



Subject Resource Teachers Learning Behaviour (RTL B) 2019 Report

Background

The Manawanui RTL B Cluster (Cluster 10) provides support to 29 schools in the Otara and Papatoetoe area. The support is targeted at Year 1-10 students who have moderate learning and/or behavioural needs. 29 RTL B provide this support. All RTL B have to complete a Post Graduate Diploma of Specialist Teaching within four years of appointment.¹

The 29 schools had total roll of 16,727 students (1 July 2018). Pasifika groups make up 53% of the school rolls and Maori 15.5%. The fastest growing ethnic group is similar to that for Auckland, i.e. Indian. There are 4 secondary schools, 2 Year 1-13 campuses, 3 intermediate schools, 17 primary schools and a Kura Kaupapa Maori. 3 of the schools are state-integrated schools.

The support provided varies, and seeks to achieve systemic change by supporting teachers to develop additional strategies when working with students. RTL B aim to provide support that is targeted to teachers and teacher aides so that the skills learned improve sustainability. This is in addition to meeting the differentiated needs of individuals or groups of students.

A focus for 2019 has been ensuring RTL B programme fidelity. The theory of improvement used by RTL B is outlined in the *RTL B Professional Practice Toolkit*. This ensures national consistency of high-quality professional practice. The theory involves 10 stages and a case may take 20 weeks or longer. Case work varies from working with individual students and their teachers to working with groups or syndicates and occasionally working with the SENCO or at the whole school level. As outlined in the section on Improving RTL B capability there have been several measures implemented to ensure RTL B are adhering to the theory of improvement.

RTL B work alongside Learning Support (formerly Special Education within the Ministry of Education) with special projects, programmes and or special tasks. This part of RTL B work is taking on increasing significance. In 2019 these have included delivery of the *Incredible Years Programme*², *Inclusive Education and Understanding Behaviour: Responding Safely*

¹ In 2019 the Cluster had one RTL B who was in their second year of study, three RTL B in their first year of study. All have passed their papers. There are three other first year RTL B who will commence training in 2020.

² See p8

(UBRS), *Bi-Lingual Assessments* and *Assistive Technology*. In Cluster 10 seven RTLB are trained to deliver *The Incredible Years Programme* and 4 RTLB have been trained to co-deliver *UBRS*.

Recent research suggests up to 9% of the school aged population may be on the autism spectrum. Increasingly schools are asking for RTLB support for both teachers and students. At the end of 2019 the Cluster was instrumental in facilitating the introduction of the Incredible Years Autism programme in the south and south west of Auckland. The IYA programme targets pre-school children and their transition to primary schools. Three RTLB will be trained as facilitators in February 2020.

In addition to providing direct support to schools, Cluster 10 allocated resources to support individual students and groups of students. In 2019 \$203,000 (GST incl) was available through the Learning Support Fund (LSF) to support cases where additional resources or teacher aide support was seen to be beneficial. More than \$30, 000 was used to support teacher aides and \$18,000 was used to fund teacher professional development. In both of these examples the funding was linked to Requests for Support made by schools. The Cluster also supported the process for the allocation of teacher aide funding for students prioritised as requiring In-Class Support. This support amounts to five hours a week of teacher aide funding and the Cluster supports the allocation process - 145 students were successful in 2019.

In March 2019 the Education Review Office published the full report of the national review of RTLB clusters which it undertook in June-August 2017. This followed a request under the Official Information Act. The full report was consistent in its praise for the RTLB service as previously indicated when the initial report was released. Previous reviews occurred in 2007 and 2010

2019

2019 has been marked by a significant improvement in service delivery by Cluster 10. This is noted in the confirmed national review of RTLB clusters ERO report (published March 2019), the RTLB national survey responses: *In 2019, 1,787 people took part in the survey; 94% had accessed the RTLB service during the month before the survey. The results show an increase in satisfaction with the quality of service delivery, from 75% in 2018 to 78% in 2019. There was also an increase in satisfaction with the timeliness of service delivery, from 64% in 2018 to 68% in 2019 (source Ministry Bulletin 3/2/2020).* Case closure evaluations by schools and school evaluations of the Liaison RTLB are also evidence of this improvement. The one concern from a Cluster perspective is only 18 of the 29 schools responded to the national survey.

In February 2019 the Cluster had two vacancies. A further vacancy occurred in May when a first year RTLB resigned due to her family relocating overseas. Both vacancies were filled by July and the Cluster has remained fully staffed for the balance of 2019.

For the first time in recent memory there has been no staff turn-over at the end of the year. Staff morale remains high – something that was identified in the 360 degree review of Practice Leaders. It was also evident in the staff wellbeing survey (Good4Work) that was undertaken during 2019. The 360 degree survey highlighted the professional support RTLB received from their Practice Leaders, the focus on quality and the professional development made available. The survey whilst identifying some aspect of the workplace which could be improved, noted the generally high level of acceptance of the conditions of work.

During the year four new RTLB – including two at the beginning of 2019 - joined the Cluster. The new RTLB come from a variety of teaching backgrounds. The teacher shortage in Auckland had no obvious effect on recruitment as all positions advertised had a reasonable number of applicants and the calibre of applicants was high.

The strong working relationship between the Cluster Manager and the Lead Principal has been maintained. This has occurred through weekly meetings, joint meetings with all school principals and Cluster Manager/Lead Principal meeting with the Manager Learning Support (Ministry) each term Cluster. The Cluster Manager attends Board meeting on a quarterly basis and is well supported at the Board level. A highlight of this relationship was the Board's agreement to continue as Lead School for the next period.

The Cluster has worked within its Annual Budget, which in 2019 was supplemented by some unused funds from previous years. A challenge has been identified in the overspending of the Learning Support Fund by \$20,000. A major contributor to this was unclaimed funding which had been committed in 2018. The Cluster honoured these commitments and has now established processes to ensure all LSF commitments are fully met in the year they occur.

(A fuller financial commentary will be inserted when the End of Year financial accounts are received.)

Highlights

All schools within the Cluster have accessed the RTLB service – this is the second consecutive year when 100% of schools have accessed the RTLB service.

456 Requests for Support were received in 2019 (cf 465 Request for Support in 2018 and 454 in 2017).

- ☐ The database indicates that there was an increase in the number of group and school requests vis a vis individual requests for support for students.

29/29 schools accessed Learning Support Funding

- ☐ \$225,184.51 (GST incl)³ Learning Support Fund was allocated to schools.

145 students were allocated In Class Support funding following a moderation process –354 applications were received.

³ There was an overspend of \$20,00 in the 2019 LSF Budget, which has been absorbed in areas of underspend and unspent fund carried forward.

Two key initiatives were implemented: The Oral Language Literacy Project and We Do Lego (Robotics) programme. Both programmes use LEGO equipment to support learning. The Oral Literacy Language programme was offered across a number of schools as an in-school programme; whereas the We Do LEGO programme involved 40 students from twelve primary schools across the Cluster in a four- full week projects based at Papatoetoe Intermediate School. The programme concluded with participants entering the Boomtown Rats regional competition and receiving two certificates.

A pilot programme for a Learning Communications Support Worker was co-constructed with the Ministry and a primary school. This sought to address the concerns over the lack of availability of a Speech Language Therapist by training a teacher aide to give communication support to students and teachers. An evaluation of the project has been completed and it is likely the Cluster will use LSF to support similar communications based programmes given the lack of access to Speech Language Therapists

13 schools have been involved in the StepsWeb Programme aimed at improving literacy skills for students. The programme has involved more than 1300 students and 46 teachers/teacher aides.

Two *Incredible Years Programme* was delivered to 24 teachers across the Cluster (This is a full day programme held over six weeks for teachers who are usually in their first years of teaching).

An *Incredible Years Programme* was delivered to 14 senior school leaders.

Three *Seasons for Growth* workshops were facilitated and attended by 27 teachers from 10 schools. Six RTLB from two clusters were also trained in the programme. For one workshop the entire senior leadership team for a school was present. The Cluster has the only accredited Seasons for Growth facilitator in Auckland.

The Cluster has worked with the Ministry to have RTLB deliver the *Incredible Years Autism Programme* in Auckland.

The Cluster is part of the cross sector Gateway programme which attempts to ensure quality transition into schools for children who are in the care of Oranga Tamariki.

- ☐ 32 Gateway Education Profiles were completed. This compares with 38 in 2018, 48 in 2017 and 13 in 2016.

Positive relationships with the Cluster principals and SENCOs is maintained through effective communications e.g. 4 newsletters, meetings each term with the two principals groups and SENCO professional development each term etc.

18 of 29 schools responded to the Ministry's National Survey of the RTLB service (see comment p2) – 12 responded in 2017. Schools were generally supportive of the service provided by RTLB. Two areas of concern identified were value for money (four secondary schools which identified they would prefer to have the funding directly) and the area of building teacher capability.

