



Making a Bigger Difference for all Students
Hangaia he huarahi hei whakarewa ake i ngā taurira katoa

SCHOOLING STRATEGY 2005 - 2010



Minister's foreword

Education is the key to a better future. It is the only way to ensure that our children and young people have the skills and knowledge to succeed in the 21st century. As a Minister of Education, I am proud to be part of a team that is committed to improving the quality of education for all.



The challenge we face is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This means providing them with the best possible education, and ensuring that they have the support they need to succeed.

As a Minister of Education, I am committed to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This means providing them with the best possible education, and ensuring that they have the support they need to succeed.

I would like to thank all those who are committed to the improvement of education. It is their dedication and hard work that makes a difference to the lives of our children and young people. I am proud to be part of a team that is committed to improving the quality of education for all.

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John M. M. M.

Minister of Education
 Department of Education



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The Schooling Strategy

Introduction

Achieving this goal will mean significantly improving opportunities¹ and outcomes² for students currently underachieving, while continuing to improve outcomes for high and average achievers, across all dimensions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and identity.

This Strategy sets the direction for effort and improvement in schooling for the next five years. It focuses on how everyone involved in schooling can contribute individually and together to improving student outcomes.

It has been developed with input from teachers, principals, boards of trustees, teacher educators, and community interests.³

It aims to build a shared and deeper understanding of:

- what works to support the learning of students with a range of abilities and from a diversity of backgrounds
- areas of greatest priority for both professional and policy focus over the next five years
- where collective and individual efforts can most effectively be applied to make the biggest difference for all students

This Strategy seeks to improve student academic and social outcomes by emphasising the importance of:

- teaching practices that work for all students
- building knowledge about what works to support student learning
- supporting everyone involved in schooling to use evidence⁴ to help them in their work
- building stronger relationships among all those involved in schooling, including among government agencies with responsibilities for children and families
- greater coherence in schooling policy.

¹ See p8 for a definition of 'opportunities'

² See p8 for a definition of 'outcomes'

³ An outline of feedback received during the development of this Strategy can be found on www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/schoolingstrategy

⁴ See p35 for a definition of 'evidence'

This Strategy seeks to focus the effort needed to improve schooling, while recognising the complexity of the task and avoiding overly simple solutions.

The challenge is to build on the strengths which already exist in New Zealand schooling, so that there is rapid improvement for students who are not achieving, and continued improvement for high and average achievers.

Purpose of schooling

Education is at the heart of New Zealand's social, economic, cultural, and environmental development – it helps to shape our individual and collective cultural identities and the way we live in our environment. Biculturalism is part of that identity.

Education is, therefore, central to what it means to be both a New Zealander and a global citizen in a changing world.

New Zealand is an increasingly multicultural society, with the proportion of Māori, Pasifika, and Asian New Zealanders set to increase in coming decades.

