

Cabinet Paper material

Proactive release

Minister & portfolio	Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education
Name of package	Redesigning alternative education: An end-to-end system of support for children and young people at risk of disengaging from education
Date considered	23 September 2019
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These documents have been proactively released:

Cabinet paper – Redesigning alternative education: An end-to-end system of support for children and young people at risk of disengaging from education

Date considered: 18 September 2019, Social Wellbeing Committee
Author: Ministry of Education

Cabinet paper – Appendix 1

Date considered: 18 September 2019, Social Wellbeing Committee
Author: Ministry of Education

Cabinet paper – Appendix 2

Date considered: 18 September 2019, Social Wellbeing Committee
Author: Ministry of Education

Social Wellbeing Committee minute – SWC-19-MIN-0129

Date considered: 18 September 2019, Social Wellbeing Committee
Author: Cabinet Office

Cabinet minute – CAB-19-MIN-0487

Date considered: 18 September 2019, Social Wellbeing Committee
Author: Cabinet Office

Material redacted

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Office of the Minister of Education

Office of the Associate Minister of Education

Chair, Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

Redesigning alternative education: An end-to-end system of support for children and young people at risk of disengaging from education

Proposal

- 1 This paper outlines the direction we are taking to redesign and improve educational options for both primary and secondary ākonga | learners at risk of disengaging from education.

Executive Summary

- 2 As part of Priority 6 within the *Learning Support Action Plan 2019 – 2025*, we are working to redesign and improve alternative education for ākonga at risk of disengaging from education.
- 3 The education system is failing to support a significant group of ākonga, who are becoming disengaged from their learning journey. Alternative Education, Activity Centres and Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu | The Correspondence School (Te Kura) provide education for this cohort.
- 4 There is evidence that these alternative settings are a positive experience for some ākonga. However, outcomes in these alternative settings are variable, and the people working in alternative settings have said that it is increasingly difficult to meet the needs of the ākonga in their care.
- 5 This paper presents our proposal for the ideal future state for alternative education. Once this is implemented, it will provide an end-to-end continuum of supports that are more strongly integrated within the wider education system. There will be a new model of alternative education, which will be referred to as intensive provision until we decide on a new name. This new model will provide intensive support for ākonga who are disengaged from education at either an on-site or off-site location.
- 6 In the new end-to-end system, in-school supports will be the first response to signs of disengagement. Ākonga will have a single plan of support in place before a move to intensive provision is considered, and entry into intensive provision will be planned for, rather than based on stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and periods of non-enrolment.
- 7 When in intensive provision, ākonga will have access to appropriately skilled, registered teachers and pastoral care staff. The markers used to measure success will be flexible and reflect the needs, goals and aspirations of ākonga. Schools and intensive providers will work together to ensure ākonga have equitable access to school resources, facilities and information, including learning support.

- 8 Post-school transition support for ākonga will be a key feature of the new system. Relationships will be maintained with ākonga after they have left intensive provision to ensure their transition to their best next step is successful.
- 9 Alternative educational settings will be integrated into the Learning Support Delivery Model that the Ministry is rolling out through 2019. Alternative settings will be a part of the package that learning support clusters can use to improve educational outcomes for ākonga.

Background

- 10 This Government has a vision for an inclusive education system where every child feels a sense of belonging, is present and makes progress. Within this system, the wellbeing of all ākonga will be safeguarded and promoted, throughout their life-long learning journey.
- 11 We still have a great deal of work to do before we can achieve this vision. There is a significant group of ākonga who the education system is failing to support, and who are becoming disengaged from their learning journey. This disengagement can start at an early age, and often has a negative impact on educational attainment and long-term outcomes.
- 12 The *Learning Support Action Plan 2019 – 2025* (the Action Plan), announced on 26 July 2019, sets out the improvements we aim to make to learning support (CAB-19-MIN-0139 refers). The Action Plan includes six key priorities, designed to make a big impact for ākonga and their families, whānau and teachers.
- 13 Priority 6 of the Action Plan seeks to *improve education for ākonga at risk of disengaging from education*. We propose to progress this priority by redesigning alternative education. We are socialising the ideal future state with Cabinet prior to developing more detailed options for implementation.

