



## Report: Budget 25 Next Steps Following Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Date:	28/03/2025	Deadline:	1/04/2025
Security Level:	Budget Sensitive	Priority:	High
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### Why are we sending this to you?

1. This paper provides you with an update on the funding level for each component of your Māori Education package following your recent decisions [METIS 1343526 refers].
2. You are also receiving this report following the completion of sector consultation, on Friday 21 March 2025, for the proposal to disestablish Resource Teachers: Literacy (RT Lit) and Resource Teachers: Māori (RT Māori) and reinvest this into other frontline and learning supports through Budget 25.
3. This report provides you with options for next steps informed by consultation findings, impacts of these options on your Budget 25 package, and the communications and implementation approach.
4. Please note this paper should be read alongside the companion paper which informs it, *Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation Feedback*, provided to you in parallel [METIS 1345292 refers]. The companion paper contains summary analysis of the sector's feedback and an Indicative Results Report, which informs the options and advice set out in this paper.

### What action do we need, by when?

5. We will discuss this report and the companion paper at Education Agencies meeting on Monday 31 March.

6. We are seeking your decision on whether to proceed with the proposed disestablishment of RT Lit and RT Māori roles through Budget 25. Your decisions are needed by **Tuesday 1 April** to facilitate the submission of Financial Recommendations to Treasury, which are required by **Friday 4 April at the very latest**.
7. If you proceed with option 2A, 2B, 2C or 3, you will need to write to the Minister of Finance by **Wednesday 2 April** to set out any proposed changes to your Budget package. A draft letter is attached as **Annex 1**. We will update the letter to reflect your decision.

### Key facts

8. This paper provides you with five options for next steps.
9. Options 2A, 2b, 2C and 3 have implications for your Budget package. If you decide not to proceed with the disestablishment of RT Lit and/or RT Māori, you will have to make trade-offs within your Vote Education package and Māori Education package to accommodate.

## Alignment with Government priorities

10. This report supports the Government's Budget priorities to:
  - Build a stronger, more productive economy that lifts real incomes and increases opportunities for New Zealanders.
  - Deliver more efficient, effective and responsive public services to all who need and use them – in particular, to educational achievement.
  - Get the Government's books back in order and restore discipline to public spending.
11. This also supports delivery of the Government's targets to lift student achievement and attendance, and the priorities identified in your Māori Education Action Plan.

## Background

12. In February 2025, Cabinet agreed for you to notify and consult with sector stakeholders regarding your proposal to disestablish RT Lit and RT Māori roles as part of Budget 25 [CAB-25-MIN-0026 refers]. You advised that following this consultation, you would decide whether to disestablish the funding.
13. The Ministry has provided you with a summary analysis of feedback received from sector consultation in the companion paper, Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation Feedback [METIS 1345292 Annex 2 refers]. This analysis of consultation feedback has informed the options set out below.
14. While submitters recognised the limitations of the services, including that they can be poorly distributed, difficult to access and inconsistent, overall, submitters were not supportive of the proposal to disestablish Rt Lit and RT Māori.
15. If the changes go ahead as proposed, funding for RT Lit and RT Māori will cease to be provided from the start of Term 1, 2026. This would realise \$55.114 million savings over the forecast period to be reinvested into frontline and learning support services.

## Options for proceeding, including impact on Budget packages

16. Within your Budget 25 package, reprioritisation of RT Lit and RT Māori funding has the following associated figures, set out in Table 1. RT Māori is one of three components in the Māori Education Savings initiative, the figures for which are also included in Table 1.

Table 1: Proposed savings for Rt Lit and RT Māori

Initiative	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 & outyears	5 Year total
RT Lit Reprioritisation	-	(0.941)	(10.229)	(13.965)	(13.965)	(39.170)
Savings to fund New Māori Education Package	-	(4.936)	(9.040)	(11.080)	(11.080)	(36.136)
RT Māori – Reprioritisation	-	(0.338)	(3.842)	(5.882)	(5.882)	(15.944)

17. Please note, as these changes affect teacher employment, surplus staffing costs will likely be incurred for the 2026 school year for affected staff. This means the full savings from these initiatives would be realised from the 2027 school year.
18. Your intention thus far with RT Lit has been to reprioritise the funding toward delivering targeted multi-tiered, in-school learning support for students. Your decision on whether to proceed with disestablishing RT Lit will impact the total funding envelope available for your Budget package, and you might need to make trade-offs. While this should theoretically be netted off your Learning Support Package, we do not recommend this, as it would undermine



the coherency of that Package of investment. Instead, we have provided options for trading off against other parts of your Budget package later in this paper.

19. Your Māori Education Re-Investment Package has been designed to equally balance out the funding available for reprioritisation through your *Savings to fund new Māori Education Package* initiative. As such, the intention thus far with the savings realised from RT Māori has been to reinvest it into your Māori Education Package.
20. Your decision on whether to proceed with the disestablishment of RT Māori funding will directly impact the funding available for your Māori Education Package.

