LOCAL CURRICULUM DESIGN SUPPORTS

Rapid formative feedback for the Ministry of Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is intending to work closely with the education sector – with input from students, parents, whānau, iwi and communities – to focus on progress and achievement across the National Curriculum. As part of this work, the Ministry has piloted an approach to working with to schools to help them develop knowledge and capability to design their local curriculum. To date, this has involved:

- Developing and publishing a "Leading Local Curriculum Guide" series of resources, including an online toolkit
- Contracting two providers to deliver a series of two hour face-to-face local curriculum workshops, and
- Two days of on-site coaching.

Schools have self-selected to engage in the above activities, although most have engaged through the Leading Local Curriculum Guide and the two-hour workshop, and a smaller selection of schools have also taken part in the on-site coaching. To understand more about the value of each of these activities for supporting schools with local curriculum design, the Ministry commissioned Synergia to gather formative feedback from a sample of schools across three regions in Aotearoa, New Zealand.
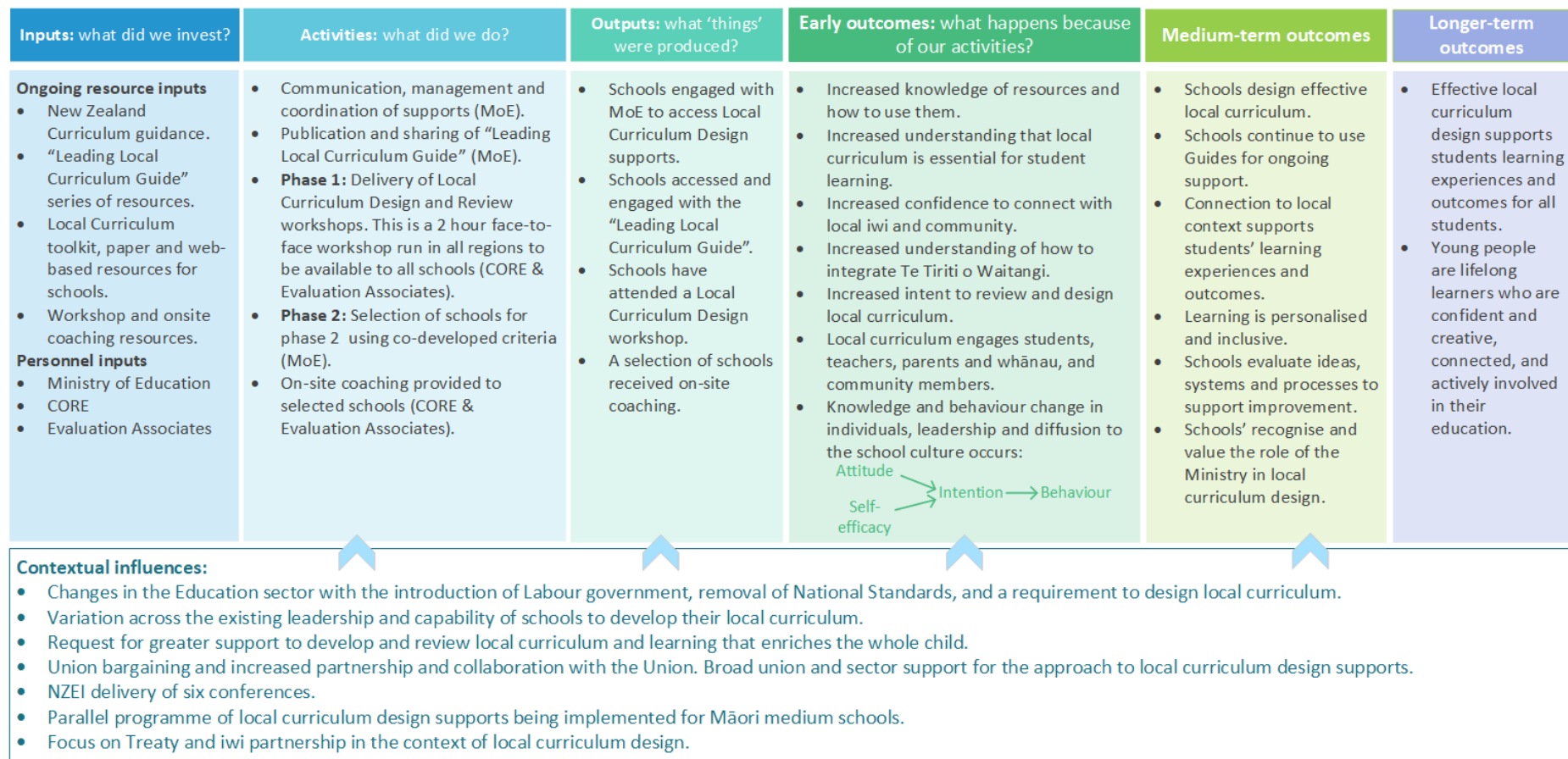
Synergia has engaged thirteen schools from Auckland, Whanganui and Christchurch to provide feedback on the Leading Local Curriculum Guide, the workshops and the on-site coaching, as applicable. Feedback was provided through face-to-face or telephone interviews with Principals, Senior Leadership and others who attended and/or engaged with the local curriculum design supports. Gaining feedback from the schools is not intended to be a full evaluation of the local curriculum design supports, rather it provides an opportunity to understand the experience of schools so far and provide important insights to guide future approaches to working with the education sector on local curriculum design. Specifically, this document presents:

- A logic model that demonstrates the intended delivery of local curriculum design supports
- An overview of the approach to gathering formative feedback and the project objectives
- The data collection methods
- Key findings including the reach of the local curriculum design supports, their use and value for schools, any resulting changes made by the schools, the factors that supported these changes, and ideas for improvement.
- Key considerations for supporting local curriculum design in the future.

2. LOCAL CURRICULUM DESIGN SUPPORTS PROGRAMME LOGIC

The following logic model illustrates the intended implementation and expected outcomes from the local curriculum design supports. Our engagement with the schools for this work was following initial implementation of the guide series, workshops and on-site coaching, therefore, it is not possible to identify the impact on the longer-term outcomes within the scope of this project.

Inputs: what did we invest?	Activities: what did we do?	Outputs: what 'things' were produced?	Early outcomes: what happens because of our activities?	Medium-term outcomes	Longer-term outcomes
Ongoing resource inputs • New Zealand Curriculum guidance. • "Leading Local Curriculum Guide" series of resources. • Local Curriculum toolkit, paper and web-based resources for schools. • Workshop and onsite coaching resources. **Personnel inputs** • Ministry of Education • CORE • Evaluation Associates	• Communication, management and coordination of supports (MoE). • Publication and sharing of "Leading Local Curriculum Guide" (MoE). • **Phase 1:** Delivery of Local Curriculum Design and Review workshops. This is a 2 hour face-to-face workshop run in all regions to be available to all schools (CORE & Evaluation Associates). • **Phase 2:** Selection of schools for phase 2 using co-developed criteria (MoE). • On-site coaching provided to selected schools (CORE & Evaluation Associates).	• Schools engaged with MoE to access Local Curriculum Design supports. • Schools accessed and engaged with the "Leading Local Curriculum Guide". • Schools have attended a Local Curriculum Design workshop. • A selection of schools received on-site coaching.	• Increased knowledge of resources and how to use them. • Increased understanding that local curriculum is essential for student learning. • Increased confidence to connect with local iwi and community. • Increased understanding of how to integrate Te Tiriti o Waitangi. • Increased intent to review and design local curriculum. • Local curriculum engages students, teachers, parents and whānau, and community members. • Knowledge and behaviour change in individuals, leadership and diffusion to the school culture occurs: Attitude Self-efficacy → Intention → Behaviour	• Schools design effective local curriculum. • Schools continue to use Guides for ongoing support. • Connection to local context supports students' learning experiences and outcomes. • Learning is personalised and inclusive. • Schools evaluate ideas, systems and processes to support improvement. • Schools' recognise and value the role of the Ministry in local curriculum design.	• Effective local curriculum design supports students learning experiences and outcomes for all students. • Young people are lifelong learners who are confident and creative, connected, and actively involved in their education.

