

Information Update: **Risks and issues with retaining Kāhui Ako and Resource Teachers of Literacy**

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
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Request

The Minister's office has asked for information on the risks and issues associated with retaining Kāhui Ako and Resource Teachers of Literacy roles. This request follows advice provided in METIS 1340891: Feasibility of new Budget 2025 initiatives.

Kāhui Ako

Kāhui Ako are groups of education institutions formed to collaborate to share best practice, with a focus on specific, locally-developed, achievement challenges. We have previously briefed you on Kāhui Ako, evidence for the model, and options for their future [METIS 1334336; 1337369 refer]. You have previously indicated you intend to disestablish Kāhui Ako and reinvest funding into learning support initiatives.

Your office has asked for information on risks and issues associated with retaining Kāhui Ako. These include:

- ***We have not provided strong central direction in recent years*** – We have not significantly increased our investment in Kāhui Ako, or re-set or amended central direction, guidance, or expectations for Kāhui Ako since the moratorium on forming new Kāhui Ako was put in place in 2019. This means that Kāhui Ako may not be as effectively implementing their achievement challenges as they potentially could. Retaining them may therefore not be the most efficient use of resourcing.
 - Kāhui Ako are designed to be locally led in both their functions and their achievement challenges. Although we know that many clusters are heavily focused on literacy, numeracy, and attendance, this local-led design limits your ability and the Ministry's ability to influence sector practice.
 - If, instead of disestablishing Kāhui Ako as previously indicated, you prefer to retain the model, we would recommend an unambiguous and ongoing commitment to Kāhui Ako which will support the Ministry and schools to put more effort and energy into bolstering their performance. The sector is not clear about the future of the model, which may impact its effectiveness.
 - Some opportunities do exist to strengthen Kāhui Ako [METIS 1334336 refers].
- ***We invest a substantial amount in the model but do not have clear evidence of its impact on student outcomes***
 - Reviews of Kāhui Ako to date have largely focused on the implementation of the model rather than on formal evaluation of its impact on student outcomes.

- The Ministry does not currently gather or analyse data that specifically compares the achievement and outcomes of students who attend a school in a Kāhui Ako to those who are not in a cluster.
 - This means a direct impact of Kāhui Ako on student achievement and outcomes is difficult to identify, noting that not all schools and kura (particularly primary schools) use assessment tools that would enable us to easily compare achievement outcomes.
 - Local achievement challenges also mean that Kāhui Ako are not all focused on the same outcomes or cohorts, which also makes meaningful comparative data challenging.
- Greater use of data and evidence in education is one of your priority areas, and we previously provided advice that we could explore opportunities to re-set expectations for reporting and accountability for schools in Kāhui Ako to report on their data [METIS 1334336 refers].
- ***You have a substantial education work programme underway*** – You have set six education priorities, each of which has a substantial work programme. As with all current educational initiatives and services, retaining Kāhui Ako means that you cannot reallocate its funding towards your other priorities.

Resource Teachers of Literacy

The RTLit Service works with (largely) English medium schools (Years 0-8) across the country. The service operates across clusters and provides a mix of direct support to students and coaching to teachers. RTLit work out of host schools, and cluster management committees determine the allocation and management of RTLit priorities and caseload.

Your office has asked for an overview of the risks and issues associated with retaining the RTLit Service:

Risk – Quality of service

There are a range of issues about the quality of the RTLit Service that would need to be resolved if it is to continue including:

- inconsistent **practices**, both professional and management, across the devolved service.
- significant **time** spent traveling to schools.
- current **data** measures do not indicate sufficient impact.

Opportunity – 121 FTE existing professional expertise

- 90% of the current RTLit workforce have recently upskilled in structured literacy approaches, many of whom trained in BSLA.
- This resource could be adapted and strengthened to consolidate and embed structured literacy capability as part of the suite of frontline services providing targeted and tailored support.