

PART 7 EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION

CRC/C/15/Add.2.16: Para 44

The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) ensure that all children in the State party have access to free primary education**
- (b) enforce legislation on compulsory education and prohibit exclusions on arbitrary grounds such as pregnancy, and ensure that students of the age of compulsory education who have legitimately been excluded from a school are enrolled elsewhere**
- (c) take effective measures to address disparities in enrolment and dropout rates between ethnic groups, including by strengthening programmes for bilingual education**
- (d) take all necessary measures, including the provision of quality counselling programmes in schools, to address behavioural problems of students while respecting their right to privacy.**

7.1 There have been a large number of changes across the whole education sector since the last report, from early childhood education and care (see part 6) to compulsory (primary and secondary) and tertiary education. The aim of the changes has been to ensure all New Zealanders have the opportunity to access and receive quality education that is sensitive and responsive to cultural diversity, and delivered in a manner appropriate to an individual student's learning needs and ability.

7.2 The changes recognise the important role education plays in enabling every child to achieve their full potential and the positive contribution it makes to their social and economic well-being. These changes include

- investing in the workforce through increasing remuneration and providing ongoing professional development
- implementing a new and innovative curriculum and achievement system
- implementing a range of strategies to improve educational outcomes for all, with a focus on Māori, Pacific and those with learning difficulties
- creating a new organisation (the Tertiary Education Commission) to plan, fund and monitor the tertiary sector with a mandate to ensure relevant and quality provision, alongside initiatives that reduce student's costs.

Access to education

7.3 The situation remains unchanged from that previously reported. Section 3 of the Education Act 1989 provides that "every person who is not a foreign student is entitled to free enrolment and free education at any state school during the period beginning on the person's fifth birthday and ending on 1 January after the person's 19th birthday". Therefore, all children from the ages of five to 19 are entitled to receive a free education at a New Zealand state-run primary or secondary school. This includes alternative education, teen parent units and correspondence school. International students are charged fees to attend school, as are students attending some integrated (mainly schools with a religious focus) and private schools. Integrated and private schools also receive state funding, as do parents home schooling their children.

- 7.4 Legal access to free education has been extended to children illegally in New Zealand (and whose parents are seeking to regularise their immigration status) under the Limited Purpose Permit regime in 2007, as noted in Part 1.
- 7.5 State-run schools are able to seek fees from parents and do so for a variety of reasons. However, as set down in legislation, non-payment of fees cannot deny an enrolled student access to education.

Teenage parents

- 7.6 The Ministry of Education is unaware of any student excluded or expelled because of pregnancy, and there are a number of options encouraging teen parents to continue their education or to re-engage following the birth of their child. Options include enrolment in Correspondence School while still maintaining enrolment at their local school, or attending one of 17 Teenage Parent Units nationwide. These units include child care facilities and pastoral care for both the parent(s) and the child.
- 7.7 A number of additional supports are in place for teenage parents. For example, the Ministry of Social Development provides eight teen parent co-ordinators throughout the country in areas that have high numbers of teen parents. They ensure that teen parents are aware of the supports available and connect them with the appropriate health, social and education services. Teen parents can access dedicated social assistance, including day-to-day living costs, additional resources to facilitate engagement or re-engagement with education, and costs such as child care, books and travel.

"It's really unfair that you should have to leave school just because you're pregnant, because it's a bad look for the school"
[female, 15, youth stream, UNCROC Forum 2006]

Enrolment

- 7.8 It is compulsory for a student between the ages of six and 16 to be enrolled at and attend school. In 2007, the Ministry of Education implemented a national web-based enrolment register to track individual student enrolments within the school system (ENROL). ENROL also automates the transfer of student information when a student changes school. The Ministry expects to build on the ENROL infrastructure to improve information quality and quantity during students' time at school. ENROL is already helping to faster identify students who have not re-enrolled, allowing them to be located and supported in their return to a suitable education setting earlier.