#### **Your Māori Education Re-Investment Package**

21. Following your recent decisions on the contents of the Māori Education Package [METIS 1343526 refers], we have made the following changes, which are reflected in table 2.
  - Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area has been included at \$2.1m,
  - Curriculum resources has shifted from Full Value 9(2)(f)(iv) to the refined Minimum Viable Option (MVO) (\$4.492m – previously \$4.800m) to accommodate this, and
  - The balance between these changes (\$0.384m) has been added to the Te Reo Māori PLD initiative.

Table 2: Updated Māori Education Package

Initiative	Full Value	MVO	Recommended level	
Te reo Māori PLD	9(2)(f)	14.328	MVO+	14.712
VLN - Specialist Workforce	10.000	6.400	Full	10.000
Curriculum Resources	9(2)(f)	4.800	MVO refined	4.492
Curriculum Advisors	(iv)	4.832	MVO	4.832
Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area	2.100	-	Full	2.100
<b>Total</b>				<b>36.136</b>

22. Further advice on the Te Reo Māori PLD initiative will be provided after Budget 25 decisions are finalised. As the initiative is still in the design phase, the funding requirements are not set, so in theory, there is scope for scaling. However, you have indicated that this initiative is a priority investment. We do not recommend scaling this initiative, as it will significantly limit the scope of what the product is able to deliver.
23. Although an MVO of \$6.400m for the VLN – Specialist Workforce has previously been provided, through further consideration, we think this will limit the scope of the support this service will be able to provide to learners. The VLN initiative will provide ongoing support for expertise within wharekura. Previously, this support has been provided through the Wharekura Expert Teachers programme which is being disestablished through Budget 25. Removal/scaling the VLN initiative will leave a gap in support. The VLN initiative proposal was also well received by the Māori Education Advisory Group. For these reasons, we recommend funding this at the full value.
24. The scaled Curriculum Resources initiative will purchase five commercial literacy texts and five commercial STEM texts 9(2)(f)(iv) per year, for each of the 181 Wharekura. It will also fund the development of associated teaching support materials.
25. While the scaled initiative goes some way in addressing the gap in resources for these subject areas, there is a risk that until this is fully addressed, there will be insufficient support to implement the new curriculum. This might increase workload for kaiako needing to source and develop their own teaching materials in te reo Māori, that are aligned with the new curriculum.
26. The MVO for Curriculum Advisors funds an additional seven roles ringfenced for Kaupapa Māori and Māori Medium education. We have not considered scaling the Curriculum

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Advisors component below the proposed seven roles, as this is an important (announceable) partial mitigation for the risks associated with disestablishing RT Māori roles.

27. There are also currently 12 vacant Curriculum Advisor positions, which we are in the process of ringfencing for Kaupapa Māori and Māori Medium education [METIS 1343526 refers]. However, there are no financial implications associated with ringfencing the vacant roles, so this will not be announceable on Budget Day.
28. You have indicated that the development of Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area is a key part of your broader curriculum work programme. Proceeding with this requires a trade-off within your Māori Education Package. Our recommendation to accommodate this is to scale the Curriculum Resources initiative to the MVO, as the other components are already at a level that we consider to be the minimum for effectively operationalising the initiatives. Scaling Curriculum Resources will sufficiently balance the package.

### RT Lit and RT Māori Budget options for your consideration

29. Following sector consultation and analysis of feedback, we propose three options (with further sub options) for you to consider. These are discussed in further detail in the following sections.
- **Option 1** – Proceed with reprioritising RT Lit and RT Māori funding through B25,
  - **Option 2A** – Do not proceed with reprioritising RT Lit and RT Māori funding,
  - **Option 2B** – Retain funding for RT Lit, reprioritise RT Māori funding,
  - **Option 2C** – Retain funding for RT Māori, reprioritise RT Lit funding,
  - **Option 3** – Review and restructure RT Lit and RT Māori services
30. Options 2A, 2b, 2C and 3 have implications for your Budget package. If you decide not to proceed with the disestablishment of RT Lit and/or RT Māori, you will have to make trade-offs within your Vote Education package and Māori Education package to accommodate.
31. You would also need to write to the Minister of Finance immediately to set out any proposed changes to your Budget package. This would need to be sent by Wednesday 2 April 2025. A draft letter is attached as **Annex 1**. We will update the letter to reflect your decision, however, if you proceed with **option 1**, the letter is not needed.

