





**Date 17 March 2035**

**To: ResourceTeacher.Consultation@education.govt.nz**

## **Introduction**

This proposal presents a potential option for a comprehensive and structured framework for learning support within the Ministry of Education. The aim is to create a cohesive, well-coordinated network of professionals who provide literacy and behaviour support across all regions in New Zealand. This framework is designed to ensure equitable access to learning support services for all students, enhance professional development for educators, and streamline administrative processes to reduce wait times for intervention services.

Collaboration is important to us, and we are committed to working together to develop a system that truly meets the needs of students, educators, and support staff. Getting this right is a priority, as we recognise the impact that well-structured literacy and behaviour support can have on student success.

DEB would like to make a formal submission providing a more detailed solution that remains within the already allocated budgets for learning support with an understanding more funding is needed. We believe this submission should be considered as part of the information previously sent on 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2025. By reinvesting existing resources effectively, we can start to implement a cost-effective and sustainable model that strengthens learning support across New Zealand.

New Zealand has 1,930 schools that cater to students aged 0–8 years. However, I am unable to access a detailed breakdown of these schools by type (e.g., Private, Charter, Character). This information is essential to determine which schools qualify for learning support and how funding and resources would be distributed accordingly.

Without a comprehensive breakdown of all ministry funding streams and funded teaching positions across English and Māori Medium—many of which may be categorised under different names or groups—this model has been designed to support an average of **1,000 primary schools**.

Its purpose is to illustrate what can be achieved with the current workforce and to highlight areas where further investment is needed.

# Framework Structure

## Central HUB (Ministry of Education Headquarters)

Staffed by the Ministry of Education.

- Serves as the central authority for learning support initiatives, policies, and funding allocation.
- All correspondence regarding training, resources, and programs flows through this hub, ensuring national consistency in implementation.
- Responsible for gathering and analysing data to monitor effectiveness and inform future decisions.
- Direct communication with all Regional Hubs.

## Regional HUBs (16 Regions in New Zealand)

Each Regional HUB is staffed with two Ministry-funded specialists:

- **1 Literacy Executive**
- **1 Behaviour Executive**

These executives serve as direct liaisons between the Central HUB and Local HUBs.

- Responsible for overseeing PLD training, providing expert guidance, and ensuring consistent evidence-based practices across regions.
- Facilitate data collection and reporting to maintain transparency and measure impact.
- All correspondence regarding training, resources, and programs flows through this hub, ensuring national consistency in implementation.
- Responsible for gathering and analysing data to monitor effectiveness and inform future decisions.
- Conducts regional studies before national rollouts to evaluate effectiveness and scalability.

## Local HUBs (100 Hubs Nationwide)

Each Local HUB covers approximately 10 schools (based on 1,000 schools) and includes:

- **1 Literacy Coordinator**
- **1 Behaviour Coordinator**

The coordinators can be responsible for:

- Providing Professional Learning and Development (PLD) for structured literacy and Behaviour to literacy leads and teachers and teacher aides.
- Acting as mentors and advisors to in-school intervention teachers.
- Ensuring the implementation of evidence-based literacy and behaviour interventions.
- Collecting and analysing data to report back to the Regional HUB.
- Offering direct intervention support if required.

Additional connections within the Local HUB:

- **ECE Coordinator** (non-funded within this framework) collaborates with schools to align early childhood education practices with primary education needs.
- **Speech-Language Therapists (SLTs)** (non-funded within this framework) work alongside Literacy and Behaviour Coordinators to share insights and enhance student support.
- **Special Education Coordinators** (non-funded within this framework) collaborate to address the needs of students with disabilities in mainstream schools.
- **The framework of Hubs can be extended** to include all teachers and specialists in learning support roles across New Zealand which will streamline support, advise and resources at local level.

## School HUBs

Intervention teachers support students at different stages:

**0-3 Years Intervention Teacher:** Currently, 965 of 1,930 primary schools have this funded.

**4-8 Years Literacy and Behaviour Intervention Teachers:** Schools require specialists at this level, with flexibility in role allocation. See implementation Feasibility.

These roles can be split between two staff members, or one teacher may cover both literacy and behaviour. Existing intervention teachers may provide additional literacy support as required.

