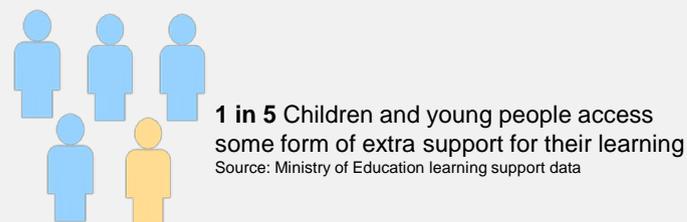


Draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan Engagement A3s

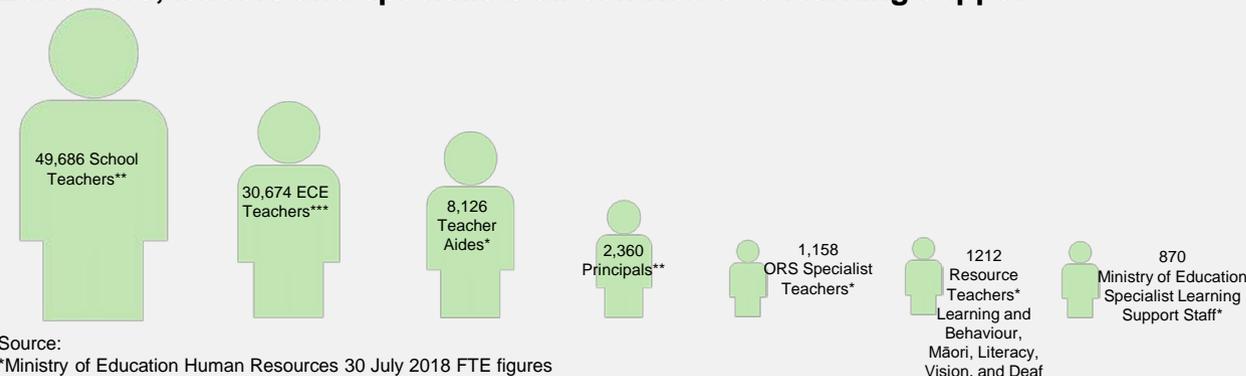
What we know about the learning support system

Every child and young person in New Zealand has the right to an education. Inclusive education is about giving all children and young people the same opportunity to be present, participate, learn and achieve regardless of their individual needs or differences. Learning support refers to the additional support some children and young people need to engage and achieve in education.



We are not there yet. We have heard from children and young people with disabilities and learning support needs, their parents, caregivers, families and whānau and the disability and education sectors.¹ We have identified a number of concerns about the effectiveness of the learning support system. These concerns are reflected in the participation and achievement rates for children and young people with disability and learning support needs.

Educators, leaders and specialists all contribute to learning support



Source:
*Ministry of Education Human Resources 30 July 2018 FTE figures
**Education Counts April 2017 FTTE figures
***Education Counts 30 June 2017 full and part time figures

The current learning support model was largely developed in the mid-1990s with a focus on access to specialist support for those with the greatest level of need. The key features of that model were that the Ministry of Education provided the specialist supports, Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLTB) provided the targeted supports for moderate needs and schools and early learning provided supports for low needs through special education grants and equity funding (respectively).

There has been little financial investment in supporting teachers and leaders in early learning, schools and kura to equip them with knowledge and strategies to meet the needs of all children and young people.

More than \$1 billion is spent each year on learning support

As our definition of learning support has expanded beyond those services previously considered special education, our spend on learning support has expanded to over \$1 billion. There is significant complexity in how Vote Education is allocated across services, interventions, related contracts and staffing. Some characteristics of spending on learning support are:

- More than half of funding is capped
- Funding hasn't kept up with demand
- There are cost pressures across a range of the supports including but not limited to: Early Intervention, Te Kahu Tōi/Intensive Wraparound Service and Residential Special Schools.

This is resulting in increased wait times and reduced service. For example, national average wait times across some the services:



Source: Ministry of Education learning support data

Some parents report that they have been discouraged from enrolling their child at their local school; that their child has not been welcome and/or allowed to attend for full school hours; or that their child has been excluded from education opportunities outside of the classroom.

There is not enough guidance for teachers on how to work with children and young people with dyslexia and dyspraxia.

In its report, the Select Committee noted that submitters highlighted that people with learning differences who had a delayed or no assessment of their learning needs were over-represented in New Zealand's benefit-dependent, mental-health, and prison demographics.