### Option 1: Proceed with reprioritising RT Lit and RT Māori funding through B25

32. Should you agree with the option to disestablish RT Lit and RT Māori, your Vote Education package will proceed as submitted to Treasury and the Minister of Finance on Friday 14 March [METIS 1344527 refers], and, pending your agreement, your Māori Education package will proceed as set out above.
33. While submissions were supportive of retaining RT Lit and RT Māori services, some respondents were generally supportive of reinvestment decisions that prioritise student outcomes and build systemic capability. Many proposed that, if reinvested, funding should enhance support for Māori learners and increase classroom-based supports such as teacher aides and structured literacy tools. Some supported investment in teacher PLD.
34. Disestablishing the RT Lit and RT Māori services will reduce the likelihood of retaining these teachers in the schooling network, as redeployment opportunities will be limited to vacant teaching roles in host schools or elsewhere in the schooling network. Where teachers cannot find a suitable alternate role to be redeployed to, or do not seek to retrain, they will access a severance payment and leave teaching. We anticipate that some resource teachers will return to classroom teaching while other recent investments in the system (e.g., structured literacy approach staffing) may provide alternate employment opportunities.
35. As noted in the companion paper, Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation Feedback [METIS 1345292 refers], submitters were concerned that disestablishment of funding for these roles would create a risk that supports provided may

not be replicated elsewhere in the system, however there are existing education system mitigations, and more will be added through Budget 25 investments. The proposal continues the strategic shift currently underway, moving from an itinerant specialist workforce and 'refer-out' model, to building and embedding effective in-school tier 2/3 expertise and practice over time to accelerate progress in literacy. Examples of this include new structured literacy approach (SLA) staffing resource and targeted and tailored SLA PLD, and the Ministry will be monitoring the impact of this approach.

### **Existing education system mitigations**

36. The RT Lit savings are balanced against the significant investment in literacy recently, with \$67 million allocated through Budget 2024 for structured literacy approaches and Rangaranga Reo ā-Tā PLD and supports, as well as interventions to accelerate students' literacy and te reo matatini learning. This includes the expansion of structured literacy approach staffing resource allocated to approximately 965 schools in 2025 [METIS 1342122 refers].
37. Te Mahau also provide some support for schools, kura, Māori learners, their whānau, hapū and iwi. This includes:
  - Kaitakawaenga (liaison/facilitators), who work proactively with Māori learners, their whānau, hapū and iwi, education agencies and Learning Support colleagues to identify and eliminate barriers to access to learning support services for Māori students with learning support needs,
  - Lead Advisors Whānau Engagement, who support ākonga Māori together with their whānau in relation to attendance and achievement, develop working relationships with other government agencies who directly support tamariki, and work with schools, kura, and whānau to ensure ākonga are attending and engaged in education, and
  - Strategic Advisors Māori (SAMs), who work to ensure an integrated focus on Māori achievement is delivered, understood and strategies are in place locally. They work with leaders and staff to accelerate Māori achievement. SAMs will also be responsible for implementation of relevant Māori Education Action Plan actions in their takiwā | regions.
38. These roles are not designed to provide mentoring support for beginning teachers in te reo Māori language pathways, te reo Māori language learning, PLD or tikanga support for kaiako, as some submitters cited was provided for by their local RT Māori provided for them. The Ministry however currently funds Kia Atamai Trust and Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori to deliver tikanga-based professional learning development and mentoring support to up to 250 beginning teachers. The Ministry also funds the Iwi Māori Workforce Support programme (IMWSP), which is a co-designed initiative delivered by iwi to support in and through teaching. The planned te reo Māori PLD will also provide additional support for teachers.

### **Mitigations for submitter concerns through Budget 25 investments**

39. Alongside earlier Budget 24 investments in literacy, additional investment in Budget 25 will progress your aspirations to lift literacy achievement and close the equity gap, and may help to mitigate concerns some respondents had about potential impacts of reprioritisation on teachers and students.
  - *Expanding structured literacy approach (SLA) staffing* – In Budget 25 you intend to provide ongoing funding for the expansion to SLA staffing that was made for 2025. Although some submitters noted that RT Lit (which work with students in Years 0-8) play a different role from SLA staffing (which currently work with Years 0-2), the Ministry has communicated that both are accelerative literacy interventions supporting SLA. Based on a Ministry survey in April 2024, approximately 90% of RT Lit self-identified as having undertaken structured literacy approach training. We anticipate this figure to now be closer to 100% given the focus on upskilling the workforce, inclusive of resource teacher roles, through SLA PLD. This means they will meet eligibility criteria for the new and expanded SLA staffing resource which, alongside other opportunities, may provide



alternate employment for some RT Lit staff and mean specialist literacy capability is retained in the system.

