



Education Report: **Timeline for the New Zealand Curriculum refresh**

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Date:	24 April 2024	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In-Confidence	METIS No:	1327038
Drafter:	Campbell Birch	DDI:	9(2)(a) [Redacted]
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Seen by the Communications Team:	No	Round Robin:	Yes

Purpose of Report

You have asked for options for delivering the refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas for the *New Zealand Curriculum* to the sector at the start of Term 4, 2024. This paper provides you with two options for your consideration and seeks agreement to your preferred approach. It also seeks your agreement to the timeline for when curriculum requirements are proposed to come into force. To note, this Education Report has been shared with ERO and reflects feedback they have provided. ✓

Alignment with Government priorities

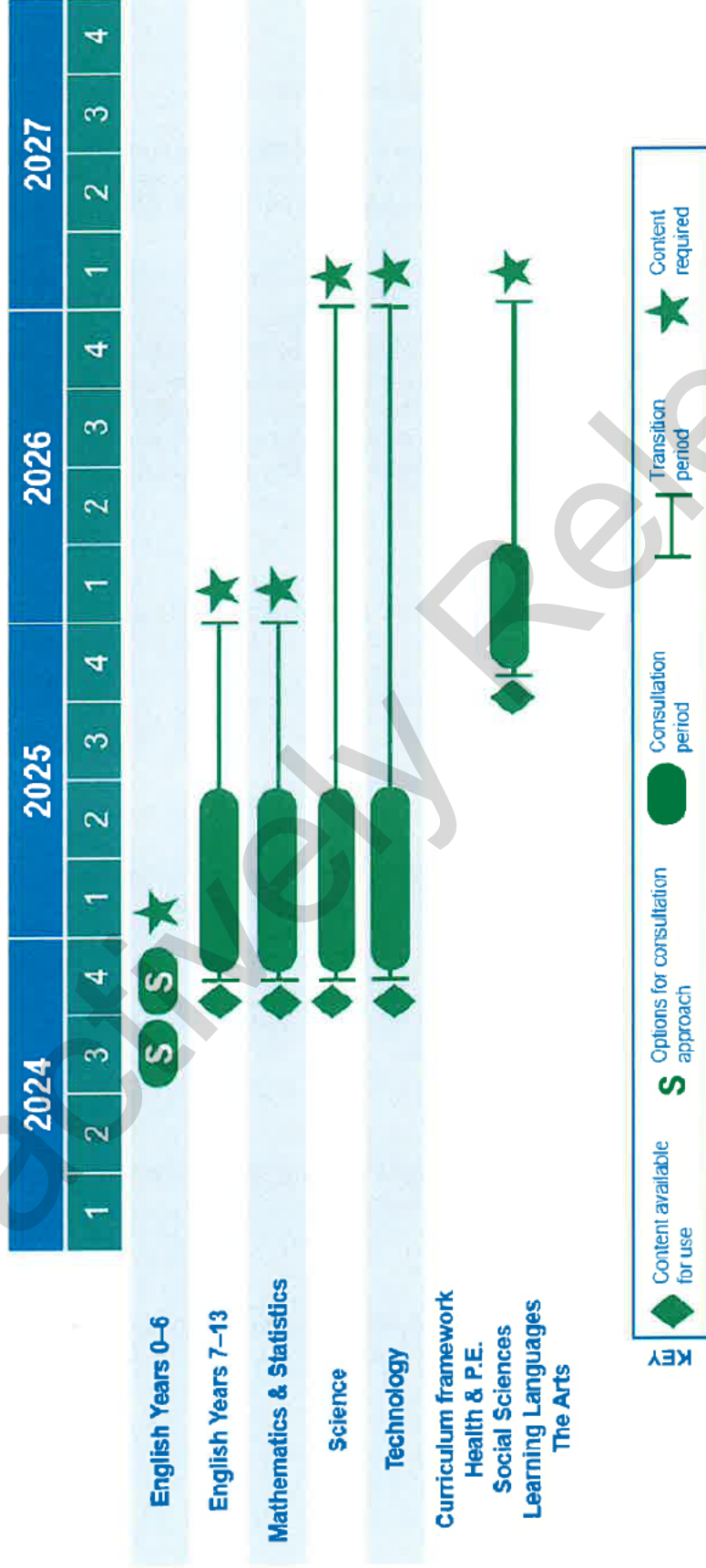
This paper supports the coalition Government's commitments through *Teaching the Basics Brilliantly* and the *Literacy Guarantee* for curriculum that provides clear definitions of what to teach, by when, and how, from Years 0 to 13. This paper directly progresses the roll out of structured approaches to teaching literacy and your priority focus, as part of the education portfolio, to establish a knowledge-rich curriculum grounded in the science of learning.