Submissions made during the Select Committee Inquiry into the identification and support for students with the significant challenges of dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism spectrum disorders in primary and secondary schools identified the challenges experienced to get children and young people's needs recognised and to access the information, expertise and specialist services to support them.

The learning support system has evolved in response to emerging issues over the years. As a result, it has become increasingly complex, slow, fragmented and difficult to navigate. This means parents, caregivers, family, whānau and educators have to deal with a range of different people and jump through multiple hoops to get funding approved for their children.

Teachers and support workers have told us that more support is needed because at times it is challenging to respond to children and young people with complex behaviour and learning needs while meeting the needs and ensuring the safety of all learners.

In 2017, 42.3% of disabled young people aged 15-24 were not in employment, education or training.

There are gaps in support for children requiring early intervention and children and young people with needs that do not meet the criteria for high need support.

¹ We have captured these voices through:

- The Education Conversation | Kōrero Mātauranga, including the Education Summits, wānanga and Pacific fono
- Ministry of Education Client Satisfaction Surveys
- Correspondence to the Ministry of Education by parents, caregivers, family, whānau, schools, early childhood education centres and other education providers
- Select Committee Inquiry into the identification and support for students with the significant challenges of dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism spectrum disorders in primary and secondary schools
- Building on Success for All forums
- 2015 Review of Special Education
- NZEI surveys of Special Needs Co-ordinators

Draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan

The draft Action Plan has been developed in response to feedback from parents and whānau and the disability and education sectors. The goal of the Action Plan is to drive progress towards an inclusive education system where children and young people with additional learning needs, including disabilities, are welcome and where their achievement, progress, wellbeing and participation is valued and supported. The draft Action Plan builds on the Learning Support Delivery Model. We need to strike a balance between in school support and increasing service delivery within available resourcing. Actions will need to be phased or sequenced over time. Each action is indicative and subject to the results of consultation, further policy work and funding decisions. All actions will be culturally responsive and designed to recognise the specific cultural needs and context for Māori and Pacific children and young people and their whānau.

PRIORITY AREAS

<p>1. Improve the way children and young people are assessed for learning needs</p>	<p>2. Strengthening the range of supports for children and young people with disabilities and additional learning needs</p>	<p>3. Improving the way the education system responds to neurodiverse and gifted learners</p>	<p>4. Ensuring that learning support is resourced for increased support and service delivery</p>
<p>Outcome: Children’s learning needs are identified quickly and responded to in a timely way</p>	<p>Outcome: Current gaps in provision are filled, so that there is a graduated system of response that better meets the needs of all learners, including at-risk children and young people</p>	<p>Outcome: Children and young people who are neurodiverse and/or gifted progress in education and achieve their potential</p>	<p>Outcome: Learning support services are resourced to meet identified needs in an efficient and timely manner, with flexibility to change the mix of services to meet the needs of children and young people, families and whānau and education professionals</p>
<p>Proposed Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tools for assessment of needs: Design and implement collaboratively across government a suite of measures and related tools in English and Te Reo Māori for identification and assessment of multiple learning differences at different points of their schooling. Ensure alignment with proposed measurement for progress across the curriculum and health checks led by the Ministry of Health. Could include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> universal checks at age three (MOH), consistent school entry measurement tool, screening for dyslexia and dyspraxia between ages six and eight, screening for gifted between ages six and eight, health and wellbeing check on transition to secondary school (MOH). Central data collection: Develop a central data collection process and system that will allow levels of appropriate access to all schools to better serve the needs of students across the country. This central data collection will also provide the Government with the ability to identify needs to initiate research, allow resource provision planning and future workforce planning. 	<p>Proposed Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Support Coordinator: Strengthen the Learning Support Delivery Model through the establishment of in school Learning Support Coordinator role (currently known as Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO)). Flexible package of support: Co-design a flexible package of support for neurodiverse and other children and young people with ongoing needs who are not eligible for Ongoing Resource Scheme (ORS) including tools for neurodiverse learners. Early intervention: Determine appropriate levels of investment for early intervention services and the appropriate balance of responsibility between Ministries of Health and Education. Dispute resolution: Implement a dispute resolution process so that parents, whānau and schools have a next step when issues arise. Improving the provision of at-risk education: Explore options to improve at-risk education to ensure all students reengage in a viable pathway to education, training or employment. Transitions: Identify additional supports required to enable young people with learning support needs to access secondary/tertiary programmes, careers advice and transition into further education. Alignment with Ministry of Health supports: Align education and health supports for disabled children aged 0-8 and their families and whānau (Ministry of Health-led MidCentral prototype for Disability System Transformation). <p>Note that consideration will be given to potential differences in service delivery needs and mechanisms for rural vs urban settings.</p>	<p>Proposed Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve teacher capability: Support teachers across all education settings to recognise and respond to the needs of gifted and neurodiverse students. This will include exploring options in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and professional learning and development (PLD). Make information more accessible: Provide information about teaching and learning for neurodiverse students, including through exploring the potential to create new tools. Flexible targeted supports: Ensure that possible solutions to the specific challenges gifted and neurodiverse students experience in secondary schools are addressed in the flexible package of support under ‘strengthening the range of support’. 	<p>Proposed Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and demand pressures: Respond to pressures across specific supports such as Residential Special Schools, Early Intervention, Te Kahu Tōi/Intensive Wraparound Service, New Zealand Sign Language and Deaf education. Future network provision: Clarify the role of special and residential schools, satellite units and learning support facilities within inclusive communities of provision.