- **Learning Support Budget** – Your approach to Budget 25 is to provide significantly increased funding for a wide range of services and supports for learners with additional learning needs. This includes:
  - **Learning Support – Early Intervention Services Strengthened and Extended to Year 1** – You intend to strengthen supports for learners in their early years, including extending the Early Intervention Service to Year 1 school students. Strong supports in the early years are shown to improve education outcomes and will mitigate the impacts over time.
  - 9(2)(f)(iv)
  - **Learning Support – New Approach to Learning Support Coordinators for Schools with Year 1-8 Students** – You intend to roll out 650 new Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs), to all schools with Year 1-8 students that do not have an LSC.
  - **Learning Support – Behaviour and Communications Service Cost Pressure** – You intend to fund additional frontline staff to meet the forecast increased demand for the Communications and Behaviour Services.
- **PLD for Re-investment in Literacy, Maths and Assessment** – In Budget 25 you intend to reinvest savings in teacher PLD back into priority curriculum PLD in line with Government priorities, recognising the significant demand for PLD in foundational areas such as literacy, maths, and assessment. Some submitters noted that RT Lit were providing a PLD function within schools and clusters (i.e., advice and support for classroom teachers). Some RT Lit may join the provider workforce; given their skills and experience, they are well placed to do so and there is high demand.

40. Previous investment in curriculum supports and resources including structured literacy, Rangaranga Reo-ā-Tā, and the refresh of the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa will provide some support to the sector. The component in your Māori Education package for seven additional Curriculum Advisors for Māori medium (Rumaki, Bilingual Units) and Kaupapa Māori education pathways, and also the ringfencing of 12 currently vacant roles, will also go some way to mitigating concerns regarding the level of ongoing curriculum support provided.

41. You recently received advice on next steps for the development of Te Reo Māori Education for Teachers, to support the te reo Māori PLD bid in your Māori Education package [METIS 1339094 refers]. Pending your direction, we propose to explore targeted support for kaiako in Māori medium education settings to grow their Māori language proficiency and second language acquisition pedagogy and practice<sup>1</sup>. You may wish to consider directing officials to include features in the service design of targeted support for Māori medium that would address gaps identified by submitters that the Ministry does not currently offer.

#### **Option 2A: Do not proceed with reprioritising RT Lit and RT Māori funding**

42. Most respondents expressed strong support for retaining RT Lit and RT Māori services. Submitters emphasised the importance of the RT Māori service in supporting Māori learners, particularly through culturally relevant pedagogy and language integration. Support for

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<sup>1</sup> Note, the allocation across English medium and Māori medium education has yet to be determined, therefore the resourcing to support any proposed amendments to targeted support Māori medium would need to factor this in.

retaining the RT Lit service identified it as a key component of literacy provision for students requiring specialist intervention, particularly those requiring tailored/tier 3 support.

43. Others advocated for further investment, rather than reprioritising funding from RT Lit and RT Māori. Comments noted that further investment in the services may resolve existing issues, for instance around lack of accessibility and uneven distribution.

**Retaining Funding for RT Lit**

44. If you choose not to disestablish RT Lit, your Budget envelope will have a \$39.170m shortfall. You would need to scale/remove initiatives from your package to fit within the reduced allowance. 9(2)(f)(iv)

45. Options to address the shortfall include:

- Removing the *Structured Literacy Approach – Expanded Staffing* initiative 9(2)(f)(iv) from your package,
- Removing or scaling the *Science and Pūtaiao Kits for Years 0-8* initiative (\$39.894m).

9(2)(f)(iv)

46. You have been clear that reprioritised funding from RT Lit should be reinvested into structured literacy supports and your Learning Support package. Retaining the RT Lit service reduces the need for additional literacy staffing, however this will mean that SLA staffing reverts to pre-2025 levels (i.e., 271 FTTE rather than 317 FTTE). This will be experienced by the sector as a reduction, as the one-year expansion of SLA staffing for 2025 reached an additional 200 schools.

47. 9(2)(f)(iv)

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50. We do not recommend addressing the shortfall by reducing your Learning Support package, as this is one of your major priorities for Budget 25.



### Retaining Funding for RT Māori

51. If you choose not to disestablish RT Māori, your Māori Education package will be reduced by \$15.944m, to a total of \$20.192m over the forecast period.
52. Table 4 sets out how you could fit your Māori Education Package within the reduced allowance.