Truancy

- 7.9 The Education Act 1989 provides the power to prosecute parents for not ensuring their children are attending school. These powers have been actively used as part of the Student Engagement Initiative, with the aim of reinforcing to parents/guardians their obligations to ensure their children attend school. The Ministry of Education contracts truancy services to locate individual students who are either not enrolled, or truant, and supports them to return to school. Police Youth Aid Officers are also involved, as partners in local truancy prevention initiatives, to work with truants and their families.

School exclusions, stand downs and suspensions

- 7.10 As the Committee noted in 2003, concern exists in the high number of students disengaging from school early, either through stand down, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, truancy, or non-enrolment. This problem has disproportionately affected Māori, and more recently, Pacific Island children and young people.
- 7.11 The Education Act 1989 requires a school to notify the Secretary of Education when students are excluded (students under 16) or expelled (students over 16). The Secretary must find a school in which an excluded student can be re-enrolled and has powers to direct the re-enrolment of a student who has been expelled.

Early leaving exemptions

- 7.12 Early leaving exemptions are approved by the Ministry of Education and enable students under 16 to leave school legally. Since 2007, the Ministry of Education has actively managed the issuing of early leaving exemptions, reducing the number of those approved by 50 percent from 4,000 to 2,000.

Student Engagement Initiative

- 7.13 Since 2001, concerted effort and resources have been dedicated to reducing the numbers of students disengaging from school early, with a particular focus on Māori. A range of approaches and actions have been initiated under the Student Engagement Initiative to specifically address this issue, including the Suspension Reduction Initiative and an active use of enforcement provisions under the Education Act 1989 to reduce truancy. Initially 65 schools with high Māori suspension rates, high numbers of early leaving exemptions, or high rates of truancy were targeted. An additional 78 schools became part of the initiative from 2002 to 2007 including some primary schools, while others that successfully reduced and maintained a low suspension rate, moved out of the initiative. In 2007, 91 schools were actively involved.
- 7.14 The Ministry of Education annually monitors these initiatives in partnership with schools. Targeted initiatives under the Student Engagement Strategy have had a significant impact in reducing students' early disengagement from school, with 2007 figures showing reductions in the rates of suspensions, stand downs, exemptions and truancy. However, Māori continue to be disproportionately represented in all categories of disengagement. Complementary strategies are being applied to ensure improved retention and achievement for Māori; these are discussed below.

Schools Plus

- 7.15 In April this year government announced a new initiative called Schools Plus. It seeks to ensure that all students remain engaged either in school, or in some other form of training or education until the age of 18. Currently up to 30 percent of students leave before the age of 17, many without attaining a NCEA Level 1 qualification. Māori students leave school earlier than other students, and are less likely to leave with qualifications.
- 7.16 The initiative actively seeks to reduce student disengagement numbers by creating a range of alternative learning pathways, including vocational learning at an earlier age (youth

"Make [school] work more fun so that students will want to do it". [Male, 16, Schools Plus Consultation, group meetings hosted by the Ministry of Youth Development, 2008]

apprenticeships), and/or training and education opportunities to under-18 year olds in full-time work. National consultation on Schools Plus has just been completed, and included seeking young people's views. Government is now considering a range of responses including legislative changes, professional development of teachers and improved pathways for students.