Cross Cutting Components of the Disability and Learning Support Action Plan

<p>5. Learning Support Workforce</p>	<p>Outcome: Early learning services and schools have the workforce they need to meet the needs of all learners.</p>	<p>Proposed actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Strategy: Include the learning support workforce in the Education Workforce Strategy to consider the quantity, training, professional learning and development, and career progression of the teachers, specialists and support workers needed to support future delivery of services.
<p>6. Wellbeing and Resilience</p>	<p>Outcome: Learning environments have access to the support they need to promote wellbeing so that children and young people can engage in learning.</p>	<p>Proposed actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing and resilience support: Deliver a cohesive, cross agency wellbeing, bullying prevention and mental health continuum of supports. Child Wellbeing Strategy: Ensure the particular wellbeing challenges for children and young people with disabilities and additional learning needs are taken into account within the Child Wellbeing Strategy.
<p>7. Data and Evaluation</p>	<p>Outcome: Quality information is gathered and used to improve support for children and young people and system-level decision making.</p>	<p>Proposed actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Data sharing protocols: Develop data sharing protocols so that data gathered about disability and learning support needs can be shared amongst agencies, while maintaining the privacy of individuals.

The Disability and Learning Support perspective will also influence other Education and Government priority work

- Tomorrow’s Schools Review
- NCEA Review
- Curriculum, Progress & Achievement
- Early Learning Strategy
- Māori Education
- Pacific Education
- Child Wellbeing Strategy
- Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction
- Disability System Transformation
- Vocational Education and Training Reform

Building on the new Learning Support Delivery Model

A new Learning Support Delivery Model is currently being implemented and will be fully in place by the end of 2019. It has been developed in response to feedback from parents and whānau and disability and education sector groups ...

Parents and whānau, principals, teachers and support workers report that they have been experiencing challenges having children and young people's needs recognised and accessing the information, expertise and specialist services to support them. Better facilitation and sharing data will enable us to work together and create more flexibility so we can improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Model draws on best practice models in place in other jurisdictions including Finland, Victoria (Australia), the USA, Scotland, England and Singapore. The six core elements to the approach for delivery of Learning Support can be implemented within schools, kura, early childhood education (ECE) me ngā kōhanga reo, Kāhui Ako and clusters of providers. The six elements are:



Having **family and whānau connection points** to help navigate the system



Working together to identify needs and set priorities across learning communities



Better facilitation to bring together local education and service providers to work collaboratively



A **single plan** of support for each child or young person to achieve their learning goals



More flexibility to create support that is innovative and responsive



Sharing data to get a clear picture of local needs, resources and response options

... we are proposing to build on this positive direction with a new roles: **Learning Support Coordinator**

