



## Briefing Note: Enabling distance learning for all – Overview of work programme

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	3 April 2020	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1225140
<b>Drafter:</b>	Anya Pollock	<b>DDI:</b>	s 9(2)(a) OIA
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Pauline Cleaver	<b>DDI:</b>	
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

- **Note** the work programme for enabling distance learning during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- **Agree** to forward this briefing to Hon Kelvin Davis, Hon Tracey Martin and Hon Jenny Salesa for their visibility.


**Agree / Disagree**

- **Agree** that this Briefing will be proactively released.

**Agree / Disagree**

### Summary

A range of supports will be in place by 15 April 2020 to give children and young people have access to at least one channel for accessing distance education (online, hard-packs of material and/or television broadcast). These supports will be built on over time: as needed, for example enhanced online teaching and learning materials, refreshed hard-packs and further work for students with learning support needs or disabilities; and as supply of resources, such as computer devices, become available.



Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
Deputy Secretary  
**Early Learning and Student Achievement**  
03/04/2020

Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister of Education**  
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## Background

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1. Along with early learning services, schools and kura we are working hard to minimise the disruption to education for children and young people as a result of the physical closure of early learning services, schools and kura during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To minimise disruption to learning progress, and avoid perpetuating or increasing inequities in learning outcomes, we have established a comprehensive programme of work to enable distance learning for all children and young people. This work programme:
  - a. ensures all learners have access to at least one channel for distance education (online, hard-packs of material or television broadcast) from 15 April, when term two starts
  - b. recognises that distance learning is a different way of delivering education, and that stresses and demands inside each person's "bubble" during the Level 4 lockdown are different – attention to wellbeing is as important as attention to learning
  - c. aims to address the equity risks created by the shift to distance learning, and to leverage opportunities to address persistent inequities in ways that will benefit learners post-pandemic.
3. The changes and supports being put in place as part of responding to the Covid-10 pandemic will accelerate our digital transformation and should significantly strengthen learner-parent-teacher partnerships. While this is an emergency situation that requires a rapid response, if we do it well, and act deliberately, it is also an opportunity to make progress on our journey towards an inclusive, equitable and connected future education system.
4. On 2 April 2020 we provided you with an Education Report covering immediate next steps for working with early learning services, schools and kura to get available supports to children and young people, and to commence television broadcasting [METIS 1225018 refers]. You have indicated that you intend to seek emergency funding for the comprehensive package of initiatives to ensure that we can reach all learners and address the risks to equity created by current variability in the system. We will be providing your office with a paper seeking this funding on 3 April 2020, for lodging with the Covid-19 Ministerial Group in the week of 6 April 2020.
5. This briefing provides a full overview of the planned deliverables over the next few weeks, noting that there is still some uncertainty about what is possible by when. It also sets out how we are making distance learning work for children and young people with learning support/additional learning needs, and for students on vocational pathways.
6. Next week we will provide you with a medium term perspective of our work programme for distance learning, setting out our planned direction of travel for the coming months. We will also provide Hon Jenny Salesa with a briefing next week on how the needs of Pacific communities will be addressed.

## Our focus for the next few weeks

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7. Distance learning will be in place from 15 April 2020 when term two starts. Our early priorities are:
  - a. Addressing barriers to learners accessing distance learning and empowering parents, whānau and caregivers to support their children's learning at home, in partnership with kaiako and teachers. This will be a new way of working for many families and whānau, and it is important that we focus on establishing relationships and connections at this early stage, and providing guidance on how to make it work within the constraints of lockdown and differing demands within each household's "bubble".
  - b. Supporting early learning services, schools and kura to prepare for leading learning from a distance, including establishing online teaching and learning, and creating supports and guidance to help them make the transition and continue to deliver quality education within the demands of each teachers' own "bubble".
  - c. Establishing channels for delivery of education that will supplement the work schools and kura, and ensure that no child or young person misses out on accessing education due to having no or limited Internet connectivity.
8. To support what early learning services, Kōhanga Reo, schools and kura are already doing<sup>1</sup> to enable learning from home from 15 April 2020, we are:
  - a. Starting to rollout Internet connectivity to homes that need it to access online learning (an estimated 82,000 homes). The first 2,000 connections will commence next week, using the prioritisation approach agreed by you [METIS 1225018 refers]. We expect to be able to get more than 2,000 households connected by 15 April, but this will depend on capacity of the telecommunication industry and shipping network, and this will ramp up quite quickly week by week.
  - b. Starting to distribute fit-for-education devices to learners who need them (an estimated 145,000 school age learners). We expect to distribute a minimum of 17,000 fit-for-education devices during April, with a focus on getting as many delivered before 15 April as possible which will be allocated in accordance with the prioritisation approach agreed by you [METIS 1225018 refers].
  - c. Distributing packs of physical and hard-copy resources across early learning (including Kōhanga Reo) and schooling (English medium and Māori medium, in accordance with prioritisation approach agreed by you [METIS 1225018 refers]. The initial round of distribution<sup>2</sup> is:
    - i. 76,000 learning at home resource kits for children in ECE services delivered in tranches to children's homes starting the week of 15 April.
    - ii. 20,000 Māori medium kits with books available for all children in kōhanga reo and puna reo, distributed to whānau from 15 April.
    - iii. 150,000 hard packs for school students in English medium education, which are expected to leave the warehouse between 9 April and 17 April for delivery into homes in tranches of 20,000 and 10,000.

