



LITERACY EDITORIALS 2021-2023

A snapshot of publications / editorials, podcasts, and news—click on story to read

POLICY POINT: A WAY AHEAD FOR NCEA LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Dr Michael Johnston Policy Point 19 July, 2022

Alarming results have come from a pilot of new literacy and numeracy assessments for NCEA. The new assessments are scheduled to be introduced as part of the Ministry of Education's review of the NCEA system. Just one third of the pilot students passed the writing assessment, and only two thirds passed each of the reading and numeracy assessments.

In this short policy paper, Dr Michael Johnston, says that the pilot demonstrates an urgent need to reform the teaching of literacy and numeracy in New Zealand's schools.

Dr Johnston also recommends a way ahead for the new standards, one that intends to recognise political reality while making it possible still to implement a robust credential for literacy and numeracy.

But perhaps the most important recommendation is for structured literacy and numeracy teaching to be systematically implemented in New Zealand's schools.

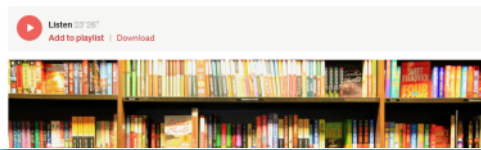


Reading the signs: Why literacy rates are falling

From The Detail, 6:00 am on 14 June 2022

Emilia Donovan, co-host of The Detail
emilia.donovan@nz.co.nz

Young people aren't reading for pleasure as much as they used to and we're relying on digital devices more and more - is this contributing to declining rates of literacy?

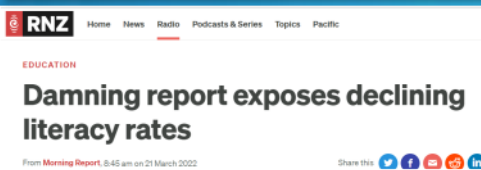


news Top Stories Latest New Zealand World Sport Te Ao Māori

Report will reveal 'dire state' of literacy in Aotearoa - expert

Mon, Mar 21 • Source: News

It is expected a report into where Aotearoa New Zealand is at in terms of literacy achievement will reveal the "dire state" of it, an expert says.



SUMMARY OF NZ MoE RR DATA

- Around 51% of schools have RR
- Approx 23% of Year 2 students involved in RR in schools offering the programme
- More high decile than low decile schools
- Māori & Pasifika 45-50% of all RR students
- Each year around 75% discontinued
- Each year 15%+ unrecovered
- Over 50% Māori & Pasifika unrecovered
- More unrecovered in low decile schools

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—L. Major, Tui Trust

Child poverty statistics show all measures trending downwards over the last three years

24 February 2022, 10:45am

All measures of child poverty were trending downwards, across the three years since the year ended June 2018, Stats NZ said today.

There is no single measure of poverty in New Zealand. The Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 (the Act) sets out a multi-level, multi-measure approach to measuring child poverty. The statistics for the year ended June 2021 includes estimates of the measures specified in the Act and compares statistics over the three years since the year ended June 2018 (the baseline year).

The Act requires the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction to set intermediate (three-year) and long-term (10-year) targets for reducing child poverty in New Zealand. The Minister set targets for three primary measures. The first intermediate target period ends with the statistics reported for the year ended June 2021.

Whakaata Pāremata Parliament On Demand

Parliament TV On Demand

Didn't catch it the first time? Watch Parliament TV On Demand to see what your MPs debated. Videos are typically available on the same day as the live broadcast, but in some cases they make take up to 24 hours to appear.

Whanganui teachers upskilling thanks to new literacy project

By Mike Tweed
3 Sep, 2022 05:00 AM 5 mins to read



Literacy Project team members (from left) Rebekah Wells, Felicity Butchart-Smyth, Nicky Collins and Jade Wakeling. Photo / Supplied

news Top Stories Latest New Zealand World Sport Te Ao Māori

Call for literacy approach which saw dyslexic boy thrive

By Kate Nicol-Williams, News Reporter
Mon, Apr 11 • Source: News

The mother of a son with dyslexia wants the literacy approach that has seen him make major progress implemented in all schools.