Contextual influences:
• Changes in the Education sector with the introduction of Labour government, removal of National Standards, and a requirement to design local curriculum.
• Variation across the existing leadership and capability of schools to develop their local curriculum.
• Request for greater support to develop and review local curriculum and learning that enriches the whole child.
• Union bargaining and increased partnership and collaboration with the Union. Broad union and sector support for the approach to local curriculum design supports.
• NZEI delivery of six conferences.
• Parallel programme of local curriculum design supports being implemented for Māori medium schools.
• Focus on Treaty and iwi partnership in the context of local curriculum design.

3. FORMATIVE FEEDBACK APPROACH, PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Formative feedback is gathered during an initiative or programme to understand initial implementation and the benefits being supported. Gathering formative feedback during the early stages of implementation provides an important opportunity to identify the aspects of an initiative that are being successfully delivered and supporting the intended benefits, as well as identify areas for improvement or future development.

For this project, formative feedback was designed to gather the views and experiences of school staff, the workshop providers and the Ministry project team to provide timely and insightful feedback to inform the future direction of local curriculum design support. This approach is not a formal evaluation or performance management approach but an opportunity to reflect on the journey so far and identify ideas for future development. The specific objectives and questions that the project sought to address were:

Project objectives

- Assess the perceived value of the local curriculum design supports in supporting schools to strengthen local curriculum, including the recently published "Leading Local Curriculum Guide" series.
- Gain insights into schools' understanding of local curriculum design and what this looks like in practice, so that future supports can better target sector needs.
- Identify areas for improvement to the current support and/or other opportunities for supporting schools with local curriculum design.

Key questions

Understanding local curriculum development
- What do schools understand about the concept of 'local curriculum development'?
- To what extent has the available support helped them develop a better understanding of the intent of local curriculum design?
- What difference have the different supports made to schools' local curriculum development?

School engagement, use and value of support
- What are the characteristics of the schools who are accessing support? Which staff are engaging in each of the activities?
- How are schools disseminating (or intending to disseminate) their learnings about local curriculum design across the school to support changes in culture?
- How have schools used these different supports in their local curriculum development?
- What aspects of support were the most valuable for schools and why?
- What aspects were the least valuable and why? In what ways could these aspects be improved?

Changes made and influencing factors
- What influence have the supports had on actual curriculum design?
- What local contexts or factors support or challenge schools' ability to achieve this?
- What other supports would be valuable for schools in supporting local curriculum design?
- How do schools perceive and value the role of the Ministry in supporting local curriculum design?

3.1   Data collection

This project involved data provided by the Ministry on the local curriculum supports delivered to schools across the country, as well as primary data collection involving interviews with school staff, workshop providers and facilitators and the Ministry project team. This section summaries the data collection and its analysis.

3.1.1   Data on the delivery of local curriculum design supports

Data made available for this report related to the workshops and the onsite coaching provided to schools during the initial implementation of local curriculum design supports. The data was provided by the Ministry to Synergia for the purposes of this project and a descriptive analysis of the data was used to summarise the reach of the workshops and on-site coaching by 28 June 2019. It also used information from the Ministry's Directory of Schools.

3.1.2   Engaging with schools who have accessed support

To date, we have visited seven schools from three Ministry regions (Table 1) and have visits secured with two other schools. We are currently connecting with the Ministry to engage with 2 schools who have taken part in the on-site coaching.

Table 1: Sample of school visits

Region	Workshops only	Workshops and on-site coaching	Total
Auckland	3	2	5
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatu	2	1	3
Bay of Plenty	2	0	2
Wellington	0	1	1
Canterbury	0	1	1
Nelson	0	1	1
Total	7	6	13

A purposive sampling approach was used to select the schools to take part in a school visit or telephone interview. This approach has enabled Synergia to select schools that reflect a range of key characteristics including school size, decile and school's engagement in the different supports.

School visits involved interviews with school principals, curriculum leaders and/or other people engaged in the workshops and/or on-site coaching. In total, 19 people have been interviewed (Table 2). Two of the principals interviewed were lead principals for their Kāhui Ako, and one other had been in involved with the design of the toolkit.

Table 2: Interviewees and roles

Role	Number interviewed
Principal	10
Assistant principal	4
Deputy principal	4
Teacher	1
TOTAL	19

The schools engaged with were predominantly contributing or full primary schools (Table 3), and so this report mainly presents a view on local curriculum design in those settings, with some information about intermediate and secondary schools.

Table 3: Schools engaged by school type

School type	Number engaged
Contributing	8
Full primary	2
Intermediate	2
Secondary	1

3.1.3 Engaging with stakeholders involved in the project

Two key stakeholders from CORE and Evaluation Associates agreed to participate in an interview for this work. Synergia also attended a debrief between three members of the Ministry team following their visits to schools for the onsite coaching to hear their perspective on the approach to supporting schools with local curriculum design.

4. REACH OF THE LOCAL CURRICULUM DESIGN SUPPORTS

Support was provided to schools through the guides, the online curriculum toolkit, workshops and the on-site coaching. This section presents the reach of the workshops, the online curriculum and the on-site coaching. When reviewing this data, it is useful to note that the support was provided across two key phases, with the on-site coaching being provided during the second phase of support in Term 2. It is important to note that data was not available on how many schools have accessed the guides.

4.1   Workshops

The workshops were designed to support schools to develop a shared understanding of why local curriculum is important for learners, identify how they can strengthen their local curriculum design and identify what strategies could help you to review and design their local curriculum design using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as context. The approach to the workshops was also designed to support schools in using their school vision to build coherent pathways, enable key relationships for learning in their communities and provide reach opportunities for learning.

In total, **1,057 representatives from 534 schools attended workshops across the country**. Workshops were mainly attended by principals and deputy or assistant principals. The number of schools that attend a workshop in each region is shown in . The workshops were predominantly attended by full primary (n=226) or contributing schools (n=194), these two school types made up 78% of workshop attendees. The location of schools that attended a workshop is shown in Figure 2 by school type. In terms of school characteristics:

- There is an even split across deciles for schools who attended the workshops.
- The average school roll was 297 students, with the largest school having 1,777 students and one school yet to open.
- 95% were co-educational schools
- 86% were state schools.

It is assumed that all schools who attended the workshops also received the guides.

The workshops were also sometimes attended by representatives from other organisations who have an interest in local curriculum or could contribute to locally focused curriculum. They attended only when there was space, and did not take the place of schools. The organisations included:

- Sport New Zealand
- Deaf Education
- National Library of New Zealand

- Waikato University
- Far Net (an online teaching community available to Secondary and areas schools)
- Caritas (the Catholic Agency for Justice Peace and Development).

