teachers to notice and respond to literacy progress in these languages.

ii. **Poto Series**

A series of reading books for Years 4-8 in Gagana Samoa and Lea faka Tonga. Poto 1.0 and 2.0 are already in use, 3.0 is currently being printed and distributed to bilingual units, and initial development of 4.0 is underway.

iii. **Pacific Bilingual ebooks**

Contract negotiations are underway for a provider to develop interactive digital books for use at home and school in five Pacific languages.

iv. Pacific Bilingual Maths Resources

Contract negotiations are underway for a provider to develop Maths resources in five Pacific languages.

Professional Learning and Development

The Ministry continues to deliver PLD that strengthens the cultural capability of the workforce. Current initiatives include:

i. Pasifika Early Literacy Project (PELP)

In the fourth year of delivery, PELP uses dual language resources in five Pacific languages to support the early language and literacy learning of Pacific children. PELP includes development of books, PLD workshops for leaders and teachers, fono for families, and visits to places of learning to support kaiako and teachers to use the books and support materials.

ii. Tapasā

Tapasā is a tool to build cultural competency and develop effective teaching practices that engage Pacific learners. Two providers are currently delivering the service to teachers and leaders in early learning settings and schools with high numbers of Pacific learners to embed the principles and approaches of Tapasā. We are in the process of expanding provision of Tapasā to include regionally based delivery.

iii. Reo Moana

Targeted Pacific Bilingual & Immersion Education PLD for both current Pacific bilingual education teachers and leaders, and teachers who want to teach in Pacific bilingual and immersion education units.

v. Tautai o le Moana – Navigators of the Ocean

Tautai o le Moana seeks to strengthen the capabilities of those in leadership, to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of Pacific learners. Facilitators work with principals to challenge unconscious bias, promote high impact culturally and linguistically sustainable practices, and to lead schools in which Pacific learners thrive.

NCEA Change Programme

Following extensive public engagement, the NCEA Change Package, which outlined seven key changes to strengthen NCEA was confirmed by Cabinet in February 2020. This signals the most significant reform of NCEA since the qualification was introduced in 2002, and will improve well-being, equity, coherence, pathways, and credibility – for students and teachers alike.

The NCEA Change Programme is a work programme led by Secondary Tertiary Group (Te Poutāhū) within the Ministry of Education to deliver the package that is aimed at strengthening NCEA, the seven changes are outlined below.

- **Make NCEA more accessible** – zero fees, fewer barriers for learners with disabilities and learning support needs.
- **Equal status for mātauranga Māori in NCEA** – develop new ways to recognise mātauranga Māori, build teacher capability, and improve resourcing and support for Māori learners and te ao Māori pathways.
- **Strengthen literacy and numeracy requirements and assessments** – ensure students with an NCEA have functional literacy and numeracy skills that will ready them to transition into tertiary education or the workplace.
- **Fewer, larger standards** – new achievement standards and resources will be developed to replace existing standards and ensure the qualification achieved credentials the most significant learning in a learning area or subject.

- **Simplify NCEA's structure** – credits can no longer be carried over to the next level and resubmissions will only be allowed where they take students from a 'Not Achieved' grade to an 'Achieved' grade. Sixty credits are required to pass each NCEA level.
- **Clearer pathways to further education or work** – develop a Vocational Entrance Award to clearly signal when a student is ready to transition into higher level vocational education and strengthen vocational pathways through NCEA.
- **Keep NCEA Level 1 optional** – ensure Level 1 provides students with the broad, foundational knowledge needed to support specialization at Levels 2 and 3.