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<sup>1</sup> In an early survey, 56% of schools and kura indicated they were already prepared to move to online learning.

<sup>2</sup> Note that households will receive packs at different days and times depending on courier network.

- iv. For learners studying NCEA, we have 500 packs printed and ready for distribution now for Māori medium kura. 5,000 packs are underway for English medium education and will be ready for distribution next week, so that they are received by 15 April (contingent on courier network delivery capacity). This includes Instant Education Unit Standard resources and field Māori unit standards for Māori medium settings.
- d. Establishing an online portal for secondary schools to access subject-specific content, both online and in hard-copy. From early next week this will include content from Open Polytechnic – including hard copy textbook and workbook resources **s 9(2)(j) OIA** and from Instant Education. We have acquired over 10,000 hard copy resources from this catalogue for immediate distribution. Over the next two weeks we will negotiate further Memoranda of Understanding with other publishers to expand the available catalogue and to ensure breadth across NCEA subjects. We anticipate being able to supply resources for up to 16,500 students likely to lack digital access, accessing up to six subjects each.
- e. Establishing television broadcasting channels for English medium and Māori medium, which will deliver six hours of new and existing educational content each weekday, including one hour of te reo Māori content on the English medium channel [METIS 1225018 refers]. The channels have the potential to broadcast 24/7 – either with repeated content or other suitable content for children and young people.
- f. Supporting more students to access Virtual Learning Network Community online learning programmes, with:
- i. Primary – an increase in enrolments from 541 to 1,200
  - ii. Secondary – access for up to 150 additional students in partially full classes
  - iii. Senior secondary – additional 40 classes for up to 600 students.
- g. Adding more content and two online learning platforms, *Learning from Home* and *Ki te Ao Mārama*, we have put in place to support distance education in English and Māori medium. These provide information and advice for parents and whānau, teachers, kaiako and leaders in early learning services, kōhanga reo, and primary and secondary schools, kura and wharekura.
- h. Supporting access to a professional learning and development (PLD) support package of \$6.84 million, for all schools and kura who request it, with our PLD provider network. From this 64 providers are contracted from now through to the end of term 2 2020 to give schools and kura access to around 400 facilitators (or 125 FTE) for professional support with online learning. This means that if half of schools and kura in New Zealand seek this support, then on average they could receive six days of support.
- i. Supporting access to a Connected Learning Advisory Service to assist leaders, teachers, kaiako, families and whānau to make full use of the online environments and resources, including a helpdesk function that provides technical advice.
- j. Setting up virtual teams with teachers who have expressed an interest in being involved with the work.
9. Annex 1 sets out the programme map of deliverables over the next few weeks. It is important to note that carrying out this work will be complex, given the Level 4

restrictions in place that limit access and availability to a number of services and products. We are relying on a number of interconnecting factors which are dependent on each other, and so although these plans are based on best estimates, it is difficult to guarantee exact dates and numbers at this time. Note that the number of Internet connections and devices in place by 15 April is a minimum based on currently contracted commitments and will grow over next few days for both pre and post 15 April.