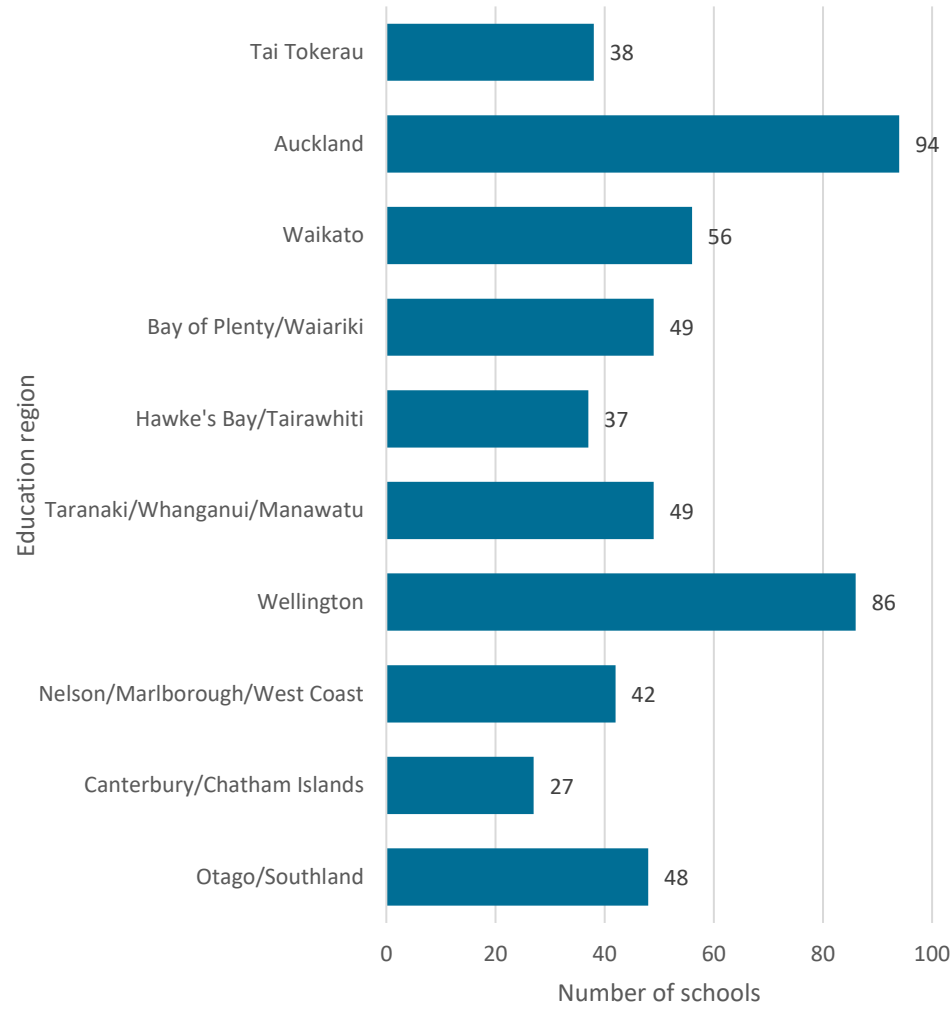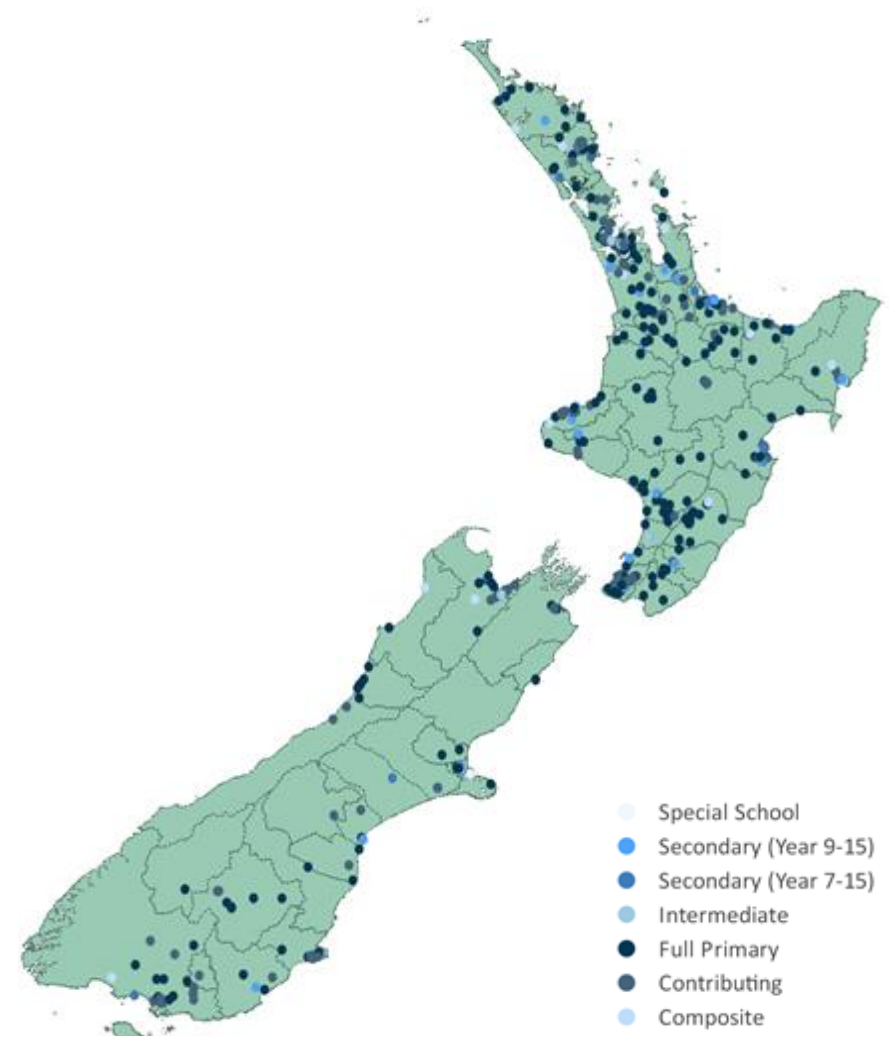## Figure 1: Number of schools that attended workshops by region

Education region	Number of schools
Tai Tokerau	38
Auckland	94
Waikato	56
Bay of Plenty/Waiariki	49
Hawke's Bay/Tairawhiti	37
Taranaki/Whanganui/Manawatu	49
Wellington	86
Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast	42
Canterbury/Chatham Islands	27
Otago/Southland	48

Figure 2: Workshops identified by location and school type

Legend:
- Special School
- Secondary (Year 9-15)
- Secondary (Year 7-15)
- Intermediate
- Full Primary
- Contributing
- Composite

4.2   On-site coaching

The on-site coaching was available for schools in Term 2 and was provided to individual schools. The on-site coaching was designed to support schools in having dedicated support to focus on the planning and application of local curriculum design at their school. **As of April 2019, a total of 79 schools received the phase two support across the country.** Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay and Otago schools made up half of the phase 2 schools. This reflects the pattern of reach for the workshops, except for Wellington that appears to have had less on-site coaching in comparison to the number of workshops provided. There were four spaces for phase two that were not filled by schools.

Figure 3: Phase 2 schools by region n=79
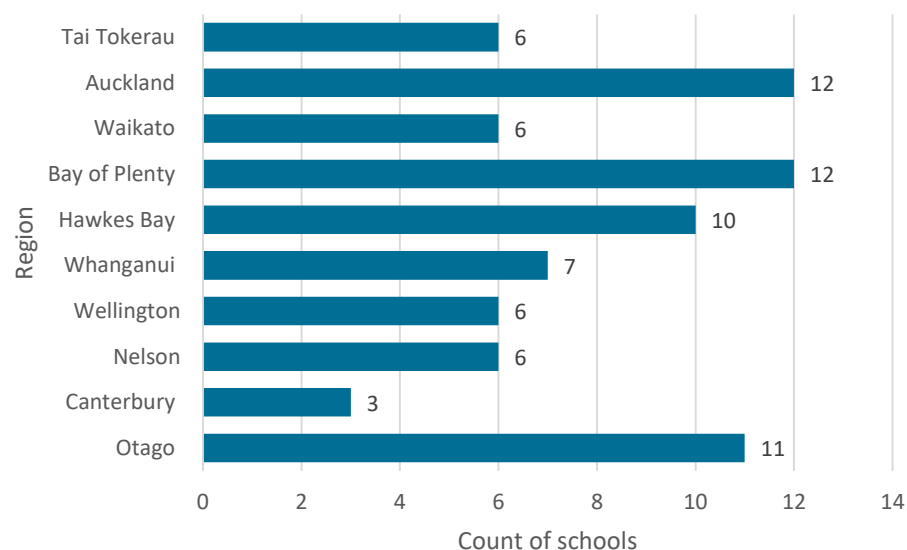
4.3   Online Local Curriculum Design toolkit

Alongside the guides, the Local Curriculum Design Tool is also available for schools. The online toolkit helps Kāhui Ako, schools and kura to collaborate when designing their local curriculum. The Local Curriculum Design tool focuses on supporting children and young people across the entire 0 to 18 education pathway. The toolkit comprises of several tools – four that are grouped in Rapua Te Ara Tika, promoting a Māori approach to curriculum

development, and four that apply to English medium[1]. While this resource was not a specific focus of the project objectives and questions, it was noted by the school staff that we interviewed. The Ministry also provided data on the number of accounts that have been created to access the toolkit. **In total, 2,224 accounts were created by the 16th July 2019.** This included Kāhui Ako, school communities and Education Sector Logon users with Community of Learning. **Given that there are 216 of Kāhui Ako this demonstrates a 91% reach. This is a good level of reach, although it is not known how much each school used the toolkit.**

Table 4: Online curriculum toolkit accounts

Account type	Number of accounts
Kāhui Ako	197
School communities	275
Education sector logon users with Community of Learning	1,752
TOTAL	2,224

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[1] The Local Curriculum Design Toolkit. https://curriculumtool.education.govt.nz/

5. UNDERSTANDING LOCAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

This section draws on the interviews with schools and other key stakeholders to reflect on schools' understanding of local curriculum development. The concept of 'local curriculum development' is newer for schools and the package of support put together by the Ministry was designed in response to feedback from schools wanting additional support. During the interviews, two key aspects emerged from the discussions: what does a 'local curriculum' mean, and how do you go about developing it?