All reporting requirements to the Ministry of Education have been met on time.

There is a much stronger and more positive working relationship with Learning Support (Botany Office). This includes meetings each term with the three Service Managers.

The delivery of professional development to SENCOs within the Cluster is another area where the Cluster works collaboratively with Learning Support. In 2019 there were seven new SENCOs in the Cluster and already five new SENCOs have been identified in 2020. Given the multitude of the supports available to students the information and training roles of Liaison RTLB is pivotal.

Stronger financial management processes have been maintained with the support of the Lead School's Executive Officer.

At 1 January 2020 the Cluster was fully staffed.

Schoolgate Version 2 database was successfully implemented in May with the minimum of disruption to schools or the main users – RTLB.

Emerging Risks and Issues

2019 contained a number of issues and risks. Often poor - or a lack of – communication contributed to this. The implementation of the new Learning Support delivery model (#1) , the deployment of Learning Support Co-ordinators (#2) and the development of the one practice framework - He Pikorua (#4) highlight the need for improved communication with the sector and a collaborative approach to implementation. Speculation over education hubs (#6) raised concerns in the first half of the year. The emerging issues associated with neurodiversity and brain trauma (#5) are also becoming evident with the increasing number of referrals of students with symptoms such as autism and FADS.

1) New Learning Support Delivery Model

The new Learning Support delivery model which incorporates the one plan concept lacks an implementation plan at a local level. In schools there is uncertainty and a level of unpredictability caused by the lack of a co-ordinated approach.

In 2019 joint meetings between Ministry and RTLB teams were initiated. The forums were used at way of promoting exemplars of the model. However, there has been little communication/information to schools concerning the new model and the meetings have been held on an ad hoc basis and are very dependent on staff availability.

A proposal to hold a joint planning day for the start of 2019 was not taken up.

2) Learnings Support Co-ordinators

The five schools in the West Papatoetoe Kahui Ako have been allocated nine LSC. This has been seen as inequitable by the other 24 schools in the cluster and leaves 12,000 students without access to what should be an invaluable resource.

Despite repeated requests by Cluster Managers to be included in the meetings called by the Ministry to provide information on the LSC roles, the requests have been declined. The

same applies to Cluster Manager presence at the LSC induction scheduled for late February 2020. This does not demonstrate the collaborative approach the Ministry is seeking from the RTLB service when working in schools where there are LSC.

In other RTLB Clusters a number of experienced RTLB have been recruited to LSC positions. This has not been an issue in this Cluster, possibly due to the limited number of LSC positions available locally.

3) Resourcing

The ongoing risks associated with lack of adequate resourcing to support students with learning support needs continued in 2019. For the third consecutive year the Cluster missed out on the allocation of any new RTLB. 72 new RTLB positions have been allocated across New Zealand since 2017.

The inequity of resource distribution was also evident in the allocation of the 628 Learning Support Co-ordinators. Nine LSC were allocated to five schools with a combined roll of 4000 students. By implication, 24 schools with a combined roll of 12,000 missed out on this resource.

A third example of the shortfall in resourcing is evidenced by the allocation of 145 In Class Support places when 354 applications were received. As a result of the small number of places available for allocation the monitoring and allocation panel for the Cluster chose not to allocate ICS to any Year 10 students in the six secondary schools.

4) One Practice Framework (He Pikorua)

He Pikorua is scheduled to be implemented in term one 2020. RTLB have been consulted and two Cluster Managers have been involved in the design process. For schools He Pikorua may be different from what they have experienced in the past. For RTLB it must not be a case of “we don’t have to do anything differently”.

He Pikorua, the one plan and the new Learning Support delivery model each has the student at the centre. This will present a dilemma for RTLB who have been encouraged to work at building teacher capability and to look at how they can work at a systems level. In 2018-2019 this has resulted in a growing trend to group/syndicate work by RTLB.

5) Neurodiversity & Brain Trauma

Research into brain development is increasingly showing the importance of neurodiversity and brain trauma on students learning. RTLB will be required to work with more students where neurodiversity is impacting on their education (e.g. autism, FADS). This will require RTLB to access quality professional development to support teachers with strategies. The opening up of IYA to RTLB is an example of how this training and support can be developed collaboratively.

6) Education Hubs

The proposed education hubs appear to have been “removed” from the education agenda.

