



Education Report: Curriculum, Progress and Achievement Ministerial Advisory Group update – August 2018

To:	Hon. Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	08/08/2018	Priority:	Medium
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

- 1 The purpose of this paper is to update you on:
 - a. the progress of your Curriculum, Progress and Achievement (CPA) Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG), and
 - b. to seek your agreement to extend the scope of the MAG to include providing advice on meeting information needs at the national level in relation to year 1-10 student progress and achievement.

Summary

- 2 Attached to this report is an update from the MAG about its initial thinking and emerging ideas (Annex 1). These ideas are being tested with the CPA Reference Group and the MAG intends to provide you with more details on its thinking to support your September update to Cabinet.
- 3 Given the MAG is still in the very early stages of preparing its advice, we do not recommend making any changes to requirements on schools and kura for the 2019 school year. We will continue to enhance and implement our existing supports for curriculum design, assessment and aromatawai practices, and reporting to students, parents and whānau.
- 4 The MAG has indicated that the development of its advice is impacted by uncertainty about national level information needs relating to learner progress and achievement across the curricula. We consider that the MAG's process provides a good opportunity to begin an open conversation about national level information needs.
- 5 We need learner progress information that allows us to be responsive to every child's learning needs and to understand what support they need now and in the future. Our system learns from the collective evidence we have of all children's needs and what is working and in what circumstances they are effective. We also use that evidence to ensure we have the right supply of resources to continue to meet children's need, but

also that we our ecosystem is growing as a result and we are constantly evolving our learning system so it supports children's learning.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **agree** to expand the scope of the CPA MAG to include providing advice on meeting information needs at the national level in relation to year 1-10 student progress and achievement, with a report back to you in May 2019

Agree / Disagree

- b. **note** that extending the timeframe would require a change to the MAG's terms of reference that will need to be agreed by Social Wellbeing Committee (SWC), and that Appointments and Honours Committee agreement will also be needed to extend the MAG's term of appointment before it ends on 21 December 2018

- c. **note** that we will provide you with a draft SWC paper on 15 August for your September 2018 update to Cabinet

- d. **agree** to meet with the MAG Co-Chairs to discuss the thinking and ideas outlined in their attached update to you (Annex 1)

Agree / Disagree

- e. **forward** this Education Report to Hon Kelvin Davis, Hon Tracey Martin, and Hon Jenny Salesa

Agree / Disagree

- f. **agree** that this Education Report is proactively released as part of a suite of documents after Cabinet decisions in September. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Release / Not release

Ellen MacGregor-Reid
Deputy Secretary
Early Learning Student and Achievement

__/__/__



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

20/8/18

Background

1. Cabinet agreed to revoke *Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori* and *National Standards* in December 2017 [CBC-17-MIN-0042 refers]. You indicated at that time that a new approach to assessment, aromatawai and reporting would be designed based on children's progress across the curricula, including key competencies for success in life, learning and work.
2. Following initial feedback from peak bodies and others in the sector, you decided to focus on strengthening the use of the curricula to understand and support all students' progress and achievement, rather than developing a 'new approach'.
3. In April, Cabinet established the CPA MAG [CAB-18-MIN-1065 refers] to provide advice on: a) how to strengthen the design and use of local curriculum so that all children and young people progress and achieve across the breadth and depth of the national curricula in years 1-10; and b) how a stronger focus on student progress across the curricula can be embedded, including change management, implementation and capability building.
4. Work on understanding system performance for national-level decision making was not included within the scope of the MAG. It was agreed, at the time, that the Ministry would provide you with advice on how system performance can be understood, and what information will be used for national-level decision making and stewardship of our national schooling curricula.
5. The MAG has been established with Co-Chairs from both Māori- and English-medium education. It has representation from both pathways to support its ability to deliver advice that reflects the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and meet the needs of a bicultural Aotearoa-New Zealand.
6. At the April Cabinet meeting, you advised Cabinet that you would provide an update with any preliminary recommendations from the MAG's advice in September 2018. You also advised Cabinet that you would provide preliminary advice on how national-level information needs can be met with an update on discussions to work through stakeholder concerns.
7. The MAG is due to make its final recommendations to you in December 2018.

Update on the Progress of the Curriculum, Progress and Achievement Ministerial Advisory Group

8. There have been three MAG meetings to date. The attached update from the MAG (Annex 1) outlines its progress to date and emerging ideas:
 - a. *Learning System*: Commit to a learning system in which all stakeholders contribute to and benefit from others' learning. All have access to high quality information that enables them to:
 - do their jobs well
 - learn
 - improve ākonga progress and achievement
 - improve the ways in which they are growing good citizens and enhancing wellbeing.
- Commit to a learning system that accepts the challenge of biculturalism as a profoundly educational concept for our nation.