5.1   What does a 'local curriculum' mean for schools?

Schools understand a local curriculum to be one that fits with their identity and local context. It is not a one size fits all approach. It is a framework which works for their students, and their community and takes advantage of their local resources. Schools are focused on making their students successful learners, whatever that may mean for each different school no matter the geography, decile or school type. One school noted that local curriculum design emphasised that 'who we are' or the identity of the school should be apparent in everything they do, including the curriculum. Schools also recognised that local curriculum design is an ongoing process, and not about creating a singular output. In order to remain locally appropriate, the local curriculum needs to be continuously revised. Schools noted that local curriculum development is not a one term, or even one-year thing. It should not be rushed and requires a lot of careful thought and planning.

By developing their local curriculum, **schools are seeking to meet their community's needs and focusing on the future**. Schools are aware that to develop their local curriculum, they must understand their local community: their students, family, whānau, and iwi:

> *"Local curriculum is responding to the wants and needs of the kids. And the wants of the community too, if when and how possible. Focusing on things that our kids need, particularly in terms of culture and making some new shared understanding." - principal*

Schools are looking to create pathways for their students that go beyond their attendance at school, especially if it is a high school. When discussing local curriculum, interviewees often noted that **education is more than literacy and numeracy, it is about providing students the key skills that will not only make them successful learners at the school, but lifelong learners.**

A local curriculum is not just about creating a framework for the school but also relates to the physical characteristics of the school and surrounding areas. For some schools that are getting new buildings while they develop their curriculum, they have sped up the process to ensure that the spaces around them work for the curriculum, and not the other way around. Thinking about their physical space allows them into integrate learning environments, and not just learning areas into their local curriculum development

Schools also wanted to acknowledge their local area and ensure that students are aware of its history. School staff indicated that they wanted to be teaching the history of their local area, and not ancient Egypt. Schools are looking at their local geography, their beaches, maunga and awa and figuring out how they can incorporate these features into their curriculum.

As well as the explicit curriculum of what is taught, a school principal also referred to the 'hidden' curriculum. Exploring the hidden curriculum was about looking at students as a point of strength, rather than weakness. The interviewee noted how viewing students from a point of weakness dominates both how teachers work, and how the school operates. The hidden curriculum needs to be actively addressed, otherwise there will not be any change.

"There's the explicit curriculum and then there's the hidden curriculum which is basically how we do things, but we don't necessarily tell people. So, when I say we, I don't mean us here, I just mean… things like the bias that you bring into the job." – principal

5.2   How do schools develop their local curriculum?

The interviews indicated that the approach schools undertake when developing their curriculum is not the same for each school, and this is important for reflecting their local context. **Each school has a different local context, history of local curriculum development and different levels of engagement with students and whānau. Many schools were not aware of how long local curriculum design would take, or the extent of what it would include.** While some more information would have helped, for many of schools it was something they had to figure out for themselves through engaging in local design.

When asked what advice they would give to other schools starting the process, *"start small"* was the main piece of advice, along with checking assumptions at the very beginning to ensure that everyone has a shared understanding of local curriculum design and what it is seeking to achieve. **The beginning of the local curriculum design process for most schools simply requires thinking and reflection as they unpack what a 'local curriculum' is**, what they are already doing, and where they want to go as a school.

"Make a start in small ways, you don't have to do everything at once, it's an iterative process that will take some time. And you'll never be finished." – Workshop provider

To support and guide local curriculum design, the interviews suggested that schools should consider the following:

- **The school's vision** is a key starting point for many schools as it *"underpins everything"*. For some schools, a review and refinement of their vision led to the redevelopment of their local curriculum. For others, focusing on local curriculum design led schools to revisit their vision. When discussing their vision, schools wanted to ensure that their vision was relevant to their schools' current situation and was not outdated.
- **Graduate profile:** the purpose of a local curriculum for schools is to ensure they have successful learners and their graduate profile is a description of what that school considers to be a successful learner. Schools can use this to identify they key components of a successful learner. The interviewees indicated that schools can then work backwards from this profile and develop pathways to successful learners.
- **Key competencies** provide fundamental components of curriculum development, and support thinking that is wider than literacy and numeracy. Under national standards, schools had to focus on literacy and numeracy. Local curriculum design enables schools to think more flexibly about key competencies and how else they can improve key competencies and skills in their students. For many schools, they are moving towards inquiry learning and incorporating literacy and numeracy into their inquiry learning.

"Starting to think more about how the components in curriculum interact with each other, how they are integrating and what's special about our place." - principal

As schools develop their curriculum, they create action plans with components such as key competencies which guide local curriculum development and can be support a longer-term plan for students. One school also created a shared document where teachers could record their reflections on the school's progress as well as their own.

When reflecting on local curriculum design, one school raised some concern about the impact that local curriculum development might have on the learning outcomes of the students while they are carrying out the change process. The interviewees suggested that while some learning outcomes may suffer in the short term when they adjust their curriculum, long-term education outcomes would be improved.

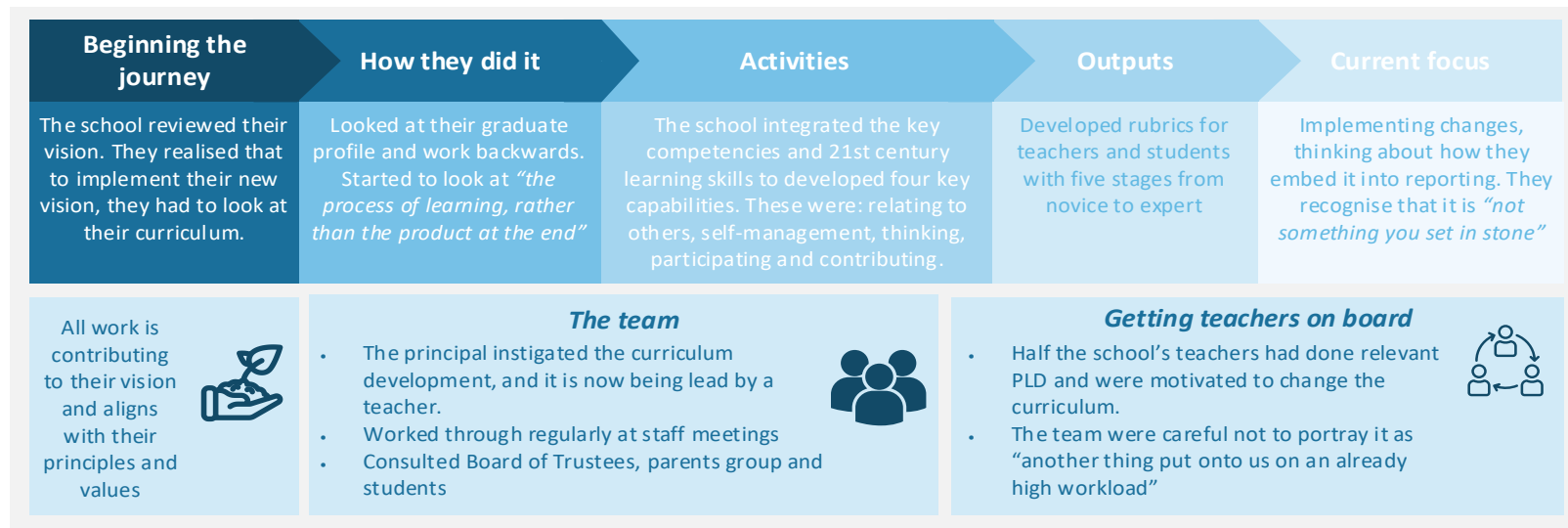## 5.3   Who has been involved in local curriculum development?

The responsibility for curriculum development lies with a different position in each of the schools that we visited. **Typically, the local curriculum development was led by a principal or assistant/deputy principal.** At one school, a teacher who was particularly interested in curriculum development was the lead for the school. At the early stages of curriculum development, it was common for schools to begin the local curriculum design efforts with the senior management team. When reflecting on this, the interviewees felt that the engagement of senior management ensured that they were on the same page, enabling them to share consistent messages with other staff.