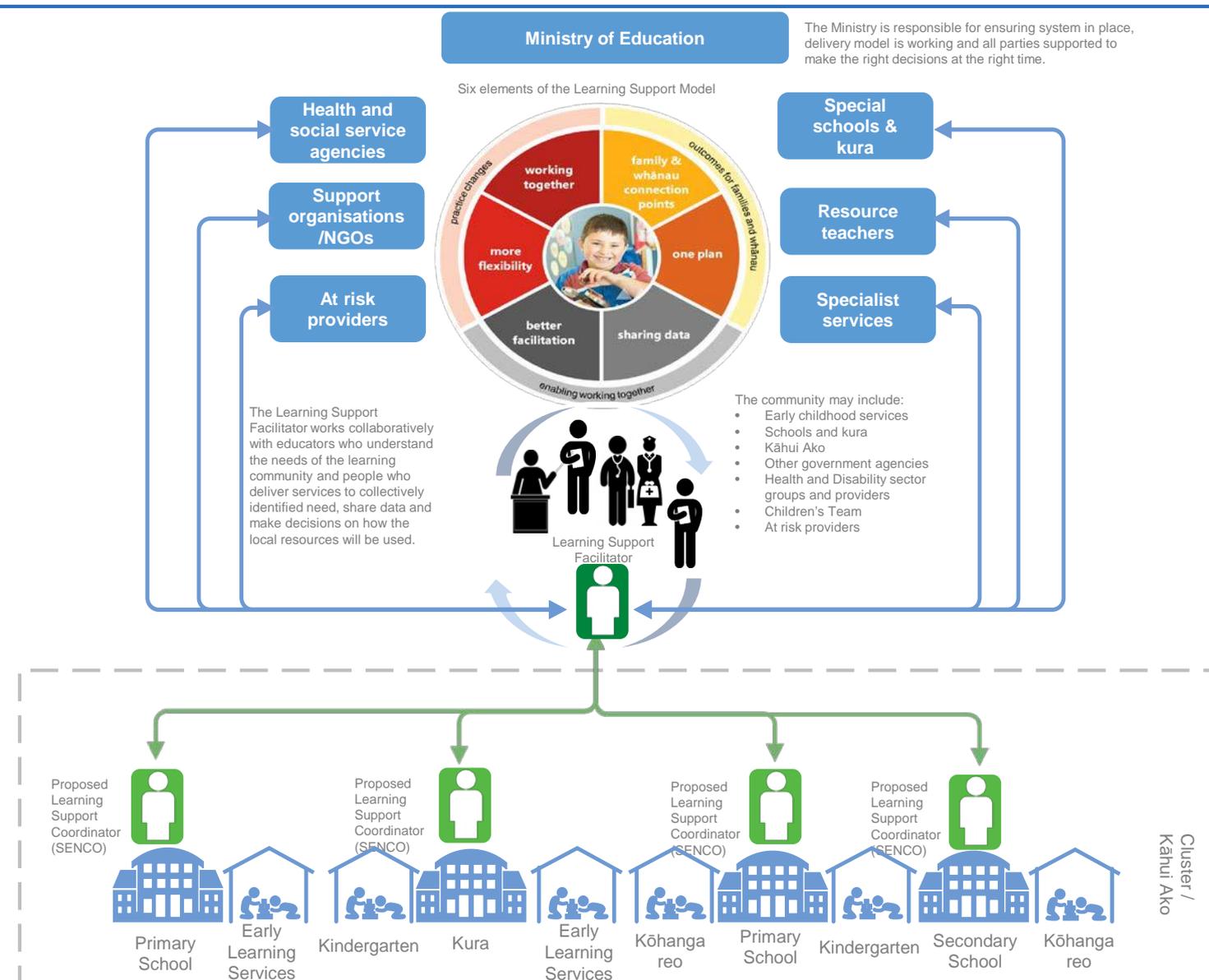
- We want these roles to:
1. Help students get the right support at the right time.
 2. Strengthen the capability and capacity of early learning services, schools and kura to meet the needs of children and young people.

Learning Support Facilitators

This function is currently being funded from Ministry of Education baselines and delivered by existing staff as part of their existing role.

The function currently:

- is a formal contact and connection point to disability and learning support services available across education and other government agencies and could work closely with the proposed Learning Support Coordinator role
- supports the coordination of professional learning and development
- establishes ways to ensure the collective decision-making process reflects the needs and views of parents and whānau
- identifies patterns of need in a cluster or Community of Learning; support coordinated professional learning and development; and work alongside agencies such as the District Health Board, New Zealand Police, Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Health.



Learning Support Coordinators

The proposed in school Learning Support Coordinator role (previously known as a Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)) will require a funding decision before it can be confirmed or Implemented.

This role will:

- be the primary point of contact for parents and whānau, and support them to work in partnership with the school
- support the school or kura to build the capability and knowledge base of teachers
- make connections for transitions from early learning services.

We are consulting on the development of a job description both in urban and rural environments

We **shape** an **education** system that delivers
equitable and **excellent outcomes**

He mea **tārai** e mātou te **mātauranga**
kia **rangatira** ai, kia **mana taurite** ai ōna **huanga**