The NCEA Change Programme & Pacific Education

Review of Achievement Standards (New Zealand Curriculum)

- The Review of Achievement Standards provides the opportunity to make NCEA more inclusive and accessible by design. This includes incorporating Pacific knowledges, contexts, and worldviews more meaningfully into the design of NCEA teaching and learning materials. Each subject within the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS) has a Subject Expert Group, which must include Pacific experts who support the development of the subject and the incorporation of Pacific knowledges, identities, and contexts. Pacific experts (NCEA Pacific Panel) provide quality review and assurance to all subjects being developed through NZC RAS to ensure that Pacific knowledges, contexts, and worldviews are woven throughout the materials appropriately.
- As part of the Review of Achievement Standards, three new Pacific subjects have also been introduced as NCEA Achievement standard subjects, including Pacific Studies at Level 2-3, and Vagahau Niue and Gagana Tokelau at Level 1-3. Pacific Studies, which was previously only offered through Unit Standards that are not university approved, are currently in development with Level 2 being piloted in 2024. Vagahau Niue and Gagana Tokelau Level 1 completed development in 2022, ready for piloting in 2023. All five Pacific Languages Subject Expert Groups (Vagahau Niue, Gagana Tokelau, Gagana Sāmoa, Lea Faka-Tonga, Te Reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani) are currently developing Level 2 materials.

Building sector capability – implementation supports

- Targeted Pacific resources for Teacher Only Day (TOD) focused on the Pacific Values Framework has also been developed and made available to the sector to support teachers to build programmes of learning that are inclusive of Pacific learners and contexts. These resources contribute to the Action Plan for Pacific Education (APPE) goal to *enable every teacher, leader and educational professional to take coordinated action to become culturally competent with diverse Pacific learners*. The resources have been published and are available here: [Pacific Values Framework – Delivering for Pacific Learners and Contexts | NCEA \(education.govt.nz\)](#)

Pathways

- As part of strengthening pathways to further education and work, a Vocational Entrance Award (name provisional) is currently under development which will aim to demonstrate that students have done the learning required to progress on to higher level vocational education training after NCEA. This work also includes introducing new vocational subjects to NCEA and developing packages of coherent learning that contribute towards clear vocational pathways. To support the delivery of this change, opportunities to engage with Pacific learners, whānau and communities are currently being explored to ensure that the design and delivery of this change is fit for purpose and able to support the aspirations of Pacific learners and their whānau.
- In 2022, a Cabinet decision [CAB-22-MIN-0469] was made to extend the eligibility of the Prime Minister's Vocational Excellence Award to the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau (with Tokelau's

eligibility contingent upon their future adoption of NCEA) . The Award recognises secondary school students demonstrating excellence in their vocational education and training and comes with an official certificate and \$2000 cash prize. In 2022, a student at Niue High School received the Award, while the timing of the Cabinet decision meant that the Cook Islands will be able to begin presenting the Award in 2023.

Literacy & Numeracy

- Work is currently underway with Pacific sector leaders and experts to understand the design and implementation considerations for Pacific learners and contexts, including Realm countries. This will help Pacific ākonga have the functional literacy and numeracy skills that will ready them to transition into further education or work. This work includes the delivery of targeted Pacific support to the Regional Support Network contractors, identifying opportunities for resource development, as well as providing Pacific critical perspective review of Literacy and Numeracy materials.

Accessibility & Inclusion

- To improve access to Special Assessment Conditions (SAC), research has been undertaken to better understand the barriers to Special Assessment Conditions uptake for Pacific learners in NCEA, and the perceptions of their whānau, and communities. Based on the research recommendations, the Pacific team are currently working to identify tailored resources and support needed to improve uptake of SACs by Pacific learners and contexts, particularly for Pacific parents and whānau to have safe conversations with their children or their school and vice versa.

