

Review OF SPECIAL EDUCATION 2010

Submission form

You can use this form to provide your feedback on the *Review of Special Education: discussion document*.

You can get a copy of the discussion document from www.minedu.govt.nz or from the Ministry of Education.

Submissions close at 5pm on Friday 19 March 2010

Please send your submission to:

Post: Review of Special Education consultation
Ministry of Education
PO Box 1666
Wellington 6140

Instead of completing this form, you can make a submission online

Online: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ReviewOfSpecialEducation>

You can also send your submission as an email

Email: SE.review@minedu.govt.nz

For further information please contact the Ministry of Education

Phone: 04 463 8000 Fax: 04 463 8254

About you

If relevant, you may answer yes to more than one of the following questions. This information helps us understand whether different parts of the sector have different views about the issues discussed.

1. Are you responding as parent or caregiver or family of a child with special education needs?

No

2. Are you a student with special education needs?

No

3. Do you work in the health or disability sector?

No

4. Are you responding on behalf of a community or other non-government organisation?

No


5. Do you work in the education sector?

Yes

6. If you do work in the education sector, is your position mainly **funded through special education funding**, for example special school principal or teacher, specialist or RTLB?

We are Principals of Special schools – Our positions are funded through Teachers Salaries

7. If you are responding on behalf of a community or other non-government organisation please name your organisation and your position within that organisation. Please also make it clear if this is the “official” response from that organisation.

Organisation:	SPECIAL EDUCATION PRINCIPALS’ ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND	
Positions:	PRESIDENT - Erin Cairns SECRETARY - Jann Carvell	

10 questions for your response

The Government is seeking feedback from the wide range of people that have a view of the special education sector. Please tell us your views on the following issues and any other aspects of the sector that are important to you. Answer as many questions as you wish and attach additional pages as required. We look forward to your contribution.

Schooling

Q 1a What is needed to help schools succeed?

New Zealand schools operate under a number of frameworks:

- The organisational Framework
- The Administrative Framework
- The Curriculum Framework - guided by the National Curriculum Statements
- The Philosophical Framework
- The Personnel Framework

The National Education Goals – the achievement objectives, the **National Administration Guidelines** - codes or principles of conduct or administration, the **National Curriculum Statements** - areas and levels of knowledge and understanding to be presented to students, all belong implicitly in each school’s individual charter. These charters give each school a sense of identity, direction and culture and form the organisational structure for each school. The administrative framework, curriculum framework, philosophical framework and personnel framework is determined by each school. A successful school will exhibit many of the common characteristics operating within the frameworks above.

Successful schools have:

- A shared vision at all levels
- An ongoing process of self review linked back to the vision
- A positive culture based on shared values
- An active leader who develops ongoing strategies to deal with change
- Systems in place to deal with change
- Developed a Professional Learning Community (PLC) with all aspects of the school interrelated
- Effective communication and consultation systems
- Up to date educational practices including the use of technology
- A safe physical and emotional environment
- Concentrated on quantity and quality of teaching and learning
- High Expectations for student achievement
- Well-established mechanisms for monitoring the progress of pupils, classes and the school as a whole
- Clear and fair student management
- An effective home/School partnership
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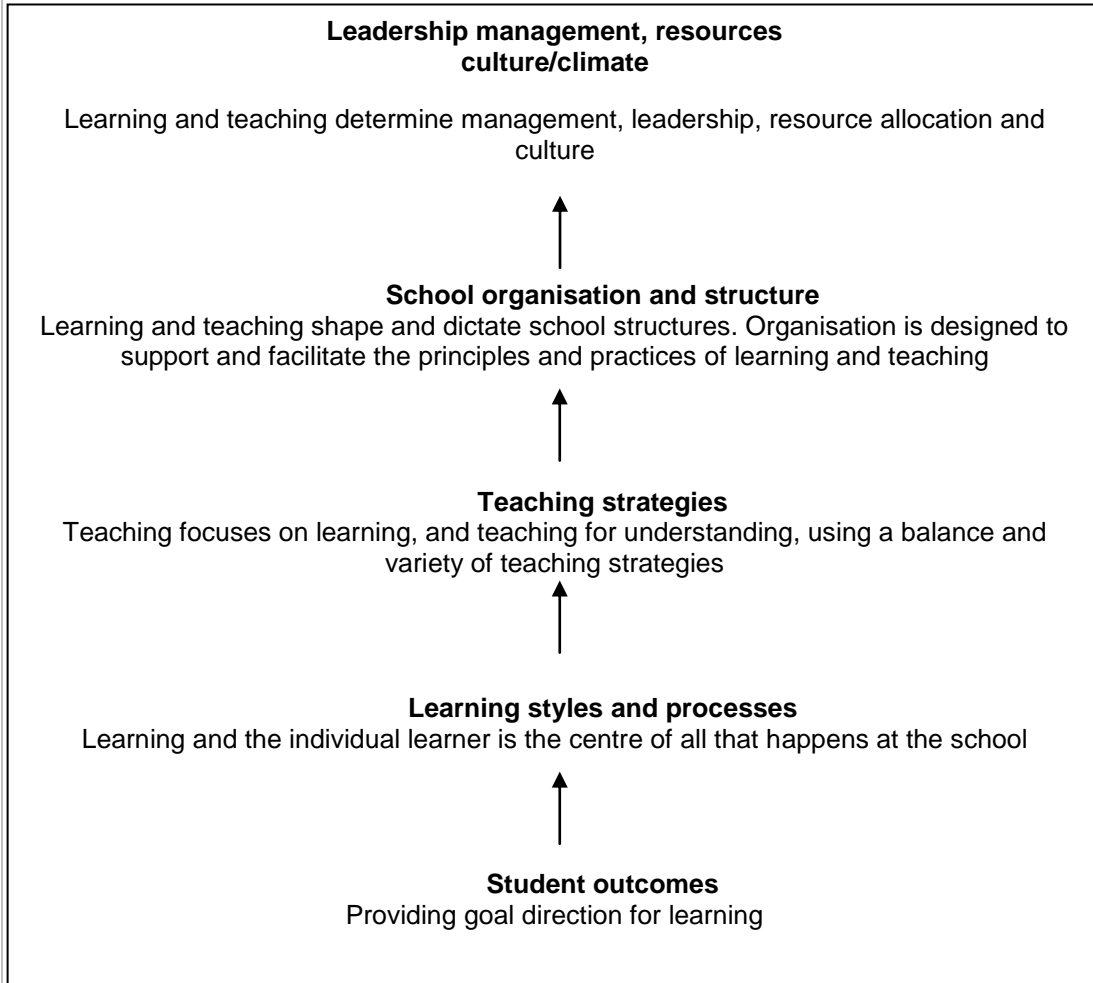
To build capacity for those students with diverse learning needs a school needs to pay particular attention to¹:

- Creating a culture that embraces the belief that all students can learn.
- Setting high expectations for learning and achievement that are assessed and monitored.
- Teaching a curriculum that is rigorous and relevant - breaking learning down into its smallest incremental steps to guide teaching.
- Creating a framework to organise that curriculum within.
- Providing students with real-life situations so they can apply the skills and knowledge being taught
- Creating multiple pathways to learning through proven methodologies based upon each student's personal interest, learning styles, aptitude, and needs.
- Providing sustained professional development that is focused on the improvement of teaching and learning for all students
- Engaging parents actively in discussions about their student's needs and how the school can meet those needs most effectively
- Staying current with research and information on teaching and learning and integrate this into the classrooms.
- Focusing on the end result for students whether it is to prepare them for work, tertiary involvement, family or community involvement.

¹ Based on: Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D, President, International Center for Leadership in Education **Successful Schools: From Research to Action Plans**, Presented at June 2005 Model Schools Conference

By keeping the student at the centre of learning a generic overarching framework provides schools with a guide to quality teaching and learning programmes².

BACKWARD MAPPING



Highly successful educational reforms have taken place quickly and effectively with the aid of people or organisations called change agents. The role of change agents could include the following elements:³

- Diagnosing the problem.
- Assessing motivation and capacity for change.
- Appraising motivation and resources
- Selecting an appropriate change focus.
- Choosing an appropriate helping role.
- Establishing and maintaining relationships.

