



# Report: Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation Feedback

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 report summarises submissions on the proposal to reinvest funding for Resource Teachers: Literacy (RT Lit) and Resource Teachers: Māori (RT Māori) into frontline and learning supports through Budget 25. This paper should be read alongside the companion paper, *Budget 25 Next Steps Following Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori Consultation*, provided to you in parallel [METIS 1345204 refers].
2. This paper provides you with a summary analysis of the sector's feedback, and a Results Report is attached as **Annex 2**.

## What action do we need, by when?

3. We will discuss this report and the companion Budget paper at Education Agencies meeting on Monday 31 March 2025.
4. Your decisions on the companion paper [METIS 1345204 refers], are needed by Tuesday 1 April to submit Financial Recommendations to Treasury, required by Friday 4 April.

## Key facts

5. There was strong interest from the sector on this proposal, and the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) received a total of 2,459 submissions from a variety of sources, including schools, kura, tumuaki, kaiako, sector professionals, parents, whānau and the wider community. Overall, submissions reflected strong support for retaining the RT Lit and RT Māori services, and significant interest in what the proposed reinvestment in frontline and learning supports will look like.
6. Should you choose to proceed with disestablishing funding for RT Lit and RT Māori, clear communications on the rationale around how the reinvestment options will support the sector will be essential, noting that at present the Budget decisions are to be released on 22 May 2025.

## Alignment with Government priorities

7. 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.
8. 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

9. 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 roles.
10. The Ministry notified the sector and conducted consultation on your behalf from 28 February 2025 to 21 March 2025. This timing met requirements in collective agreements for the Ministry to notify school and kura Boards of the Government's proposal by 1 March 2025, ensuring they have sufficient time to allow correct employment processes for any impacted staff [METIS 1342122 refers].
11. Consultation was targeted to State and State integrated schools and kura, education sector unions and peak bodies. For this reason, the Ministry previously advised that it would not make the consultation materials available via the Ministry's website [METIS 1343266 refers]. The notification letter and consultation document were sent by the Ministry to these groups on 28 February 2025. A copy of the consultation materials is provided as **Annex 1**.
12. Nationally, there are 121 RT Lit and 53 RT Māori full-time teacher equivalent (FTTE) positions. Of these, 110 FTTE are currently filled for RT Lit and 48 FTTE for RT Māori.

## Submissions Analysis

13. As anticipated, the consultation materials were shared beyond the targeted parts of the sector the Ministry consulted [METIS 1343266 refers]. The Ministry received submissions from the wider education sector and school and kura communities, including parents, whānau and iwi. This ensured a wide range of expertise, experience and views were captured throughout the consultation period.
14. The Ministry received a total of 2,786 submissions, representing a minimum number of 54,150 individuals. 2,459 submissions were received through SurveyMonkey and 327 through other communications channels into the Ministry (e.g., the Resource Teacher Mailbox).
15. Of the total submissions:
  - 145 did not indicate if they were responding as an individual or as part of a group,
  - 2,446 were by individuals,
  - 194 from groups representing 53,159 individuals, and
  - 48 responses were received from groups where the numbers of individuals were not specified (i.e. Facebook Group, Junior School Leaders, Principal Associations).
16. Of the total submissions received through SurveyMonkey:
  - 1,419 indicated that they currently access the RT Lit service, and

- 310 indicated that they currently access RT Māori service.
17. An Results Report, *Sector Consultation on Changes to Funding for Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori* (the Report), has been provided in **Annex 2**. The Report provides more detailed data analysis information, including the breakdown of respondents, their roles and a detailed analysis of responses to the consultation document.

