



Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): Teacher aide practice and support: What good looks like

Date	11 November 2022
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M22-66
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
Associate Minister of Education	<p>It is recommended that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Note that ERO intends to release the attached report <i>Working together: How teacher aides can have the most impact</i> on 1 December 2022. b) Agree to forward this briefing and the attached report to the Minister for Education, and Associate Ministers. c) Indicate if you want to discuss this report with ERO officials prior to its launch. d) Note this briefing is recommended for proactive release at the time of its publication. 	



Attachments:

***Education Review Office (ERO):
Teacher aide practice and support:
What good looks like***



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: M22-66

11 November 2022

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education (Schools Operating)

Teacher aide practice and support: Good practice report

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with a near final report, summary, and guide for school leaders, from ERO's research on teacher aide practice and support (attached as Appendix A). We intend to publish this report on 1 December.
2. The report looks at teacher aide (TA) practices as well as how the practices of teachers, leaders, and others, support them.

Background

3. ERO was commissioned jointly by the Ministry of Education and NZEI Te Riu Roa to produce a report focused on sharing good TA practice and support. This commissioning is linked to ongoing work, through the Accord, on supporting the teacher aide workforce.
4. There are approximately 22,000 TAs employed in Aotearoa New Zealand schools. Most TAs work closely with priority learner groups; supporting learners with identified support needs, supporting learners of diverse cultures and/or who are learning English, and enacting Māori and Pacific cultural support roles.
5. Research evidence shows that the quality of TA support has significant impacts on learners' wellbeing and learning. While good practices have positive effects, poor practices are linked to isolation, limited learner autonomy and agency, and poor academic outcomes. ERO's recent evaluation of provision for disabled learners noted some concerning practices, for example, TAs planning for learners instead of teachers. The sector, and learners, would benefit from up-to-date information and practical guidance.
6. Over the past six months ERO has researched good practice and support for teacher aides. To do this we looked at the national and international evidence base, and interviewed TAs, teachers, principals and senior leaders, SENCOs, LSCs, RTLBs, parents, and learners from 11 diverse primary and secondary schools.
7. The schools that participated were recommended to us by contacts at the Ministry and NZEI Te Riu Roa as good practice examples. Interviews were focused on what works well.

Overall findings

8. ERO looked at what the research evidence says about good TA practices and good support practices for TAs, and identified how these practices work in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.
9. There are four key areas of TA practice that are strongly reflected in the evidence base as effective for learners:
 - a. **Generalised classroom support** – TAs working with the wider class, enabling teachers to have quality interactions with those learners that need extra support.
 - b. **Delivering structured interventions** – TAs holding short, highly structured sessions with individuals and small groups, using evidence-based programmes and interventions.
 - c. **Te ao Māori cultural leadership and support** – Māori TAs supporting staff and students with their cultural expertise.
 - d. **Collaboratively supporting students with learning support needs** – TAs using a collaborative approach to supporting the learning and wellbeing of these students, focusing on working with experts and promoting autonomy, agency, and inclusion.
10. For each of these four key areas, the report provides an overview of the evidence base. This is followed by narrative examples, strategies, insights, and quotes from our participants **focused on TA practice**, and then narrative examples, strategies, insights, and quotes from our participants **focused on how schools can support those TA practices**
11. The main messages of the report are as follows:
 - a. **Understandings** of good TA practice and support **have changed over time**.
 - b. **Side-by-side support does not work well** for most learners.
 - c. **TAs can have a positive impact on learners' learning and wellbeing**, with collaborative, evidence-based strategies (particularly: generalised classroom support; delivering structured interventions; te ao Māori cultural leadership and support; and collaboratively supporting learners with support needs).
 - d. **Teachers and leaders need to actively support good quality TA practices**, through: building current understandings of the TA role; sharing key information with TAs; discussing plans and strategies with TAs; valuing TAs' expertise, insights, and cultural perspectives; involving TAs in meetings and professional learning opportunities; and purposefully building a school culture of including and collaborating with TAs.
 - e. **Collaborating to enable great TA practice is worth the time and effort**. Participants shared with ERO that they were energised by the practices they had put in place, and could clearly see their efforts paying off in the classroom and in their learners' outcomes.

Guides

12. Alongside the report, ERO will be publishing five targeted guides focused on improving understandings and practices.
 - a. Three practical guides with strategies and reflective questions for: TAs; teachers; and school leaders (including learning support leaders).
 - b. Two brief guides including useful questions to ask a school, for: parents and whānau of learners with support needs; and school boards.
13. An example of one of the practical guides, *A practical guide for school leaders: What quality teacher aide practice looks like*, is included with this briefing as Appendix 1.

Publication

14. The report and guides are focused on providing clear guidance and practical strategies, to create practice changes in the sector. To ensure that the resources can have impact, we have designed the resources to:
 - a. Be brief, clear and engaging.
 - b. Use plain language, grounded in robust evidence.
 - c. Offer practical ideas and strategies.
 - d. Be targeted and relevant to key groups.
 - e. Heavily feature sector voices.
15. ERO intends to publish this report on 1 December 2022. We plan to share the report with key groups through:
 - a. An ERO media release on the morning of publication (see Appendix B).
 - b. Publication of the report on the ERO website.
 - c. Sending the report to peak bodies that support boards and principals.
 - d. Delivering online webinars on key findings and advice for schools and services.
 - e. Providing accessible guides for schools and whānau.

Recommendations

16. It is recommended that you:
 - a) **Note** that ERO intends to release the attached report *Working together: How teacher aides can have the most impact* on 1 December 2022. **Noted**
 - b) **Agree** to forward this briefing and the attached report to the Minister for Education, and Associate Ministers. **Agreed** ~~Disagreed~~

c) | **Indicate** if you want to discuss this report with ERO officials
| prior to its launch.

Yes/No

d) | **Note** this briefing is recommended for proactive release at
| the time of its publication.

Noted



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED/APPROVED



Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education (Schools Operating)

20/11 / 2022

Appendix A: Report and Summary

Appendix B: Draft ERO media release