Other risks and issues have involved teacher recruitment in the Auckland region. To date this has not impacted on the recruitment of quality people to vacant positions in the Cluster.

Improving RTLB support

The 2019 focus of Regeneration was built around two work strands: professional practice and monitoring & accountability. The work-strands followed on from the structural changes implemented in 2018.

- ☐ The Requests for Support process was strengthened and allocation were made weekly which made the Cluster more responsive to schools
- ☐ Implementing Schoolgate Version 2 has provided the opportunity to more accurately monitor case work
- ☐ Practice Leaders actively monitored the case work on a fortnightly basis
- ☐ The monitoring is linked to case work supervision
- ☐ A system of Team Case Reviews is being implemented
- ☐ The Liaison RTLB role has been redefined based on research – school evaluation of the Liaison RTLB role has been extremely positive
- ☐ Practice Leaders have been supported by the provision of professional supervision by an external provider who is a registered psychologist and a former RTLB
- ☐ A Budget commitment of \$32,500 to professional development for RTLB.

Outcomes reporting

The Cluster received \$2,414,840 in funding (including RTLB salaries) for 2019.

The new Schoolgate database now has the capacity to generate aggregated data across a number of criteria. This will enable the data to be analysed and compared with previous years. In March we will analyse 2019 data to provide some baseline information and support setting targets for 2020. This data analysis will still be driven by qualitative decisions of RTLB and classroom teachers.

Progress has also been made in addressing the concerns over not being able to report aggregated outcomes by ensuring group work is assessed. This has been demonstrated in the three schools which participated in the Oral Language Literacy Project and data is currently being collected across the 13 schools involved in the Steps Web project.

In 2020 the Cluster will continue to explore how to develop a more robust evidence-based approach to outcomes-reporting which is both meaningful and helpful in planning the next steps for an individual student.

New Learning Support Delivery Model

The Ministry is seeking to introduce a new Learning Support delivery model for students who are identified as having learning and behavioural challenges. The approach is

continuing to be trialled across the country based on Kahui Ako. To date at a local level there have been preliminary discussions with Learning Support and some isolated individual cases which have highlighted the new model.

Looking forward to 2020

The focus for 2020 Consolidation and Continuing Improvement. It is evident that 2020 will bring about further change to the work of RTLB. This will be the result of implementing He Pikorua and the new Learning Support Delivery Model and working alongside Learning Support Co-ordinators.

We will also continue to expand the toolkit of interventions so RTLB are able to assist teachers and students where neurodiversity is impacting on learning. One key break though in this will be the involvement of RTLB in the Incredible Years Autism programme. The Cluster is also fortunate to have a number of RTLB who have specialised in areas such as ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder) and FADS (Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder)

RTLB will continue their work with schools to support student wellbeing and resilience. A local example is supporting schools to implement Seasons for Growth. In supporting these programmes it is noted that schools should be the main drivers for school-wide wellbeing programmes.

2019 provided opportunities for new initiatives involving Stepsweb and LEGO. 2020 should be used to build on these opportunities and also to look for new initiatives that are evidenced based and demonstrate improved outcomes for students.

With the implementation of Schoolgate Version 2 completed the Cluster's RTLB website can now be updated and made more user friendly to parents and whanau.

Report Against The 2019 Funding Agreement

Student Success (Goal 1)

29/29 schools in the Cluster accessed RTLB support – no cases were deferred to a waiting list

456 Requests for Support were received with an increase in group and school referrals

- ☐ 76.9% (80% in 2018) of requests for support for individuals was for males
- ☐ 26.8% (28.9% in 2018) of requests for support for individuals was for Maori students (15.5% of total student population)
- ☐ 51.7% (50.1% in 2018) of requests for support for individuals was for students the Pacific Islands (53% of total student population) –Samoan 44, 25 Cook Island Maori, 22 Tongan

26 students were supported as transition cases between early childhood centres and schools

29/29 schools accessed LSF support with \$225,184.51 (GST inclusive) being allocated in 2019. 207 (189 in 2018) applications were received and approved.

- ☐ This included 13 schools being supported to use LUCID and Step Web, a cluster wide presentation to primary principals of the Read-Write and Step Web tools
- ☐ 8 SENCOs were funded to attend the national conference Supporting Wellbeing, Resilience and Mindfulness
- ☐ Schools were supported to be involved in LEGO Oral Language Literacy programme and We Do LEGO robotics programme (schools had to purchase the LEGO)
- ☐ A project to support a Learning Support Communications Worker was piloted

The Cluster supported the moderation and allocation process for In-Class Support.