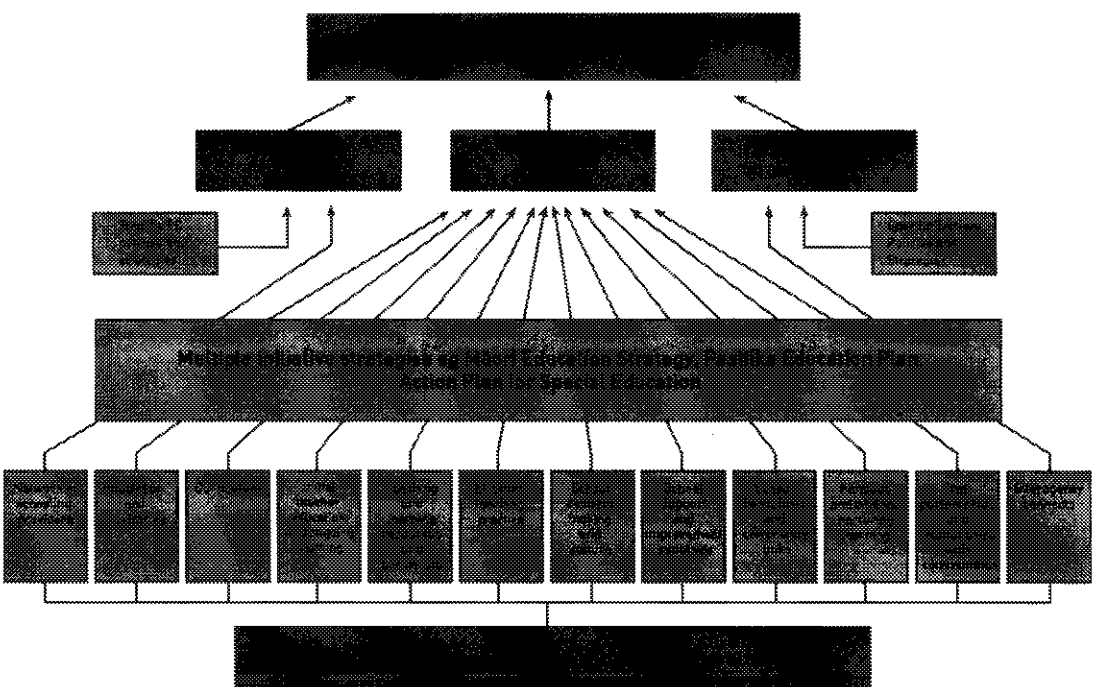
Providing the best education for disabled people is also a key part of achieving the vision of a fully inclusive society.³

In *Education Priorities for New Zealand*,⁴ the Government identified four areas in which the whole education system contributes to New Zealand and New Zealanders:

- strong learning foundations for all New Zealanders
- successful school leavers
- motivated and self-directed lifelong learners
- research that grows New Zealand's knowledge base and supports innovation. Schooling contributes to all of these.

³ New Zealand Disability Strategy www.doh.govt.nz/nzds
⁴ Education Priorities for New Zealand, May 2003 www.eeonline.govt.nz/education/priorities

This diagram summarises the links between the Schooling Strategy and other strategies and activities



Where are we?

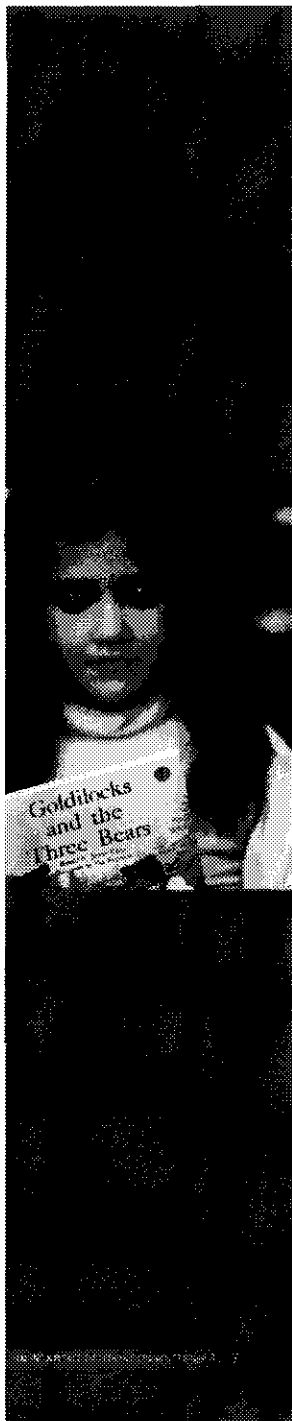
Many students achieve excellent outcomes by international standards. For instance, in PISA (2003),¹ in terms of New Zealand's average score at the fifteen-year age level, this country was within the group of second highest performing countries for each of reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy, along with countries such as Australia, Canada, and Japan.

Researchers and educators from other countries are keen to learn from the best of New Zealand practice.