Table 4: Option to reduce Māori Education Package

Initiative	Full Value	MVO	Recommended level	
Te reo Māori PLD	9(2)(f)(iv)	14.328	MVO-	11.692
VLN - Specialist Workforce	10	6.4	MVO	6.4
Curriculum Resources	9(2)(f)(iv)	4.8	don't fund	0
Curriculum Advisors		4.832	don't fund	0
Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area	2.1	-	Full	2.1
<b>Total</b>				<b>20.192</b>

This option:

- Reduces the total funding for Te Reo Māori PLD component by \$3.020m (to balance the package),
  - Scales the VLN – Specialist Workforce component to the MVO (\$6.400m),
  - Removes the Curriculum Resources component,
  - Removes the Curriculum Advisors component, and
  - Funds Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area.
53. You have indicated that funding the Reo Māori PLD component is a priority within this package. This scaling will limit the scope of what the product is able to deliver but is necessary if you want to fund the Curriculum Area. You will receive further advice on the design of this initiative after Budget 25 decisions are finalised.
  54. The VLN – Specialist Workforce component must be included in some capacity to balance the loss of the Wharekura Expert Teachers programme, which is being disestablished through Budget 25. Not funding this initiative will leave a gap in support for wharekura and schools' delivery of the curriculum.
  55. Removing the Curriculum Resources component means there will continue to be insufficient support for wharekura to implement the new curriculum in literacy and STEM. While this initiative would address a gap in resourcing, Te Reo Māori PLD and the VLN Specialist Workforce initiatives are filling gaps that have been/are being created by reprioritising funding from existing services. We therefore consider this to be a lower priority within the reduced package allowance.
  56. The need for the additional seven Curriculum Advisors (ringfenced for Kaupapa Māori and Māori medium education) is reduced by the retention of RT Māori, as these roles were originally proposed to partially offset the loss of RT Māori. We don't recommend funding this in the reduced package.
  57. As set out in paragraph 27, there are currently 12 vacant Curriculum Advisor roles which will be ringfenced for Māori medium and Kaupapa Māori. Though this will not be announce-able on Budget Day, the additional support to the sector will be delivered.
  58. You have directed us to include the development of Te Ao Māori Curriculum Area in your package, as it is a key part of your broader curriculum work programme. Please note, the development of the Curriculum Area will add a substantial workload to the curriculum design work we already operating at capacity to deliver. Without the additional Curriculum Advisors, it will also be challenging to implement.

### **Option 2B: Retain funding for RT Lit, reprioritise RT Māori funding**

59. You could decide to proceed with the disestablishment of RT Māori roles, but to retain funding for RT Lit, which would leave a \$39.170 million shortfall in your Budget package.
60. Options to address this shortfall are set out above (paragraphs 44-50).

### **Option 2C: Retain funding for RT Māori, reprioritise RT Lit funding**

61. Similarly, you could decide to proceed with the disestablishment of RT Lit roles, but to retain funding for RT Māori, which would create a \$15.944 million shortfall in your Budget package.
62. If you proceed with this option, we recommend addressing the shortfall by reducing your Māori Education Package to a total of \$20.192m over the forecast period. Options for how this can be done are set out above (paragraphs 51-58).

### **Risks for options 2A, 2B and 2C**

63. Retaining the RT service does not resolve the issues and challenges the Ministry has previously highlighted for RT Lit and RT Māori services,<sup>2</sup> which were also reflected in many of the submission responses. Concerns expressed about service delivery included:
  - Uneven distribution and lack of accessibility of RTs,
  - Lack of infrastructure and management arrangements,
  - Insufficient guidelines available for RTs, base schools and principals or clusters,
  - Inconsistent practices, and
  - Inefficiencies in time management [METIS 1342122 refers].
64. If the RT Lit and RT Māori were retained and only the location of some roles was altered to better align to need, roles identified as being located in a place which does not meet the need for services would still have to be disestablished. It would be up to individual resource teachers to decide if they would seek to relocate to continue in the role via the redeployment option, or if they seek to retrain or decide to leave teaching and access the severance or long service payment.
65. Although anecdotal evidence captured through some submissions reports the benefits of these roles directly and indirectly for learners, there remains insufficient evidence of impact of the service on learner outcomes. Based on current data measures, there is also limited evidence of impact/effectiveness of their engagements or interventions with the schools, kura and students they work with. For example, initial analysis of 2023 RT Lit data showed that 33% of students were 'successfully discontinued' [METIS 1342122 refers], and in 2024 this figure was 32%. It should be noted that some submissions contested the Ministry's approach to data collection and the definition of successful discontinuation, but data does indicate that a high proportion of students accessing the RT Lit service are likely to continue to need additional targeted or tailored support to accelerate their literacy progress.

### **Option 3: Review and restructure RT Lit and RT Māori services**

66. We received a significant response from the sector requesting that investment be put into restructuring rather than disestablishing the RT Māori service. The RT Māori role has been subject to several reviews over the years, which have made recommendations on strengthening the practice, accountability and focus of these roles.
67. Submitters who supported this option frequently cited the 2012 *Matarau Report – A Report on the Re-Design of the Teacher Support Service for Māori Medium* (Matarau Report), as

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2 Education Review Office. (2008). *Evaluation of the Resource Teacher: Māori Service*.

the guide to progress this restructure. The Matarau Report<sup>3</sup> was developed following the 2008 Education Review Office (ERO) evaluation of the RT Māori service<sup>4</sup>. A copy of the Matarau Report can be made available to you at your request.