² Based on Dimmock, 1993 based on Elmore, 1979-80

³ Spedding, S. (1996) *Teachers as change agents. Chapter 11, pp341-371.* In Phil Foreman (ed) *Integration and inclusion in action.* Australia: Harcourt, Brace.

Q 1b How could schools work together to succeed?

SEPAAnz supports the vision of Specialists Schools as a Resource Centre with the retention of a Base School and satellites. The specialist knowledge and unique culture of specialist schools has been built through appropriate and targeted professional development aimed at improving student achievement. If this culture is dissipated another level of bureaucracy is created. We support parental choice and a Board of Trustees and firmly believe there needs to be an option of a placement of students within a specialist inclusive environment that offers students 'The Best of Both Worlds'.

A vision of a fully inclusive society underpins the New Zealand Disability Strategy. SEPAAnz believes that we will help achieve this vision, which acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, by **expanding** their 21st Century learning communities based on collaborative partnerships. SEPAAnz acknowledges that cooperation and sharing are essential elements for the delivery of learning, that learning is available everywhere – in the home, in the work place, in a range of community places and is dispersed across the community. An expanded Centre of Excellence, a Specialist School Resource Centre, operating under a collaborative framework will provide the ability for members to share facilities, resources and services thus contributing to economic sustainability. The expertise operating within the Resource Centre will transfer to other communities, be responsive to change and link into the wider community.

The pathway to a successful and sustainable future is through organisational renewal and transformation, raising student achievement and building a cohesive network of communities. Specialist Schools have already established an organisational structure which demonstrates that they can cope with change and maintain initiatives. Specialist Schools have used external demands to stimulate transformation and have built a cohesive network of communities. Specialist Schools are already outward-looking centres of excellence that work collaboratively with partner schools and other agencies to support students with diverse learning needs.

SEPAAnz's vision is to develop an integrated and sustainable expanded community, built on foundations already established, which supports learning for everyone, and participation in all aspects of life is maximised. Specialist Schools have moved away from narrow academic assessments and have developed 'whole of life' assessments which take account of emotional and physical well-being as well as academic progress. They know that effective pedagogy⁴ requires effective professional development, effective practice requires collaborative planning and teamwork and effective assessment involves partnerships between school, community and families.

⁴ <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Effective-pedagogy>

Specialist Schools have achieved this by establishing effective school cultures with learning and high student expectation of achievement placed at the heart of policy, procedures and practice. They are able to manage simultaneously the complexity of learning needs of diverse students and ensure quality teaching⁵ throughout their schools.

At present, the practitioners and leaders who have the most experience of successfully teaching students with the most challenging needs work in Specialist Schools. Taking into account this expertise and using our experience, knowledge and capability we are well positioned to become change agents for others to help increase the sector's capacity for responding to and accounting for all learners with diverse educational needs.

An Expanded Specialist School Resource Centre

By working in a collaborative manner an expanded Specialist Resource Centre would help to build capacity in schools and achieve better learning outcomes for students with diverse needs. The provision of service from a Resource Centre would focus on the development and enhancement of existing learning communities by facilitating, managing and building future capacity for a cohesive special education provision and network. An expanded Specialist School Resource Centre will include:

- **The expansion of the Special Education Itinerant Teacher service (SEIT) - ensuring professional and expert teacher support is provided for ORRS students in mainstream settings.**

This will enable:

- Access to well planned and delivered training and development programmes specifically targeted to staff at all levels intent on raising student achievement
- Ongoing Professional Development, focusing on up to date and relevant pedagogies, interventions and practices
- Access to well planned and delivered training and development programmes specifically aimed at parents and families.
- A transdisciplinary approach in meeting identified student needs bringing together effective therapy practice with relevant pedagogy in a timely and efficient manner
- Well planned disability awareness programmes
- Advice and guidance to teachers and schools on the creation of a meaningful and managed curriculum.
- Advice and guidance to teachers and schools on meaningful assessment and monitoring.
- Coordination of additional services – health / mental health
- Coordinated quality partnerships with families through specialist

⁵ Quality teaching is identified as a key influence on high quality outcomes for diverse students. The evidence reveals that up to 59% of variance in student performance is attributable to differences between teachers and classes. BES Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling, June 2003

- teacher relationships
 - Quality partnerships with other agencies / service providers / post school or tertiary
 - Appropriate and adapted resources and equipment directly related to student individualised learning needs through providing a specialist teacher through the Specialist School's itinerant service.
 - A seamless provision of service and transition for ORRS students
- **Supplementary Learning Support Services based at and managed by Specialist Schools**

Transitions and agencies working together

Q 2 What needs to be done to make transitions work better?

- **A transition service for students from pre school across all schooling options to tertiary by:**
 - Ensuring there is accountability for transition funding in terms of outcomes for the student
 - Effective and managed communication and transition systems with pre/post and other school providers e.g. Christchurch Special School lead school model.
 - Outlining a clear continuum of service and continuity of programme and support
 - Working more closely with post school providers. Note: There is an increasing need here for actual options as traditional providers are opting out of service for high needs students.
 - Being a seamless provider with Interagency work/knowledge, relationships, systems
 - By operating a revolving door across a continuum enabling provision to become more flexible and community oriented
 - Having consistency across the sector - these Guidelines and standards are already in place.

Q 3 How could services be better coordinated and focused on the needs of students and families?

- Families viewed as equal partners
- Flexible Pathways accessed with minimum bureaucracy
- Strong links between agencies and improved interagency effectiveness, cooperation and community knowledge.
- Well developed cultural sensitivity and awareness
- Using ICTs to communicate more effectively

Funding and resource use

Q 4 What arrangements for funding, decision-making, verification, and fundholding should we have?

Fundholding

Fundholding considerations could include:

- The Specialist School Resource Centre extends throughout New Zealand developing effectively within each local community.
- The Specialist School Resource Centre delivers Specialist Services to ORRS students in mainstream and other settings. Employment, management and provision of all therapy services to ORRS students under the umbrella of the Specialist School Resource Centre.
- With the expansion of the SEIT service across the country an identified teaching specialist for every student will ensure more effective programming and intervention reaching the student it is intended for. Newly verified students will have the proviso of a transferred staffing to SEIT built within the ORRS section nine.
- Funding mechanisms are in place to ensure the management, teaching and specialist structure of the SEIT remains intact in the event of any possible roll decline.
- The employment of appropriately trained teacher aides is a necessity for students with diverse learning needs. An entitlement funding for teacher aides would streamline the processes already in place.
- A supportive and facilitative role for ministry personnel to be developed removing the tension of assessor, provider and gate-keeper from the Ministry.

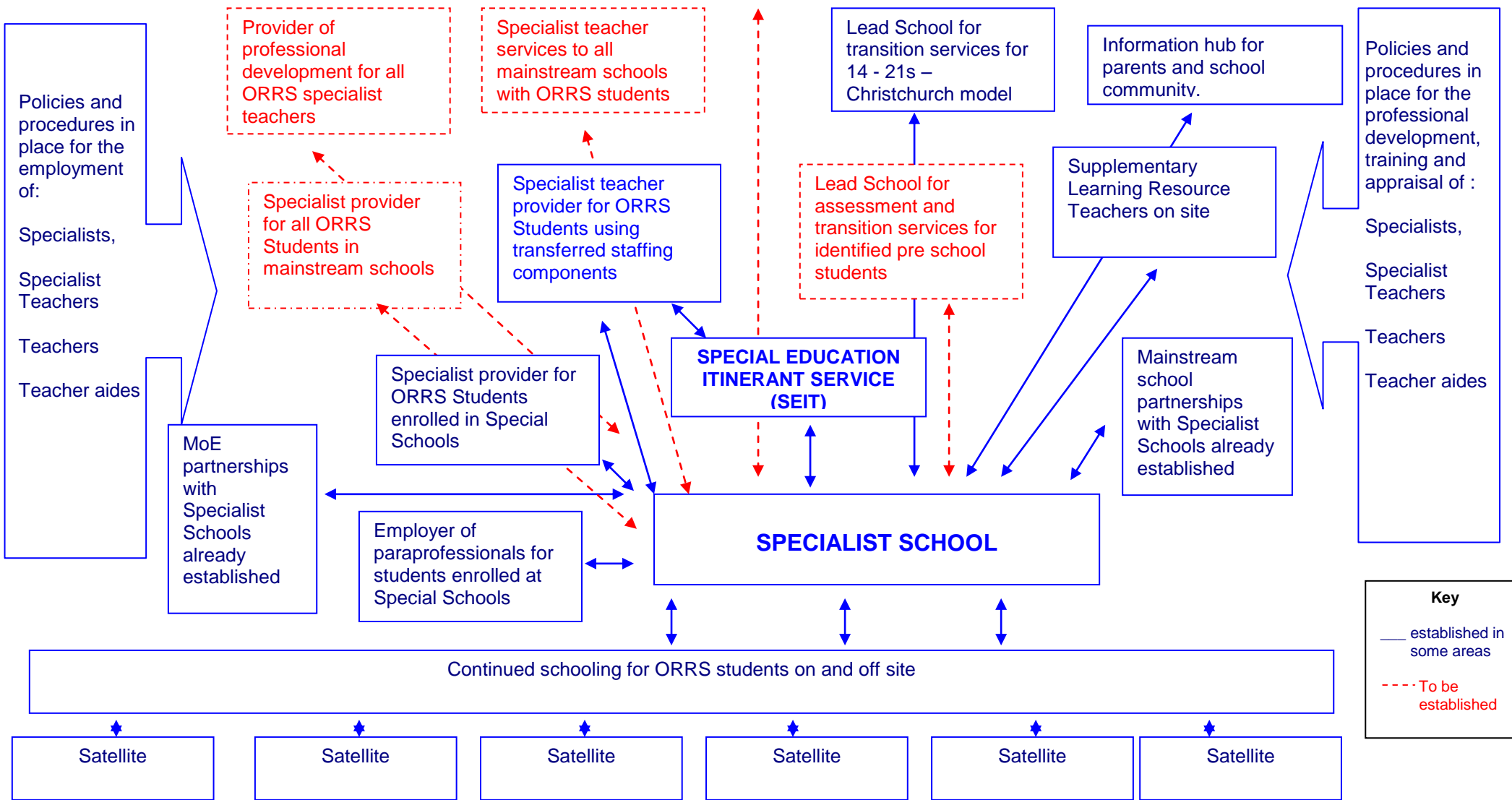
Verification

- A simplified ORRS application process that with accompanying standardised, consistent assessment processes.
- An appeal process utilising and acknowledging local assessment and knowledge.

**CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE – A RESOURCE CENTRE
PEDAGOGY PROFESSIONALISM PASSION**



Information hub for parents, whanau and wider community.



The New Zealand Disability Strategy is underpinned by the belief of a fully inclusive society. Building on the proven, established and successful practices of special schools we will help achieve this vision, and acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and continue to grow 21st Century learning communities based on collaborative partnerships by establishing special schools as centres of excellence. A centre of excellence, operating under a collaborative framework, will achieve an integrated schooling network for all learners, help enhance integration with existing providers, build capability at regular schools and involve the community. The expertise operating within it will transfer to other communities, be responsive to change, link into the wider community, providing whole of life learning. Centres of excellence will actively support increased inclusion of children with diverse educational needs and help close the gaps that exist in an uncoordinated range of services.

5a How can individually targeted services and supports be made more efficient?

Targeted services will be made more efficient by placing services closer to the student. Efficiency would be achieved through:

- Appropriate utilisation of specialist teacher time through SEIT
- Effective assessment, programming, implementation and reporting – through SEIT
- Effective use of ICT and communication systems
- Transdisciplinary teams working in collaboration - including all specialist providers.
- A quality IEP/Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) process including standards, guidelines and consistency of delivery with the use of effective and relevant assessment tools aligned to the National Curriculum
- Innovation being allowed to flourish by the reduction in bureaucracy and red tape

Q 5b Is the current mix of programmes, services and supports right and does it provide value for money? What changes would you suggest?