Structured reading approach called for during Government review

What Makes a Good Life for Tamariki and Rangatahi Māori?

As part of our engagement with children and young people for our *What Makes a Good Life 2022*, we did 175 face-to-face engagements with tamariki and rangatahi Māori. This summary report shows how they envision a good life for themselves and their whānau, and the barriers they face to experiencing a good life.

Tamariki and rangatahi gave us four key insights into what a good life means for them:

- We want the opportunity to be our true and best selves as Māori
- We want the education system to work for us
- We want safe, close and supportive communities

Mana and kaitiakitanga in ECE

Concepts of mana and kaitiakitanga are fundamental to Māori understandings of wellbeing. In this webinar, Dr Lesley Hanks (University of Waikato) explores how mana can be promoted through kaitiakitanga or active guardianship, as one way of meeting the practice expectations outlined in Te Whāriki (2017).

Now I don't know my ABC

The perilous state of literacy in Aotearoa New Zealand

A 2020 UNICEF report found that only 64.6% of 15-year-olds

NCEA online shakeups a 'bolt from the blue' for educators

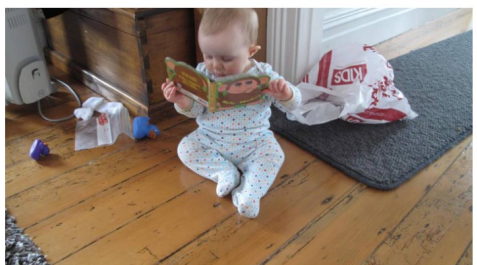
10:46 am on 1 August 2022
John Gerritsen, Education Correspondent
john.gerritsen@nz.co.nz

Secondary school principals have told officials to rethink plans for offering online NCEA tests during the year.



A mother's story: Diagnosing my daughter's dyslexia

By Julie Clothier
25 Jan, 2021 05:00 AM 6 mins to read



Julie Clothier's daughter, who has dyslexia, was read to from 10 weeks old. Photo / Supplied

Schools footing bill to teach teachers how to teach reading

Schools around the country are paying tens of thousands of dollars to private consultants to change the way they teach reading.

Experts say NZ children are facing school postcode lottery, neurodivergent kids at most risk after shocking NCEA pilot results

20/7/2022 • Island Henry, Tennent



Jan Tinetti: Radical changes to how Kiwi kids learn to read | Q+A 2022

Funding kickstart needed from Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori to boost te reo in education, says union

School News • 22 hours ago

Reading block: NZ's falling literacy crisis - why our kids can't read

18 Aug, 2022 04:50 AM 11 minutes to read



Holly Hancock spent thousands on private schooling and tuition trying to help her son with his reading difficulties. Photo / Brett Phibbs

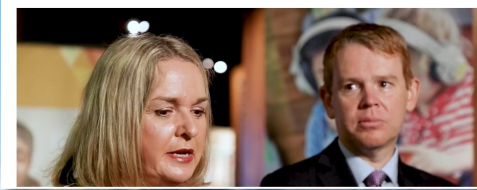
Damning new report finds two in five New Zealand children failing or only just meeting literacy standards

21/03/2022 • Shannon Redstall



'Whole system change' required for country's poor literacy and numeracy rates

Ellen O'Dwyer • 15:37, Mar 25 2022



Student struggle: Dire new NCEA results

By Beth Clarke, Editor

"I don't think it should come as any surprise to teachers who are paying attention," says Dr Michael Johnston, Associate Dean of Victoria University's School of Education.

Discussing the latest following results of a pilot of new NCEA standards to help school leavers "to do a much better job of preparing themselves for the world of work," Johnston says the results are "shocking" and "a real wake-up call for the education system."

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Expert explains how to improve Kiwi kids' numeracy and literacy

Wed, Jul 13 • Source: News

There are effective ways to improve Kiwi kids' numeracy and literacy, according to one teacher and researcher, who claims they've been declining since the 1970s.



READING WITH THE LIGHT SWITCHED ON

Steen Videbeck 26 November, 2021

New Zealand's reading light has been dimming for some time.