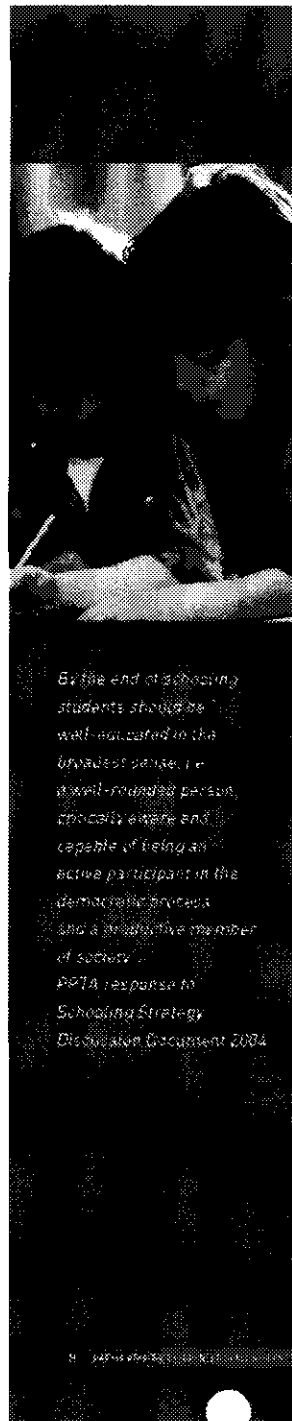
There is a wide gap, however, between our highest and lowest achievers. While some students from all social groups achieve very well, Māori students, Pasifika students, and students from lower socio-economic groups are over-represented among students who underachieve.

All students deserve the best that the collective expertise, knowledge, and commitment of everyone involved in schooling can offer: teachers, specialist staff, families, whānau, principals, boards of trustees, communities, teacher educators, researchers, government, and government agencies. All have a significant role to play in addressing the challenge of underachievement.

Feedback from communities and the school sector during the development of this Strategy showed that people want students to be successful at school, to have the skills and attitudes that enable them to choose from the range of available post-school options, and to feel optimistic about their futures.



¹ Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2003) OECD. www.minedu.govt.nz/geto/pisa



*By the end of schooling
students should be
well-educated in the
broadest sense, i.e.
a well-rounded person,
critically aware and
capable of being an
active participant in the
democratic process
and a productive member
of society.
PPTA response to
Schooling Strategy
Discussion Document 2004*

Outcomes of schooling

"Outcomes" refers to what students learn during, or have learned by, the end of their schooling. This learning supports them in further tertiary education, work, and life.

New Zealand's national curriculum takes a broad view of student outcomes from schooling. It emphasises that outcomes for students include what they know (knowledge), what they can do (skills), and who they are in relation to themselves and others (values and attitudes, including a strong sense of personal and cultural identity).

Work is currently under way on the national curriculum,² to define key competencies,³ which are based on a correspondingly broad view of learning.

This Strategy emphasises both academic and social outcomes for students, to capture this broad view.

In addition, in order for students to achieve across the curriculum they need to develop literacy and numeracy skills throughout their schooling as these skills form a foundation for learning at all levels.

This strategy emphasises both outcomes and opportunities.

"Opportunities" means all students experiencing effective teaching and having their learning nurtured by families and whānau. It also means being at school (attending), staying on into senior secondary school, and gaining senior secondary qualifications.

² The New Zealand Curriculum Project/Kaupapa Marautanga o Aotearoa. www.tki.org.nz/nzcurriculum and www.cmp.ac.nz
The goals of the project, which is part of the review of the New Zealand curriculum and marautanga are to: clarify and refine outcomes, focus on quality teaching, strengthen school ownership of the curriculum, and support and strengthen partnerships with parents and whānau and with communities. The Curriculum Project is due for completion by 2007.

³ For information, click on "key competencies" at www.cmp.ac.nz

Engaged, motivated, and learning students

Students who are engaged, motivated, and learning attend school and achieve. By the end of their schooling, they are well grounded in the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and sense of identity they need to take the next steps in their lives successfully. They have gained qualifications, they have options available to them, they are committed to further learning, and they are optimistic about their futures.

