



Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): ERO Evaluation of Education Provision for Disabled Learners in Schools: Final Report and Summary

Date	31 August 2022
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M22-47
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee

**Associate
Minister of
Education**

Action sought

- Note** the attached near final (pre-designed) report and summary:
Thriving at school? Education for disabled learners in schools.
- Note** that the publication of ERO's evaluation on education for disabled learners in schools will now be jointly published with the ECE report before the end of September 2022.
- Note** that ERO will publish accompanying guides for different audiences and hold a forum and targeted best practice webinars to support the publication and impact of the school and ECE reports.
- Agree** to forward this briefing to the Associate Minister of Education and Associate Ministers.
- Note** that a meeting with you, Hon Williams and ERO officials is scheduled for 1 September 2022 to discuss the key findings and recommendations.
- Note** that this briefing is recommended for proactive release after the publication of the report.



Attachments:

***Education Review Office (ERO):
ERO Evaluation of Education
Provision for Disabled Learners:
Report – Appendix A; Summary
Appendix B***



Comments:

Minister's Office to complete

Noted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to:	
Date signed by Minister:	



Our Ref: M22-47

31 August 2022

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

ERO Evaluation of Education Provision for Disabled Learners in Schools: Final Report and Summary

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with a copy of the near final report and accompanying summary on ERO's evaluation of the quality and inclusiveness of education provision for disabled learners in schools and provides an update on the publication plan.

Background

2. On the 25 July 2022, ERO provided you with a briefing (M22-33) on the key findings from our evaluation of the quality and inclusiveness of education provision for disabled learners in schools, and draft recommendations to strengthen education for these priority learners.
3. A copy of this briefing was also shared with Hon Potu Williams in her capacity as Minister for Disability Issues.
4. ERO have now completed the school evaluation report and accompanying summary. A copy of the full evaluation report: Thriving at school? Education for disabled learners in schools and the summary are attached in Annex A and B.
5. A companion report on the education provision for disabled learners in Early Childhood Education (ECE) is also in progress. A briefing on the key findings and draft recommendations from this evaluation have been provided to you.

Recommendations

6. Following consultation with agencies, the final recommendations to address the areas of greatest concern, and to strengthen education for these priority learners are:

Area 1: *Strengthening prioritisation of disabled learners in schools, and accountability for how well they are doing*

Recommendation 1: Report nationally and annually on education experiences and outcomes for disabled learners (Ministry of Education, Whaikaha-Ministry of Disabled People).

Recommendation 2: Provide guidance to Boards and schools on expectations for education for disabled learners (Ministry of Education, ERO, NZSTA).

Recommendation 3: Include education for disabled learners as a focus for all ERO school evaluations (ERO).

Recommendation 4: Require all schools to report annually on their plans and progress for disabled learners (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 5: Require all Boards to report on provision for disabled learners as part of Board Assurance Statements (ERO).

Recommendation 6: Act when a school persistently discourages enrolment of disabled learners (Ministry of Education).

Area 2: To increase disabled learners' sense of belonging and acceptance in school, build leaders and teachers' capability in teaching disabled learners

Recommendation 7: Strengthen new principals and initial teacher education (Ministry of Education, Teaching Council).

Recommendation 8: Strengthen Beginner Teacher Induction and mentoring (Ministry of Education, Teaching Council).

Recommendation 9: Ensure guidance on professional standards for teaching are explicit on expectations for inclusion of disabled learners (Teaching Council).

Recommendation 10: Make disability a priority for Professional Learning and Development (PLD) for principals and teachers (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 11: Review the quality of disability PLD for principals and teachers (ERO).

Recommendation 12: Put in place, and increase use of, guidelines, resources, and supports for teachers of disabled learners (Ministry of Education).

Area 3: To increase disabled learners' and whānau understanding of their education rights, how to raise concerns or make a complaint, or get someone to advocate on their behalf

Recommendation 13: Provide an accessible resource for learners' and parents and whānau on their education rights and entitlements and ensure access to advocacy support if they need it (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 14: Put in place an independent mechanism for complaints, and report annually (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 15: Investigate and act when a school persistently fails to meet the needs of disabled learners (Ministry of Education, ERO).