Current state of alternative education

- 14 In 2017, there were 4,459 rangatahi | young people in alternative education settings. Māori and Pacific rangatahi are overrepresented within this cohort, with 62 percent of rangatahi identifying as Māori and 12 percent identifying as Pacific peoples¹.
- 15 Alternative settings include Activity Centres, Alternative Education and Te Kura's at risk gateways. Te Kura also runs a face to face programme delivering personalised learning and pastoral care to a small number of at risk ākonga. The ākonga who are in these settings are mostly of secondary school age.
- 16 The aim of these alternative settings is to support ākonga who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, to reengage in education or to successfully transition on to further training or employment. An overview of current provision is included as Appendix 1.

¹ For Activity Centres, this data is based on ENROL inputs and is missing information from 209 Activity Centre ākonga.

- 17 The current system of support for ākonga who are disengaged from their education is not performing consistently. For some ākonga, alternative provision provides an important opportunity to take a break from their local school and get a fresh start. However, outcomes vary considerably and many are ending up in the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) cohort, or are having ongoing interactions with the justice system².

An ideal future state for alternative education

- 18 We have been working with the sector and the Ministry of Education to redesign and improve alternative education settings.
- 19 The proposal outlined in this paper draws on the feedback received at the Alternative Education Hui on 22 February 2019, the voices of ākonga who are in alternative settings, a sector engagement held by the Ministry on 21 June, and a review of the research on good practice. A second Hui will be held on 20 September to discuss next steps.
- 20 To reflect the size of the shift needed, the proposed ideal future state is an end-to-end system of support. Current alternative education settings will be replaced by a new model of intensive provision. We will continue to work with Activity Centres, Alternative Education providers and Te Kura to transform the current models of alternative education into a new model of intensive provision. We have provided an overview of our proposal in Appendix 2.
- 21 We recognise that in order for ākonga to be engaged and learn, their basic wellbeing needs must be met. In addition, the end-to-end system of support must be built on strong foundations. These include:
- 21.1 *Whānaungatanga*: The education system must support authentic engagement and partnership with ākonga and their caregivers, family and whānau. By upholding whānaungatanga, shared understandings and reciprocal benefits can emerge from relationships that are built on trust and respect;
 - 21.2 *Inclusive practices*: The success of this proposal will also hinge on changes for some teachers and schools. Some schools will need to work to adjust their practices, attitudes and behaviours in order to be inclusive of all ākonga;
 - 21.3 *Whānau-centred and ākonga-centred approaches*: Support for ākonga must keep their voices and interests at the centre, with decisions made with ākonga and their caregivers, family and whānau. Support must prioritise the agency and mana of ākonga and their family and whānau; and
 - 21.4 *Culturally responsive practices*: To ensure positive educational outcomes and promote a sense of belonging for all ākonga, it is critical that teachers and

² Ministry of Education. (2019). Not just about NEETs. A rapid review of evidence on what works for youth at risk of limited employment. Draft Ministry of Education document.

schools cultivate practices that value ākonga identity, language and culture. These practices are central to high-quality teaching and learning.

The end-to-end system will offer a continuum of supports, and be fully integrated into the wider education system

- 22 Once fully implemented, we propose that the new system will consist of a continuum of supports that are strongly integrated within the Learning Support Delivery Model and the wider education system. This continuum of support will include in-school supports, a new model of intensive provision, and post-school transition support and pathways. Support will be available and accessible, as and when it is needed.
- 23 An integrated approach is needed to close existing gaps in our educational options for ākonga. These gaps result in many of the ākonga enrolled in alternative settings having extended periods of disengagement and non-enrolment from the current education system.

In-school supports should be the first response for ākonga at risk of disengagement

- 24 Support for ākonga must be provided in school before intensive provision is considered as a response. The intensity of response should depend on the changes needed to meet the wellbeing and learning needs of ākonga. This response will be a part of the Learning Support Delivery Model (LSDM) and will include the development of a single plan of support for ākonga.