After senior management, heads of learning areas were the next group often included in the curriculum development process. These teachers then engaged other staff in their teams, supporting wider school engagement in curriculum design. In a small school, the whole teaching staff were often included in curriculum development earlier than in larger schools. Staff meetings are a key opportunity for school wide discussion of curriculum development. Schools recognised that it is important to engage with teachers and executive staff early on, as opposed to consulting them after the design has finished.

Curriculum development can be school wide and led by senior management, or classroom specific, led by teachers. Teachers in some schools have been encouraged to explore what they can do to better meet their students' needs in their own classroom, while also having school wide programmes such as sports and music programmes.

Schools consistently emphasised the importance of including the student voice and engaging family, whānau and the local community when developing their curriculum. Each school does this to a different extent and in a different way such as surveys, hui and focus groups. Incorporating the student voice was not just relevant to the curriculum but was considered to be important for other aspects of the school. When one school was consulting with their school community about their vision, and allowed them to vote for their desired option, *"overwhelmingly they chose the option which talks about students having a voice and global part to play"*.

Case study: Curriculum development three years on

Beginning the journey	How they did it	Activities	Outputs	Current focus
The school reviewed their vision. They realised that to implement their new vision, they had to look at their curriculum.	Looked at their graduate profile and work backwards. Started to look at *"the process of learning, rather than the product at the end"*	The school integrated the key competencies and 21st century learning skills to developed four key capabilities. These were: relating to others, self-management, thinking, participating and contributing.	Developed rubrics for teachers and students with five stages from novice to expert	Implementing changes, thinking about how they embed it into reporting. They recognise that it is *"not something you set in stone"*

All work is contributing to their vision and aligns with their principles and values	***The team*** • The principal instigated the curriculum development, and it is now being lead by a teacher. • Worked through regularly at staff meetings • Consulted Board of Trustees, parents group and students	***Getting teachers on board*** • Half the school's teachers had done relevant PLD and were motivated to change the curriculum. • The team were careful not to portray it as "another thing put onto us on an already high workload"

6. LOCAL CURRICULUM DESIGN SUPPORTS: USE AND VALUE

This section explores how schools used the supports and what was the most valuable aspect of each support. This is followed by a discussion of the most valuable aspects of the supports overall.

6.1 The Guides

Schools indicated that the guides very useful. The interviewees felt that the content was valuable, the questions were thought provoking and the guides were very visually attractive, which made them enjoyable and easy to use.

For schools who were early in the local curriculum development journey, the guides *"helped start a thinking process to unpack what local curriculum is about".* The guides helped schools to take stock of the range of activities they were doing as a school and think about why they were doing them and what else they could do. The guides also encouraged schools to review their vision. **The practical nature of the guides also supported schools in establishing a shared understanding of curriculum design.** For example, the diagrams in the guide were used by the curriculum lead in one school to discuss curriculum development with staff and parents.

Where schools were further along with designing their local curriculum, the guides were used as a check to reflect on their journey. While this was useful, schools would have preferred it earlier on in their curriculum development journey and did not consider the guides crucial given their progress.

The awareness and use of the guides varied across schools, depending on their stage of curriculum development. Some schools only became aware of the guides at the workshops, and another school did not receive a hard copy, which they would have preferred. Any school that had not used the guide at the time of the interviews, indicated that they intended to do so.

The toolkit that is paired with the guides was not mentioned by many schools. For the few schools that used the toolkits, they cited technical issues which prevented them from accessing the site. One school did comment that the material in the toolkit complemented the guide very well and that neither would have been as useful without the other.

How the guides changed one South Auckland primary school's thinking about their curriculum:

- This school has only used the first guide so far, as it corresponds to where they are at in their curriculum development journey. The school staff thought it was well put together and can see a lot of time and thought has gone into it. The staff felt that this signalled the importance of local curriculum design for the Ministry.
- Similarly, to other schools they talked about how the guides (the first guide) started of a process of thinking and an iterative process which sent them on a journey. The guide helped them take a more holistic view of their curriculum, encouraging the school to consider their local history and the school's identity and values. Importantly, the guide was recognised for providing a framework to inform and apply local curriculum design.

6.2 The Workshops

The workshops were highly valued by participating schools. **The workshops raised pertinent questions to get schools really thinking about their school and curriculum development.** Approaching learning holistically was a key learning from the workshop from one school, and now the school is thinking about how the different learning areas can interact with each other and break out of their silos. Other schools also noted the value of thinking more deeply about local curriculum design, what it means and why it is important:

> *"Just the simple thing of challenging, so what is education, what is the purpose of school, and, and how do you do those things? But then….they really unpacked the thinking behind it and the rationale… but there was also the how and it was really nice" – principal*

A common theme amongst schools was that **they appreciated the opportunity to speak to other schools and hear about their knowledge and experience**. Workshop participants found the interaction and discussion with other schools to be **an invaluable networking opportunity** and found value in simply listening and participating in conversations around school's different and unique local contexts. For one school, that was further along with developing their curriculum, they were surprised when the workshops only briefly touched on key student capabilities, whereas they had put a major focus on this in their own curriculum development.

Through conversations with other schools, some schools commented that they found it valuable being able to frame where they were in their learning curriculum development journey compared to other schools. These schools suggested that this enabled them to pause and reflect on where they are in their journey and why they may have taken similar or different approaches compared to other schools on the same journey. **One school commented on how listening to other schools and their local contexts helped them better understand their approach to language and culture within the school.** They gave the example of how their school is 80% Pacific and for them it is more appropriate to fully embrace Pacific language all year round as opposed to having distinct language weeks. For another school which has a very diverse population, they focus on many different language weeks to embrace all cultures and languages at their schools, as well as trying to embrace their diversity in other activities at the school.

The effectiveness of the workshop facilitators was highlighted by one school. The school staff reported that one of the workshop facilitators had previously been a school principal. They found this facilitator to be highly effective as she understood the school context and had a clear, relevant and sound understanding of senior leadership. The school staff also commented on how this facilitator's professional experience enabled them to relate theory to teaching practice and the school environment. It is useful to note, that this project did not specifically ask about the effectiveness of the facilitators. This was a specific reflection that a school wanted to share, and other schools also noted the credibility of the workshop facilitators.

Overall, schools valued the opportunity to hear about other school's curriculum development, and this was considered an important component of the workshops which could have been expanded to allow for a more in-depth discussion.

While schools understand the purpose of a local curriculum and what it is, there was less clarity on how to get there. The workshops provided a key opportunity to give schools the "where to next?" The next steps are very different for each school context and stage of curriculum development. For schools beginning their curriculum journey, the workshops were very helpful but for schools further along with curriculum development, they had thought about a lot of the content of the workshops already and felt that it was a duplication of material in the guide. This highlights the value of understanding where schools are in their curriculum development journey and aligning the supports to their stage of development.

When reflecting on the workshops, some **schools also wanted more time to think about their own school context and begin to apply the ideas that they were exploring during the workshop:**

> *"There was no time to really look and consider and think about our own context."*   *- principal*

6.3   On-site coaching

The option of **on-site coaching was very appealing to schools and was the most highly valued of the three supports**. The opportunity to have school specific time to apply the concept of local curriculum design were the most valued aspects of the on-site coaching. Schools also described accessing this support to enable them to review their progress and identify areas for further improvement. Schools also wanted to make sure that they maximised the value of the time that they spent on local curriculum development and were focusing on the right aspects of development for their school.

The interviews indicated that the **coaching worked well for the schools no matter what stage of curriculum development they are at**, but for schools who are at an advanced stage it was the most valuable form of support.

The on-site coaching was highly valued by school staff and providers for its ability to provide **tailored and focussed support** for school's local curriculum design ideas. Interviewees felt that school specific support was important as local curriculum design is heavily dependent on the school's local context and environment. The providers suggested that on-site coaching also enabled schools to begin to apply and further develop the ideas presented in the guides and explored in the workshops, giving them the opportunity to apply the key local curriculum design concepts to their context.

This form of professional development was reported to be rare. Schools were disappointed to miss out on coaching and felt that it should be more widely available to schools needing additional support. One school who received coaching had already contracted the facilitator to provide them with that form of support, but in 90-minute meetings around three times a term instead of two full days. This school considered the on-going coaching to

have extra value because the facilitator was already familiar with the curriculum team, the school context and their stage of curriculum development. The spacing of the sessions also enables the schools to make progress in between the coaching sessions. Another school has since contracted the facilitator to provide them with ongoing support, as they found the facilitation so valuable.

