



Briefing Note: 2021 Early Learning Action Plan monitoring and evaluation

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Education		
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Purpose of Report

This briefing provides you with:

- Information on the first of three reports the Ministry and ERO are jointly delivering which monitor and evaluate progress on the Early Learning Action Plan (ELAP).
- An A3 summary (attached) showing how existing measures for the ELAP tracked in 2021.

Summary

- At the June 2021 ELAP stocktake strategy session, 13 indicators were identified and endorsed to measure progress across quality, equity, and parental choice.
- Three reports on the indicators which monitor and evaluate progress on the ELAP will be produced by the end of 2023.

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- a note that the Ministry and ERO are jointly delivering three ELAP monitoring and evaluation reports based on the 13 indicators agreed to by the Ministry and ERO.

- b **note** that the A3 summary attached is the first of the three reports, showing how existing measures for the ELAP tracked in 2021.
- c **agree** the A3 summary be published on the Education Counts website in late June 2022. The specific date will be confirmed with your office. A copy of reactive communications is attached to this briefing.

Agree Disagree

- d **agree** this briefing is released once considered.

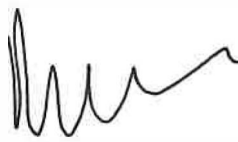
Agree Disagree



Nancy Bell

Hautū Te Mahau
| Te Tai Runga

25/5/22



Ruth Shinoda

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Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

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Background

1. At the June 2021 ELAP stocktake strategy session (the strategy session), the Ministry and ERO jointly committed to delivering ongoing monitoring and evaluation reports for the ELAP.
2. Thirteen indicators were identified to measure progress across the ELAP. These relate to the quality of early learning provision, equity for learners, parental choice of service type and teaching workforce. These indicators and measures were endorsed at the strategy session.
3. Three reports on the 13 indicators, to monitor and evaluate progress on the ELAP's goals, will be produced by the end of 2023. These are:
 - a. The attached A3 summary which uses existing measures to show progress in implementation of the ELAP during 2021.
 - b. 2022 year-end report with a fuller set of measures, including nuanced data extraction and analysis.
 - c. 2023 year-end report with a complete set of new and existing measures and full data triangulation.
4. The full set of monitoring and evaluation reporting will be published publicly. Reporting will include existing measures as well as new measures, which will require further development. Annex 1 provides you with a high-level summary of these indicators and measures.

The A3 summary of ELAP measures for 2021

5. The A3 summary uses data collected in 2021 from existing Ministry collection methods, including data from the ECE Census, ELI and FIRST. As most of the measures for the A3 summary are based on previous public releases of 2021 data, they do not align perfectly to the indicators and goals of ELAP. Therefore, these measures only provide a provisional understanding on how the indicators are tracking.
6. The summary includes 2020 comparatives alongside the 2021 data. We note both years were impacted by COVID-19.
7. Key findings from the A3 summary, for each of the goals and the enabler of workforce, and their respective indicators are outlined below:

a. **Quality**

- i. **Quality teachers**
The majority of early learning teachers were qualified – 70% overall; with 66% qualified in Education and Care, and 94% in kindergarten.
- ii. **Adult: child Ratios**
The average adult:child ratio for:
 - under 2-year-olds was 1 adult to 3.7 children.
 - 2-year-olds and over was 1 adult to 6.6 children.

While the average adult to child ratio gives an indication of the direction of this ratio, it does not reflect ratios in individual services. Consideration is

being given to how adult to child ratios could be better collected, measured, and reported that reflect future regulated ratios.

iii. **Non-complying services**

- There were 1,222 breaches of licensing criteria in 143 licensed early learning services, which were placed on provisional licenses.¹
- "Health and safety" was the most common breach (42% of total breaches).
- Education and Care services had the highest number of non-compliant services (97 Education and Care services).
- The Ministry analysed overall trends and themes from provisional licences. This information was used to inform the work of Ministry licensing staff and to provide targeted communication to the early learning sector.

b. **Equity**

i. **Enrolments**

- Enrolments in licensed early learning services and the Correspondence School increased 2% from 2020, to 194,697.
- Enrolments for mokopuna Māori increased 3% from 2020 (to 46,873 enrolments), compared to a half percent increase in population.²
- Enrolments for Pacific children fell 1% from 2020 (to 14,605 enrolments), compared to a 1.1% increase in the population.
- The percentage of children aged 3 who were enrolled in ECE increased from 86% in 2020, to 87% in 2021.
- The percentage of children aged 4 who were enrolled in ECE increased from 91% in 2020 to 92% in 2021.³

ii. **Participation Intensity**

- The Participation Intensity Measure (PIM) is the percentage of children, across the population of children in New Zealand, attending an early learning service for 10 hours or more per week on average, across 52 weeks of the year.
- Because the PIM is calculated as an average, it does not capture the detail of a specific learner's attendance patterns. For example, if they had 80 hours for the first ten weeks and then 0 for the following 42 (out of 52 weeks of the year).
- The PIM also does not take into account or remove time that children spent in COVID-19 related lockdowns or isolation periods during 2021 (Annex 3 refers).