**Common themes from consultation, including views on reasons for and risks of proposed changes**

18. Officials completed analysis of each submission to understand the sector's views on the reasons for and risks of changes outlined in the proposal. In reviewing the submissions, a broad range of common themes emerged. Some were relevant to either RT Lit or RT Māori services, however many were relevant to both.
19. Overall, the most common themes in submissions identifying reasons for change as outlined in the proposal include:
- RT Lit/RT Māori are not distributed well enough,
  - RT Lit/RT Māori are hard to access,
  - There is a lack of expertise,
  - Inconsistent practices,
  - The RT Lit/RT Māori system is not efficient, and
  - Equity issues.
20. The most common themes in submissions noting potential risks of change include:
- Loss of valuable expertise/experience for students and teachers alike,
  - More funding is needed for RT Lit/RT Māori, not to be taken away,
  - Proposal does not align with current literacy government priorities,
  - Disestablishing the roles disproportionately affects our most vulnerable students, and/or students with complex needs,
  - Risk of losing te reo Māori expertise,
  - Crown not honouring its Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi obligations, and
  - Proposal is based on old or inaccurate data and evidence.
21. Additionally, we heard from some submitters, including sector peak bodies, that they were disappointed in the way the consultation process was undertaken. For example, because of the length of the consultation period (three weeks), or because they found out about the consultation indirectly.

***Submissions reflected mostly positive experiences with the quality and effectiveness of services delivered by both services.***

22. RT Lit and RT Māori teachers were commonly described as having significant knowledge, resources and information to support students, kaiako and teachers by submitters from schools and kura where these services are effective for them.
23. Submissions from parents, whānau and the wider community reflected on the positive impact these roles can have on student outcomes. Some parents and whānau shared accounts of the difference these interventions have made for their children's literacy skills, or in supporting the growth of te reo Māori language learning at school and in the home.



24. There were many responses from the Māori medium and Kaupapa Māori education sector, including whānau, schools, kura and peak bodies, advocating for the retention of RT Māori services, and for funding not to be distributed away from their pathways.

***However, some respondents noted a lack of expertise and inconsistent practices...***

25. Schools, as the employer for RT Lit or RT Māori, have been able to shape the roles to meet their own needs, or those of the cluster schools. Submitters reported RT Lit and RT Māori perform a range of functions and that this can contribute to inconsistent delivery of the model nationwide, as well as a lack of clarity about the services' purposes.
26. This evidence of variability aligns to previous evaluations which describe the impact of limited infrastructure, including national coordination of the services, as well as insufficient information or guidelines for RT Māori and RT Lit, base schools and principals or cluster schools<sup>1</sup>. An evaluation of the RT Lit service, published in 2014,<sup>2</sup> noted that access to the service is inconsistent, with variable RT Lit practices and processes (both (professional and management) across the devolved service [METIS 1342732 refers].
27. For RT Lit, submitters raised concerns around accessibility of services leading to unmet needs in their communities. As an example of this theme, one submitter noted the quality and effectiveness of the service is "erratic". Another noted the variability of RT Lit quality across the service is not a match for the shifts happening in the sector, leading to what they saw as wasted money spent on international conferences rather than directly on the child. This submitter noted that, in their view, the service is undermanaged and ineffective.
28. Some respondents indicated limited access, unclear communication, or inconsistent service quality for RT Māori services. While many appreciated the service's community engagement and cultural expertise, access gaps tempered the overall sentiment, and some submitters noted there is little accountability or external monitoring of the service, leaving the host school in the position to do this, resulting in unreliable service.

***... and others wrote that both services are not distributed well enough, are difficult to access, not efficient, and have equity issues.***

29. Feedback received from the sector confirms data held by the Ministry that the current distribution of RT Māori and RT Lit roles does not fully meet the needs of schools and kura across the country [METIS 1342757 refers].
30. A number of submissions expressed concern about the current level of resourcing for RT Lit. This is consistent with findings from the 2014 evaluation of the RT Lit service, which noted resource allocation has not responded to changes in enrolments or patterns of demand across clusters. Some submitters noted that the level of resourcing for RT Lit had been held consistent at 121 FTTE for a number of years (since 2001) and not been adjusted to reflect increases in the school roll. Additionally, submitters noted that in remote areas of the country – where accessibility to this service is a challenge – there is a need for more literacy interventions that work more closely with at-risk children and their whānau.
31. For RT Māori, there were a range of concerns from submitters about accessibility to this service – including that RT Māori had no capacity to pick up further work in their community, as well as that the school or kura had never heard from the RT Māori or had heard from them once and never again. As an example of this theme, one tumuaki noted their interactions with the RT Māori had been limited with very little follow through on work. Other submissions noted that the resource simply did not exist in their community.
32. Although RT Māori were established to work with Level 1 and 2 immersion settings, responses reflected that RT Māori are working in a wider variety of settings, including

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<sup>1</sup> Education Review Office. (2008). *Evaluation of the Resource Teacher: Māori Service*.