6.4   The most valuable aspects of supports overall for schools

When considering all the supports together, the coaching was the most valued, as it provided targeted support that worked for the school at any stage of the curriculum development process. Overall, other aspects of the support that were highly valued were:

- **Sharing of effective curriculum development examples**. This was both Ministry shared examples and those shared by other schools at the workshops. The examples were noted for their value in helping schools to think about their curriculum and what they could do, and how they could adapt these examples and ideas to their local context.
- **Connecting with other schools.** This reduced the sense of isolation that some schools felt when thinking about local curriculum design.
- The **focus on the 'local' aspect of curriculum development** from the Ministry.

Overall, the supports from the Ministry were greatly appreciated by all the schools we interviewed. The supports were deemed to be of high quality and helped ensure that schools were optimising their approach to meeting the needs of their school community. Schools felt that the Ministry has an important role in providing support to schools to develop their local curriculum. There was no sense from the interviews that the support was not welcomed or valued by the schools.

7. IDEAS FOR BETTER SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

This section provides suggestions from the schools for improving the supports. These improvements can be broadly classified into two categories: enhancing the current supports and expanding the types of supports available.

7.1 Enhancing the current supports

Ideas for improving the guides mainly related to communication. It was suggested that awareness of the guides could be increased as some schools only learnt about the guides at the workshops and would have liked to have access to them earlier. For one school access to a hard copy of the guides was important.

One specific recommendation regarding the content of the guides related to the Treaty of Waitangi. The school staff mentioned that the Treaty of Waitangi material in these guides was many steps ahead of past material, although it could still be improved. More specifically, this school suggested that **the guides did a very good job at describing the Treaty of Waitangi but did not bridge the gap as to why the Treaty of Waitangi is important in terms of its application and the difference it makes for educationalists**. Another school found the content about the Treaty of Waitangi useful, but recognised the challenge of more effectively incorporating the Treaty into their curriculum.

Providing the guides in more than one medium was suggested as a possible improvement. Teachers are time poor, and **a podcast or video could increase teachers' use of the guides by making them more accessible**. While there are videos which complement the guide in the online toolkit, this had not been accessed by the teacher that suggested this improvement.

7.1.1 Enhancing the current supports: the workshops

Potential improvements for the workshops included **more time for discussion, more workshops for different stages of development, and better communication and timing for school's local curriculum development journey**.

Some schools felt that the support provided through the workshops would be better if spread across multiple workshops. This would also prevent the 'information overload' noted by some schools. Providing support across multiple timepoints would also allow schools time to work on and develop their local curriculum design ideas. It was suggested that this would enable schools to better connect with the content of the workshop and what it means in their school context. The need for more workshops was particularly noted schools that had not received the on-site coaching, with some suggesting that one session was insufficient to support local curriculum development and at worse was described as tokenistic by one interviewee.

Timing of the workshops and advanced notice of the workshops needs to be considered for teachers to incorporate any resulting actions into their plans for the following year. **General communication about the content and purpose of the workshops** to schools could also ensure that the school can send

the most appropriate person to the workshop. For example, a principal who has been very involved in curriculum design may not gain as much as a senior teacher or head of learning area who does not have as strong an understanding of local curriculum design. This was particularly relevant for schools who have already engaged in local curriculum design.

7.1.2 Enhancing the current supports: the on-site coaching

The **key improvement suggested for coaching was simply to have more of it**. For the schools who received it, they wanted more and the schools who did not receive it wanted to have access to the coaching and thought it would have been very valuable. **Spreading the coaching across two separate days rather than having one two-day block was also suggested as an improvement**. The interviewees suggested that this would allow for more thought and development between the coaching sessions. The interviewees felt that this would increase the value of the coaching and reduce the risk of information overload. As noted earlier, some schools have commissioned the providers to provide additional coaching through 90-minute sessions a few times a term. This also enables the schools to make progress between the coaching sessions and the interviewees suggested that this approach to coaching would be useful for schools.

Communication with the schools on the purpose of the on-site coaching and particularly the purpose of Day Two was noted by the interviewees. This would support schools in making the most of the focused nature of this day and ensure that the right people are in the room. For example, one coaching session had 20 people in attendance which was too many for substantive thought or work. **Timing of the coaching** in the school year is also important to ensure that changes can be implemented when the time is right for the school.

One school, who were only just starting to think about local curriculum development, found the format of the coaching too rigid and the facilitator had to adjust accordingly. While it worked in the end, the school did feel like they had some lost time due to the initial format not working for their stage of development. This again raises the value of aligning supports to the school's stage or readiness for local curriculum design.

7.2   Expanding the supports available to schools

The interviewees felt that there is considerable opportunity to provide more support to schools to help them develop their curriculum. The interviewees suggested that schools expected the Ministry to provide a variety of resources and opportunities. Ministry support and guidance was value by the schools, as this was a new area of development for schools and teachers:

"It's become apparent to us that this is actually something that our teachers are struggling with to wrap their heads around" –
principal

Apart from the desire for increased on-site coaching, most of the ideas for providing additional supports related to further developing the guides. It was suggested that there was opportunity for the guides to be expanded to include:

Templates for the different stages of curriculum design, with modifiable headings to adapt to the local context, were highly desired by multiple schools. These would help provide a starting point and continued direction for the schools. Schools need to be able to keep track of their progress and have a plan for their development.

Case studies of effective curriculum development could be used for inspiration and adapted to the local context. These should include successes and challenges and represent a range of school contexts and environments. Local curriculum design is new to schools, so case examples help guide schools' thinking and gives them a starting point.

Suggested timelines for the curriculum development process to help keep teachers accountable to each other, and so schools know that they are on track with development. This feedback is interesting given the ongoing nature of curriculum design.

Guidance for socialisation with teachers to support schools in communicating the purpose of local curriculum design and motivate teachers to take part. This was especially important for teachers who have only taught under national standards, and who could be overwhelmed with the opportunities and challenges that local curriculum development presents. While there was some guidance provided in the phase 2 coaching, these ideas could be shared with schools who did not receive the coaching.
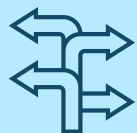
Navigation support for all the resources available, what their purpose is and where to access them could also be incorporated into the guides. The navigation support could also include links with other documents that are related to the guides. The role of regional offices in supporting schools both through the navigation of resources and facilitating shared learning across schools was also noted. This was also identified as an opportunity to improve the consistency of the communication to schools.

7.2.1 Expanding the supports available to schools: connecting schools

There is significant opportunity **to support schools to develop their curriculum by connecting them with other schools**, especially schools in their local area.

The sharing of ideas and learnings from other schools was highly valued amongst all schools. The development and sharing of case studies is a key way to share ideas and learnings, but by connecting local schools with each other, there is potential for this to be strengthened and to develop a curriculum that is local for an area, and not just for a school. Schools also considered connecting with schools to be an efficient way to develop their curriculum.

Prior to receiving any of the supports, one high school paid for some of their teachers to visit innovative, future focused schools across the country to learn more about their curriculum development. The school also paid for a deputy principal of one of these innovative schools to visit their school and share learnings. This was considered incredibly valuable, but resource intensive. While most likely not feasible at a national level, **consideration should be given to different ways to connect schools, such as developing relationships between feeder schools and using Kāhui Ako as a vehicle for curriculum development.**

Creating connections between schools was noted for its value in supporting a student's learning pathway across multiple schools. The interviewees suggested that if schools were more aware of what schools in their area were doing, then when students change schools, the schools will have a greater understanding of what that student has learnt, and what that school's assessments mean. It was suggested that this should ease the student's transition. This was especially important for areas with a highly transient population. Some schools were already on this journey. For example, an intermediate school has active relationships with their main feeder primary school and have started talking more to their local high school. This existing relationship has made it easier for them to start discussing curriculum development with their connector schools and through these discussions they already have a better understanding of students' experiences in these schools and how each form of assessment links to the intermediate's assessments.

Another primary school also started talking to their local intermediate and high school. They realised that their students knew some topics very well, such as photosynthesis and the water cycle, but had large gaps elsewhere. This led the primary school to think about where they can prevent repetition and **broaden students' understanding of other areas and better prepare them for the next stage of their education**. The school noted however, that to achieve this **they also needed to broaden the knowledge base of their teaching staff** to ensure that they can teach these topics. This need for professional development alongside curriculum design in and interesting insight and will be useful to continue to understand what schools have needed to do here, as they progress through their local curriculum design journeys.