Initiatives to encourage Māori

- 7.17 Increasing the success of Māori in all aspects of education, from early childhood to life-long learning, remains a key priority for government. This is to be achieved through a range of initiatives that include: lifting Māori participation in quality early childhood education, compulsory and tertiary education; improving the capability of schools to better meet the needs of Māori students; supporting Māori language teaching in schools, and in bilingual and immersion settings; and recruiting more Māori teachers through increasing the availability of scholarships (TeachNZ).
- 7.18 Over the reporting period a number of significant initiatives have been put in place, the most recent being the 2008 launch of Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success, a strategy for Māori education for 2008 – 2012 (see below). Māori students (160,660 students) comprise around 22 percent of the total student population. By 2020, it is estimated that approximately 40 percent of all primary school children, and 35 percent of all secondary school children, will be of Māori and/or Pacific descent.
- 7.19 There is evidence that a number of previously negative indicators (including retention and achievement) are starting to change. A number of highlights include:
- between 1995 and 2006 the proportion of Māori 16 year olds still in secondary school rose from 72.4 percent to 80.6 percent
 - the proportion of Māori students leaving school with no qualifications fell from 33.4 percent in 1999 to 21.8 percent in 2006
 - the proportion of Māori school-leavers who left school without achieving NCEA Level 1 qualification dropped from 44 percent in 2006 to 35 percent in 2007
 - the percentage of Māori students entering directly into formal tertiary education from high school rose from 31 percent of school leavers in 1998 to 51.2 percent in 2005
 - the percentage of Māori school leavers with a university entrance qualification doubled between 2001 and 2006, from 7.4 percent to 14.8 percent.
- 7.20 The Ministry of Education's comprehensive Ngā Haeata Mātauranga - the Annual Report on Māori Education, 2006/07 sets out in detail significant statistical profiles of Māori participation and achievement in education, with data covering most of the reporting period. Kura kaupapa Māori (and kura teina) are schools that teach using Te Reo Māori. In 2006 there were 6,125 Māori students attending these schools.
- 7.21 The initiative Whakaaro Mātauranga seeks to encourage a more positive image of Māori in education through a public information campaign Te Mana Ki te
- "I feel that we need to keep our thinking caps on in creating strategies to make sure children can succeed in education by giving the right tools, the right funding as well as the professional support so that more students can attend school."
[Te Kerei Moka, (17 and 23 years old) New Zealand representative in 2002 and 2007 at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children: Commemorative High Level Plenary Session 2007]*

Taumata, (Get There with Learning). The initiative aims to increase expectations of educational success and achievement among Māori, the community and education providers, by modelling success and achievement and highlighting career choices available through education.

Ka Hikitia – Māori Education Strategy

- 7.22 Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy (2008 – 2012) was developed to focus government, school and teacher practice on lifting the achievement of Māori students through an evidence-based, outcome-focused approach.
- 7.23 Ka Hikitia sets out priorities, goals, actions, targets and outcomes for Māori students over the next five years, and draws together evidence of successful approaches to Māori education. The key elements of the strategy include better supporting the professional learning and capability of educators, responsible and accountable professional leadership, high-quality Māori language education, family, whānau and iwi engagement in education, and government agencies working together.

Pacific students

- 7.24 New Zealand has a significant and growing Pacific population with its own particular educational needs. Pacific students now constitute 9.3 percent of the New Zealand school population, an increase from 7.6 percent in 1997. New Zealand has developed a Pacific Education Plan to ensure the success of Pacific peoples' education. The Plan is designed to help ensure that Pacific children and students receive high-quality education from early childhood to tertiary education. Focusing on the long term, the plan offers a co-ordinated approach compared to past ad hoc initiatives. The Plan recognises that Pacific peoples must be supported to take charge of solving many of the problems themselves, in partnership with government and education providers.
- 7.25 Between 1998 and 2006, the percentage of Pacific students leaving with little or no formal achievement fell from 27.4 percent to 12.2 percent. The proportion of Pacific students leaving school qualified to attend university increased from 11 percent in 1998 to 16.8 percent in 2006, although this is still below the overall rate of 36.3 percent for all school leavers.

Addressing behavioural problems

- 7.26 Schools and families can call on special education services for children and young people with severe behaviour difficulties. The government has focused on ensuring special education services are better co-ordinated and responsive to the needs of students and families. Special education provides extra assistance, adapted programmes or learning environments, and specialised equipment or materials to support children and young people and help them participate in education. Special education support includes specialist teachers, health professionals and Ministry of Education specialists. All schools receive a grant called the Special Education Grant and access school-based resource teachers called Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour.
- 7.27 School settings available to students with special education needs include mainstream classrooms, special schools and special education classes within mainstream schools. A child's parent or caregiver has the right to choose which school setting their child attends.