A new model of intensive provision will be developed

- 25 Intensive provision will provide another option for ākonga who need support. This setting will have the flexibility to adapt to the context and needs of the local community and respond accordingly.
- 26 The property used for intensive provision may be on or off the school site, depending on the needs of the local community. Physical spaces must be fit-for-purpose, and will be required to meet the same health and safety standards as schools.

Moving into intensive provision

- 27 The criteria for entry into intensive provision will be flexible and based on the need for support. The decision to move into intensive provision will be planned and made with the ākonga, and their family and whānau.
- 28 If not already in place, creating a single plan of support for the ākonga will be the first step taken when planning a move into intensive provision.

Moving through intensive provision

A single plan of support will put the ākonga at the centre

- 29 The ākonga, their family and the relevant adults (including those from government agencies) will come together to update a plan of support to include the move into

intensive provision. The plan will be based on the identity, language and culture of ākonga. It will be specific to their needs, interests, strengths, aspirations and goals.

- 30 The plan will become the focal point for regular check-ins with the group. It will be revisited regularly and adjusted as needed to reflect changes in goals and aspirations.

Stronger relationships between schools and intensive provision will help ākonga stay connected to school

- 31 Once ākonga are in intensive provision they will continue to have equitable access to school resources, facilities and information. For example, ākonga will be able to access careers advice, guidance counsellors, specialist subject facilities (e.g. science labs), secondary-tertiary pathways, extra-curricular activities, learning support including resource teachers, and opportunities to learn outside the classroom.

Wrap-around services and support from agencies and non-government organisations will be available and accessible

- 32 When in intensive provision, support from other agencies and non-government organisations will continue under the Learning Support Delivery Model to wrap around the ākonga and their family and whānau.

Markers of success will be diverse and flexible

- 33 The markers of success for ākonga in intensive provision must be flexible and accommodate not only the needs of ākonga, but also their goals, aspirations and progress. Ākonga will leave intensive provision with a broad range of outcomes that will set them up to succeed as they continue on to their best next step and beyond. Outcomes could include: a sense of belonging; greater confidence in self-esteem and identity; improvements in health and wellbeing; progress in learning that builds on the level of education that ākonga entered into intensive provision with; increased ability to self-manage and self-reflect; and improvements in social skills.

Staff in intensive provision will have pastoral care and quality teaching skills and expertise

- 34 Intensive provision will have low ākonga to staff ratios. This will ensure ākonga receive the attention and support they need to feel safe and secure, to reengage with learning and to achieve their goals.
- 35 Staffing for intensive provision will be organised in a flexible way in order to best support ākonga. This would mean access to staff who are skilled in providing pastoral care, teaching and trained in trauma-informed responses.
- 36 Ākonga will have access to appropriately skilled, registered teachers with practising certificates, who are able to provide a rich and engaging curriculum relevant to the local context.

- 37 Staff in intensive provision will have adequate on-site administrative and management support to ensure smooth day-to-day operations. This will mean more dedicated time to support ākongā.

Intensive provision will have the right tools to support learning and collaboration

- 38 Intensive provision will have access to the appropriate technologies to support ākongā and to enable collaboration with schools, as well as to access online resources to support learning for both ākongā and staff.

Moving on from intensive provision

- 39 A successful transition to the best next step must be seen as a good outcome, regardless of whether this step is integrating back into a school or on to something else. Intensive provision will enable access to a range of future pathways.
- 40 The best next step will be decided on by the ākongā, with support from their family and whānau. The best next step may change and adjust as ākongā progress through their personalised learning plan³.
- 41 Relationships between ākongā and staff in school or intensive provision will be maintained, and learning supports, health and social services will continue as needed during the transition period.