10. As outlined above, we are particularly concerned about student wellbeing at this time, especially if Level 4 restrictions continue beyond the current four weeks. We are working on a rapid-cycle student wellbeing survey that could be deployed to monitor student wellbeing, to be used by schools and the Ministry to develop appropriate supports, as required. This could feed into the All of Government effort being developed to monitor the wellbeing of New Zealanders through the COVID-19 crisis.

### Making distance learning work for children with learning support/additional learning needs

11. Children with learning support/additional learning needs face specific challenges during level 4, such as barriers to engaging with distance learning material and lack of access to some of their usual supports. They may also be disproportionately affected by challenges that apply to all children, such as increased anxiety or stress or difficulties for family and whānau in supporting learning in the home.
12. A range of activity is underway to make distance learning work for children and young people with learning support needs, including
  - a. creating or adapting appropriate web-based content and learning resources for students, parents and teachers
  - b. identifying and providing any specific support needed by families and whānau of children with learning support learning needs
  - c. exploring how distance learning material can be adapted for children with disabilities and impairments (eg feasibility of commissioning large print or Braille materials for blind and low vision learners)
  - d. setting clear guidance for learning support specialist workforces such as Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour to continue to provide support
  - e. contacting Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) to find out how they will support the distance learning of students with additional learning needs, and the help LSCs need from the Ministry at this time.
13. Learning support staff remain available and are preparing material and resources for families with different needs, as emphasised in the early learning and school bulletins. Schools have been advised to contact local Ministry offices if they are concerned about how students with learning support needs will be supported during the lockdown period.

### Making distance learning work for students on vocational pathways

14. We have developed a needs analysis for providers of secondary tertiary programmes, informed by reaching out to the Trades Academy Lead Providers and also key individuals who sit on our NCEA Pathways Advisory Group, NCEA Review Pathways

Panel, or who we otherwise have a strong relationship with who are providing Trades Academies, Gateway or other secondary tertiary programmes.

15. Based on this analysis we are progressing five key work priorities:

- a. Support for providers to maintain teaching and learning of theory work when students are unable to engage in practical work – for example, by working with Industry Training Organisations to resources available free of charge, and to support providers to flexibly rearrange their courses.
- b. Provide meaningful alternatives to work experience or applied learning– for example, by directly delivering self-directed learning resources, and investigating ways to support a wider range of practical or applied learning experiences post lockdown (e.g., volunteering as an alternative to work experience).
- c. Resources and programmes to keep students mentally and emotionally engaged and motivated – e.g., by exploring options to encourage remote mentoring arrangements, and creating engaging content to keep students interested in vocational pathways.
- d. Providing opportunities for students to learn technical practical skills and employability skills (post-lockdown) – e.g., by expanding access to successful local programmes that teach core employability skills.
- e. Supporting students to make strong pathways choices – e.g., by partnering with the Tertiary Education Commission to ensure students can access high quality careers advice and guidance.

## Proactive Release

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16. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

## Annex

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Annex 1: Programme Map – Covid response activities to facilitate Distance Learning Phase 2 (support for schools opening 15 April 2020)



**Annex 1: Programme Map – Covid response activities to facilitate Distance Learning Phase 2 (support for schools opening 15 April 2020)**