Responsibilities can include:

- Delivering one-on-one interventions.
- Developing and implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- Collaborating with specialists such as but not exclusive to SLPs, Occupational Therapists (OTs), and support carers via local hubs.
- Direct reporting to the Literacy and Behaviour Coordinators at the Local HUB.
- Ensuring consistent implementation of interventions across schools.
- Referrals and other general administrative roles

## Literacy Lead in Schools (School Hub):

- The Literacy Lead may be the Principal, Deputy Principal, or a classroom teacher.
- Directly funded by the Ministry of Education.
- Acts as the key liaison for literacy initiatives within the school.

# Justification for the Framework

## Why This Model?

- The current learning support system doesn't meet the demand for one-on-one interventions.
- This framework unifies specialists under a single coordinated system, reducing fragmentation and inefficiencies.
- It promotes collaboration between literacy and behaviour experts, speech-language therapists, and special education coordinators and others.
- Ensures equitable access to structured literacy and behaviour support in mainstream schools when staffing numbers are increased.

## Implementation Feasibility

The Ministry currently funds 1,733 staff across different learning support roles, including:

- **109 RTLits**
- **1,001 RTLBs**
- **623 LSCs**

The proposed framework requires:

- **32 Staff** for the 16 Regional HUBs
- **200 Staff** for the 100 Local HUBs
- **Total Required: 232 Staff**

**Remaining Staff:** 1,533 learning support professionals remain in schools, allowing flexibility in role assignment:

- **766 Literacy Specialists**
- **766 Behaviour Specialists**

Alternatively, a dual-role position could be established, allowing teachers to support both literacy and behaviour interventions. If this approach were adopted, 533 funded teachers within learning support would still be available to work with primary schools beyond the 1,000 included in this model.

Additionally, this could help expand early intervention by increasing support for teachers working with Years 0–2, beyond the 965 already allocated, or another consideration could be providing Years 3–8 intervention in schools that currently lack an intervention teacher for any year.

However, the figures in this model will need to be expanded, as additional teachers and funding will be required to implement it across all eligible schools. Final adjustments can be made once you have confirmed the total number of qualifying schools and identified additional funding streams not yet accounted for in this model.

## Funding Considerations

- 1733 Teacher salaries are already accounted for within the education budget.
- Additional funding will be required for some of specialist teachers to role the model out to all schools and training in literacy and behaviour interventions. (Many have already completed the specialised literacy and behaviour training) Knowing this information will be beneficial for coordinators and funding allocations
- Funding for ALL (Accelerating Learning in Literacy) programs could be redirected toward evidence-based literacy training to teachers who can provide one to one intervention.
- Travel costs could be included in contracts where necessary.
- The individual role of the SENCo in schools could be enhanced by reinvesting the funded units into the 0-2 staffing resource, extending intervention hours and expanding support to children aged 0-3 years or extend it into more schools.
- Alternatively, if the model indicates that the intervention role requires additional support with administrative tasks such as referrals, IEPs, or coordinating school timetables, the unit could be repurposed to assist intervention teachers in managing these responsibilities more effectively.
- This framework includes its own support network within the local hub, enabling schools to establish a collaborative support system. Additionally, the funding allocated to Kāhui Ako can be redirected to fund the additional support teachers to meet the needs of schools making sure every school at least gets access to one literacy and behaviour teacher/teachers with specialised training.

## Benefits of This Framework

- **Standardisation:** All staff receive the same evidence-based training and access to the same resources, ensuring national consistency.
- **Efficiency:** Reduces administrative burdens and streamlines referrals, minimising wait times for student interventions.
- **Flexibility:** Allows staff to stay in teacher specialist roles.
- **Retention of Expertise:** Keeps experienced teachers within the education sector and allows for knowledge sharing and no job losses.
- **Collaboration:** Integrates various educational specialists, ensuring a holistic approach to student support, no more working in isolation.

# Qualifications and Training for Literacy and Behaviour

This is a suggested but recommended level of qualifications and training. It is essential to engage with learning support teachers on the ground to understand their perspectives and identify additional qualifications or professional development opportunities that should be offered. Deb recommends consulting with learning support executives, who are actively listening to teachers in these roles, to ensure their needs are met. This approach will help keep information, research, and training current, aligned with the latest evidence, and grounded in best practices.