Wider Education and Government priorities

- 42 The redesign of alternative education is a stream of a larger work programme seeking to improve the education experiences of ākongā at risk of disengagement. This work includes improving the Attendance Service; reviewing the legislative framework for, and the guidelines on, stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions; and developing support for primary aged children who are at risk of disengaging from education. The Action Plan also aims to make wider improvements to how learning support is facilitated to better serve ākongā in their local schools.
- 43 Improving education for ākongā at risk of disengaging is just one of the changes we are making to the education system through the Education Work Programme. The ideal state will leverage improvements being made through the Curriculum Progress and Achievement work, the Tomorrow's Schools Review, the National Education Learning Priorities, the Reform of Vocational Education and the Tertiary Education Strategy to ensure equitable access and excellent outcomes for all ākongā, including those who are at risk.
- 44 Implementing the ideal state will also require workforce planning to ensure we have the right people with the right skills in intensive provision. Workforce requirements for alternative education are included in the Learning Support Workforce plan.

³ The best next step could be: a supported transition into their enrolling school, or a different school; employment; vocational or other training; further education; or other opportunities, goals or aspirations e.g. overseas experience or volunteering.

- 45 A fully implemented ideal state will ensure there is equity within the system for all ākonga, in the context of their whānau, which aligns with the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.

Consultation

- 46 Treasury, Ministry of Health, Te Puni Kōkiri, New Zealand Police, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Education Review Office, Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Social Development, Office for Disability Issues, Oranga Tamariki, Department of Corrections, New Zealand Police and Ministry of Justice were consulted on this paper.

Financial Implications

- 47 Implementing the proposed changes to alternative education will have associated costs. We know that alternative education settings are currently insufficiently resourced to provide adequate support to ākonga who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging. We also expect that once redesigned, alternative education will have greater usage than current provision.

- 48 s 9(2)(f)(iv)
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Funding already committed

- 49 In December 2018, Cabinet agreed (SWC-18-MIN-0191) to invest \$1.08 million from Ministry underspends to fund the first three years of the Napier Managed Move Service for primary aged children at risk of disengaging from school.
- 50 An additional \$9.8 million in funding was secured through Budget 2019 to provide an increase of 6.9% to Alternative Education and Attendance Service providers, and to fund the Te Kura Big Picture programme⁴.

Legislative Implications

- 51 Priority 6 of the *Learning Support Action Plan, improving education for ākonga at risk of disengaging*, has committed to reviewing the stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsion guidelines. This work could result in legislative changes.
- 52 In addition, as the paper highlights, the criteria for entering into the new intensive provision will become a part of a planned for and managed pathway. This differs from the current entry criteria for Alternative Education⁵, which mostly focus on

⁴ Of this funding, Alternative Education providers will receive an additional \$5.8 million over four years, Attendance Service providers will receive an additional \$1.4 million over three years, and the Te Kura Big Picture programme will receive an additional \$2.6 million over four years.

⁵ Current criteria for entry into Alternative Education is based on ākonga being out of school for a period of time, excluded, and refused by local schools, multiple suspensions, alienation and chronic absences.

having a period of non-attendance at school prior to going into an alternative setting. Legislative change may be required to implement this. However, this will not be known until implementation options have been developed.

Human Rights

- 53 The proposals in this paper are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Gender Implications

- 54 Males are disproportionately represented in alternative education settings, and may therefore benefit from the proposed improvements.

Child Impact

- 55 New Zealand made a commitment under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) to consider the views of children and young people at all levels of decision-making. The ideal state presented here is informed by engagements with ākonga for the Learning Support Action Plan (LSAP) and National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP), consultation with the Minister for Education's Youth Advisory Group and engagements with ākonga in alternative settings. This aligns with Article 12 of UNCROC, which states that children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.
- 56 Under UNCROC, all children have the right to an education that helps to develop their personality, talents and abilities to the full. They have a right to be treated with respect and be encouraged to respect each other's rights and values. Alternative education will be used to ensure a child or young person's right to education is realised. It will be designed in a way that aims to ensure children and young people are free from discrimination and stigma, and reflects their identity, language and culture.

Disability Perspective

- 57 Alternative education is for ākonga who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from their education. Learners with learning or other disabilities, as well as those who are neurodiverse, may be disproportionately represented within this cohort.
- 58 The proposals in this paper are consistent with the principle inherent in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026, of people with disabilities getting an excellent education.