- 7.28 The National Education Guidelines require schools to provide a safe physical and emotional environment. Schools develop behaviour-management policies and procedures to be followed by staff and students. The new Curriculum was launched late in 2007 and includes core competencies such as Managing Self and Relating to Others.
- 7.29 Schools are responsible for managing low-level disruption and “moderate” behaviour which impacts on learning. There is additional funding and support available for teachers, including over 700 resource teachers who can assist with students who have learning and behavioural difficulties. In 2007, the Ministry of Education launched the Interim Response Fund and a website which provides up-to-date information and resources on behaviour issues including bullying. Additional initiatives to combat bullying were announced in July 2008.
- 7.30 There are three national residential schools for children with severe behaviour problems, and two residential schools for students with severe learning, behavioural and/or emotional needs. These schools provide programmes that have a consistent approach to behaviour across the school and residential services. Students are not enrolled at these schools for their entire schools career – the aim is to re-integrate each student back into his or her local school and community as soon as is feasible.

Counselling in schools

- 7.31 Counsellors are available in some secondary schools and a number of primary and secondary schools have a range of support services, including health workers, social workers, youth workers and other such professionals. They are all bound by their professional code of ethics or professional association rules, which include maintaining confidentiality (except if abuse is suspected).

Conduct disorder/severe antisocial behaviour

- 7.32 In 2007, government published the Inter-agency Plan for Conduct Disorder/Severe Antisocial Behaviour, managed by the Ministry of Social Development. This plan outlines action areas for a comprehensive and effective approach to managing and treating behavioural difficulties. Over the next four years the focus will be on ensuring existing services are evidence-based and follow best-practice interventions. A comprehensive behavioural service for three to seven year olds will be established. A group of experts has been set up to advise on best practice in these areas. An inter-agency group will consider the recommendations, review current provisions and propose new and upgraded interventions by the end of 2009. Indicators to monitor the overall effectiveness of the Inter-agency Plan are being established.

EDUCATION GENERAL

- 7.33 The New Zealand education system provides for diversity in schooling options and includes public, private and integrated schools. Further diversity of schooling is provided in certain areas by 73 Kura Kaupapa Māori schools (compared with 59 in 1999). Kura Kaupapa Māori are state schools in which Māori language, culture and values predominate and in which the principal language of instruction is Māori. Forty-six state special schools provide specialist

education services for children with special education needs. Home schooling is available to parents who want to educate their children at home, provided they maintain a standard of education equivalent to that of a registered school.

Early childhood education

- 7.34 Participation in education and training from an early age is important for children and young people, and New Zealand invests significantly in ensuring that children and young people have maximum opportunities to participate. Most under-fives are enrolled in some form of early childhood education, or child care, and participation has increased significantly in recent years. Over 94 percent of children attend early childhood education before beginning school (up from 92 percent in 2002 when this data began). Initiatives to increase participation include:
- twenty hours of free early childhood education introduced for three and four year olds in July 2007. These hours are available to all parents regardless of income
 - the Early Childhood Discretionary Grant Scheme, an annual allocation of grants to eligible community-based groups. The scheme accords priority to those communities with significantly lower early childhood education participation rates than the national average. Funding for this initiative has risen from \$0.5 million in 200/2001 to \$6.2 million in 2007/2008.
 - the Ministry of Education's Promoting Participation Project that targets communities with low early childhood education participation and facilitates access to quality services. The project was developed in 2000 and first implemented in 2001 with ongoing funding of \$2.8 million per annum.

EDUCATION, INCLUDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND GUIDANCE (article 28)

- 7.35 New Zealand recognises education in its broadest sense. Over the reporting period, there has been increased recognition of the importance of all levels of education and training, and that vocational pathways are as important as formal academic training. This is reflected in the time and money the government is investing in initiatives aimed at encouraging young people to participate in education and training, and assisting them to make a successful transition from these into work.