Area 4: To improve the coordination of supports for disabled learners, and pathways both in and beyond school

Recommendation 16: Clearly define specialist roles and ensure working as a joined-up team to assess and support disabled learners (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 17: Ensure that information follows disabled learners across education settings (Ministry of Education).

Recommendation 18: Improve coordination across agencies on supporting disabled learners' education (Whaikaha (lead), Ministry of Education, MSD, Oranga Tamariki, Ministry of Health, ACC).

Recommendation 19: Schools to more strongly collaborate and share resources and expertise (Ministry of Education).

7. Adoption of these recommendations has the potential to significantly improve education experiences and outcomes for disabled learners. Improving education for these learners can in turn dramatically improve their lives and life course.
8. The recommendations are high level and require work programmes led by the Ministry of Education, ERO, NZSTA, Teaching Council, and Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People, to develop more detailed options for Ministers, including costing. We have recommended that agencies report to Ministers on progress in July 2023.

The publication of the school evaluation report will now be jointly published with the ECE report at the end of September 2022

9. The publication of the report for the evaluation of education for disabled learners in schools was originally planned for the first week September, while the publication of the ECE report was planned for the end of September. Feedback from the sector is that it would be more helpful to release the reports together so they can provide a complete picture of education for disabled learners. We now propose publishing them simultaneously on the 27 September 2022.
10. To enable disabled learners and their whānau to understand the findings, and for schools and services to learn from the findings, ERO will:
 - a. Publish a short summary and make available in a range of accessible formats
 - b. Publish a tailored guide for learners and whānau (also available in a range of accessible formats)
 - c. Publish tailored guides for school leaders, teachers, Board of Trustees, service leaders and kaiako

A number of activities are planned to support the launch of the reports and to ensure we reach and have maximum impact with our key stakeholders

11. The publication of both the school and ECE reports will be supported by a forum and targeted best practice webinars.
12. The forum will be an in-person event for education sector peak bodies, learning support policy and operations professionals, and other interested government agencies. The focus of the launch will be on the findings from the two evaluations and what needs to be done to enable disabled learners to thrive in education.
13. A series of best practice webinars will be run by ERO for principals, SENCOs, teachers, ECE service managers and kaiako. The focus of these webinars will be on findings from the report and good practice examples for schools and ECE.

Next Steps

14. A copy of this briefing and the near final (pre-designed) schools report and summary will be shared with Hon Poto Williams, in her capacity as Minister for Disability Issues.
15. A joint meeting with you, Hon Williams, and ERO officials has been scheduled for 1 September 2022 to discuss the key findings from the school evaluation and the recommendations.

16. Given their education portfolios, ERO recommends that you forward this briefing to Hons Davis, Hipkins and Sio.
17. A briefing and near final copy of the ECE report and summary will be provided to you in mid-September. At this time, we will also provide you with a copy of the joint media release for both the school and ECE reports and with Q&A.

Recommendations

18. It is recommended that you:

- a) **Note** the attached near final (pre-designed) report and summary: *Thriving at school? Education for disabled learners in schools* noted
- b) **Note** that the publication of ERO's evaluation on education for disabled learners in schools will now be jointly published with the ECE report before the end of September 2022. noted
- c) **Note** that ERO will publish accompanying guides for different audiences and hold a forum and targeted best practice webinars to support the publication and impact of the school and ECE reports. noted
- d) **Agree** to forward this briefing to the Minister of Education and Associate Ministers. agreed disagreed
- e) **Note** that a meeting with you, Hon Williams and ERO officials is scheduled for 1 September 2022 to discuss the key findings and recommendations. noted
- f) **Note** that this briefing is recommended for proactive release after the publication of the report. noted



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED/APPROVED



Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)

04 / 09 / 2022