When discussing the approach to connecting schools, the interviewees noted the importance of these relationships being developed on their own terms to help ensure that they are sustainable and built on trust. The Ministry could have a role in facilitating connections across schools, perhaps at a regional level or bringing schools together through workshops. However, schools were keen to ensure that connections or relationships were not mandated in case they were not the right relationships for those schools.

Kāhui Ako were also noted as a key vehicle for creating relationships between schools in a community and move beyond feeder school relationships. The interviewees noted that Kāhui Ako needs enough trust and social capital for it to support local curriculum development. Consideration needs to be given to when the Kāhui ako does not function that well, or its function serves other purposes that do not align with curriculum development. It was also suggested that development of a broader local curriculum would work well in areas where all the schools are in the same community, such as in urban areas, not might be more challenging for more rural areas where schools are more likely to be quite different. When discussing the role of the Kāhui Ako , two schools noted the value of facilitator familiarity with the school, with one interviewee going on to suggest that the Kāhui Ako facilitator could provide coaching support to their schools.

"There's definitely usefulness in sitting down together as a collective community to decide our vision through the whole community but where than runs into trouble is each school is its own little part of the process….it can be quite difficult to be on the same page" – deputy principal

7.2.2 Expanding the supports available to schools: teacher release

Time is a scarce resource for teachers, and **the provision teacher release was identified as a key way to help schools develop their local curriculum**. While the local curriculum design supports helped schools significantly, some felt that they did not have the time to do it justice. Some schools may prioritise local curriculum development within their current budgets, but not all schools can do this if they have other programmes going on or are less motivated to do so. Schools ability to free up time for local curriculum development was also strongly linked to when the supports were provided in their planning cycle, as their capacity to engage in local curriculum design may be impacted on by previously committing teacher release elsewhere.

8. CHANGES MADE BY SCHOOLS AND INFLUENCING FACTORS

This section discusses what changes schools have made regarding their local curriculum, and what influence the supports had. Factors which affect schools' curriculum development are also explored in this section.

8.1 Changes made

When reflecting on the contribution of the guides and the workshops to their understanding of local curriculum design, many schools indicated that it had **reaffirmed their thinking and given them confidence in their approach to local curriculum design. as well as further developing their ideas and understanding**. Many schools are still in the planning phases for local curriculum development and have not implemented any changes yet, even schools that have been thinking about curriculum development for multiple years now as it is a significant process to go through. Some schools have updated their school vision to be aligned to their current focus and stage to be more relevant for their students.

The guides helped schools recognise that local curriculum design is about the process of student learning and not the end product. Schools are trying to move the *"locus of control"* to students so they can take ownership of their learning. Schools consider it important for students to see the relevance of their learning and that they are proud of their achievements, and schools view having a local curriculum as a key way to achieve this. Schools want their curriculum to be meaningful for their students, and **the guides helped them establish a sound, connected, holistic metaphor for their local curriculum design which is connected to their local situation.**

The influence of the supports depended on the alignment of timing and nature of supports with the school's local curriculum design journey. Schools that were just starting to think about curriculum development were more likely to discuss the influence of the supports. For example, one school commented on how their school had begun a schoolwide review shortly before the supports were released. They mentioned how they were reviewing requirements regarding staff, policy and documentation through this process. They commented that the workshops were perfect timing for them and enabled them to reflect and further develop the work they were undertaking at their school. For schools that have been redesigning their curriculum for some time, the supports have been useful for them for them to evaluate where they are up to and identify any gaps in their process. For these schools, the support also motivated schools to further progress their work.

The interviews and visits to the schools for this report, were completed soon after the workshops and on-site coaching had been completed. Subsequently, most of the schools were able to talk about future plans around changes and how they are moving in the direction of achieving those, rather than being able to identify the specific changes that had occurred and their benefits. For instance, when asked about sharing learning to other staff, one school suggested it was still early in their journey and they had not yet begun disseminating learning with teaching staff.

Specific changes that schools have made when developing their curriculum include incorporating digital literacy, hiring more arts teachers, creating a hauora focus across the school and changing what sports are on offer for their students.

Case example: Primary School in South Auckland

A primary school in South Auckland shared the value of the supports and local curriculum design for their school. It is a decile one school and has a rich school culture which is strongly influenced by the high Pacific student population (approximately 80%). They suggested that these unique characteristics of their school have many implications for the school from the kind of staff they hire, the learning environments they provide students, as well as curriculum. Examples taught in classes are reflective of what would resonate with students from their lived experiences and are intended to provide real life uses of school content. Overall, this school emphasised that the school's context goes beyond curriculum and emphasises the school identity which should be inherent in the curriculum and reflective of their students.

One school also highlighted how they are moving away from teaching material in a two to three year cycle to **focusing on teaching material that will enable them to connect with the child in front of them**. This enabled them to shift away from a cycle that was not focusing on students' *"passions, interests, strengths and knowledge"* to one that was. Other schools also noted shifts in their approach to teaching, such as increasing the emphasis on inquiry-based learning, rather than teacher led topics:

> *"The traditional idea of being a knowledge dump and a, by the end of this our kids will know blah, blah, blah. And the difference being that actually they'll have a connection to what they know or have an idea of where they fit. And what they can do about a problem, or something that's localised that can go wider, nationally or wider world." – principal*

8.2   Factors influencing schools' local curriculum design efforts

The school visits and interviews highlighted a range of contextual factors that influenced local curriculum design. Key factors included school's engagement with students and the school community, iwi, the local area and its history, and the capability and buy-in of the school.

8.2.1   Engaging with students and the school community

Engaging with the community is considered a vital component of developing a local curriculum. The school community includes students, parents, carers and whānau. The level of engagement varies significantly between schools, both in terms of regular engagement and consultation for curriculum development. **Some schools actively and regularly seek out parent/carer and student feedback and were incorporating curriculum consultation into that engagement, while other schools early on in their journey, are planning to engage students and whānau.** Consultation with students can be at a

classroom level, through the student council, focus groups or surveys. Consultation with parents includes 'at the gate' consultation, newsletters and hui. Some schools modify the setting and timing of each hui to best meet the needs of the different cultural groups at their school to ensure broad engagement. The engagement and support of the board and parent association were also noted by schools as being important.

Case example: Primary School in Central Auckland
This primary school in Central Auckland is well known in the local community and has a strong connection with the neighbouring intermediate and high school. The school has a highly active and engaged board and parent association who are both key enablers for the school's engagement with the community. The school has a diverse community with a high migrant population, the school is eager to embrace diversity and incorporate culture into their local curriculum. The high engagement from their board and parent association were highlighted as key factors that will support the development of a locally relevant curriculum for their students.

Community engagement can be difficult for schools with highly transient populations or parents that appear to have less interest engaging. The interviewees also noted that parents/carers have different views towards education, some of which do not encourage feedback or working alongside the school. The challenging of communicating with parents/cares was also noted, particularly when they do not have access to the internet making more difficult. **A traditional perception of education amongst parents can make it harder for them to understand the shifts in education**, the purpose of these shifts, such as local curriculum design or even why the school is trying to be innovative. It was suggested that parents/cares may expect their children to have the same education they did, and do not understand the changes.

"Community perception of what is good practice in schools and what schools should be doing is actually potentially outdated. But it's also so impacting, it's quite impacting because it makes it really challenging for us in the consultation and the connection process. So, we're really keen to develop these connections, these learning connections with community, but of course, we're coming from different places." - principal

There was also a cultural element to these perceptions, with one school describing the school's Pacific community holds values around compliance relating to school's leadership role in education, as opposed to participation in aspects of the school such as local curriculum development. Unpacking this understanding has encouraged the school to look at other ways to engage with their community to support local curriculum design.

"Trying to build the strength within our community to see that, actually, children learn more from a passion, or more from a strength than they would from a knowledge dump (laughter) is, is quite yeah, so yeah, we're still early on that journey." – principal

8.2.2   Engaging with local area and the school's history

A common theme across the interviews was the importance of connecting with their local area and using the history and geographical features of the area to guide their curriculum. **Schools are trying to connect the students with their maunga and awa, and actively organise trips to enhance students' understanding of the area.** Teachers want to be teaching material that is relevant to their students in the present day, and not focusing on other people's history. Connection to the local area was noted to be more challenging for schools with a highly transient student population, as the students do not consider it to be their local area and are less likely to be interested in the local area, or as impacted by connecting to it.