Publicity

- 59 We will be presenting the proposal for an ideal future state to a group of key stakeholders at a Hui on 20 September.

Proactive Release

60 This paper will be released with appropriate redactions once noted by Cabinet.

Recommendations

61 The Minister of Education and the Associate Minister of Education recommend that the Committee:

- 1 **note** that the redesign of alternative education responds to Priority 6 of the *Learning Support Action Plan 2019 – 2025*
- 2 **agree** to the direction for the work to redesign and improve alternative education, attached as Appendix 2
- 3 s 9(2)(f)(iv) 

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Tracey Martin

Associate Minister of Education

Appendix 1: Current state of alternative education provision

Alternative education \$21 million



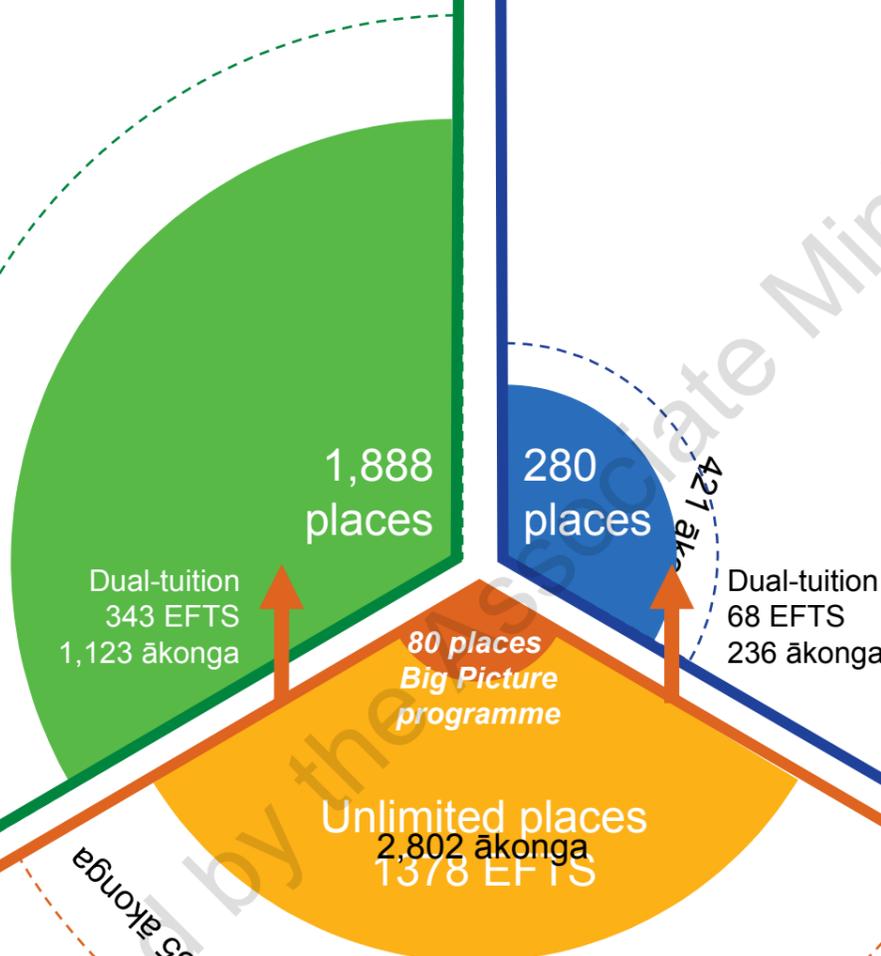
Face-to-face provision for ākonga aged 13-15 years old who have been alienated from mainstream education.



Funded through contracts with managing schools at a rate of **\$11,020** per ākonga place. This covers staffing, property and operational costs, with a small amount dedicated to pedagogical leadership. Not regularly adjusted for price increases.



Workforce is primarily **youth workers and tutors**. Managing schools provide a small amount of registered teacher time.



