

# NATIONAL STANDARDS FACTSHEET

## Consultation on National Standards

This factsheet outlines the process the Ministry of Education used for consultation, key themes and issues identified in feedback, and the Ministry's response to that feedback.

The Ministry consulted on National Standards with parents, families and whānau and the education sector between 25 May and 3 July 2009. The Ministry carefully considered the feedback in finalising the National Standards.

Nearly 2,150 parents and members of families and whānau were involved in face-to-face discussions, and over 4,000 people attended school sector meetings.

The Ministry held 39 school-hosted meetings with parents, family and whānau, and Ministry Pouwhakataki, Pasifika Co-ordinators, and Refugee and Migrant Co-ordinators held additional community meetings.

The Ministry commissioned the New Zealand Council for Educational Research to analyse nearly 5,000 feedback forms and submissions:

- 3,011 forms from parents, families and whānau
- 1,776 forms from the education sector (reflecting the views of 4,557 people)
- 181 written submissions.

The views expressed by parents, families and whānau and the education sector have been useful in finalising the National Standards and planning for their implementation.

Parents and family members told us they want their children to enjoy learning and have the chance to be the best they could. They wanted schools to have the flexibility to meet a range of needs and support the development of a well-rounded child.

Parents said they want to be involved in their children's learning, and emphasised the need for practical assistance and support from schools, so they know what to do to support their children's education.

They want good communication and strong, respectful relationships with teachers so they could work together and support their children's learning.

They want clear, timely, honest and specific information on their children's progress, achievement, strengths and weaknesses in language they can understand, and on a regular basis.

Schools will report to parents in plain language on their children's achievement and progress from 2010.

From January 2010, information will be available on the Ministry website for schools to use in their newsletters to parents, including what parents can expect from their schools in the future and what they should see in school reports.

Parents, families and whānau will have access to materials that explain the standards and what parents can do at home to support learning.

The education sector wanted clarity on the alignment between National Standards, the New Zealand Curriculum and the learning progressions. There were a variety of sector views on whether the standards were set at appropriate levels, whether the criteria were clear, and whether the exemplars were appropriate.

Other questions concerned comparisons between schools, use of assessment data, and the proposed time frame for implementing the standards.

There were questions about how the standards would apply to students with special needs and students who were learning English as a second language

Teachers also asked about the professional development and support will be provided for teachers and schools to implement the standards.

National Standards are set within the context of the New Zealand Curriculum and their levels closely align to the curriculum. The standards describe the levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics required for successful learning in all learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Schools will use the standards during 2010 to guide teaching and learning, report to parents about children's progress and achievement against the standards, and develop their 2011 charters including baseline data and targets against the standards. Schools will report school-level data to the Ministry from 2012.

In response to consultation the standards were more clearly aligned with the draft Literacy Learning Progressions. Criteria in the standards were revised to make expectations clear. Exemplars are being further developed so they align with the standards and reflect a broad range of achievement against each standard.

The dimensions of the mathematics standards have been rewritten to reflect the three strands in the New Zealand curriculum — number and algebra, geometry and measurement, and statistics.

English language learners will be judged and reported against the English Language Learning Progressions. As students gain proficiency in English, teachers can begin assessing their achievement against the National Standards. Students with high cognitive impairments will have standards set through their Individual Education Plans.

Assessment against National Standards will not rely on any one test or assessment tool. Teachers and schools will decide the mix of assessment information to gather that best suits their context and needs, and enables good decision-making about each student's learning and their teaching programme.

The Ministry is preparing materials to support teachers' confidence in their own judgements and also build consistency. Individual teacher judgements can be moderated within schools through quality discussions and sharing of expectations. The Education Review Office will review assessment and moderation processes in the context of its school reviews.

The Ministry is providing a wide range of support for schools on the National Standards, including information sessions, online and print resources and professional development.