During their schooling years they are informed and active participants in their own learning, involving both their teachers and their families/whānau in their learning. They are developing a strong personal and cultural identity and healthy self-esteem, supported by both their families/whānau and their school community. The identities and experiences they bring to school are affirmed and built on in their school and class experiences.

They feel physically, emotionally, and culturally safe at school. They have affirming learning relationships with teachers and are members of supportive, healthy peer cultures. They are developing positive ways of responding to learning and social challenges. They have opportunities to take reciprocal tūkuna-teina (helper-learner) roles with their peers. They share, are respectful of differences, and are learning to resolve conflict constructively. They participate and are included.

They believe they are capable of learning and experience learning as challenging, relevant, meaningful, useful, and stimulating. They are learning to take charge of their learning and become independent learners. They have opportunities to experience and celebrate achievement and feel safe about risking and experiencing failure as part of the ongoing process of learning.

By the time they reach senior secondary school, they are taking increasing charge of decisions and choices about their learning pathways. They are questioning, persistent, and do their best in their learning.



How is schooling changing?

There have been significant changes in the school sector over the past fifteen years and in the nature and quality of the relationship between teachers, communities, iwi, and government. These changes include a growing emphasis on:

- identifying and supporting teaching practices that help all students to learn
- support for schools to provide meaningful learning opportunities for students with special education needs
- student progress and outcomes, and the provision of assessment tools and professional learning opportunities to help teachers and schools monitor their students' progress more effectively and consistently, and provide effective feedback to students
- collaboration among government, teachers, communities, and iwi, and a genuine attempt to achieve better understandings
- recognition that different schools have different needs and a greater willingness by government to intervene when a school is in difficulty
- recognition of the interrelationships between schooling, the home, and the wider society
- recognition of the role of families and whānau in supporting student learning
- recognition of the importance of evidence-based practice
- the need for greater coherence in schooling policy at a national level
- co-ordination across government agencies that interact with schools, families/whānau, and children, and especially among education agencies.

A strong infrastructure for New Zealand schooling

This Strategy focuses on the people involved in schooling, particularly the way they carry out their roles and how they interact with each other, rather than on schooling structures and systems.

It is important, however, to have strong systems in place and an infrastructure that can support those who work within, or interact with, schooling. Schools will continue to be self-managing, but there are times when schools need additional support.

For this reason, it is important to have a review and monitoring system so that schools with difficulties can be identified early on. Any resulting interventions will then focus on what is needed to address the situation.

General school improvement initiatives, carried out with the co-operation of schools, will be continued.

Other ways of maintaining a strong schooling infrastructure, in both mainstream and kaupapa Māori schooling, will be

- continued training for boards and principals
- supporting schools to plan strategically and use evidence to improve student academic and social outcomes
- providing infrastructure (such as e-administration and ICT) and, at times, bulk purchasing to achieve benefits from economies of scale
- encouraging schools to share good practice and work collaboratively
- providing specialist support to help schools understand and provide for the special education needs of students
- responding to changes in student numbers at different levels of schooling, and in different subjects
- ensuring that national frameworks, requirements, supports, and resources best enable teachers, principals, boards, researchers, teacher educators, and families and whānau to support student learning.



Resourcing schooling

Resourcing continues to be a contentious issue within the schooling sector. Despite the significant increases in operational funding, staffing, and other resources in recent years, the sector has clearly indicated that it considers further increases are needed.

Choices will need to be made about the priorities for future investment, and these should be driven by evidence about what will make the most impact on student learning.

The way resources are used is as important as the level of resources. Decisions need to be made, at both national and school level, about whether existing resources are being used as effectively as possible and how to reprioritise resources to get better results.

To support decision making in this area:

- there will be further analysis to assess the pressures the sector is facing
- sector groups and the Government will discuss the priorities and sequencing for future resourcing decisions
- evidence about 'what works' to improve student learning will be drawn on in this work
- more emphasis will be placed on sharing evidence between teachers and schools about what works
- assistance will continue to be provided to help schools collect and analyse evidence of student progress across a range of outcomes, as the basis for effective school-based decision making.