Distance education provision for ākonga who are non-enrolled, excluded or expelled, ākonga with psychological or psycho-social grounds that prevent or seriously impede their attendance at school, young parents, ākonga in the custody and/or guardianship of Oranga Tamariki and ākonga attending Regional Health Schools.

Face-to-face provision for ākonga participating in the Big Picture Pilot.



Funding of **\$6,372** per EFTS.* Funding is adjusted for changes in teachers' salaries and in alignment with schools' operational grant increases.

An additional \$7,925 per ākonga participating in the Big Picture Pilot.

Te Kura at risk gateways \$12.6 million**

Activity centres \$3.7 million

Face-to-face provision for ākonga in Year 9-13 who have disengaged from mainstream education.



Resourcing includes operational funding, staffing entitlement (at a 1:10 teacher:student ratio) and property. This is equivalent to around **\$13,200** per ākonga place. Funding is adjusted for changes in teacher salaries and as part of schools' operational grant increases

Workforce is primarily registered **teachers**.



Workforce is primarily registered **teachers**.

Funding rates and enrolment data are for 2017

*includes both base and per ākonga funding

**this funding includes full-time tuition, dual tuition and the Big Picture funding

Appendix 2 The ideal state for an end-to-end system of support

DRAFT NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Identifying and responding to needs earlier

The Learning Support Delivery Model will enable us to work together and create more flexibility for ākonga | learner by:



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



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



Working together to identify needs and set priorities across learning communities



More flexibility to create support that is innovative and responsive



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



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

There are opportunities to better identify and respond to need before ākonga disengage.

We will develop tools to identify different learning needs earlier and more consistently through the Learning Support Action Plan.

We will develop ways to recognise rich and deep learning through the Curriculum Progress and Achievement work.

This work will be aligned with your attendance service work programme.

We will lead a work-stream to develop new provision for tamariki who would be better served by more intensive pastoral care support. This could include short term placements outside of the child's usual classroom or school e.g. the Napier Managed Moves pilot.

We will review the work currently undertaken around non-attendance and transience, in particular options for bringing the attendance service closer to schools.

A ākonga-centred model of supported provision, integrated within the schooling system

The education system and other social systems are not working for all ākonga, leading to their disengagement from learning.

The schooling system offers many options, including education based on different languages, cultures, values, teaching philosophies, and religious beliefs, to meet need.

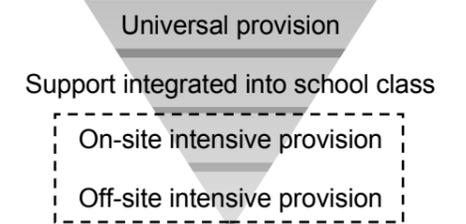
Intensive provision is another option when ākonga need support.

The intensity of response should depend on the changes needed to meet ākonga need

Where changes can be made to make the school environment work for the ākonga, this should be tried first.

Entry into intensive provision should be a decision that is made by ākonga and their family and whānau.

Continuum of support



Moving into intensive provision

Key health & social service professionals

Learning Support specialists

Teachers & other school professionals

Parents, caregivers, & whānau



The criteria for entry into intensive provision will be flexible based on the needs of the ākonga.

The decision to move in intensive provision will be made by the ākonga, with the support of their family and whānau

A single plan of support is already in place.

Regional Health School

Intensive support in their school

Intensive support in another school

Intensive support on or off site

Moving through intensive provision

Intensive support from agencies and NGOs come together under the Learning Support Delivery Model to wrap-around the ākonga and their family and whānau.



Ākonga have permeable access to school resources, facilities and information (including careers and guidance counsellor advice)

Professionals in school and in intensive provision have equal mana and recognise each others complementary skills are most effective when they work together. This could be in a school or in intensive provision.

Intensive provision sites are warm and safe, where ākonga can have their material needs met.

Ākonga can access learning teams that meet their pastoral care and teaching needs.

Intensive providers have the management and administrative support for smooth day-to-day operations.