Work-stream	End of week 30 march	Week beginning 6 April	Week beginning 15 April
<b>Survey</b>	Survey to all schools and kura to better understand current capability and capacity to provide online/distance learning.	Survey/data collection form to identify learners who would require a device, or hard pack to be delivered on 16 April.	
<b>Broadcast</b> Stand up of Broadcast channel(s) and ongoing development and delivery of daily content Aligned to the National Curriculum and the needs of all English Medium, reo Māori learners and Māori medium	<b>English medium Television</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope and approval to launch Home school TV.</li> </ul> <b>Māori Television</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope of content development in progress. Note: One hour of Māori language content is being made available for language learners.</li> </ul>	<b>English medium Television</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract signed with TVNZ</li> <li>Communication to launch</li> <li>Content plans finalised to deliver 6.5 hrs of education content to learners relevant to age groups (e.g. EL 'play' sessions) – staggered approach</li> <li>Content production/filming starts.</li> </ul> <b>Māori Television</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract signed with Māori TV</li> <li>Communication to launch finalised</li> <li>Content development begins</li> </ul> Agreements in place with key whānau to record specific content.	<b>All</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go Live</li> <li>POST LAUNCH – continued development and production.</li> </ul>
<b>Online Learning Support</b> Development, collation, and upload of website resources for <b>Early learning to senior secondary</b> learners, teachers and parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learningfromhome.govt.nz</li> </ul> Collation and launch of Ki te Ao Mārama on Kauwhata Reo to support whānau, ākonga and kaiako te progress learning at home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>kauwhatareo.govt.nz</li> </ul> Student support	<b>Learningfromhome.govt.nz</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch website: learningfromhome.govt.nz – with load for priority content and advice.</li> </ul> <b>Ki te Ao Mārama</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch and load for priority content and advice.</li> </ul> <b>Source and draft exemplars of 'best practice'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For distance learning in early learning services for publication on Learningfromhome and Ki te Ao Mārama.</li> </ul>	<b>Learningfromhome.govt.nz</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Load of priority learning resources from Te Kura, leaders and teacher</li> <li>Identify, collate and final load of content.</li> </ul> <b>Ki te Ao Mārama</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional content is being developed and quality assured for load to the site.</li> </ul> Publish <b>exemplars of 'best practice'</b> for distance learning in early learning services on Learningfromhome and Ki te Ao Mārama.	<b>Learningfromhome.govt.nz</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, collate and final load of content.</li> </ul> <b>Ki te Ao Mārama</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional content is being developed and quality assured for load to the site.</li> </ul> <b>StudyIt forums</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to be reopened by 15 April and updates prioritised to provide students with online NCEA tutoring.</li> </ul>

