**Education Report:** Drawdown of funding for digital devices for Learning Support Coordinators

| To: | Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education  
Hon Grant Robertson, Minister of Finance |
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<td>Cc:</td>
<td>Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>5 December 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Level:</td>
<td>In Confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drafter:</td>
<td>Talia Pollock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Contact:</td>
<td>Ben O'Meara</td>
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<td>Messaging seen by Communications team:</td>
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<td>Priority:</td>
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<td>METIS No:</td>
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<td>Round Robin:</td>
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**Purpose of Report**

This paper seeks your agreement to the drawdown of operating funding to cover the costs of digital devices for Learning Support Coordinators.

**Summary**

1. As you know, we are introducing the first tranche of 623 Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) in schools from the beginning of the 2020 school year. You approved the drawdown of funding from the LSC operating contingency to implement this new role in August 2019 [METIS 1194784 refers].

2. Since then, the Ministry has been receiving enquiries from schools about meeting the costs of digital devices to ensure LSCs can fulfill their roles. While we consider that the provision of digital devices is essential for LSCs to carry out their role successfully, we have identified that we did not sufficiently account for these costs in the August drawdown:

3. To ensure that employing schools are not financially disadvantaged by the need to provide digital devices for LSCs (through their operating grants), we are seeking your agreement to draw down further funding from the LSC operating contingency to increase the annual networking grant to employing boards of trustees from $500 to $1,500 per LSC role, and to expand the TELA+ Digital Devices for Educators scheme (TELA+ scheme) which provides subsidised, leased digital devices to teachers. There is sufficient funding available in the operating contingency to meet these costs.
Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends that you:

a. note that, in October 2018, Cabinet agreed to establish a tagged operating contingency of $217.284 million and a tagged capital contingency of $95.000 million to introduce the Learning Support Coordinator role with a first tranche of around 600 LSCs [CAB-18-MIN-0526 refers]

   Noted
   Minister of Finance
   Noted
   Minister of Education

b. note that, in August 2019, you approved the drawdown from the Learning Support Coordinators – Tagged Operating Contingency to implement the new Learning Support Coordinator role [METIS 1194784 refers]

   Noted
   Minister of Finance
   Noted
   Minister of Education

c. note that, while the drawdown in August 2019 was expected to be the full amount of operating funding (other than capital charge and depreciation) required to implement the first tranche of LSCs, the Ministry has subsequently received enquiries from schools about more funding being needed to meet the costs of digital devices for LSCs

   Noted
   Minister of Finance
   Noted
   Minister of Education

d. note that the Ministry considers that the provision of digital devices is essential for LSCs to carry out their role successfully, and there is sufficient funding left in the operating contingency to meet these additional costs

   Noted
   Minister of Finance
   Noted
   Minister of Education

e. approve the following changes to appropriations to increase the annual networking grant for employing boards of trustees and extend the TELA+ Digital Device for Educators Scheme, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

   Approved / Not approved
   Minister of Finance
   Approved / Not approved
   Minister of Education
f. agree that the proposed change to appropriations for 2019/20 above be included in the 2019/20 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprint Supply  

Agree / Disagree  
Minister of Finance  

Agree / Disagree  
Minister of Education

g. agree that the expenses incurred under recommendation (e) above be charged against the Learning Support Coordinator – Tagged Operating Contingency  

Agree / Disagree  
Minister of Finance  

Agree / Disagree  
Minister of Education

h. note that, after the appropriations above, the remaining balance of the Learning Support Coordinator – Tagged Operating Contingency will be as follows:  

s 9(2)(f)(iv)  

Noted  
Minister of Finance  

Noted  
Minister of Education

Proactive Release Recommendation

The Ministry of Education recommends that the Minister of Education:

i. agree that this Education Report is proactively released as part of the next publication.

Agree / Disagree  

Dr Andrea Schöllmann  
Deputy Secretary  
Education System Policy  
05/12/2019  

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister of Finance  

Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education  

17/12/17  

15/12/19
Background

1. On 29 October 2018, Cabinet agreed to provide operating and capital contingencies to fund the introduction of around 600 new Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) roles from the beginning of the 2020 school year [CAB-18-MIN-0526 refers].

2. In August 2019, you approved the drawdown of operating funding for the implementation of these roles [METIS 1194784 refers]. This left the following balance within the LSC operating contingency:

3. A portion of this remaining funding will be required for the capital charge and depreciation associated with providing school property for LSCs. The estimated funding required for these property costs is less than the balance remaining in the contingency.

Providing digital devices for LSCs

4. Since the announcement of the LSC roles, the Ministry has been receiving enquiries from schools about meeting the costs of digital devices (such as laptops and mobile phones) to ensure LSCs can fulfil their roles.

5. We consider that the provision of digital devices is essential for LSCs to carry out their role successfully, and will enable more flexible communication, engagement and administration. This is particularly important because 381 of the 623 LSCs will be working across more than one school or kura.

6. We recommend that you agree to cover the costs of digital devices for LSCs by increasing the networking grant for boards of trustees and expanding the TELA+ Digital Devices for Educators scheme. These changes would require additional funding to be drawn down from the LSC operating contingency. There is sufficient funding available in the contingency to meet these costs, as well as for capital charge and depreciation.

Increasing the networking grant

7. We initially budgeted for each employing board of trustees to receive an annual networking grant of $500 to cover the costs of meetings and networking with other LSCs. We have now identified that this is insufficient to provide funding for laptops and mobile phones for LSCs. Employing schools would therefore need to use operational funding to pay for these mobile devices.

8. We propose to increase the networking grant from $500 to $1,500 to ensure employing schools are not financially disadvantaged. This will provide sufficient funds for a laptop through the TELA+ scheme, a mobile phone and other related costs.
Expanding the TELA+ scheme

10. The TELA+ scheme provides subsidised, leased digital devices to principals and permanent teachers who are employed for 0.5 FTTE or more at State and State integrated schools. The digital devices are leased for three years and then replaced.

11. LSCs who are employed for 0.5 FTTE or more are eligible for and meet the requirements of the current TELA+ scheme policy. However, the scheme is currently fully subscribed and would require additional funding to support the LSC roles.

12. We propose to extend the contract for the TELA+ scheme to include the first tranche of LSCs. The TELA+ scheme provides a 75% subsidy for digital devices for teachers. The increase to the networking grant is expected to cover the remaining cost to boards.

13. Section 9(2)(f)(iv)