Stigma-free environments need a change in hearts and minds

Moving on from intensive provision

Ākonga will leave intensive provision with: self-esteem | identity | wellbeing | sense of belonging | confidence | self-management | self-reflection | social skills | positive behaviour | willingness to contribute | community engagement | engagement in learning | academic success

The best next step for each ākonga will depend on their interests, strengths, aspirations, achievements and needs.

The best next step could be:

- Integrating into a school
- Employment
- Vocational or other training
- Further education
- Other opportunities, e.g. overseas experience

Post-transition, support is ongoing

Ākonga can still access their teaching team and other supports until they are ready to continue independently.

There are opportunities to link with work going on in the tertiary education space to better respond to at risk ākonga.

The single plan of support is reflected on and adjusted to ensure ākonga are on-track and have the right supports to meet their goals. Goals may change as ākonga build confidence in their identity. The plan will enable greater information sharing between all adults, ensuring the right support is in place from the beginning of time in intensive provision.



Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Redesigning Alternative Education: An End-to-end System of Support for Children and Young People At Risk of Disengaging from Education

Portfolio Education / Associate Education (Hon Tracey Martin)

On 18 September 2019, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1 **noted** that the redesign of alternative education responds to Priority 6 of the Learning Support Action Plan 2019 – 2025, improving education for children and young people at risk of disengaging;
- 2 **agreed** to the direction for the work to redesign and improve alternative education, attached as Appendix 2 to the submission under SWC-19-SUB-0129;
- 3 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Vivien Meek
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Kelvin Davis
Hon Grant Robertson
Hon Chris Hipkins
Hon Andrew Little
Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)
Hon Tracey Martin
Hon Willie Jackson
Hon Poto Williams
Jan Logie, MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for SWC
Office of the SWC Chair

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Minister of Education
Associate Minister of Education (Hon Tracey Martin)



Cabinet

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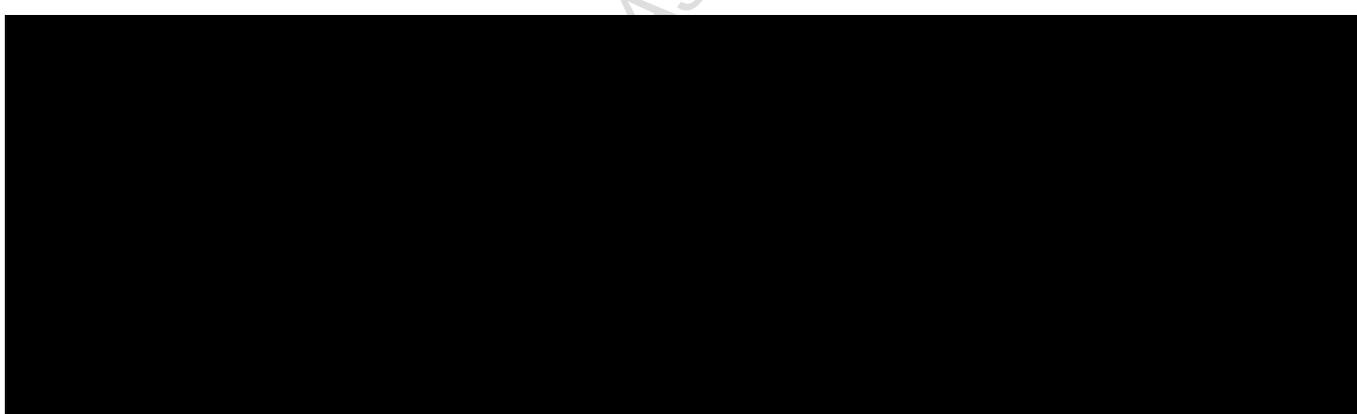
Redactions made as content outside scope of Minister's portfolio responsibility

Report of the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee: Period Ended 20 September 2019

On 23 September 2019, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee for the period ended 20 September 2019:



SWC-19-MIN-0129 **Redesigning Alternative Education: An End-to-end System of Support for Children and Young People At Risk of Disengaging from Education** CONFIRMED
 Portfolio: Education / Associate Education (Hon Tracey Martin)



Redactions made as content outside scope of Minister's portfolio responsibility

Michael Webster
 Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
 Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee