



New Zealand Disability Strategy

2026 to 2030:

Education Change Story



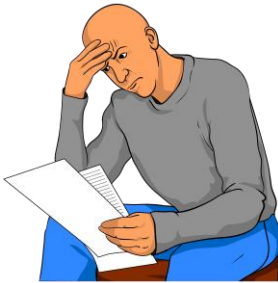
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Before you start



This is a long document.

It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:



- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What you will find in here

Page number:



About this Easy Read3



Goal for education.....9



Actions for education11

What work is happening on
the actions?.....25



What might stop the actions
from happening?33

About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is about the **New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026 to 2030**.



The **New Zealand Disability Strategy** says what the Government will do to make things better for disabled people in Aotearoa New Zealand.



In this Easy Read the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026 to 2030 will be called the **strategy**.



The **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha** was in charge of writing the strategy.



The **Ministry of Disabled**

People – Whaikaha works to make things better for disabled people by working with:



- the Government
- the community which includes:
 - disabled people
 - tāngata whaikaha Māori / Māori disabled people
- businesses.

In this Easy Read when we say **Whaikaha** this means the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.

Where it says **we** this means Whaikaha.



The strategy has 5 **priority outcome areas**.



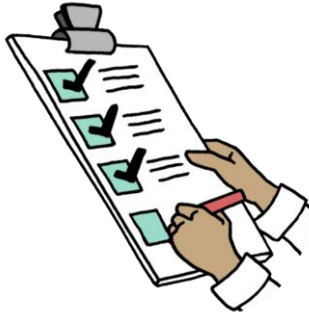
Priority outcome areas are the most important things the strategy will work on.



The priority outcome areas are:

- education / learning
- employment / jobs
- health
- housing
- justice which means things to do with the law.





Each priority outcome area has:

- a **goal**
- **actions.**



Here a **goal** is how we want things to be.



Here **actions** are things we will do to work towards meeting a goal.



This Easy Read is a **change story** for the education priority outcome area.



Here a **change story** tells you:

- what the goal is
- what actions the Government will do
- who in the Government will do each action
- when the actions will happen
- what might stop the actions from happening.

You can find the other change stories in Easy Read on the Whaikaha website.

The link for the employment change story is:

<https://shorturl.at/FJghF>



The link for the health change story
is:

<https://shorturl.at/8YIE6>



The link for the housing change story
is:

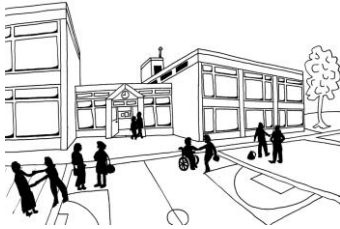
<https://shorturl.at/fiijr>



The link for the justice change story
is:

<https://shorturl.at/2v9jr>

Goal for education



The goal for education is to support every **learner** to:

- go to a place where they can learn like a school
- be part of education
- keep learning as they grow older.

Here a **learner** means a student:

- in early childhood education
- at school
- at university.



All learners should be able to go to the type of school they want to go to.



This means disabled learners should be able to go to the type of school they want to go to.

Actions for education



There are 9 actions for the education priority outcome area.



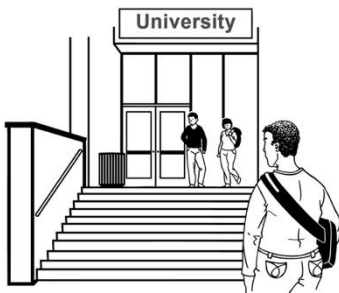
The **Ministry of Education** is in charge of actions 1 to 8.



The **Ministry of Education** is the part of the Government in charge of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The **Tertiary Education Commission** is in charge of action 9.



The **Tertiary Education Commission** is the part of the Government in charge of **tertiary education** in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Tertiary education is any learning you do after you finish school like going to:

- university
- polytechnic.

Action 1

Spend over 2 hundred million dollars on **early intervention services**.



Early intervention services support children who:

- are disabled
- have a hard time with:
 - learning
 - behaviour
 - **communication.**

They support:

- children from birth to Year 1 at school
- their whānau / families.



Here **communication** is things like:

- talking
- using sign language
- understanding other people.



Spending more money on early intervention services means:

- the Government can work out what support children need with their learning sooner
- whānau / families will not have to wait too long to get support for their child.



Action 2



Look at new ways to run **specialist learning support**.



Here **specialist learning support** is when children who need extra support with their learning get support:

- just for them
- in small groups.



The Government will see if specialist learning support can be run by:

- **private** companies
- community groups.



Here **private** means something that is not part of the Government.



Having new ways of running specialist learning support should mean learners do not have to wait too long to get support.

Action 3



Make the **learning support system** easier to use for:

- teachers
- whānau / families
- learners.

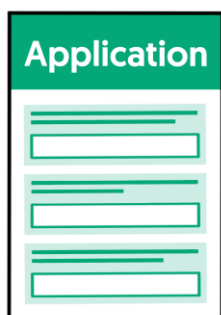


The **learning support system** is how the Government supports children who have a hard time with learning.