"We were fortunate to have a starting base of a visual narrative of all the treasured places, locally and further out and to our awa. But hadn't really built onto the strengths that that narrative presented us with." – principal

Schools also partner with other organisations and places, such as the District Health Board, museums, art galleries and mosques. Partnerships with these organisations are viewed as being reciprocal, and that both sides should benefit from the partnership. The school's history also influences the direction of their curriculum development. One school's past principal had a keen interest in the arts, and this remains at the school to this day with all classrooms named after artists and art being a key component of the curriculum.

"We have to really look out wide for those things. We don't have a community immediately to draw on, it's quite limited in the ways that we would like, really like to look at strengthening the localised stuff." – principal

8.2.3   Engagement with iwi

Connection between schools and local iwi varied, but all expressed a desire to have a relationship with local iwi. **Barriers to developing a relationship with iwi included previous breakdowns in the relationship, not having one clear iwi to connect with, or simply not having contact details.** One school in particular had some connections to many iwi, which is considered beneficial to the school because of increased diversity but does make more difficult

to reach agreement about the one way to do things. The difficulty for schools to build relationship with iwi was also noted by a provider, as well as the impact of new parents and whānau moving into the community to help bridge the gap between schools and iwi.

"It's a real gift that we have many different iwi from across New Zealand contributing to what happens in the community, on the opposite ed it can actually also be difficult when you're trying to come up with one way of doing something… so coming to general consensus can be difficult" – deputy principal

8.2.4 School capability and buy in

Developing a local curriculum is easier for schools that have highly capable and supportive senior leadership, who understand what is required for developing the curriculum, can handle the extra workload and are able to support other staff during the change process. For schools where it was a teacher, assistant principal or deputy principal leading the curriculum development, a supportive principal was considered a key enabler for their work.

Schools must create buy in to support local curriculum development and ensure that it is not perceived as another task for teachers to do on top of their existing high workload. Previous experience with Professional Learning and Development and a broader knowledge base was considered a key difference in one school between teachers who got on board with curriculum development easily, and ones who needed more support. For less experienced teachers who have only worked under national standards, this is particularly uncharted territory and could be overwhelming for them. Local curriculum Is not just about literacy and numeracy as national standards were. It was suggested that teachers also must see the value of a local curriculum, for themselves and for the students.

"I want them to play, especially coming out of National Standards. Because for almost everyone on staff that's all they know. So I want them to play and explore, and just follow, you know if the kids show interest in something just head down that track and see where things go, and experience things. For a lot of them it's really new." – principal

Other professional development programmes can also affect curriculum development if they increase time pressures on staff to deliver on all their projects. If programmes are being piloted in the school, such as Positive Behaviour for Learning, this may also increase time pressures but can also provide more direction for schools to support their curriculum development.

8.2.5 Students' learning needs

Every student has different strengths and different learning needs. The interviewees indicated that this diversity can create very different environments in schools which can impact on local curriculum development for the school. One interviewee highlighted that their school feels extra pressure to accelerate learning outcomes for children because they are in a low decile environment, and they have to figure out how an inquiry model of learning will work for these students, and how to track progress and monitor impact. Creating consistency across the school for children that are very different was identified as a challenge and may not be the right thing for students. For schools with high transiency, they are regularly getting new students and they have to assess their current stage of learning, and identify gaps in knowledge.

9. OVERVIEW AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Overview

Schools are excited about developing their local curriculum to improve their students' learning experiences and meet the needs of their school community. They want to improve the process of learning for their students and provide local and relevant material for them to learn, and to take ownership of their learning. However, schools recognise that local curriculum development is not a quick fix and requires dedicated time and consideration to ensure that any development is responsive to the students' learning needs. Schools also recognised the opportunity and challenge of securing buy-in from teaching staff, engaging with parents, carers and whānau, and local iwi.

The supports from the Ministry have been greatly appreciated by the schools for enabling their local curriculum design journey. Overall, the resources were considered to be high quality and valuable for supporting local curriculum design. The value of each support varied for schools depending on where they are with their curriculum development journey. Schools further along in their journey used the supports as a checklist and a way to identify gaps in their development while schools new to curriculum development could really unpack what a local curriculum is and what it will look like in their school because of the support they received.

The provision of coaching, and the tailored support that it entailed was highly valued for schools, and not like any other PLD they receive. The workshops provided a key opportunity to connect schools so they can share experiences and examples about curriculum development, and there is significant potential to increase connections between schools. The connections and engagement across the schools was highly valued by the teaching staff as an opportunity to learn from one another.

It is important to note that schools self-selected to receive the supports, and only a selection of those schools participated in this project, therefore local curriculum design may look different in these schools to schools who did not receive supports. It is also important to note that most of the schools engaged in this project were primary schools with only one high school, and so this report presents an understanding of local curriculum design in a primary school context, which may not translate to a secondary school context.

It is also worth noting that interviewees did not mention the role of the regional offices, or the availability of strategic advisors Māori in these regional offices as a form of support. Strategic advisors Māori could provide the requested support to schools to connect with iwi.

9.2 Key considerations

This rapid feedback report identifies the following key considerations for the Ministry:

The existing local curriculum design supports:

- Continue to provide local curriculum design supports for schools but consider the value of developing options that are tailored to a school's stage of curriculum development. This will maximise the value of the different supports.
- Review the format of the on-site coaching and the potential to provide smaller but more frequent bursts of support. This could be in the form of additional on-site coaching; however, it could also be through shared Skype conferences following an initial one-day coaching session. This would enable schools to progress their thinking between sessions and have the ongoing support of the facilitator. To support the learning across schools, these sessions could also involve more than one school from the same area and/or characteristics.
- Expand the opportunity for schools to connect and share learning with one another during the workshop sessions.
- Bolster the value of the current supports through the inclusion of templates and case studies. When providing these examples, it is important that schools still recognise the importance of developing ideas that are fit for their own school context. The value of learning from other schools noted in the interviews, however, suggests that sharing examples would be highly valuable for schools. The examples shared in this report provide some useful starting points. The insights from this report suggest that examples demonstrating how schools have supported teacher buy-in, engaged with parents, carers or iwi, and responding to the diversity of student need would be useful.
- Enhance communication with schools about the range of supports available and their purpose for each stage of curriculum development. This should include information on the purpose of the workshops and the on-site coaching to ensure schools have the right people in the room.
- Engage with schools early on to enable schools to plan and allocate teacher capacity to support local curriculum design.

Considerations relating to additional supports:

- Explore options for enhancing the connections between schools through the different supports. This was well supported through the workshops but could also be encouraged through the guides and the on-site coaching. There is an important balance to achieve for the Ministry when encouraging schools to connect with one another, as while it was valued, schools did not want to feel that this was a requirement and wanted to lead the development of these relationships themselves. One option for the Ministry to consider is the role of the Regional Offices in supporting connections between schools, as well as the use of examples and case studies to demonstrate the value of these connections. The Ministry could consider holding regional learning sessions that would provide an opportunity for schools to show case their progress and share their learning. However, the variability in school contexts mean that there can be no one standard way to connect schools:
  o The use of Kāhui Ako or other school networks could work well to create a curriculum local for that area and not just a school, but only when the Kāhui Ako is functioning well and its purpose aligns with curriculum development.
  o Connection of feeder schools, or schools across the country with similar characteristics such as high transience could help schools to identify commonalities and gaps which could better support them to address their students' needs. This could include an understanding of different assessment practices to better understand student's learning ability, when certain material is taught to identify gaps in knowledge, and how teaching about a local area can be considered relevant to students who are new to the area.
- Consider enhancing the capacity for schools to develop their local curriculum through allocating teacher release time.

Future feedback or evaluation considerations:

- Consider following up with schools who have engaged with the workshops and on-site coaching in 3 to 6 months' time to see what other changes have happened. This will identify case studies that can be shared with other schools. This follow up could also include creating a register of what other programmes are in schools such as Positive Behaviour for Learning to see how they influence curriculum design and what - resource pressures the school might face.
- To support accurate measurement of reach and ensure consistency of reporting, consider recording the school ID with the school name. This will mean that it is clear exactly what school participated and there will be no confusion when there are schools with similar names near by and the full school name is not recorded.
- Engaging with schools who are not developing their curriculum and did not receive the supports, to understand what supports they need to be able to effectively develop their curriculum.