- b. *Dynamic Curriculum*: Design and embed a mechanism for a dynamic, bilingual national curriculum (comprising *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *The New Zealand Curriculum*) with regular and timely iterations that refresh the curriculum in response to system-wide learning about direction and priorities.
 - c. *Assessment Tools and Systems Inquiry*: Design and support the implementation of tools and processes that can be used to evaluate progress in relation to critical learning and progress markers in each of the National Curriculum documents.
 - d. *Progress Markers*: Develop progress markers that describe and exemplify critical learning in each of the National Curriculum documents.
 - e. *Literacies for Learning Progress – Data and Assessment*: Build capabilities in assessment literacy and data literacy that are conducive to supporting progress and achievement in valued learning in each of the National Curriculum documents.
 - f. *Networks*: Strengthen the networks of all stakeholders in the learning system to leverage expertise across the system in ways that serve the goal of supporting progress and improving achievement for all ākonga in each of the National Curriculum documents.
 - g. *Learning Loops to Strengthen Partnerships*: Facilitate respectful conversations and establish processes for ensuring high quality high impact learning loops across the system (students, teachers, parents/whānau, school/kura leaders, boards of trustees, Ministry of Education) to support ākonga progress and achievement in critical learning in each of the National Curriculum documents.
 - h. *Curriculum and Assessment Think-Tank / Laboratory / Institute*: Establish a curriculum and assessment think tank, laboratory or institute to lead thinking about new approaches to curriculum and assessment and grow knowledge across the system, including in Māori and Māori-medium education.
9. While these ideas may evolve or change as the MAG continues its work and engages more widely, this initial thinking does signal that there are likely to be significant implications from the final recommendations. These includes financial, regulatory, implementation and change management implications, including for the Education Workforce Strategy. In addition, there are likely to be interactions between these ideas and advice you are receiving in other parts of your Education Work Programme, including the Disability and Learning Support Action Plan, NCEA Review, Early Learning Strategic Plan and Review of Tomorrow's Schools. A detailed analysis of implications will be provided once the MAG has completed its final report to you in December 2018.
10. The emerging ideas from the MAG appear to support the Education Summit vision and are responsive to initial findings from the Education Conversation. As outlined in the attached update, the MAG is grappling with some complex issues. It is striving to develop an approach that will make a real difference to the experience of students, parents and whānau in relation to learning across the curriculum. This approach aims to support and value teachers as professionals, and will make a meaningful contribution to addressing the equity and excellence challenges in the education system. It is important that the MAG, supported by the Reference Group, has time to work through these issues and engage widely and genuinely.
11. Given the MAG is in the very early stages of preparing its advice, we do not advise making any preliminary recommendations about changes to strengthen the use of curricula, including in planning and reporting.

12. A CPA Reference Group was formed alongside the MAG. The purpose of this group is to provide a vehicle for broader sector engagement to inform both the MAG and the Ministry. Annex 2 provides a copy of insights from the Reference Group's first round of sector engagement.
13. The Education Review Office's recent report, *Building genuine learning partnerships with parents*, highlighted that regular and honest sharing of all achievement and progress information was one of the key components of genuine learning partnerships. The report further highlighted that these partnerships had significantly positive impacts on student progress. We are concerned that the National Administration Guidelines requirements to report to students and parents in writing twice a year may be creating a context where schools think this is sufficient communication. This is something that will need to be considered in future regulatory changes to school planning and reporting requirements.

Extending the Scope of the CPA MAG to include National-level Information Needs

14. The Government decision to remove National Standards and Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori provides an opportunity to have an open conversation about how we answer system-wide information needs with the wellbeing of the learner at the heart. There is increasing demand for information on children's educational outcomes across the Government's work programme, including the Child Wellbeing Strategy and Disability Strategy. You have recently received a briefing note on recommended changes to the Child Poverty Reduction Bill that outlines the likely need for additional education and development measures [METIS# 1143997]. These include:
 - a. progress made in early childhood development
 - b. student engagement and wellbeing
 - c. school experiences such as exposure to bullying or discrimination, and
 - d. the learning progress of students throughout school.
15. Discussions within the MAG are touching upon the issue of collecting assessment and aromatawai information in order to understand system performance. The MAG has noted that sector concerns around the ability for this information to be used to produce league tables is not only a barrier to the uptake of existing tools, but also to the potential implementation of future MAG advice. The MAG has requested that the Ministry provides them with clarity on: a) the different purposes that assessment and aromatawai information is, or could be, used for at the national level; and b) how the latter would enable better decision-making that allows for a positive impact on student learning outcomes.
16. We understand you are looking for solutions that provide robust information for understanding system performance without repeating previous unintended consequences caused by attempts to gather national-level information through National Standards and Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori. The sector has told us that these included narrowing the learning and teaching experience, enabling simplistic league tables that rank school performance, and overburdening teachers with an increased workload. Developing possible solutions in partnership with the sector will allow us to work through how to mitigate these issues and other potential unintended consequences. It will also allow us to design solutions that make sense as a whole, while meeting differing information needs in fit-for-purpose ways. We will provide further advice before your report back to Cabinet on progress to work through sector concerns.

17. In order to take the conversation forward, we believe it is necessary to shift the focus of the conversation from a layered system, where the Ministry monitors from the outside, to viewing the education system as a complex ecosystem. Using an ecosystem approach to thinking about information needs places the child at the centre. It highlights how various actors (including whānau, teachers, schools and kura, boards, external providers, and the Ministry) can play multiple roles in the teaching, monitoring, governance and stewardship of each child's educational journey. We propose to develop a narrative along these lines to support engagement with the MAG.
18. Our preliminary advice is that there is high value in collecting more system-level information on learner progress than is currently available. We need to test our current thinking with key stakeholders. The compound value of more progress and achievement information at the national level, which can be linked to other factors relating to the child, includes:
- a. understanding and reporting on child wellbeing
 - b. knowing how many children are disabled or have additional learning needs in order to ensure adequate supply of targeted support
 - c. identifying areas of best practice to inform research, guidance, and decisions, including an increase in the sharing of knowledge between Māori- and English-medium
 - d. understanding what needs to change for which groups of learners in order to deliver excellence and equitable outcomes for all
 - e. measuring the value of investment, particularly at the national level, to ensure resources are going where they are most effective, and
 - f. enabling schools and kura to use national level information to inform their practice, including as context for goal-setting.
19. We need more information at the national level because we currently rely on a range of national and international sample-based studies. There are gaps in the coverage of these studies, in particular for Māori-medium settings. There are also limitations to the sample-based studies. First, given the high diversity within our relatively small population, the actual numbers of minority population groups within the samples are too small to provide useful insight. Secondly, the samples often cannot be linked to each other or to other administrative data. This means we cannot use them to answer complex questions about the factors at play and what we could change to bring about better results. Given the diversity of our population we need some curriculum progress information from individual learners in order to enable the system to respond to the needs of each child. There are choices to be made about what information would be available for national level use and how best to ensure coverage of our diverse population while mitigating potential adverse consequences.
20. As we design a new approach to understanding progress across the National Curriculum we need to collaborate with the sector, wider community and other agencies to answer the following questions:
- a. What do we value? Why and for whom do we measure?
 - b. How do we ensure measurement informs, rather than hinders, learning?
 - i. What do we measure and when?

- ii. Who does the measurement and how?
- c. What is the service response when measurement shows a reason for concern?
 - i. How is it triggered?
 - ii. Who delivers it?
 - iii. Is it adequate and effective?
- 21. We recommend beginning the conversation by expanding the scope of the CPA MAG to include providing advice on meeting information needs at the national level in relation to student progress and achievement for year 1-10. This is consistent with their terms of reference, but your previous advice to Cabinet specifically put understanding system performance out of scope of their work, so you would need to note this change in your update to Cabinet.
- 22. In changing the scope of the MAG we are asking it to consider and provide advice on how information needs for teaching and learning interacts with information needs at the national level. This ensures that its advice on understanding of progress across the curriculum comes together with wider thinking on understanding system performance.
- 23. The Ministry will also lead wider engagement on other aspects of measurement of the education system, through existing MAGs and advisory groups where appropriate. We need to consider whether there are opportunities for measurement for the purposes of understanding system performance to also meet the needs of the Disability and Learning Support Action Plan, including the consideration of universal screening points for dyslexia, dyspraxia, and giftedness. We need to ensure that screening for additional need, measurement of progress information, and wellbeing measures work together as a coherent whole for the good of the child. We also need to ensure that measurement enables us to meet our Treaty obligations and supports us to collaboratively address our education system's persistent equity issues.
- 24. We recommend that we include the CPA Reference Group in the conversation to contribute 'on the ground' advice on the student progress and achievement information that would best meet system level needs. This will help build trust and understanding with the sector through transparency, so that we can continue to develop constructive relationships and embed an ongoing mode of working collaboratively.
- 25. If you agree to extend the scope of the MAG there will be timeline implications. We recommend directing the MAG to continue to provide advice on its current scope in December 2018. We recommend establishing a second report back on system performance in May 2019. Extending the timeline will require Cabinet Social and Wellbeing Committee agreement to change the MAG's terms of reference. Cabinet Appointments and Honour Committee agreement to extend the term of the MAG appointments will also be needed before their current term expires on 21 December 2018.