Summary

1. The previous Government planned for the refreshed English and mathematics & statistics learning areas to be required from the start of 2025 and the remaining learning areas from the start of 2027. You have indicated that you intend to maintain the overall timeline of 2027.
2. Following the work of your Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) to review the English and mathematics & statistics learning areas, there is further work to be done to strengthen these learning areas. This includes bringing structured approaches to literacy into the New Zealand Curriculum (instead of through a separate common practice model), which is in line with advice from the MAG [METIS 1326990 refers]. ✓

3. Cabinet has endorsed current planning to require structured literacy approaches in classrooms for reading and writing from Term 1, 2025 [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers]. To realise this timeframe, we recommend that the first two phases of the refreshed English learning area (covering Years 0–6) are formally issued as part of schools' curriculum requirements later this year (this contains the structured approach to literacy that schools will be required to use). We seek your agreement that the **first two phases of the refreshed English learning area (Years 0–6)** are required from the start of 2025. This phasing will provide teachers with the sequence of what needs to be taught and the teaching methods to use as part of a systematic and explicit approach to teaching reading and writing.
4. Based on your agreement to this timeline, we have developed options for testing the English learning area content for Years 0–6, and seek confirmation of your preferred approach. The options are set out in the body of the paper, with the key difference between them being when Ministry-led consultation occurs. You may wish us to test your preferred option with select peak bodies before finalising and announcing your decision.
5. The refreshed English (Years 0–13), mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas will be available for schools to use in Term 4, 2024. Broader engagement with the sector and wider public on the English (Years 7–13), mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas is planned to occur in Terms 1 and 2, 2025 in parallel to schools using the drafts. ✓
6. We also seek your agreement that the **remaining phases of the refreshed English learning area (Years 7–13)** and the **refreshed mathematics & statistics learning area** are required from the start of 2026, with 2025 serving as a transition year. These timelines for both English and mathematics & statistics support your continued focus on lifting outcomes in reading, writing and maths. ✓ agreed
7. The sector is currently expecting that the **fully refreshed NZC (including all updated learning areas and overall curriculum framework)** will be required from the beginning of 2027. We seek your agreement to this timeframe, noting that we plan for **the fully refreshed NZC to be available to schools to use from the start of Term 4, 2025, with 2026 serving as a transition year before requirements come into effect.**
8. Once we have received confirmation of your decisions, we will develop a detailed delivery plan for the NZC refresh work programme. This will include curriculum development timelines, ERO's Independent Quality Assurance and consultation processes, and lay out implementation timelines. The Ministry will develop the NZC in line with the design principles and criteria that have been agreed by you [METIS 1326990 refers].
9. The diagram below (next page) captures the proposed timelines in this paper.

Proposed NZC refresh timeline (landscape format)



Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

Proposed timeline for curriculum requirements coming into effect

- a. **note** that you have updated Cabinet on your intent to issue curriculum statements that require state schools and kura to apply structured literacy approaches in classrooms for reading and writing, or pānui and tuhituhi, from Term 1, 2025 [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers];

need to discuss kura .
• Resources
• Training
• Work with TRN + NKA

Noted

- b. **note** that you have accepted your Ministerial Advisory Group's recommendation that structured approaches to literacy (the sequence of what needs to be taught and the teaching methods to use as part of a systematic and explicit approach to teaching reading and writing) should be included as part of the refreshed English learning area, and that there is not to be a standalone common practice model [METIS 1326990 refers];