Teacher/leader capability	<p><b>Virtual Learning Network</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiation to extend numbers of students who can access direct teaching through the VLN network.</li> </ul> <p><b>PLD Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools access support from current provider where possible and</li> </ul> <p><b>CORE Education</b> to stand up connected learning service to support schools and kura.</p> <p><b>Kahu Pūtoi</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online space to support kaiako to create professional and curriculum online communities with others so they can support each other to develop stronger reo Māori and kaupapa Māori learning programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rangaranga</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online community collaboration space for kaiako to work with ākonga and where ākonga can work with others on shared topics.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Virtual Learning Network</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract signed to extend numbers of students who can access direct teaching through the VLN network.</li> </ul> <p><b>PLD Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helpdesk function enabled</li> <li>Service operational.</li> <li>Schools matched with PLD provider</li> </ul> <p><b>Kahu Pūtoi</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All security checks completed</li> <li>Communications prepared for launch</li> <li>Content to introduce and support kaiako and ākonga to engage in the online communities completed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Virtual Learning Network</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VLN extended service commence.</li> </ul> <p><b>PLD Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service continues.</li> </ul> <p><b>Kahu Pūtoi</b></p> <p>Launch to support kaiako and ākonga with distance learning.</p>
<p><b>Hard Copy</b></p> <p>Development, collation, printing and distribution of hard packs to schools, learners, , parents and whānau</p>	<p><b>Hard copy resources overview:</b></p> <p><b>Early Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design, sourcing materials for hard copy early learning resource kits out to some children in early learning in services which receive Targeted Funding for Disadvantage (TFFD). There will be two different kits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kit A: for children aged 3 to 5 years of age</li> <li>Kit B: for children aged under 3 years of age.</li> </ul> </li> <li>This includes printed resources, items such as books, crayons and paper, and other age appropriate items. Also included will be a letter to parents, safety messaging, and ideas for supporting play at home. (This information will also be available online)</li> <li>Ordering content of Tranche 2' of early learning hardcopy kits design underway. This will target children at all other TFFD services (approx. 64,000).</li> </ul> <p><b>Schooling</b></p>	<p><b>Numbers printed or distributed this week:</b></p> <p><b>Early learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial printing run ('tranche 1') will provide resources to approx. <b>12,000 ākonga</b> identified with the highest needs (0-2 years: 5,046, and 3-5 years: 7,216). Printing underway and scheduled for completion on 15 Apr</li> <li>Sourcing content for 'Tranche 2' of early learning hardcopy kits design underway. This will target children at all other TFFD services (approx. 64,000 children)</li> <li>Also sourcing material for second version of 'follow-up' kits targeted to the initial 12,000 'Tranche 1' children being sourced (intended for a May-June delivery).</li> </ul> <p><b>Schooling</b></p>	<p><b>Numbers printed or distributed this week:</b></p> <p><b>Early Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early learning pack distribution: Initial run ('tranche 1') will distribute resources to approx. <b>12,000 ākonga</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Schooling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pack distribution - Years 1 – 10</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard packs include reading books, literacy, maths and science educational activities for Years 1 – 10</li> <li>Some stationery items, along with a parent guidance sheet explaining how to use these resources</li> <li>Ministry of Health brochure to remind families about the importance of staying safe and washing their hands etc. to stop the spread of COVID 19</li> <li>SchoolKit will be providing a kit to 6,000 students in South Auckland and West Auckland. These kits support a child's learning and are able to be used by parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first <b>20,000</b> (per day) packs distributed prioritised to year 1-3</li> <li>Pack distribution – <b>6,000</b> SchoolKit (Yr 1-3; 8/9 April).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>20,000</b> each day provided the need is there. Up to 150,000</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Ki te Ao Mārama Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of reading materials, activity cards and Covid-19 guidelines to ensure whānau have support to assist their tamariki, mokopuna with learning from home</li> </ul> <p><b>NCEA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field Māori resources made available for students in Māori-medium settings, online and in hard copy, focusing on Te Reo Māori and Māori Performing Arts. 500 of these packs are ready for distribution</li> <li>Range of subject-specific resources made available, online and in hard copy, to be provided directly to students to support NCEA learning across subjects</li> <li>Memoranda of Understanding with first tranche of publishers (Open Polytechnic and Instant Education) to license, print and distribute subject-specific content and accessible unit standards packs, online and in hard copy</li> <li>This includes online access to Open Polytechnic's iQualify platform, and acquiring an initial tranche of over 10,000 items of hard-copy content ready for launch to be provided to schools immediately.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Maori medium resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>20,000</b> packs available for all ākonga in kura anō MM settings from Yr 1-13.</li> <li><b>20,000</b> packs are available for Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo learners aged 0-4.</li> </ul> <p><b>NCEA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit standard packages for up to 16,500 students likely to lack digital access provided directly to those students</li> <li>Distribution of hard-copy NCEA textbooks and workbooks begin as schools request through Salesforce platform Supply will be available for up to <b>16,500 students</b> accessing up to six subjects each, with provision for up to 20% of enrolments in each NCEA subject for which resources are available</li> <li>Memoranda of Understanding with second tranche of publishers confirmed. This tranche will focus on other publishers with broad catalogues</li> <li>Negotiations commenced with ITOs for access to hardcopy resources aligned to the Vocational Pathways, with distribution to follow as resources become available.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Māori medium resources</b></p> <p>Māori medium materials distributed;</p> <p><b>NCEA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memoranda of Understanding with third tranche of publishers confirmed. This tranche will focus on specialist catalogues to fill gaps in tranche 1 and 2 provision, and may include sector groups like Subject Associations.</li> </ul> <p>.....</p> <p>After the initial distributions, requirements will be reviewed and consideration will be given to whether further packs are needed if isolation continues for further months.</p>
<p><b>Equitable Digital Access</b></p> <p>Provision of technology solutions (devices and internet connectivity) to address the digital divide</p>	<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chorus and other Telcos (Enable and Ultrafast fibre at this stage) have confirmed they will provide their wholesale broadband service for free for six months</li> <li>Terms agreed for provision of connectivity to 2,000 households</li> <li>Negotiations underway with additional internet service providers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out of connectivity commences to initial <b>2,000</b> households from Monday 6th April</li> <li>Sign up of further internet service providers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out of connectivity continues numbers to be determined as contracts are secured.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Devices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Secure stock of 7000 on-shore devices; which will be supplemented with offshore supply, first shipment will arrive in four weeks.</li></ul> <p><b>e-learning Software &amp; Systems - Online Platforms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commercial negotiations underway with suppliers for delivery of platforms.</li></ul>	<p><b>Devices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supply commences of devices <b>7,000</b>, prioritising NCEA students and informed by the completed surveys (see above).</li></ul> <p><b>e-learning Software &amp; Systems - Online Platforms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commercial agreements with suppliers for delivery of platforms.</li></ul>	<p><b>Devices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supply continues of devices continues</li><li>Next shipment expected onshore week commencing 20/4.</li></ul>
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Proactively Released