Realm implementation support

- The Ministry have also continued to provide targeted change and implementation support to Realm countries (Niue, Cook Islands, Tokelau) to implement the NCEA Changes. Niue and Cook Islands currently offer NCEA as the national secondary school qualification.
- To support implementation of NCEA Changes in Niue and the Cook Islands, a NCEA Niue Panel and NCEA Cook Islands Panel have been established as a key vehicle to kept connected to the Niue Department of Education and the Cook Islands Ministry of Education, education leaders and community leaders. These panels provide advice and guidance implementation priorities, initiatives and opportunities of the NCEA Change programme. This includes identifying the appropriate resources and support to support the sector successfully implement the NCEA Changes within their unique contexts, such as ensuring NCEA Change resources like the Whānau Toolkit were translated and adapted for the Niue and Cook Islands students and whānau.
- In 2022, the Realms Nations piloted a selection of Literacy, Numeracy, and Cook Islands Māori standards. Regular bespoke online support for Niue and Cook Islands pilot teachers was provided throughout 2022, in tandem with face-to-face pilot support. A team from the NCEA Change Programme delivered two separate weeks of face to face PLD in the Cook Islands, and one week of PLD in Niue. These visits included PLD sessions which pre-empted what the Realm nations schools have planned to pilot in 2023.
- Tokelau hosted an Education Summit in 2019 and the General Fono of Tokelau agreed to implement NCEA, alongside a range of other changes within their education system (including update to their curriculum and enhancing vocational training provision).
- The Ministry are currently working alongside NZQA and a cross-agency group to support the implementation of NCEA in 2024. This includes partnering with Te Kura who will provide the assessments towards NCEA, and some online delivery of programmes in partnership with their on the ground teaching workforce.

Glossary of education terms

- **Curriculum Progress and Achievement work programme (CPA):** Ministry work programme focused on progress and achievement across the national curriculum (New Zealand Curriculum for English medium schooling and Te Mātauranga o Aotearoa for Māori medium schooling)
- **Developing Mathematical Communities of Inquiry (DMIC)** - A model of ambitious mathematics teaching founded in equity. It uses an advanced form of teacher-directed collaborative learning and uses mixed achievement learner groups (influenced by early work out of Stanford University). DMIC in New Zealand is led by Professor Roberta Hunter and Dr Jodie Hunter who bring their Cook Islands heritage, mathematics education, professional learning and theory to practice expertise to this collaborative and culturally responsive pedagogy
- **Education studies** - International research into educational progress and achievement New Zealand participates in
 - **Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)** - An educational research study on children's reading literacy achievement conducted in countries around the world
 - **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** - An international study that assesses how well 15 year-old are prepared to meet the challenges of today's society
 - **National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) – Wānangatia Te Putanga Tauria** – A national study that assesses student achievement across the curriculum at the primary level in New Zealand's English-medium state schools
 - **Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)** - An international comparative study that provides countries the opportunity to examine trends in mathematics and science achievement at the middle primary level (Year 5) and lower secondary level (Year 9)
- **Education Workforce Strategy (EWS)** - Strategic education document being developed by the Ministry of Education to support Aotearoa New Zealand to have a strong, culturally competent education workforce, with the right skills and dispositions to encourage every learner on their education pathway and to help every learner fulfil their potential
- **Education Work Programme** - Key education work to embed this Government's long-term vision for education. The work programme is made up of big reviews of parts of the system, medium term strategies to map out priorities and key initiatives (for example, the review of vocational education (RoVE), the review of NCEA, the Early Learning Strategic Plan and the review of Tomorrow's Schools).
- **He taonga te tamaiti – Every child a taonga: Early learning Action Plan 2019-2029** - Strategic document that sets the high level direction and vision for early learning for the next ten years
- **Ka Hikitia - The Māori Education Strategy** - A cross-agency strategy for the education sector that sets out how the education system will work with education services to achieve system shifts in education and to support Māori learners and their whānau, hapū and iwi to achieve excellent and equitable outcomes
- **Joint initiative-** Joint initiative between the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Development to develop and pilot an innovative approach to integrated service delivery for Pacific families. Shared outcomes between agencies will be integrated into the contracts of mature Pacific providers of health and social development services working with Pacific families and communities. This work will also pilot engaging with Pacific families in collaborative development of family action plans that prioritise family needs (rather than individual needs) across education, health and social needs