Vocational initiatives

- 7.36 Since 2000, there has been a focus on improving vocational opportunities for young people to reduce their risk of 'dropping out', making better links with employment opportunities and encouraging those already disengaged from school to re-enter school or an alternative form of training. In addition, there has been a significant investment in career guidance including new initiatives to improve students' and families' access to information so that they can make informed choices about further education and training.
- 7.37 Youth Training offers foundation-level training to young people under 18 who have left school with few or no qualifications. It is a fully funded, full-time programme (up to 52 weeks) administered by the Tertiary Education Commission and mainly provided by Private Training Establishments. Trainees are expected to be able to progress to further education or into

employment within two months of completing the courses. There were 11,350 youth trainees in 2006, 46 percent of whom were Māori.

- 7.38 The Gateway project is delivered to students at secondary school and is a vocational- based initiative designed for students interested in a particular industry. Students spend one day a week in their workplace where they are assessed and can obtain credits that count towards an industry qualification. In the year to 31 December 2006, approximately 6,680 young people of whom 2,068 were Māori, participated in Gateway.
- 7.39 A new initiative called Modern Apprenticeships was introduced in 2000 and expanded over the following years. It involves work-based learning for young people involved in industry and enables them to gain a qualification. Employers receive support from a co-ordinator to help manage the apprenticeship. The programme is targeted at 16 to 21 year olds who are able to meet the industry's entry requirements and are ready to start working towards a NCEA Level 3 or 4 qualification. As at July 2006 there were 5,490 under-18 year olds involved in the programme.
- 7.40 Youth Apprenticeships is a vocational training programme aimed at assisting young people with low or no secondary school qualifications, to continue with further education, or move into work. Youth apprenticeships is being trialed in 20 schools in 2008 and rolled out to a further 100 schools in 2009. The Tertiary Education Commission is also piloting a post-placement support programme for trainees who have undergone Youth Training.

Designing Careers

- 7.41 Designing Careers was an initial step towards improving career planning for all schools, ending in 2006. Designing Careers laid the groundwork for 'Creating Pathways and Building Lives', or CPaBL, a new programme led by the Ministry of Education and supported by Career Services. CPaBL was initiated in 2007 in 100 secondary schools nationwide, and \$7.6 million over two years has been allocated for its implementation.
- 7.42 CPaBL supports schools to work with their young people to provide them with comprehensive and holistic careers advice and guidance. Each school has a 'school team' tasked with developing and implementing an effective school-wide career education plan that is recognised in the school's governance and reporting arrangements. The school team includes the Principal, any careers staff, a Career Services representative and an advisor from School Support Services (a unit of the Ministry of Education responsible for promoting teachers' professional development). School teams are linked to local Youth Transition Services, the Tertiary Education Commission and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

Youth Transition Services

- 7.43 The Youth Transition Services is funded by the Ministry of Social Development and implemented in partnership with the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs. It is designed to connect with young people and to encourage and support them in thinking about their futures. The goal is to have all 15 to 19 year olds in work, education or training, or other activities that contribute to their long-term economic independence and well-being. Youth Transition Service works with local providers giving support to young people through further education, training or other activities. Many of the young people who have used the service have been supported into quality career and training opportunities, returned to school or tertiary education.

The Mayors' Task Force

- 7.44 The Mayors' Task Force initiative provides government funds for collaboration between central and local government aimed at providing one-year projects with training, education and work outcomes for youth, in particular those aged between 15 and 19 years. These projects predominantly involve local government cadetships and vocational mentoring as well as transitional services.

AIMS OF EDUCATION (article 29) WITH REFERENCE TO QUALITY OF EDUCATION

- 7.45 Government has provided significant additional investment into education, through increasing teachers' salaries (across the board) and providing for ongoing professional development. In addition they have invested in more teachers so that classroom sizes can be reduced. This includes recent funding being invested to ensure that all new entrant classes have a teacher-pupil ratio of no more than one to fifteen. This investment is considered essential so that new entrants can be given the best start, and their learning needs attended to immediately, with appropriate supports put around children who may need additional assistance such as reading recovery.