Noted

- c. **note** that to realise the timeframe for structured literacy requirements, the first phases of the refreshed English learning area (covering Years 0–6) should be formally issued as part of schools' curriculum requirements later this year (this contains the structured approach to literacy that schools will be required to use);

Noted

- d. **agree** to the following timeline:

- i. Refreshed **English learning area for Years 0–6** to be required from the start of 2025 to deliver structured approach to literacy milestone;

→ to discuss 0-3 only to align with 0-3 SL then 4-6 + 7-13 in 2026

Agree / Disagree

- ii. Refreshed **English learning area for Years 7–13** to be required from the start of 2026, with 2025 as a transition year;

Agree / Disagree

- iii. Refreshed **mathematics & statistics learning area** to be required from the start of 2026, with 2025 as a transition year;

Agree / Disagree

- iv. **Fully refreshed NZC** (including all other refreshed learning areas and the overall curriculum framework) to be required from the start of 2027, with 2026 as a transition year;

Agree / Disagree

→ unsure of Y4-6 material as yet.

Releasing and testing refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science and technology learning areas

- e. **note** that the refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas for the NZC are planned to be released to the sector at the start of Term 4, 2024;

Noted

- f. **note** that broad Ministry-led consultation with the sector and wider public on the refreshed English learning area (for Years 7–13), as well as the refreshed mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas, is planned for Terms 1 and 2, 2025;

Noted

Approach to testing refreshed English learning area content for Years 0–6

- g. **agree** that the Ministry test the two consultation options below with select peak bodies before you finalise and announce your decisions;

Agree / Disagree

- h. **agree in principle**, subject to peak body feedback, one of the following options for delivering the refreshed English learning area content for Years 0–6:

- i. Option 1: Consultation at the start of Term 4, 2024

Focussed four-to-six-week window of Ministry-led engagement with schools and key stakeholders on English learning area content for Years 0–6 at the start of Term 4, 2024;

Agree / Disagree

OR

- ii. Option 2: Consultation in Term 3, 2024 (**Recommended option**):

Focussed four-to-six-week window of Ministry-led engagement with schools and key stakeholders on English learning area content for Years 0–6 in August–September 2024;

Agree / Disagree

- i. **note** that, for both options, ERO will run an Independent Quality Assurance process which involves focussed testing of curriculum materials with 25 schools before materials are released;

Noted

The Arts, learning languages, health & physical education, and social sciences

- j. **note** that, following a planned period of engagement with the sector and wider public in 2025, all other final refreshed learning areas (and the overall curriculum framework) will be ready for schools and kura to use from the beginning of Term 4, 2025;

Noted

Next steps

- k. **note** that the Ministry will develop the *New Zealand Curriculum* in line with the design principles and criteria agreed by you [METIS 1326990 refers], which are informed by advice from your curriculum Ministerial Advisory Group;

Need to further discuss the "Do" sections and how they might tie in to a competencies framework.

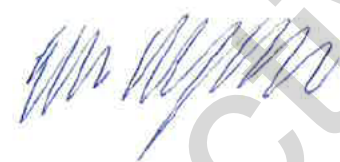
Noted

- l. **note** that, in line with your decisions above, we will develop a detailed delivery plan for the NZC refresh work programme; and

Noted

- m. **agree** that this paper is not released at this time, as it contains free and frank advice, and that its release is considered as part of future communications activities following any associated Cabinet decisions.

Agree / Disagree



Ellen MacGregor-Reid
Hautū | Deputy Secretary
Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre

24/04/2024



Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Education

28, 4, 24

Background

1. It is a priority for the Government to ensure that New Zealand has a knowledge-rich curriculum that provides clear year-by-year guidance from Year 0 to Year 13 and is delivered through teaching approaches that are backed by the science of learning and the support of regular assessment. To achieve this, the Ministry will work on developing *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) in line with the design principles and criteria provided you have agreed [METIS 1326990 refers].