- **National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)** – The main qualification for senior secondary school students, available at Levels 1, 2 and 3 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)
- **Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP)**- Strategic document to set out the Government’s educational priorities for all of our state schools, kura, private schools, early learning services, me nga kōhanga reo, and Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako. The governing bodies of schools, kura, and early learning services will use these priorities, alongside their own local priorities, to help every child and young person to progress and achieve to their potential (to be launched next week)
- **Pacific Education Innovation Fund**- A targeted fund, funded through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, to support early learning services, schools, tertiary providers, community groups, providers and researchers to deliver innovative practices that support Pacific learners’ wellbeing and curriculum needs, which have been affected by COVID-19, including in Pacific bilingual and immersion education.
- **Pacific Education Support Fund**- A targeted fund, funded through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, to enable Pacific community groups, and organisations and Pacific Health and Social Service providers to meet education-related and wellbeing needs of learners and families arising from and/or exacerbated by COVID-19.
- **Pasifika Early Literacy Project (PELP)** - A targeted project focused on promoting the development of partnerships between home and school in order to grow Pacific learners’ language and literacy capabilities in both English and their heritage language. The project included professional development workshops for teachers, Pacific parent and family fono, and the development and publication of five dual language books with teacher and kaiako support material. The dual language resources were published in five Pacific languages; gagana Sāmoa, gagana Tokelau, 'lea faka Tonga, te reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani, and vagahau Niue
- **Professional Learning and Development (PLD)** – Approach to professional learning, to support continuous improvement
- **Reading Together** - A research-based and cost-effective workshop programme for parents, children, teachers and librarians, to help parents and caregivers to more effectively support their children's reading at home. By participating in this programme, parents were able to develop basic understandings of the reading process and how children learn to read, learn strategies to constructively support their children’s reading at home; reflect on and discuss their experiences with their children’s reading; and access and select reading material at an appropriate level from school
- **Standards for the Teaching Profession (the Standards) and the Code of Professional Responsibility (the Code)** - The standards describe the expectations of effective teaching practice. The Code sets out the high standards for ethical behaviour that are expected of every teacher. Together they set out what it is and what it means, to be a teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand
- **Talanoa Ako**- A 10-week Pacific parent education programme that aims to equip and empower parents, families and communities with skills, knowledge and confidence they need to champion their children’s education. In 2020, a parent focussed programme and a parent and family focussed programme through Ako centres, alongside radio sessions and a free mobile application
- **Tapasā**- A cultural competencies framework for teachers of Pacific learners. It is a tool and a resource for all teachers of Pacific learners. It is designed to support teachers to become more culturally aware, confident and competent when engaging with Pacific learners and their parents, families and communities. It aims to contextualise quality teaching and planning within a Pacific learner setting by providing a Pacific lens to the Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Code of Professional Responsibility

- **Tautai o le Moana-** An educational leadership collaboration which seeks to strengthen the capabilities of those in leadership, to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of our Pacific learners. Tautai o le Moana works with principals across Tautai clusters to challenge unconscious bias, seeking a shift in behaviour and beliefs of those in leadership. It promotes high- impact culturally and linguistically sustainable practices and works to build the confidence of Tautai (Navigators – participating principals) to move comfortably within different cultural spaces or vā. Tautai o le Moana was developed in partnership with the New Zealand Pasifika Principals Association (NZPPA), the New Zealand Principals Federation and the Ministry of Education
- **Te Hurihanganui-** Programme to support communities to work together to address racism and inequity so that they can accelerate the achievement and wellbeing of ākonga Māori and their whānau. From October 2020, The Ministry of Education will launch Te Hurihanganui in six communities across Aotearoa, with the commitment to support those communities for three years
- **Tertiary Education Strategy (TES)** - Strategic document that sets out the Government's long-term strategic direction and current and medium-term priorities for tertiary education. The Tertiary Education Commission must give effect to the TES and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority must have regard to it. Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) must show how they will contribute to achieving the priorities set out in the TES through their investment plans. Under development
- **University Entrance (UE)** - The minimum requirement to go to a New Zealand university
- **Urgent Response Fund (URF)** - Contestable fund for early learning centres and schools to support children and young people who need extra help, especially in terms of attendance and their re-engagement with learning after the COVID-19 lockdowns. The URF is available for one year from 1 July 2020