International benchmarks

- 7.46 Participation in international studies provides New Zealand with benchmarks for comparing our system with those of other countries, and is also a rich source of evidence for developing education policy. The programme of international assessment (PISA) is undertaken every three years and New Zealand is one of 57 countries taking part in this cycle which focuses on scientific literacy but also assesses reading and mathematical literacy. The results of the 2006 survey were released in December 2007 and New Zealand students were ranked seventh out of the 57 countries taking part.
- 7.47 Overall reports indicate that New Zealand is performing as well as, or better than, many other countries in education. The State of Education in New Zealand (2007) which pulls together indicators on participation, achievement, effective teaching, labour market outcomes and resource levels shows that New Zealand is making good progress.

Curriculum

- 7.48 In November 2007, a new curriculum for primary and secondary schools was released providing guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum delivery. The curriculum complements the new assessment framework for secondary schools.
- 7.49 The new curriculum is outcome-focused and moves away from detailed subject prescription. It sets out a comprehensive and positive vision for children and young people's learning. The vision is underpinned by five key competencies (thinking, using language, symbols and texts, managing self, relating to others, participating and contributing) to support eight learning areas (English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and

statistics, science, social sciences and technology). There is a parallel document, Te Mātauranga ō Aotearoa, providing the same guidance and framework for Māori-medium schools. Although they come from different perspectives, both start with visions of young people who will develop the competencies they need for study, work and lifelong learning and go on to realise their potential.

- 7.50 The curriculum was developed following a 2000 review of the 1992 curriculum and substantive consultation that included discussions with over 15,000 people including students, teachers, parents and the wider community. Over 10,000 written submissions were received on the draft in 2006. Implementation of the curriculum enables schools and wider communities to tailor education delivery to reflect the interest and needs of students and their wider community and students. Delivery is supported with ongoing professional development for teachers.

National Certificate of Educational Attainment (NCEA)

- 7.51 Another significant change in the education sector during the reporting period has been the introduction of the National Certificate of Educational Attainment (NCEA) for students in Year 11 to Year 13. NCEA can be gained in three levels; students usually work towards NCEA Level 1 in Year 11, Level 2 in Year 12, and Level 3 in Year 13. However, NCEA is very flexible and students may study at a mix of levels during a year.

“If you don’t get NCEA [at school] then at least you have another chance to get qualifications” [unknown, Schools Plus Consultation, group meetings hosted by the Ministry of Youth Development, 2008]

- 7.52 NCEA is about assessing what students know. Students are assessed against pre-set standards. These standards stipulate what a student must be able to demonstrate in order to meet the standard. This means NCEA assessment results explain what a student can do.
- 7.53 In the past, assessment was based on ranking students, where a set proportion of the more highly ranked students passed. After ranking and scaling, there was no guarantee that those who passed knew the subject in sufficient depth, nor that those who failed did not, rather it showed that some students knew more than others did.
- 7.54 Standards are assessed through internal or external assessment. Internal assessment is undertaken at school through different tasks, for example, essays, exams set by teachers, and experiments.
- 7.55 External assessment is undertaken once a year, through national exams sat in November and December. A few externally-assessed standards, such as graphics, require each student to submit a folio or collection of work.

Gifted children

- 7.56 Responsibility to meet the needs of gifted students lies with individual schools. In 2005, government amended the National Education Guidelines to require schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the needs of their gifted and talented learners, as they are required to do for students who are not achieving, who are at risk of not achieving, and who have special needs.
- 7.57 To support this change, a range of professional supports has been put in place:

- in-depth professional development through School Support Services advisors
- a handbook – Gifted and Talented Students: Meeting their Needs in New Zealand Schools
- a range of online and hard-copy materials, including resources on Te Kete Ipurangi and the Ministry of Education website
- research into effective approaches to meeting the needs of gifted and talented learners.