68. The Matarau report provided eight recommendations and proposed a two-stage implementation process, including:
- Establishing a larger service of 65 Matarau (new RT Māori) positions (53 RT Māori and 12 unfilled RT Lit Māori positions), be established as a teacher support service for Levels 1 and 2 immersion settings at Years 1 – 8,
  - Re-defining the role of the Matarau to strengthen learning and teaching practice through sound language acquisition, curriculum delivery and teaching pedagogy derived from a Māori world view,
  - The development of a mandatory training programme specifically for the Matarau positions,
  - The establishment of a national and regional management structure, including a designated Ministry resource for the Matarau service,
  - Te Ohu Matarau maintaining oversight of the transition from the RT Māori to the Matarau service,
  - Further consideration being given to professional support for teachers at Levels 3 and 4 immersion, and te reo Māori in English medium schools.
69. In the time available, we have not been able to cost these recommendations, but will do so if you want further advice on this option.
70. The Ministry worked with Te Ohu Matarau and the National Association of Resource Teachers and Advisors Māori (NARTAM) to develop a work programme for a restructure of the roles until October 2016. Ministry records reflect the work was deprioritised due to the substantive body of work underway to redesign the education system at the time.
71. Further work to review and strengthen the RT Lit service in response to evaluation findings was signalled in Ministry action plans, including the Learning Support Action Plan (2019–2025) and the Literacy & Communication and Maths Action Plans (2022),<sup>5</sup> however this work has not been progressed due to phased sequencing of actions and budget constraints.

#### ***Budget 25 package implications:***

72. The Budget package implications for **option 3** are the same as **option 2**, as reviewing and restructuring the services will remove them as reprioritisation options for Budget 25 and leave a shortfall that will need to be addressed (refer to paragraphs 44-58 above).
73. As earlier noted, should you choose this option, you will need to write to the Minister of Finance immediately to set out any proposed changes to your Budget package. This would need to be sent by Wednesday 2 April. A draft letter is provided as **Annex 1**.

#### ***Risks for option 3***

74. On balance, we do not recommend this option. Restructuring the roles to alter the content, purpose and/or location will largely have the same impact for the host schools and the

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3 The Ministry seconded two RT Māori for 18 months to develop The Matarau Report. This work was supported and informed by a sector advisory group, Te Ohu Matarau, who worked alongside the two RT Māori.

4 Education Review Office. (2008). Evaluation of the Resource Teacher: Māori Service.

5 The Learning Support Action Plan contained an action to "Design improvements with the Resource Teachers: Literacy Service to better support teachers of children and young people with literacy difficulties, including dyslexia." The Literacy & Communication and Maths Action Plans contained an action to "Review and strengthen the role and functions of Resource Teachers of Literacy."



workforce as disestablishment. Functionally, if the change is significant, the roles will still need to be disestablished. While some resource teachers may be able to be redeployed the new role (assuming the employer remains school boards) as an outcome of the surplus staffing process, those that do not want to, or cannot, relocate and/or do not fit the profile or requirements of the new role will have the option to retrain or leave the teaching service with a severance or long service payment.

75. Officials at the time noted<sup>6</sup> that none of the reports or evaluations completed on the RT Māori service on their own presented a viable option and cohesive package that was ready for implementation. Additionally, the Matarau report did not describe how the redesigned positions would help deliver on Government priorities.
76. The Ministry has also not completed any further work with NARTAM or Te Ohu Matarau to resume redesign work. Significant work would be required to further modernise and design the RT Māori service for current supports and services available in the system.

## Overall Risks

*A decision to disestablish the RT Lit and RT Māori roles will likely be negatively received by the sector*

77. As evidenced through sector consultation, disestablishment of funding for these roles will be negatively received by some parts of the sector, including unions and peak bodies (e.g., Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa, Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa, NARTAM and the Resource Teachers: Literacy Association), and communities.
78. 9(2)(j)
79. The sector is also likely to be concerned with a perceived loss of literacy specialists – or a reduction in expert literacy support for students – through the proposed removal of funding for RT Lit. We will communicate that skilled teachers are always in demand, and that many Resource Teachers are expected to have the necessary capability to fill other roles in the system. Budget 25 communications will contextualise any savings decisions related to RT Lit and support understanding of the suite of actions and additional investment targeted to lifting literacy achievement and improving learning supports and services.
80. While the Māori Education package has 19 Curriculum Advisors (seven new and 12 ring-fenced current vacancies), the decision to remove funding for 53 FTTE for RT Māori may be met with criticism from the sector and perceived as an overall reduction in frontline staff. RT Māori are employed by kura and school boards, while Curriculum Advisors are employed by the Ministry.
81. Approximately one third of RT Māori roles are based within Kaupapa Māori kura. Submissions received from the peak bodies representing these kura reflects dissatisfaction in the consultation approach and lack of engagement with these organisations. We advise that you engage with these organisations about any decisions to disestablish RT Māori roles, including the rationale for doing so, as this will support your growing relationship with these partners. Further advice on communicating your decisions is provided below.
82. While initiatives proposed in the Māori Education Budget package may mitigate some of these concerns, it still represents a reduction in FTTE count for the sector. Many RT Māori are highly skilled in both teacher and te reo Māori qualifications. As there is a shortage of qualified teachers with te reo Māori capability in the education sector, some of the risk