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/schooling2/learning-support/resource-teachers-literacy-operational-and-policy-review/>.

Rumaki Reo Rua and English medium. Some submitters noted eligibility for the service was unclear, leading them to see the service as inequitable. For example, one submitter expressed disappointment that although 80 percent of the learners in their school are Māori and could benefit from this service, they could not access RT Māori support at all. The Ministry has previously advised the allocation and modelling of RT Māori locations is outdated, and the roles not distributed to where they are most needed [METIS 1342122 refers]. The submissions received broadly support this position.

***Submitters were concerned disestablishment of funding for these roles would create a risk that supports provided could not be replicated elsewhere in the system***

33. Based on feedback provided, one of the key concerns with the proposal is the potential loss of expertise in the sector and the impact this could have on students. Some respondents expressed there was not sufficient information about the new services and supports into which RT Lit and RT Māori funding was proposed to be reinvested, or how existing roles might be redeployed.
34. While consultation materials made clear that funding would be reinvested in frontline and learning support services for all students across English medium, Māori medium, and Kaupapa Māori education pathways, we were constrained in the level of detail we could provide due to Budget sensitivities.
35. Many schools noted RT Lit have effectively supported their implementation of structured literacy approaches and the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) support. In some schools, RT Lit are providing both targeted/tier 2 and tailored/tier 3 interventions for students and PLD for teachers, sometimes across large clusters. There was concern from some submissions that the focus on literacy (and related supports for students), would be impacted by the proposal (i.e., the level of support would be reduced), and some noted that RT Lit are not directly comparable to other roles in the system, such as structured literacy approach staffing or Curriculum Advisors.
36. For RT Māori, their te reo Māori proficiency and strong ao Māori and tikanga Māori knowledge were commonly cited for some schools and kura as invaluable. Submissions also were concerned that disestablishment of funding for RT Māori would result in a loss of support with implementing assessment and aromatawai, te reo matatini and pāngarau and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa resources for kaiako. Many highlighted the value of PLD and the role of RT Māori in building teacher capability and equity, especially in smaller or more remote schools.

## Next Steps

37. The Ministry is publishing an item in the School Leaders Bulletin on 1 April to thank the sector for their participation in the consultation and acknowledge the approximate number of confirmed submissions received. The item also notes that after consultation feedback is considered, decisions and next steps will be communicated to the sector as part of Budget 2025 communications.
38. The Ministry will support you to notify and/or meet with groups on the outcome of the proposal, at an appropriate time. This includes those peak bodies and unions, as well as other stakeholders, that the Ministry met with or notified in February 2025, in advance of consultation beginning [METIS 1343266 refers].
39. Please note that further details on the communications and implementation approach are set out the companion paper, which has been provided to you in parallel [METIS 1342504 refers], and we will develop sector-facing products to be released post-Budget to help close the loop on consultation findings and provide additional context on decisions.

## Financial Implications

40. Financial implications relating to decisions on reprioritising RT Lit and RT Māori are discussed in detail in the companion paper that you are receiving [METIS 1342504 refers].

## Annexes

The following are annexed to this paper:

- Annex 1: Consultation materials sent to the sector [attached separately]  
Annex 2: Results Report: *Sector Consultation on Changes to Funding for Resource Teachers: Literacy and Resource Teachers: Māori* [attached separately]

## Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** that, in line with Cabinet decisions [CAB-25-MIN-0026 refers], from 28 February 2025 to 21 March 2025 the Ministry undertook consultation on the proposal to reinvest funding from Resource Teachers: Literacy (RT Lit) and Resource Teachers: Māori (RT Māori) Noted
- b. **note** the Ministry received a total of 1,495 completed submissions, many expressing common themes, including views on the rationale for and risks of proposed changes – discussed in paragraphs 18–36 and in more detail in the Results Report provided as **Annex 2** Noted
- c. **note** that you are receiving a companion paper [METIS 1342504 refers] – provided to you alongside this one – outlining options for next steps informed by consultation findings, and any impacts the options may have on your Budget 25 package Noted
- d. **note** the companion paper also provides detail on the communications and implementation approach Noted

### Proactive Release:

- e. **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



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28/03/2025



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31/3/25



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28/03/2025