7.58 The Funding Pool for Developing Gifted and Talented Students takes applications from clusters of schools, and not-for-profit community groups and national organisations who are working to facilitate the learning needs of groups of students who exhibit characteristics of giftedness or talent.

The literacy and numeracy strategy

7.59 Government has a number of initiatives in place to improve child and adult literacy. These are organised under the Ministry of Education's Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy sits alongside the Ministry's Adult Literacy Strategy, Pacific Literacy Strategy and Te Reo literacy strategy.

7.60 The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy does not comprise a single, discrete literacy project. Instead, the strategy acts as a device to provide alignment and consistency for a range of policies, programmes and projects all focused on improving literacy achievement.

7.61 The strategy provides a common set of evidence-based principles to underpin policies and practice. Three key themes have been used as an organising framework. They are:

- raising expectations for learners' progress and achievement
- lifting professional capability throughout the system so that everyone plays their part in ensuring that the interaction between teacher and learner is as effective as possible
- developing community capability – encouraging and supporting family, whānau and others to help learners.

7.62 The emphasis of the strategy is on both:

- improving first practice, because the most appropriate and effective literacy programme for most learners is an everyday classroom programme that purposefully integrates all aspects of literacy learning
- ensuring that specific interventions for learners with specific, well-identified needs beyond the classroom are timely, appropriate, and well-supported back in the classroom programme.

7.63 The Literacy Professional Development Project (LPDP) began in March 2004. The LPDP has a focus on improving teacher content knowledge in literacy, pedagogy and practice, and building effective professional learning communities. The project provides schools with an evidence-based professional development programme which aims to improve student learning and achievement in literacy. A total of 288 schools (3,288 teachers) have participated in the project to date. Schools work within the project for two years.

7.64 An independent evaluation of LPDP was commissioned and undertaken by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) in collaboration with the University of Canterbury. The final evaluation report was received by the Ministry in August 2007. Overall, the

evaluation finds that the gains in reading and writing achievement by students from schools in the LPDP were greater than could be expected for those schools without the intervention.

The Pacific literacy initiative

- 7.65 The Pacific Literacy initiative, launched in December 2000, is focused on achieving the goals of the Pacific Education plan across the school sector and is an integral part of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.
- 7.66 While it was initially targeted at raising Pacific student achievement, schools involved in the programme have been able to involve other ethnic/language communities in co-operative, collaborative partnerships.
- 7.67 Given the success of the programme the original folder of materials has been re-designed as an inclusive model for all schools to use in developing and strengthening the Home-School Partnership Programme described below.

The Home-School Partnership Programme

- 7.68 The Home-School Partnership Programme aims to raise student's achievement within the New Zealand curriculum, by training teams of teachers and parents to deliver sessions for parents and families. These sessions will empower them to help their children to develop their language and learning skills. All members of the school community are kept informed and are involved with the programme. This helps to develop a mutually beneficial partnership between home and school.
- 7.69 The teachers learn about the children's language and culture and how to incorporate this prior learning in school programmes. The parents learn the school culture, its processes and expectations.
- 7.70 The programme was evaluated by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. The focus of the evaluation was concerned with four key aspects of the Home-School Partnership Programme:
- how schools went about implementing the programme
 - the nature of the partnerships between parents/whānau and schools that have evolved as a result of the programme
 - the literacy impacts of the programme on students, parents' understandings, and teachers' literacy programmes
 - issues concerning sustainability of home-school partnerships in schools that have completed the programme.
- 7.71 The successes of the programme on literacy were:
- eighty percent of schools reported parental involvement had a positive impact on children's opportunities to learn
 - approximately three quarters of the surveyed schools reported that it had a minor positive impact on students' engagement, attitudes, confidence and literacy achievement.
- 7.72 In spite of the promising findings, there are still some challenges within the programme to bring about greater literacy impacts. These were identified as:

- increasing parents' confidence to engage with session leaders about their home literacy practices
- shifting teachers' thinking so they realise the importance of learning from parents about children's home literacy experiences and practices
- increasing teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices.