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<sup>6</sup> Memo to the Student Achievement Portfolio Board, 3 May 2013.

around loss of FTTE front-line roles may be mitigated through RT Māori choosing to return to the classroom.

9(2)(h)

83. 9(2)(h)

84.

85. Due to this work progressing quickly, the Ministry has not had an opportunity to complete a fulsome Te Tiriti analysis and due diligence of relevant Treaty rights or interests on the proposed RT Lit and RT Māori reinvested Budget options. The Waitangi Tribunal has found that the Crown has a duty to make informed decisions, and to engage directly with the impacts its policy could have on Māori learners, kura and Kaupapa Māori organisations before decisions are made.<sup>8</sup> While consultation with peak bodies (such as Te Rūnanga Nui and Ngā Kura ā Iwi) has been undertaken for the proposed disestablishment of RT Lit and RT Māori, there has been no consultation on the possible next steps presented in this paper, or the proposed Budget initiatives that intend to replace these services (if disestablishment is progressed).

86. 9(2)(h)

87. For Option 1, our analysis shows potential loss to the education workforce if these positions are not replaced with an equivalent workforce initiative. Across all options, there is variability in terms of Māori gaining agency and authority over their learning, and equity of outcomes. Option 3 has potential to be most compliant noting it allows an opportunity to engage with Māori if you choose to restructure the service.

## Next Steps

### Communications approach

88. Once you have made a decision, the Ministry will support you to meet with groups on the outcome of the proposal 9(2)(h) at an appropriate time. This includes those peak bodies and unions, as well as other stakeholders, that the Ministry

9(2)(h)

<sup>8</sup> Kei Ahotea Te Aho Matua, Waitangi Tribunal report on Wai 1718, at [3.3.2].

met with or notified in February 2025, in advance of consultation beginning [METIS 1343266 refers].

89. Should you agree to **option 1** (proceeding with reprioritisation), the timing of these communications is best made in close alignment with Budget Day announcements, planned for 22 May 2025. This will enable you to place the reprioritisation of RT Lit and RT Māori funding in the wider context of your Budget 25 package (including investment in Māori education and learning support). It also means you can provide details on this reinvestment to support sector understanding, as information will no longer be subject to Budget secrecy requirements.
90. Communications with key stakeholders in advance of Budget Day announcements would require approval from the Minister of Finance. We do not recommend this approach as you will only be able to confirm your decision on RT Lit and RT Māori, while the details of your reinvestment intentions will remain Budget Secret.

### Implementation approach

91. If you agree to **option 1**, the Ministry will need to undertake some key milestones to implement these changes. The timing and process for disestablishing RT Lit and RT Māori roles is determined by teachers' collective agreements, which require that employing Boards receive confirmation of any reduction in funding for the following school year (2026) by 1 July 2025 [METIS 1342757 refers].
92. The table below provides a high-level overview and timeline of these key milestones.

Date	Milestone
April 2025	Initial engagement with Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) to draft the Education (2026 School Staffing) Order
22 May 2025	Budget Day – Government decision on the reprioritisation of RT Lit and RT Māori funding will be reflected in the Vote Education package
1 July 2025	The Ministry confirms to school boards the withdrawal of funding for these roles from the start of 2026.  Draft 2026 Staffing Order circulated for stakeholder review and feedback (early July).  Cabinet paper and draft Staffing Order submitted to Ministers, LEG Committee and Cabinet (late July).
August 2025	2026 Staffing Order published and Gazetted by PCO.

93. If you agree to **option 2A, 2B, 2C** or **option 3**, you need to write to the Minister of Finance by Wednesday 2 April 2025 setting out the proposed changes to your Budget 25 package ahead of final Budget Minister decisions. We have drafted a letter as **Annex 1**. If you proceed with **option 1**, this is not needed.