Once hubs are established and job roles are clearly defined, any new training needed to stay up to date with scientific research can be delivered through the hubs. This will help maintain consistency in rollout and ensure alignment in the resources, frameworks, and evidence-based practices used in both behaviour and literacy interventions.

## **Literacy Executives and Coordinators (Local Hubs):**

- Maintain the existing PGDip in Literacy through Massey University.
- Based in Local Hubs, overseeing literacy programs, providing professional development, and supporting structured literacy implementation across schools.
- Complete IMSLE and LMIT training (or a similar structured literacy standard) with accreditation, including:
  - 5 days of face-to-face training
  - 12-month follow-up/mentoring accreditation process

## **Literacy Intervention Teachers (School Hubs):**

- Complete IMSLE and LMIT training (or a similar structured literacy standard) with accreditation, including:
  - 5 days of face-to-face training
  - 12-month follow-up/mentoring accreditation process
- Ensure evidence-based literacy interventions are implemented effectively.

## **Behaviour Executives and Coordinators: (Local Hubs):**

- Either maintain the current Learning and Behaviour qualification or introduce a Postgraduate Qualification in Complex Needs through Massey University.
- A strong understanding of Neurodiversity, Trauma, and Disability and their impact on learning and mental health.
- Introducing evidence-based frameworks such as Dr. Ross Greene's Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS), which supports individual children's needs within a structured, research-based approach.

## **Behaviour Intervention Teachers (School Hubs):**

- A strong understanding of Neurodiversity, Trauma, and Disability and their impact on learning and mental health.

- Supporting an evidence-based framework schoolwide such as Dr. Ross Greene’s Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS), which supports individual children’s needs within a structured, research-based approach.

### **Ensuring Alignment with Best Practices and Inclusive Education Principles**

The PGDip and Learning and Behaviour courses should be reviewed to ensure they reflect current evidence and best practices for supporting children with disabilities, experiences of trauma, and neurodivergence. Consideration should be given to ensuring this training aligns with trauma-informed and neuro-affirming approaches, as well as the principles of Enabling Good Lives, which fall under Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People. Any future training should also be designed to align with these principles, ensuring consistency and evidence-based practice in supporting diverse learners.

### **Challenges and Considerations**

- Not enough teachers: This model only caters for 1000 schools with the allocated funding from Rtlits, LSC’s and RTLB’s.
- Rural Schools: May not have sufficient student numbers for both literacy and behaviour intervention teachers; Local HUB coordinators may need to provide additional support.
- Workload Balance: The feasibility of 10 schools per coordinator should be assessed to ensure effectiveness. Especially with larger schools these numbers would need to be adjusted. The model is designed to show what is possible with the money already budgeted.
- Job Scope: Roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined to prevent overlap and ensure manageable workloads.
- Mathematics Intervention: Further consideration is needed on how this role can be funded and fit within the framework.

### **Conclusion**

This framework provides a flexible and adaptable approach that can be extended to all of learning support. With strategic fine-tuning by experts in literacy, behaviour, mathematics, special education, and speech-language therapy, it has the potential to become a cost-effective and efficient model all learning support could use. By combining existing learning support funding, this approach strengthens learning support across New Zealand, leveraging current resources to establish a nationwide, structured system that can ensure equitable access to quality support for all students. However, this requires the Ministry to view learning support as a unified system, rather than addressing isolated areas separately.

While this framework presents one possible solution, I acknowledge that there will be on-the-ground challenges I have not accounted for. I encourage you to discuss this model—or any alternative—with the experts. Their expertise, along with real-time insights can help refine and shape effective solutions.

It is important to note that this model accounts for only 1,000 primary schools due to limited information on the exact number of schools that would qualify for funding and a lack of clarity around specific funding allocations.

Ultimately, this model highlights what can be achieved and why we must invest both existing and new funding to learning support teachers to address the students who are in Years 3–8 who

have been left behind by an outdated system. These students urgently require intensive one-on-one intervention to help them meet co-requisites and achieve NCEA qualifications—otherwise, we risk failing them.

I urge you to align all learning support funding and prioritise direct interventions for students. Classroom teachers do not have the time or resources to provide one-on-one intervention, and schools lack sufficient funding to offer it independently. This model serves as a reference point, with subjective figures intended to illustrate a big-picture solution to a complex issue.

**Kind Regards**

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Founder of the Dyslexia Evidence Base Community

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