Two Incredible Years Programmes was delivered involving 24 teachers. A third programme was held for senior school leaders – this was fully subscribed.

Two Seasons for Growth Programmes which aim at building students' resilience were attended by 27 teachers and 6 RTLB.

The Cluster Manager co-ordinates the RTLB representation by local Cluster Managers at Gateway Paediatrician Clinics

Schools were supported in completing 32 Gateway Education Profiles (38 in 2018, 48 in 2017 and 13 in 2016)

The relationship between the Cluster and the local office of Learning Support is growing. This has involved meetings of Practice Leaders and Service Managers each term and the collaborative planning and delivery of professional development to SENCOs each term. A new development in 2019 was the joint team meetings between the geographic based teams and their respective service managers and Practice Leaders.

Strengthening RTLB Capability (Goal 2)

All RTLB have been involved in a range of task specific professional development, which is recorded in individual PD logs. In 2019 \$32,500 was budgeted for RTLB professional development. This included professional supervision for Practice Leaders to enhance their practice in supervision and modelling.

This investment included the two day mini-conference at the beginning of the year which involved Marcus Akahuta Brown (Maori Succeeding As Maori), Michael O'Brien (Child Poverty Action Group) and two RTLB specific workshops on StepsWeb and Google Read-Write.

Four RTLB were supported to attend and graduate from stage one of Growing Great Leaders as part of an initiative designed to promote leadership within the Cluster.

The Cluster will investigate how it can show the investment in professional development has enhanced RTLB capability. The Cluster will also continue to promote the Professional Practice work stream as a way of improving RTLB capability.

Partnership (Goal 3)

The working relationship between the RTLB Cluster and the Botany Office of Learning Support (Ministry of Education) continues to develop. The Cluster Manager meets regularly with the Manager Learning Support and the three other Cluster Managers that are within the geographic boundaries of the Botany office. The Practice Leaders meet once a term with the three Service Managers and programmes such as UBRS and SENCO professional development are co-delivered by RTLB and Ministry staff. Bi-Lingual Assessments and The Incredible Years programmes are delivered by RTLB on behalf of the Ministry.

There is also a strong partnership with Oranga Tamariki. The Cluster facilitates the completion of Gateway Educational Profiles for children in the care of Oranga Tamariki. The Cluster Manager co-ordinates the schedule for Cluster Manager attendance at the fortnightly Gateway Paediatrician Clinics as well as participating in the clinics and quarterly Gateway forums.

This year there have also been attempts to foster relationships with the Anglican Trust for Women and Children (ATWC) and Taunaki Child & Mental Health Service (formerly Whirinaki). Meetings have been held with both organisations and ATWC is eager to look at ways we can each support the other.

Collaboration (Goal 4)

Sector Relationships

Positive relationships with the Cluster principals and SENCOs have been maintained through effective communications e.g. 4 newsletters, meetings each term with the two principals' groups and SENCO professional development each term. The Liaison RTLB role with each

school in the cluster is the key component. The success of this role is evident from SENCO evaluations of Liaison RTLB which was undertaken in November.

Kahui Ako

Of the 29 schools in the Cluster seven are in Kahui Ako which have endorsed Achievement Challenges. Five schools are involved in Papatoetoe West Kahui Ako and two schools are involved in the cross Cluster Southern Catholic Schools Community of Learning. There are three other Kahui Ako (SEHC - 4 schools), Papatoetoe (3 schools) and Tangaroa (4 schools) which are in the earlier stages of development. Immediately prior to Christmas the Tangaroa Kahui Ako had its Achievement Challenges endorsed.

Resourcing (Goal 5)

Personnel

The Cluster started the year with 28 RTLB out of an entitlement of 29 RTLB. Two resignations were received during the year. By July the Cluster was fully staffed and enters 2020 fully staffed. All RTLB undertaking their Post Graduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching studies passed (one second year and three first year)

Assets

A number of improvements to facilities and amenities have been undertaken:

- A data projector has been installed in the RTLB meeting room (Room 26)
- New hessian board has been installed in Room 30
- Room 30 has been painted
- A kitchenette has been installed in Room 28
- New furniture has been installed in Room 26

Finance

(to be completed when End of Year results are available)

Raymond Webb

RTLB Cluster Manager

Cluster 10 - Manawanui