Te Tere Auraki – Māori in mainstream

- 7.73 Te Tere Auraki - Māori in Mainstream – captures the wider development of evidenced-based frameworks that explore, and make explicit, the key dimensions of quality teaching for diverse students. This research and professional development strategy is focused on improving teaching and learning for Māori students in mainstream schools.
- 7.74 The four discrete but overlapping professional development strands of work co-ordinated by the strategy are:
- **Te Mana Kōrero** – professional development packages and workshops facilitated through School Support Services
 - **Te Kotahitanga** – Years 9 and 10 research and professional development project
 - **Te Kauhua Māori in Mainstream** – professional development project
 - **Te Hiringa i te Mahara** – developing Māori secondary teacher capability and addressing workload.

Education Review Office

- 7.75 The Education Review Office is a government department whose purpose is to evaluate and report publicly on the education and care of students in schools and early childhood services. It is an integral part of the steps taken to ensure the delivery of quality education for all children.
- 7.76 The Education Review Office findings inform decisions and choices made by parents, teachers, managers, trustees and others, at the individual school and early childhood level, and at the national government level. The Office carries out different types of reviews - education reviews of individual schools, home school reviews, cluster reviews of education institutions and services, and national evaluations of education issues. It also provides contract evaluation services. Findings are made widely available.
- 7.77 In addition to regular, local level reviewing of individual schools, a number of reviews have national implications and inform policy development. Examples over the reporting period include reviews on the effectiveness of teaching (and learning) for teen parents in teen parent units, Māori (in mainstream schools), Pacific Island and home-schooled students. Curriculum topics that have been reviewed and require further consideration as a result, include the effectiveness of sex and drug education in schools.
- 7.78 Student participation in school decision making was reviewed with recommendations that schools have more formal processes in place to facilitate more, and a wider range of student participation. All secondary school boards of trustees are now required to have a student representative.

REST, LEISURE, RECREATION AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES (article 31)

Rest, leisure and recreation

- 7.79 Sports and recreation facilities are provided by schools and in community settings where they are managed by either local authorities or charitable organisations. A number of local councils have developed specific policies aimed at children and young persons and are involved in projects that focus on providing social and recreational activities for youth. Youth information networks have also been initiated by some councils to provide information about events, opportunities, funding and support for young people.
- 7.80 Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) is the Crown Entity responsible for sport and recreation. SPARC was established on 1 January 2003 under the Sport and Recreation New Zealand Act 2002. The previous functions of the Hillary Commission, the New Zealand Sports Foundation and the policy arm of the Office of Tourism and Sport were incorporated into the new organisation.
- 7.81 SPARC provides leadership in research and policy development and implementation. It provides advice, guidance, and support to schools and sporting organisations and nurtures talented individuals. It has recently run a successful social marketing campaign, 'Push Play', to encourage physical activity and participation. SPARC is also a substantial contributor to Mission-On – a broad-based package of initiatives which give young New Zealanders and their families the tools to improve their nutrition and increase physical activity.
- 7.82 The Department of Conservation encourages New Zealanders to participate in conservation activity and to use the facilities they provide to enjoy the outdoors. From July 2008, hut and campsite fees for children and young people aged under 18 are free on New Zealand's nine Great Walks, reducing the cost for families wanting to walk New Zealand's National Parks. This initiative improves access to the outdoors, and implements the government's wider work to tackle obesity, foster recreation and tourism, and enhance the time working people have to spend with their families.

FACTORS AND DIFFICULTIES

- 7.83 International studies show that New Zealand students continue to perform well when compared with students in other countries. However, there is a group of students who continue to under-achieve compared with their peers: 22 percent of Māori still leave school with little or no formal attainment. The government recognises this ongoing challenge, and as detailed above is committed to addressing the education needs of Māori students and their whānau.
- 7.84 Although most New Zealand school students are actively engaged in their learning, educators are challenged by the need to engage all students, including disruptive, truant and gifted students, as well as those with serious behavioural issues and special needs.