Next Steps

- 26. The attached engagement and implementation timeline (refer Annex 3) provides an outline of the current process and timeframes for engagement with the sector between August 2018 and 2019. We note that this will change if you agree to extend the scope of the MAG.

27. We propose the following timeframes for your September 2018 update to Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

First draft to Minister's Office	Wednesday 15 August
Revised draft to Minister's Office	Wednesday 22 August
Draft for ministerial consultation	Thursday 23 August
Revised paper to Minister's Office	Monday 3 September
Final paper to Minister's Office	Wednesday 5 September
Lodge for Social Wellbeing Committee	by 10am Thursday 6 September
Social Wellbeing Committee	Wednesday 12 September
Cabinet	Monday 17 September

28. The MAG Co-Chairs would like the opportunity to meet with you to ensure that you have clear visibility of the MAG's thinking and are comfortable with the direction of travel before your report back to Cabinet in September. If you agree the Ministry will liaise with your office to arrange a meeting.
29. The MAG will be aligning its thinking with other parts of the Education Work Programme in the coming months to ensure that advice is coherent and joined-up. This most pertinently applies to the Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce, NCEA MAG, Early Learning Strategic Plan MAG and the Education Workforce Strategy Quality Teaching and Wellbeing Working Group.
30. The MAG's final report in December 2018 will form the basis of a detailed report back to Cabinet in early 2019. The timing of this report back will need to be considered alongside other parts of the work programme (including the Review of Tomorrow's Schools, the NCEA Review and Early Learning Strategic Plan) to support coherency with other changes. Annex 4 provides a visual overview of linkages across the work programme from a Curriculum, Progress and Achievement perspective.

Annexes

- Annex 1: Curriculum, Progress and Achievement Ministerial Advisory Group: Update to the Minister of Education
- Annex 2: Curriculum, Progress and Achievement 2018 Sector Engagement by the Reference Group Final Report
- Annex 3: Engagement and Implementation Timeline
- Annex 4: Draft Curriculum, Progress and Achievement Education Work Programme Linkages Map