International assessments show New Zealand's reading performance has fallen, and that Māori and Pasifika students are particularly underserved.

Behind the statistics, our failure has a human face. Kids who label themselves as being 'dumb' because they are struggling to learn to read. Kids who withdraw from learning.

Despite the challenges, there are many reasons to be optimistic. A revolution in the way literacy is taught in New Zealand schools is underway.

Throughout the country, teachers and concerned parents have questioned the poor literacy rates among their children. Their questioning of the status quo has led them to an evidence-based approach called Structured Literacy.

Reports & Media • Opinion • New NCEA literacy requirements will improve long-run productivity

NEW NCEA LITERACY REQUIREMENTS WILL IMPROVE LONG-RUN PRODUCTIVITY

Dr Michael Johnston NZ Herald 12 July, 2022

It's no secret that low productivity is a major issue for the New Zealand economy. There are many factors contributing to that.

One, which may sometimes be overlooked, is declining literacy. Research published by the Tertiary Education Commission in 2014 examined the literacy of a cohort of young people commencing non-university tertiary education.

More than half had literacy skills below those that are considered necessary to operate in an information-rich society.

The research also revealed that the current NCEA literacy requirement is a very poor indicator of those

Lit Minute with Dr Olwyn Johnston

Literacy Crisis

Introducing a structured literacy approach

Podcast: Oliver Hartwich and Michael Johnston on New Zealand's education emergency



news Home News Radio Podcasts & Series Topics Pacific

Changing the narrative on ADHD

From Afternoons with Jesse McEgan, 3:10 pm on 24 May 2022

"Imagine somebody sitting on the keys of a computer, that's ADHD," says American fashion designer Steve Madden in a new film.

A host of celebrities have opened up about their journey with the condition in the documentary, which follows five families as they navigate raising children diagnosed with ADHD.

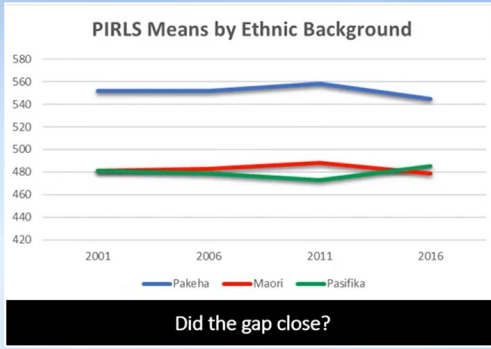
Low pass rates in trial of NCEA literacy and numeracy tests alarm principals

RNZ 7 Sep, 2022 06:27 AM 4 mins to read



New tests could make it harder for some students to get NCEA, principals say. Photo / John Borren, File

By John Gerritsen for RNZ



More investment in literacy skills is needed if NZ is serious about ending persistent disparities for Pasifika students

School News • 1 week ago

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NCEA trials new literacy and numeracy tests, to low pass rates

Dr Michael Johnston • NewsTalk ZB • Heather Du Plessis-Allan Drive • 7 September, 2022

There are some worryingly low pass results in a NCEA literacy and numeracy trial. Year 10 students have trialled the test, which will be made compulsory for year 11 students in 2024. Michael Johnston, a senior Fellow at the NZ Initiative, states that the tests were designed to reflect real world usage of reading, writing, and numeracy, and the reason why the students are under performing is attributed to teaching methods.

"For decades, we've been pursuing methods of teaching reading and writing and numeracy, that are not as effective as they could be."

Posted: 16

Blame It On GUTENBERG

A documentary about the evolving science of dyslexia, dueling theories over how to teach reading, and one family's landmark struggle with an unresponsive school system.

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—L. Major, Tui Trust

READING WITH THE LIGHT SWITCHED ON

Steven Mathias • 26 November, 2021

New Zealand's reading light has been dimming for some time. International assessments show New Zealand's reading performance has fallen, and that Māori and Pasifika students are particularly underrepresented.

Behind the statistics, our future has a human face. Kids who label themselves as being 'Maori' because they are struggling to learn to read. Kids who withdraw from learning.

Despite this challenge, there are many reasons to be optimistic. A revolution in the way literacy is taught in New Zealand schools is underway.