¹ The count of unique services that had been placed onto a provisional license was 141. The total number of services on provisional licenses was 143 because two services were placed on a provisional license twice in 2021. The total number of non-compliance exceeding the number of services is because ECE services can be non-compliant in one or more areas.

² Based on estimated resident population from Stats NZ Infoshare, table: National ethnic population projections by age and sex, 2018(base)-2043. Population based on total number of Maori/Pacific people in 0-4 age group, in 2020 and 2021.

³ Based on estimated resident population from Stats NZ Infoshare, table: National ethnic population projections by age and sex, 2018(base)-2043. Population based on total number of people in aged 3 and 4 groups, in 2020 and 2021

c. **Choice**

i. **Availability by service-type**

- Children aged 1: In 42% of ECE services there were wait times for children (up from 30%). Education and Care had the highest percentage of services with wait times (52%).
- Children aged 4: In 40% of ECE services there were wait times for children (an increase from 33%). Kindergarten had the highest percentage of services with wait times (64%).
- Occupancy rates, the measure of how full ECE services are, were greatest in kindergartens (83%), followed by Education and Care services (77%) with playcentres having the lowest (53%).⁴

ii. **Availability by location**

- All 16 geographic regions had an increase in the proportion of services with waiting times for children aged 1 and 4.

iii. **Language setting**

- Between 2020 and 2021, for bilingual and immersion services:
 - Te Reo Māori services (not Kōhanga Reo) increased to 57, from 56.
 - Kōhanga Reo decreased to 434, from 444.
 - Pacific languages services decreased to 96, from 118.
 - Asian languages services increased to 45, from 35.

d. **Workforce- Size of workforce**

- i. The number of qualified and unqualified teachers increased.
- ii. Qualified teachers increased by 6%, from 21,836 in 2020 to 23,133 in 2021.
- iii. Unqualified Teachers increased by 14%, from 8,640 in 2020 to 9,852 in 2021.

New Measures for 2022 ELAP indicators

8. The Ministry is currently working on developing three new measures as part of the 2022 year-end report. These measures will be included in the 2022 year-end report along with the existing measures used in the A3 summary. The new measures include:
 - a. **Teacher retention rates:** collected through ECE census, this measure will provide a greater understanding of entry into the early learning teacher workforce, turnover and leaving rates.
 - b. **Availability by hours:** this measure will provide greater understanding of the number of services with an hourly or daily operational model, such as sessional or full day services.
 - c. **Measure of participation in quality services:** the definition and data used for this measure is being considered by the Ministry and ERO. This measure has not been included in the A3 summary of existing measures and will now be included in the 2022 report.

⁴ Home-based services are not included in measures of occupancy rates.

9. The Ministry will need to develop a range of further measures for the 2023 reports. Development of these will begin in the second half of 2022.

10. ERO is developing new tools and measures for monitoring ELAP in 2022. This will include a suite of surveys for kaiako, whānau and peak bodies, and a tool for gathering compliance and quality judgement data from their regular reviews of services. These tools will produce new measures that will contribute some preliminary data to the 2022 report, with more robust baseline data ready for the fully triangulated 2023 report.

Prioritisation needed to develop new ELAP Measures

11. To monitor and evaluate ELAP on an ongoing basis the Ministry will need to dedicate resources to the development of new measures and reporting; as well as for technology and services required to collect and store new data.

12. These new measures will allow the goals to be tracked, where we currently do not have sufficient data to accurately track progress towards the goals. For example:
 - a. **Retention rates** – will help understand when staff in each service move employment to a different service or leave the teaching workforce.
 - b. **More precise adult:child ratios** – will help better understand the ratios to track progress against future regulated ratios for two year olds.
 - c. **Parent fees** – will help understand the cost of accessing ECE for parents. There is potential to look at affordability in the future if data is linked into the IDI.

13. The measures being developed for monitoring and evaluating ELAP will likely have uses beyond this work programme. For example, the objectives and tracking of ELAP will help contribute to understanding progress against the National Education Learning Priorities (NELP). The measures will also inform policy decisions by providing greater understanding of the needs of providers, kaiako and whānau. How new measures can inform other work programmes will be better understood and considered as they are developed.

14. The Ministry is considering ways to resource this work and the timeframe for delivery. In the meantime, we will identify other possible data sources to create a picture of the current state against the goals, which can be augmented with the new measures over time.

15. The Ministry and ERO will provide you with an update later this year to signal manageability on the new indicators for 2023.

Next Steps

16. The A3 summary will be circulated to ECAC members and then published on Education Counts in late June.
17. An update on the ELAP monitoring and evaluation work will be provided to you at the July Strategy Session for the ELAP.
18. The Ministry and ERO will continue to engage on ELAP, and work to deliver the 2022 and 2023 reports.

Annexes

- Annex 1: ELAP High Level Indicators and Measures
- Annex 2: ELAP A3 Summary
- Annex 3: Early Learning Participation – EWU 14 October 2021
- Annex 4: Reactive Communications