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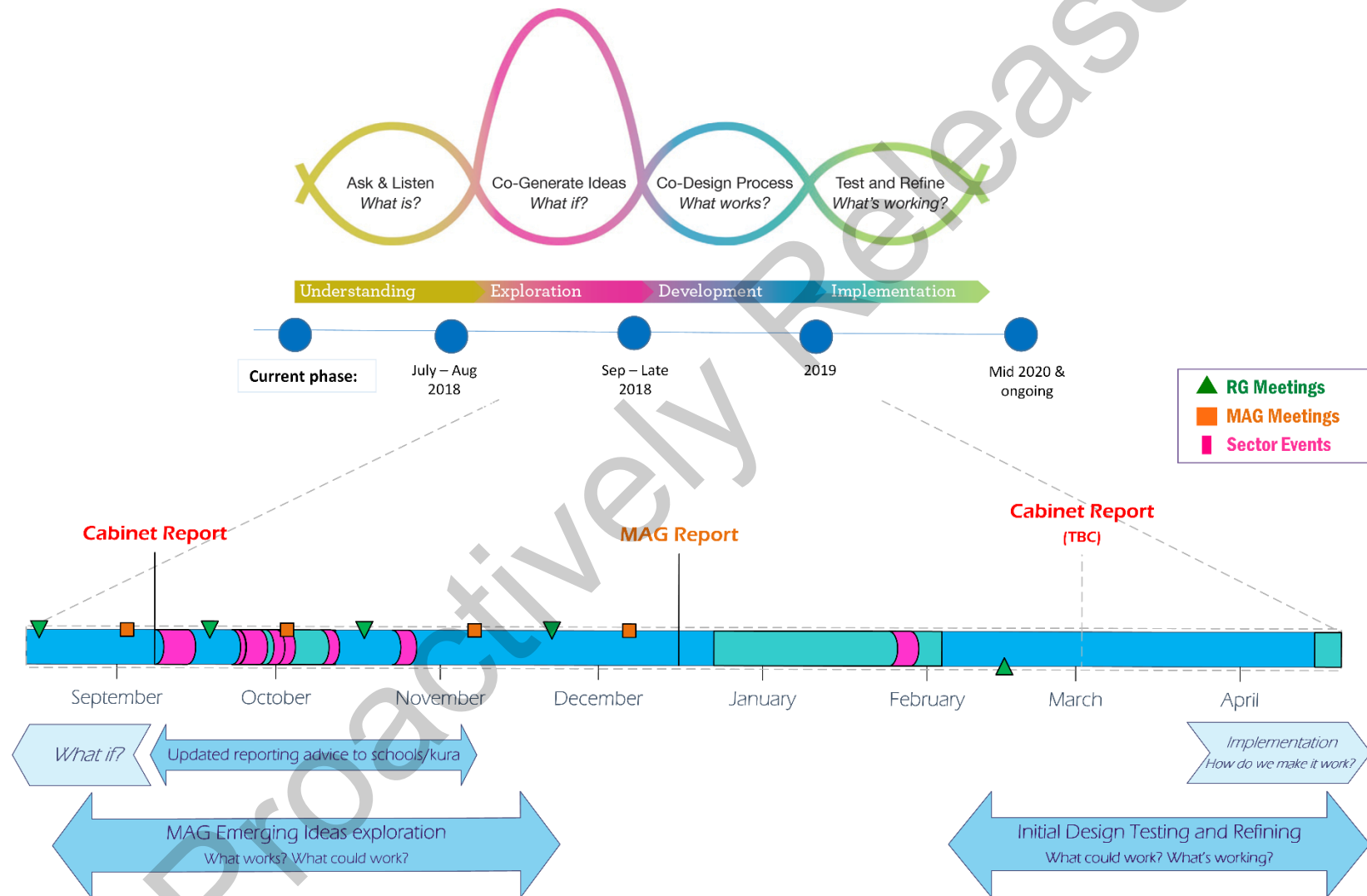
Annex 2: Curriculum, Progress and Achievement 2018 Sector Engagement by the Reference Group Final Report

1. The Reference Group has met twice to date and facilitated an initial survey as part of the Education Conversation, and to support the work of the MAG and Ministry to better understand the current state and existing practice in relation to how schools and kura design their local curriculum and learning environments. It also asked about how schools report on student progress and achievement and how this is received and understood by learners, parents and whānau.
2. The Reference Group members utilised their own networks to share the survey across the regions to ensure diverse voices and specific perspectives have been heard as part of this initial phase of the CPA work programme (e.g. from learners, parents, whānau, disability perspectives, rural voices).
3. We received positive feedback from the Reference Group over the survey's dissemination, technological flexibility, and access by diverse audiences due to translations in Māori and various Pacific languages and NZSL support videos.
4. MAG and Reference Group members were concerned to keep in perspective the size and make up of the sample (2,053 responses). NZEI raised this concern separately in an email to the Ministry during Reference Group discussions on the draft report. The NZEI concerns were noted in the Ministry's email circulating Reference Group meeting minutes to all Reference Group members. This was done to ensure transparency and to acknowledge the NZEI comments.
5. The MAG was provided a copy of the final survey report as part of a wide range of information gathered to inform its thinking and advice. The wealth of information in the survey report capturing the voices of children and parents will be most useful to the MAG.
6. Key themes obtained from the engagement survey include:
 - a. The need for engagement between schools, kura parents and whānau when developing local curriculum and learning opportunities, emphasising the importance of trust and open-mindedness being established and maintained between teachers, parents and whānau.
 - b. The need for engagement between schools, kura, parents and whānau, and how sharing of quality information on progress and achievement is required (including academic, wellbeing, behavioural and socio-cultural information).
 - c. The need for rich discussions about learning between teachers and learners, for learners to feel involved in decisions about their learning, and for learners to receive constructive feedback from their teachers that provides their next learning step.
 - d. A rich curriculum is sought overall, and the cultural needs of learners needs to be reflected in this.
 - e. Tools can play an important role as part of a broader suite of approaches and options in considering progress and achievement.

- f. Educators representing learning support needs were less likely than educators as a whole to use levels of progression against the curriculum in measuring how well each learner is progressing.

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Annex 3: Engagement and Implementation Timeline



Annex 4: Draft Curriculum, Progress and Achievement Education Work Programme Linkages Map