Changes have been detailed throughout this submission.

High quality services and being accountable

Q 6 How can the quality of services be improved?

Schools are financially audited on a yearly basis, schools charters are monitored by the Ministry, ERO reviews schools on a three year cycle - unless a school faces issues that need resolving, schools report regularly to their Boards of Trustees and the Quality Specialist Service Provision (QSSP) practice guidelines review specialist services. Quality of services would be further enhanced by:

- Skilled reviewers who understand diverse needs, pedagogies and skill requirement
- Quality teacher training and development, particularly in accounting for those students with diverse needs
- Ongoing review and implementation of the QSSP
- Schools and organisations following quality teaching principles.
- If the Ministry continues as provider of educational advice and services, they are audited accordingly.

Q 7 How can families and schools be better informed?

- Creating a culture that embraces the belief that all students can learn.
- Setting high expectations for learning and achievement that are assessed and monitored and reported upon to parents and families
- Teaching a curriculum that is rigorous and relevant - breaking learning down into its smallest incremental steps to guide teaching and informing parents and families of programmes taught and progress made.
- Engaging parents actively in discussions about their student's needs and how the school can meet those needs most effectively
- Staying current with research and information on teaching and learning and integrate this into the classrooms.
- User friendly Ministry of Education locally and nationally
- Schools and organisations have an open and welcoming culture
- Schools and organisations are culturally responsive
- The Ministry website information is easy to access and contains thorough content about the sector
- Information and advice given across the country is consistent

Q 8 What does successful special education look like and how should we measure it?

Future special education provision is an integrated schooling network for all learners which is responsive to change, linked into the wider community and provides whole of life learning. It will be measured by:

- Families, who are at the hub of student learning, feel well supported and well informed by all agencies and in all environments
- Learning programmes are tailored to meet the needs of individual students with programme design, assessment and monitoring based on the New Zealand National Curriculum
- All schools are inclusive learning communities which celebrate diversity
- All schools have a safe physical and emotional environment.
- Everyone holds high expectations for all students
- All students are valued as learners.

Q 9 When things do not go well, what arrangements should be in place to resolve issues?

Each school has a complaints procedure to deal with any issues that may arise. If this is not successful an independent person or body which people can turn to for assistance. This body to be independent of the Ministry of Education as they are currently involved in both policy and service delivery and are not seen as independent by the sector.

In closing

Q 10 What is the most important change that would improve outcomes for children and young people with special education needs?

To improve outcomes for children and young people with special education needs there needs to be an integrated and sustainable community, built on previously established foundations where effective pedagogy⁶, effective professional development, practice, collaborative planning and teamwork and 'whole of life' assessments involve partnerships between schools, community and families.

To do this the Government needs to recognise the legitimacy and appropriateness of all options for students with diverse needs, from full inclusion in the mainstream through to attendance at a base specialist school. This specialist school of the future to be recognised as a centre of excellence for students, leaders, teachers and support staff. It is an active teaching and learning organisation in its own right, and is embedded in its community, providing services to schools and other institutions around it.

⁶ <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Effective-pedagogy>

Oral presentations

Once submissions have closed, the Associate Minister of Education will convene a panel to enable submitters to present the key points of their submission to the Government. If you wish to present to the panel please indicate this below and provide your email address and daytime telephone number so that we can contact you. The Government will endeavour to hear from as many submitters as possible in the time available.

Yes

I would like to make an oral presentation and have provided my contact details.

If yes, please indicate whether you would like to present in (please select one location):

Wellington

Email address (if available):	erin@rurued.school.nz	
Daytime contact telephone number:	03 2159379	0274 100323

If you require assistance to make an oral submission (for example a sign language interpreter) please tell us the assistance you need

Please enter your comments here

Please note that all submissions can be requested by members of the public under the Official Information Act. However, we will seek to withhold the personal details of individual submitters when responding to Official Information Act requests.