## Annexes

The following are annexed to this paper:

Annex 1: Draft letter to Minister of Finance [attached separately]



## Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** that you are receiving **companion paper** [METIS 1345292 refers] – provided alongside this one – that contains summary analysis of the sector's feedback on consultation about Resource Teachers: Literacy (RT Lit) and Resource Teachers: Māori (RT Māori), which informs the advice and options presented in this paper  
**Noted**
- b. **note** that, following Ministry analysis of the feedback, we have identified 3 options (with further sub options), each with advantages and trade-offs, including potential impacts on your Budget 25 package  
**Noted**
- c. **note** if you proceed with option 2A, 2B, 2C or 3, you need to write to the Minister of Finance by Wednesday 2 April setting out the proposed changes to your Budget package, and a draft letter to support this is provided as **Annex 1**  
**Noted**

### EITHER

#### Option 1: Proceed with reprioritisation of RT Lit and RT Māori funding

- d. **agree** that the Ministry proceeds with the proposal to reprioritise funding for RT Lit and RT Māori and reinvest this into new frontline and learning support services for English medium, Māori medium, and Kaupapa Māori education pathways  
**Agree / Disagree**
- e. **note** that this option will have no impact on your Vote Education package, which will proceed as submitted to Treasury and the Minister of Finance on 14 March [METIS 1344527 refers], realising savings of \$55.114 million over the forecast period  
**Noted**
- f. **agree** to proceed with the Māori Education Package updated to reflect your recent decisions, as set out in Table 2 (paragraph 21)  
**Agree / Disagree**
- g. **note** that the reprioritisation of both RT Lit and RT Māori carries some potential risks, including:
- h. Removal of specialist literacy and Māori language workforce expertise which may not be available elsewhere in the system, resulting in a decrease in support for students,
  - i. 9(2)(j)
  - ii. 9(2)(h)**Noted**
- i. **note** that, if this option is agreed, the timing of communications with key stakeholders (including peak bodies and unions) is best made in line with Budget Day announcements, as this will enable you to place the reprioritisation of RT Lit and RT Māori funding in the wider context of your Budget 25 package and provide details on reinvestment

Noted

j. **indicate** your preference to:

i. time communications with key stakeholders with Budget Day announcements  
**[Recommended]**

☒ Yes / ☐ No

ii. communicate with key stakeholders in advance of Budget Day announcements, noting that this will require approval from the Minister of Finance, and that you will only be able to confirm your decision on RT Lit and RT Māori, while the details of your reinvestment intentions will remain Budget Secret

☐ Yes / ☒ No

**OR**

**Option 2A:** Do not proceed with reprioritising Rt Lit and RT Māori funding

k. **agree** that the Ministry does not proceed with reprioritising funding from RT Lit and RT Māori

**Agree / Disagree**

l. **note** that this option leaves a \$55.114 million shortfall in your Budget package

**Noted**

m. **agree** to indicate to officials which option to address this shortfall you want to proceed with (discussed in paragraphs 44-58)

**Agree / Disagree**

n. **note** that while this option responds most directly to feedback received through consultation, it does not address the issues identified with the RT Lit and RT Māori services

**Noted**

**OR**

**Option 2B:** Retain funding for RT Lit, reprioritise RT Māori funding

o. **agree** that the Ministry does not proceed with reprioritising funding from RT Lit

**Agree / Disagree**

p. **note** that this option leaves a \$39.170 million shortfall in your Budget package

**Noted**

q. **agree** to indicate to officials which option to address this shortfall you want to proceed with (discussed in paragraphs 44-50)

**Agree / Disagree**

**OR**

**Option 2C:** Retain funding for RT Māori, reprioritise RT Lit funding

r. **agree** that the Ministry does not proceed with reprioritising funding from RT Māori

**Agree / Disagree**

s. **note** that this option leaves a \$15.944 million shortfall in your Budget package

Noted

- t. **agree** to indicate to officials which option to address this shortfall you want to proceed with (discussed in paragraphs 51-58)

Agree / Disagree

OR

Option 3: Review and restructure RT Lit and RT Māori services

- u. **agree** that the Ministry proceed to review and restructure the RT Lit and RT Māori services

Agree / Disagree

- v. **note** that this option leaves a \$55.114 million shortfall in your Budget package

Noted

- w. **agree** to indicate to officials which option to address this shortfall you want to proceed with (discussed in paragraphs 44-58)

Agree / Disagree

- x. **note** that while this option responds to some of the feedback received through consultation, restructuring the roles to alter the content, purpose and/or location will largely have the same impact for the host schools and the workforce as disestablishment

Noted

**Proactive Release:**

- y. **agree** that this Budget-Sensitive paper is withheld under OIA section 9(2)(f)(iv) until it can be considered for publication as part of the Budget 25 Proactive release process.

Agree / Disagree



Jennifer Fraser  
**Acting Hautū | Deputy Secretary**  
**Te Pou Kaupapahere**

28/03/2025



Hon Erica Stanford  
**Minister of Education**

29/3/2025



Mere-Hēni Simcock-Rēweti  
**Hautū | Deputy Secretary**  
**Te Pou Tuarongo**

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Pauline Cleaver  
**Acting Hautū | Deputy Secretary**  
**Te Poutāhū**

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