Throughout the country, teachers and concerned parents have questioned the poor literacy rates among their children. Their questioning of the status quo has led them to an evidence based approach called Structured Literacy.

Download PDF

Reading Recovery's refresh - will it satisfy its critics?

RNZ • 17 May, 2022 12:20 PM • 4 mins to read

Reading Recovery's refresh - will it satisfy its critics?

A literacy programme for children called Reading Recovery has been used by thousands of schools around the world to help struggling readers. But is it the answer to literacy in crisis?

All in for learning | Kia kotahi te ū ki te ako

Being engaged in learning really matters, right from a child's first days in early learning, throughout primary schooling and secondary schooling. Aotearoa New Zealand's children need every opportunity to learn, participate, and flourish by regularly attending school or kura. Every school day is a big day when you are young.

Every school day is a big day

Right now almost half of our tamariki don't regularly attend school. Together we'll change that.

Structured literacy provides solid foundations

By Education Gazette editors • ISSUE: VOLUME 101, NUMBER 3

A structured literacy approach is plugging foundational gaps, with fewer children requiring extra support at a Wanaka school.

- Better Start Literacy Approach
- Student and whānau kōrero



School suspensions can help get support for autistic kids - Principals' Federation president

By Dubby Henry • 17 May, 2022 12:20 PM • 4 mins to read

The chickens of negligence have come home to roost - but they're not welcome in the Henhouse of Education. As we wrote in Insights last week, in a pilot of new literacy and numeracy assessments for NCEA, only two thirds of assessed students met a basic standard of adult numeracy and reading ability. Only one third met the standard in writing.

But rather than taking responsibility for a failing system, the Ministry claimed that its own study was flawed. They went alone. A conga line of influential educators assembled to explain away the dismal data.

Their most credible argument was that, because the pilot had no personal consequences for the participating students, they didn't take the tests seriously. But even if all of the success rates came up by ten percentage points when the tests are run for real credits, a quarter of our young people will fail in reading and numeracy, and more than half in writing.

Abolish school streaming to improve education for Māori students, says research

Lee Kenny • 05:00, Mar 23 2022

Your hands to the tools of the Pākehā for the welfare of your body

REPORTS & MEDIA

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CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Dr Michael Johnston • Insights Newsletter • 2 September, 2022

The New Zealand Initiative has been a trenchant critic of the way literacy is currently taught in New Zealand's schools. The Ministry of Education has, for far too long, promoted manifestly ineffective approaches.

Neurodiversity - unlocking the causes and dispelling the myths

From Nine To Noon, 9:20 am on 17 August 2022

Listen on Spotify | Add to playlist | Download

We are all wired differently. Dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD and autism spectrum conditions are all variations that you exist in our brains.

Conversations That Count - Ngā Kōrero Whai Take is back for a third season, beginning with a kōrero about the state of literacy in Aotearoa. We asked Massey University academic (and featured guest) Dr Christine Braid to set the scene

CRYING FOWL

Dr Michael Johnston • Insights Newsletter • 29 July, 2022

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TVNZ 1 Breakfast Interview - Professor James Chapman and Dr Jennifer Buckingham

Experts come together to improve literacy standards.

More Videos

NCEA changes: Just 2 per cent of decile 1 students pass new writing pilot

Dr Michael Johnston • 25 Oct, 2022 05:31 PM • 3 mins to read

Learning about their rights empowers ākonga

By Education Gazette editors • ISSUE: VOLUME 101, NUMBER 2 • Posted: 23 February 2022 • Reference ID: 1H45Xn

A new education programme developed by Save the Children New Zealand aims to teach Year 0-13 ākonga in Aotearoa about their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Save the Children resources

Providing solutions & hope for those with specific learning disabilities

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Major overhaul to way Kiwi children are taught literacy and maths

At age 10, around one in three students have poor reading or maths skills, according to the latest research. (Source: Starline)

THREE MAJOR FACTORS IN FAILURE

- Constructivist orientation to literacy teaching (pedagogical constructivism)
- Literate cultural capital at school entry (background language experiences)
- Failure of Reading Recovery to fulfil its stated mission

Prof James Chapman: The past and future of literacy education in New Zealand: 629 Views • May 18, 2022 • The New Zealand Initiative Literacy Workshop - 12 May 2022. Professor James Chapman: The past and future of literacy education in New Zealand: What's gone wrong and how we can do better

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Tonga Language Week has new lea-faka Tonga goals

Minister for Pacific Peoples Aupito William Sio is urging Tongans everywhere to embrace Uike Katoanga'i 'o e lea faka-Tonga - Tonga Language Week 2022, to help stop the decline in its use by the New Zealand born Tongan population.