Updated timeline for mandating components of the refreshed NZC

2. The previous Government planned for the refreshed English and mathematics & statistics learning areas to be required from the start of 2025 and the remaining learning areas from the start of 2027.
3. Following the work of your Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) to review the English and mathematics & statistics learning areas, there is further work to be done to strengthen these learning areas. This includes bringing structured approaches to literacy into the New Zealand Curriculum (instead of through a separate common practice model), which is in line with advice from the MAG [METIS 1326990 refers]
4. Cabinet has endorsed current planning to require structured literacy approaches in classrooms for reading and writing (or pānui and tuhituhi) from Term 1, 2025 [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers]. In line with advice from the MAG, content in the English learning area for Years 0–6 will provide the structured approach to literacy that schools and kura will be required to use, as part of the regulated national curriculum. This includes the sequence of what needs to be taught and the teaching methods to use as part of a systematic and explicit approach to teaching reading and writing [METIS 1324218 refers].
5. To support timelines for the roll out of structured literacy, we seek your agreement that the first phases of the **refreshed English learning area** (covering Years 0–6) are required for use from the start of 2025 under section 90 of the Education and Training Act 2020,¹ with the remaining content (Years 7–13) required from 2026. Literacy learning is the focus of the first two phases of learning within the English learning area [METIS 1326990 refers]. *agreed.*
6. We also seek your agreement that the **refreshed mathematics & statistics learning area** is to be required from 2026, with 2025 serving as a transition year. The timelines for both English and mathematics & statistics support your continued focus on lifting outcomes in reading, writing and maths. ✓
7. You have indicated that you intend to maintain the overall timeline of 2027 for the remaining learning areas. We seek your confirmation that the fully refreshed NZC (including all updated learning areas and the overall curriculum framework) is to be required from the start of 2027, which is the timeframe currently expected by the sector. The fully refreshed NZC is planned to be available for schools to use from Term 4, 2025, meaning that schools will be able to use it for a full transition year (2026) ahead of requirements coming into force from the start of 2027. *great*

¹ Under section 90 of the Education and Training Act 2020, the Minister of Education has the ability to issue Foundation Curriculum Policy Statements and National Curriculum Statements. These are formally issued in the New Zealand Gazette.

8. The timelines proposed align with the Government's recent announcement to rephase the NCEA Change Programme, supporting sector readiness and meaning that changes to the national curriculum are made in advance of the roll out of NCEA Level 2 and Level 3 (now planned for 2028 and 2029 respectively).

Options for releasing refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas

9. ✓ Based on your agreement to the timelines above, we have developed options for delivering the refreshed English (Years 0–13), mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas for the NZC to the sector at the start of Term 4, 2024.
10. Two options for achieving this timeline and supporting your implementation places for structured literacy are provided below, and we seek confirmation of your preferred approach. The key difference between them is when Ministry-led consultation on English learning area content for Years 0–6 occurs, given the need for this to be required from 2025.
11. You may wish for the Ministry to test your preferred option with select peak bodies before finalising and announcing your decision.
12. For both options, ERO will run an Independent Quality Assurance process which involves focussed testing of the refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas with 25 schools before materials are released; → experts
- a. **Option 1: Consultation at the start of Term 4, 2024**
- Entails ERO in-school testing, but no wider Ministry-led consultation before the release of these curriculum materials in Term 4, 2024.
 - Focussed four-to-six-week window of Ministry-led engagement with schools and key stakeholders (e.g. boards, teachers and leaders; Māori representative bodies; education peak bodies; disability groups) on English learning area content for Years 0–6 **at the start of Term 4** — *Note the full learning area for Years 0–13 will be available, but feedback is sought only on the Years 0–6 content at this time given its role in underpinning structured approaches to literacy*.
 - Formally issuing Years 0–6 English content in December 2024, to meet the planned requirement for structured literacy approaches in classrooms for reading and writing from Term 1, 2025 [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers].
 - Broad Ministry-led engagement with the sector and wider public on the refreshed English (Years 7–13), mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas occurring in Terms 1 and 2, 2025 in parallel to schools using the drafts.
 - Updated final versions available at the start of Term 4, 2025.
- b. **Option 2: Consultation in Term 3, 2024 (Recommended option)**
- As above, except focussed four-to-six-week window of Ministry-led engagement with schools and key stakeholders on English learning area content for Years 0–6 will occur **in August–September** — *Note the full English learning area (including Years 7–13) will not be available at this time, and will be released at the start of Term 4, 2024.*

- Formally issuing Years 0–6 English content in October 2024.