Māori success in schooling

While many Māori students achieve well within both English and Māori-medium schooling, Māori students continue to be over-represented among students who underachieve

Government and Māori have been discussing education issues in detail in recent years through the Hui Taumata Mātauranga¹⁶ process. These hui endorsed broad goals for education for Māori, which do not override the particular aspirations of iwi and hapū. The broad goals are:

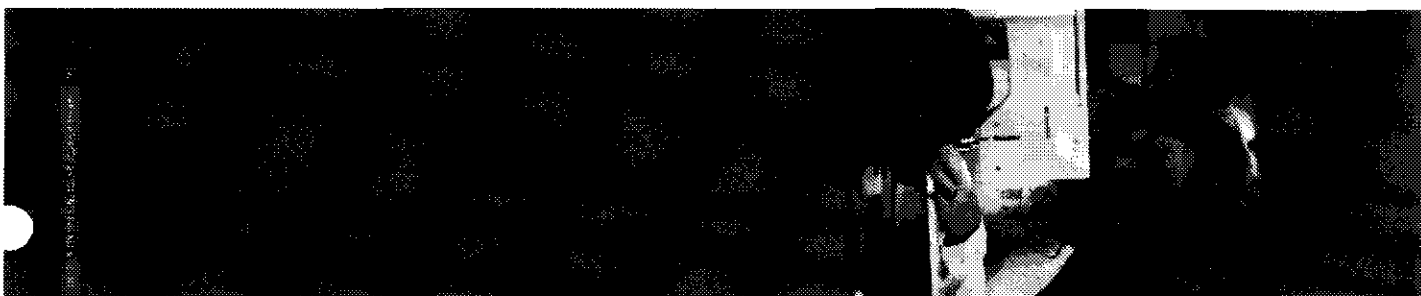
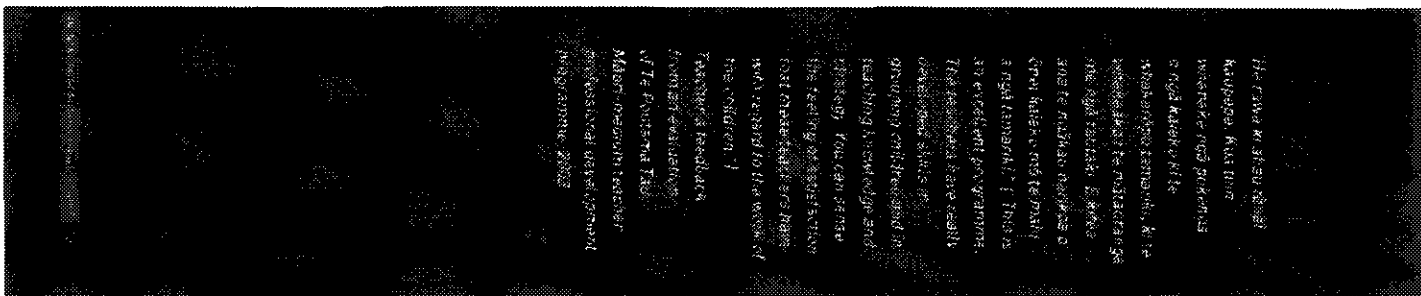
- enabling Māori to live as Māori
- facilitating participation of Māori as citizens of the world
- contributing towards good health and a higher standard of living for Māori.

In addition to success in schooling, Māori have identified that educational excellence also means access to high-quality learning both of te reo Māori and through the medium of te reo Māori. Such learning will result in confident, motivated students who use their skills for personal, community, whānau, hapū, and iwi social and economic development.