The Government will make the learning support system easier to use by:

- paying for more **Learning Support Coordinators**
- making it easier to apply for learning support.





Learning Support Coordinators

are teachers who:

- find out which learners need support
- find the right support for learners
- support teachers to learn more about supporting disabled learners.

The Government will pay for every school with learners in Years 1 to 8 to have a Learning Support Coordinator.



Action 4

Spend money to build more **specialist classrooms**.



Specialist classrooms are classrooms only for disabled learners.



Having more specialist classrooms will mean parents have more choices about where their children go to school.



Action 5

Train teachers better so they can teach disabled learners well.



Action 6

Make sure schools have to write reports about what disabled learners are:

- learning
- doing well at.

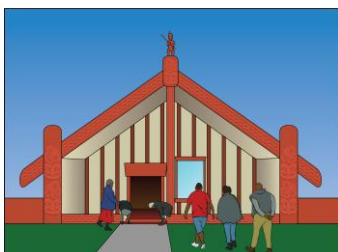


Having to write reports about these things will mean schools have to care about supporting disabled learners to do well.

Action 7



Support **Kaupapa Māori** schools to get better at supporting disabled ākonga / learners.



Kaupapa Māori schools are schools where:

- ākonga / learners learn in te reo Māori / the Māori language
- Māori **culture** is an important part of the school.



Culture is a way of:

- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.

Action 8

Use **education data** to:



- find out which learners are disabled
- see how disabled learners are doing.



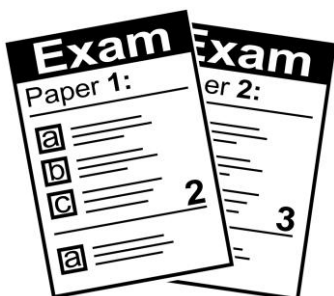
Data means information like:

- facts
- numbers.



Education data is information about education like:

- how many days each year learners go to school
- test results.





Having better education data about disabled learners will mean the Government knows what support they need.

Action 9

The Tertiary Education Commission will make sure all tertiary education providers:



- have a **Disability Action Plan**
- follow their Disability Action Plan.



Disability Action Plan say what places that run tertiary education will do to support disabled learners.



The Tertiary Education Commission will work with groups that speak up for disabled learners to make sure Disability Action Plans are working well.



One of the groups the Tertiary Education Commission will work with is the **National Disabled Students' Association**.



The **National Disabled Students' Association** is a group that speaks up for disabled learners in tertiary education.

What work is happening on the actions?



In 2025 the Government said it would spend over 7 hundred million dollars to make sure learners get the support they need at school.



The Ministry of Education is working out how to spend this money.



This money will be spent on actions 1 to 4 about learning support.



The Ministry of Education is spending this money on:

- getting more people working in early intervention services
- using early intervention services to support learners until the end of Year 1
- more specialist learning support
- making the learning support system easier to use
- having a Learning Support Coordinator in every school with learners in Years 1 to 8
- building up to 25 new specialist classrooms.





At the moment the **Teaching Council** is in charge of action 5 about making teacher training better.



The **Teaching Council** is in charge of teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The Teaching Council:

- says what teachers must be able to do
- finds out what happened if someone complains about a teacher.



The Government wants to make some changes to what the Teaching Council does.



If these changes happen the Ministry of Education will be in charge of action 5.



These changes should happen by the middle of 2026.



The Ministry of Education is working on new rules about what teachers must learn when they are training to be teachers.



Places that train teachers will start following these new rules from 2026 to 2028.



The Teaching Council is also working on new rules about what a teacher must be able to do to be allowed to work as a teacher.



Teachers will have to follow these new rules from 2026.



All the new rules will mean that teacher training changes.



There are links between actions:

- 6
- 8.



Action 6 says what reports schools have to write.



The reports will have to say:

- what goals the school has
- what information they are looking at to see how they are doing on the goals
- how well they are doing on the goals.



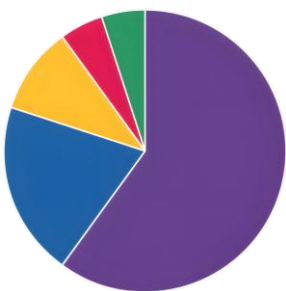
Action 8 is about getting more information about disabled learners.



This will tell the Government what other information needs to be in the reports schools write.



The Government has also made an agreement with **IHC** about what it will do to better support disabled learners.



IHC is an organisation that:

- speaks up for people with learning disability
- runs support services for people with learning disability.

The agreement with IHC is linked to actions:

- 6
- 8.

For example the agreement with IHC also talks about:

- getting better data about how disabled learners are doing
- writing better reports about how disabled learners are doing.



The Government will do more planning for action 7 about supporting Kaupapa Māori schools in 2026.



The Tertiary Education Commission is already making sure all tertiary education providers:

- have a Disability Action Plan
- follow their Disability Action Plan.



Action 9 means the Tertiary Education Commission will keep doing this work.

What might stop the actions from happening?



The Government is making lots of changes to education at the moment.



The Government will need to carefully plan how it does the actions from the strategy so that it is not too hard for schools to make all the changes.



This information has been written by the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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