13. While both options have shortened consultation windows, Option 2 is our recommended approach as it provides for earlier finalisation and formal issuing of curriculum content that is to be required from Term 1, 2025. Schools typically begin planning their teaching and learning programmes in Term 4, 2025, and finalising and formally issuing curriculum content in December 2024 would impact on schools' preparedness to implement structured approaches to teaching reading and writing. ✓
14. While there are no legislated consultation requirements for foundation curriculum policy statements, consultation is expected for significant changes. As secondary legislation, any instrument made under section 90 may be disallowed by the House of Representatives, so we advise following Government Expectations for Good Regulatory Practice as set by Treasury. This enables any issues to be identified by those affected, leading to final requirements that are clear and able to be implemented with integrity.
15. You have flexibility to determine the approach to consultation, noting that under the Education and Training Act 2020 there is a strong directive to give effect to the Treaty principles in the exercise of statutory powers, including issuing curriculum statements. Given the principle of partnership there is an expectation that we should engage with Māori representatives before any decisions are made that affect Māori interests. We recommend that at a minimum the consultation process includes targeted engagement with a range of representatives of those affected by the curriculum statements. We have established relationships with a range of organisations and groups that could be used, and we would add others that you may wish to us test the draft content with. ✓ new
↳ my maori MAg-to

Remaining learning areas and overall curriculum framework

16. We have planned for the arts, learning languages, health & physical education and revised social sciences to be written in line with the design principles and criteria, consulted, updated and final versions ready for release for use in the sector at the start of Term 4, 2025. The updated overall curriculum framework will also be available at this time. ✓
17. This will bring the writing of the updated NZC to its conclusion and complete the transition into business-as-usual activity. — ✓

Professional learning and development (PLD) and support for the refreshed curriculum

18. We will support teachers immediately with the delivery of PLD for structured approaches to teaching literacy, and Cabinet has endorsed your plan for implementing the Literacy Guarantee [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers]. Future PLD and supports will be phased in over time as the NZC refresh work programme is implemented [METIS 1326677 refers]. These will be designed to deepen curriculum knowledge and understanding to support leaders and teachers to implement the refreshed curriculum. The PLD will be designed and planned as the learning areas are developed so that it is ready to meet the rollout timeframes. The nature and scale of PLD will be informed by analysis of sector needs taking into consideration available funding and progress on initial focus areas. ✓
19. Resources that support the curriculum will also be made available to support implementation of the refreshed English, mathematics & statistics, science, and ✓

technology learning areas when these are released. A similar approach will be taken as each of the other learning areas is developed and implemented.

Next Steps

20. Once we have received confirmation of your decisions, we will develop a plan for the NZC refresh work programme. This will include curriculum development timelines, ERO's Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) and consultation processes, and lay out implementation timelines.
21. The Ministry will develop the NZC in line with the design principles and criteria you have agreed [METIS 1326990 refers]. We have begun work to update the English, mathematics & statistics, science, and technology learning areas. Initial work will involve developing the specific principles and criteria in relation to each of these four learning areas. The updated learning areas of the NZC will be positioned within an updated curriculum framework, and an IQA process will be carried out by ERO throughout the development process.
22. We recommend that you update Cabinet before announcements are made, given the significant role that the curriculum plays in your education portfolio priorities and the timeline that Cabinet recently endorsed for implementing structured approaches to literacy [SOU-24-MIN-0023 refers]. You may also like to communicate to Cabinet that your intention is for the timelines to be broadly consistent for updating *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. If you wish to update Cabinet, we can provide you with talking points to support an oral item, or a draft Cabinet paper.

Noting paper

We need
to discuss
Te Marautanga