This Strategy will contribute to these goals by:

- endorsing continued dialogue and co-operation between government, government agencies, and Māori that result in greater respect and mutual understanding, that help develop the education system's capacity to be responsive to Māori educational aspirations; and that help strengthen Māori capacity to engage with schooling and expect quality schooling provision
- ensuring that the work flowing from this Strategy is responsive to the particular concerns and aspirations of Māori
- focusing effort on strengthening effective teaching, including effective relationships between schools and homes that work for teachers and whānau, and on incorporating practices into all teacher education that are effective for Māori students
- continuing to support access to knowledge about te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, both through quality kaupapa Māori and mainstream schooling and through identifying and building on the learning benefits of bilingualism

¹⁶ Hui Taumata Mātauranga
www.mined.govt.nz/index.cfm?tag=1-706&id=52&id2=5&id3=6&id4=73&id5=74



- supporting teachers to affirm and develop the identities of students to contribute to student engagement and learning
- putting greater emphasis on helping whānau to support the learning of their tamariki
- raising the expectations of teachers and whānau of Māori students' learning potential, by identifying and sharing practices that support Māori educational success
- focusing on practice and decisions that are based on robust evidence about student learning, to ensure that time, expertise, and resources are focused on what will make the most difference for Māori students
- encouraging whānau participation and interest in school governance
- supporting the achievement of the goals of the Māori Education Strategy."

Pasifika success in schooling

While many Pasifika students achieve well within the current schooling system, Pasifika students continue to be over-represented among students who underachieve.

A series of fono throughout the country between Pasifika communities and the Ministry of Education have sought to build mutual understanding about Pasifika education issues. In these fono, Pasifika communities have said they want their children to succeed in education, both academically and socially, while maintaining their Pasifika identities.

This Strategy will contribute to these goals by:

- endorsing continued dialogue and co-operation between government and Pasifika communities that result in greater respect and mutual understanding; that help develop the education system's capacity to be responsive to Pasifika educational aspirations; and that help strengthen the capacity of Pasifika families to engage with schooling and to expect quality schooling provision
- ensuring that the work flowing from this Strategy is responsive to the particular concerns and aspirations of Pasifika peoples
- focusing effort on strengthening effective teaching, including effective relationships between schools and homes that work for teachers and families, and incorporating practices into all teacher education that are effective for Pasifika students
- supporting work that will help teachers identify and build on the strengths that Pasifika students, including bilingual Pasifika students, bring to the classroom to enhance their learning
- supporting teachers to affirm and develop the identities of students to contribute to student engagement and learning
- putting greater emphasis on helping Pasifika families to support the learning of their children
- raising the expectations of teachers and Pasifika families of Pasifika students' learning potential by identifying and sharing practices that support Pasifika educational success
- focusing on practices and decisions that are based on robust evidence about student learning, to ensure that time, expertise, and resources are focused on what will make the most difference for Pasifika students
- encouraging Pasifika community participation and interest in school governance



- considering the specific issues of education in Auckland, where 72 percent of all Pasifika children and students attend education services
- contributing to the achievement of the goals in the Pasifika Education Plan.¹⁷

How do we work to achieve our Schooling Strategy goal?

This Strategy identifies three priorities for the next five years:

- all students experience effective teaching
- children's learning is nurtured by families and whānau
- evidence-based practices are used by all involved in schooling.

Much work is already under way in these priority areas and this Strategy builds on this work. This Strategy will also help refine and refocus other areas of work and guide the development of new work.

The strategic priorities, and how they fit with the overall Schooling Strategy goal, are shown in the diagram on page 17.

The following pages identify how the activities and contributions of teachers, principals, boards of trustees, families and whānau, and government and its agencies (including providers of specialist support to schools) will combine to help achieve the strategic priorities.

While this Strategy focuses particularly on teachers, principals, boards of trustees, families and whānau, and government, it also affects, and will seek contributions from, all who are working with schools, including teacher educators, researchers, and wider community interests. Achieving the strategic priorities will require contributions from everyone involved in schooling.

¹⁷ Pasifika Education Plan: www.minedu.govt.nz/gov/pasifikaeducation