School News • 2 days ago

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Govt announces \$44m to increase teacher numbers, support students affected by Covid

NZ Herald • Wed, 14 Sep 2022, 2:00pm

Of the \$20m allocated to supporting students, \$2m would go towards support programmes designed specifically for Māori and Pacific students and \$17.4m to schools where greater proportions of students faced socio-economic challenges.

Changes needed to the teaching of literacy and maths across mainstream schools and kura kaupapa Māori have been revealed by the Ministry of Education, in an attempt to improve outcomes for students.

Associate Education Minister Jan Tinetti and Education Minister Chris Hipkins released the new strategy on Friday, after Cabinet agreed in 2021 to develop the strategies to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

It's part of a wider programme of work the Education Ministry has been tasked with to improve equity for students in the education system and to ensure it reflects Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This includes updating the New Zealand Curriculum for mainstream schools and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa for kura kaupapa Māori.

Major overhaul to way Kiwi children are taught literacy and maths

At age 10, around one in three students have poor reading or maths skills, according to the latest research. (Source: Starline)

Jan Tinetti: Radical changes to how Kiwi kids learn to read | Q+A 2022

NZQandA TVNZ • 6.17k subscribers

3,799 views • Aug 28, 2022 • Associate education minister, Jan Tinetti

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SYSTEM IN FREEFALL: WHY NZ CHILDREN FACE EDUCATION TRAGEDY

Dr Oliver Hartwich • The Australian • 3 August, 2022

A little more than half a year after New Zealand Labour came to power in 2017, Education Minister Chris Hipkins held two education summits. There were 1,400 people at the Auckland and Christchurch events, which cost NZ\$3.1 million to run.

The stated purpose of these summits was grand: "To lay the foundation for the future of learning in New Zealand." Or, as Minister Hipkins enjoined participants: "You are here not only because of your passion for education, but because we need your help, your ideas and your enthusiasm as we seek to build the world's best education system for every New Zealander."

If you read the materials on the Ministry of Education's website, you get a flavour of what that meant. Asked about the most important values for education, participants settled on "Hauora / Wellbeing," "Creativity" and "Whānau/tangata / Family Community".

In hindsight, perhaps they should have selected "Excellence," "Academic Knowledge" and "Rigour" instead.

Streaming in schools: The 'seismic shift' that's looming in education

nzherald.com

NEWS | EDUCATION

NZ Herald • Wed, 14 Sep 2022, 2:00pm

Streaming in schools: The 'seismic shift' that's looming in education

LISTENER

Vanessa Bellw

Vanessa Bellw is a freelance writer based in Te Anau.

Spelling out dyslexics' needs

The system is stacked against families that can't afford private help for dyslexic kids and people working with struggling learners want the Ministry of Education to do more, reports Vanessa Bellw, in the second part of a two-part feature.

Families unable to afford private support for dyslexia and other learning difficulties are coming under "immense stress", says Jeremy Drummond, executive director of SPELD NZ.

The nationwide not-for-profit support provider has worked in the sector for 50 years. New Zealand statistics for the number of people with dyslexia aren't available, but in the UK it's estimated 10 percent of people have the learning difficulty and in the US as many as 20 percent.

The cost of diagnostic assessments for dyslexia or related learning differences ranges from \$650 to \$1800 a child. Private structured literacy tuition with a fully qualified tutor costs from \$75 to \$120 a session.

Drummond says the Ministry of Education should make structured literacy, considered by many the gold standard for overcoming dyslexia, compulsory in all schools and children who need extra learning support should get government funding.