

Kōrero

Mātauranga

Me kōrero tātou

Supporting all schools to succeed

Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools system

Information for learners with disabilities and/or additional learning needs

All schools should be great places to learn. We're resetting the system that governs, manages, administers, and supports schools so that all learners have the same chance to succeed.

One in five children and young people need some kind of extra support for their learning. This might be because of disability, learning difficulties, disadvantage, physical or mental health or behaviour issues. Our education system has a responsibility to ensure it meets their needs.

During the [Kōrero Mātauranga | Education Conversation](#), and in our discussions on the [Learning Support Action Plan](#), many educators, children and young people with disabilities and learning support needs and their whānau, along with board members and disability rights groups, told us that our education system needed to do much more to be inclusive of students with disabilities and learning support needs.

Now, New Zealand has the opportunity to reset the education system with a greater level of resource and expertise at the front line where it is needed.

This reset is significant. Changes will require ongoing investment of time and resource, and will need to be managed in a coherent and connected way over the next ten years.

Key changes of interest to learners with disabilities and/or additional learning needs

Learning Support Coordinators and the Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025

The Learning Support Action Plan 2019-2025 provides the blueprint for schools to advance the interests of all children and young people with disabilities or learning support needs. The Plan will prioritise the introduction of Learning Support Coordinators in schools and kura, strengthen early intervention, and provide additional and flexible supports for neurodiverse children and young people. It will also increase access and support for gifted children and young people, and improve education for those at risk of disengaging.

A new Education Service Agency (ESA) will be established within a redesigned Education Ministry, to provide better support to schools (and early learning services) and to the learners/ākonga they serve. The Learning Support staff will be part of the ESA and they will continue to implement the plan.

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A new independent process to resolve serious complaints through dispute resolution panels

Students with disabilities and/or additional learning needs, and their families, will benefit from a new disputes resolution service. This will facilitate the resolution of serious disputes not resolved within the school, including matters relating to learning support and the right to attend schooling.

The panels' focus will be to resolve disputes in an inclusive, culturally appropriate, and timely manner. These panels will operate free of charge and will be created over the next 2 to 4 years. Complaints about teachers will continue to be within the jurisdiction of the Teaching Council.

More responsive, accessible and integrated local support to schools and early learning services

The Education Service Agency (as part of the redesigned Ministry of Education) will ensure that leaders and teachers are well supported locally to identify and respond to the needs of learners/ākonga with disabilities and/or learning support needs, and the needs of their whānau.

The Education Service Agency will also play a key role in ensuring that excellent practice and behaviours, in terms of support for students with disabilities or those in need of additional learning support, are acknowledged, shared, and embedded through local support networks.

Supporting greater engagement

The reforms will support greater engagement in our schools by parents with children with disabilities or additional learning needs, and by these learners themselves. The Ministry will work, in consultation with disabled rights groups, on how this will be achieved in practice.

What's next?

The Government acknowledges that this is a significant change to further strengthen the education system. Changes related to governance and management of schools need to work in a complex system that also includes early learning and tertiary education. They will require ongoing investment of time and resource, and will need to be managed in a coherent and connected way over the next ten years.

A detailed timeline can be found in Appendix 1 of the Government's position document, *'Supporting all schools to succeed: Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools system'*.

Website: <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/tomorrows-schools-review/>