

# TE HORANUI RTLB CLUSTER 36 PRINCIPALS' NEWSLETTER

Hui te mārama hei purapura ora  
Working together to nurture and support the growth and wellbeing of mokopuna

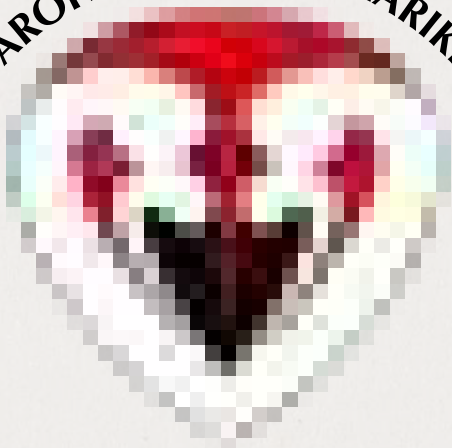
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"AROHA KI NGĀ TAMARIKI"



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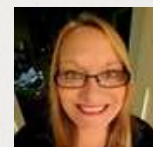
# CLUSTER MANAGER UPDATE

Kia ora koutou and thank you so much for taking the time to read Te Horanui RTLB Cluster 36's Term 1 Pānui. Our year has started well with a very low staff turnover. We are fully staffed and although we did not receive additional staffing for 2026, the team is working hard to meet your school needs within the resourcing restraints that we have. With the opening of Te Rau Horopito in Rolleston this year, our number of cluster schools has risen to 59, with the new school in Prebbleton taking our number to 60 in 2027. We spent day 1 of 2026 at Te Pā o Moki teaming up with Taumutu and Kōia te Matauraka and learning more about the history of our geographic area, as well as exploring our cluster values. Understanding and exploring Māori history of the region as well as traditional pūrākau helps us as a cluster honour our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a Te Tiriti partner.

Thank you for all you do to support our ākonga to be the best they can be and have a term break. If you have any questions or queries about anything in this newsletter, please get in touch. I am always happy to hear from our cluster schools at any time. My contact details are below.

Ngā mihi nui,  
Nancy

manager@rtlb36.school.nz  
022 342 7852



## Partnership Agreements

One of the requirements was for each cluster to have a signed delivery agreement in place with each school. This was also a procedure we had in place, but we did make the mandated tweaks to our Partnership Agreements, including information about the timeframes and stipulating that we operate in alignment with the RTLB funding agreement, the OS&Ps and current government priorities. By the end of Term 1, these signed agreements will need to be in place.

## Te Horanui Cluster Website

Our website has recently been updated with changes in staffing, OS&Ps as well as the introduction of some new resources for kaiako as part of our 2026 cluster initiatives, which you will hear more about later. You can find our 2026 Annual Plan on the [website](#) too.

## National RTLB Operating Standards and Procedures

2026 has brought some significant change for the RTLB service, with both the introduction of nationally mandated Operating Standards and Procedures (OS&Ps) as the expansion of the Early Intervention Service into Year 1 of school. Luckily, for us, as a cluster, the OS&Ps do not require significant shifts in operations and procedures and has just required some slight adaptations to practice to meet the mandated timeframes, tweaks in wording and measuring our outcomes and impact. These OS&Ps are available on the MOE website for your information and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

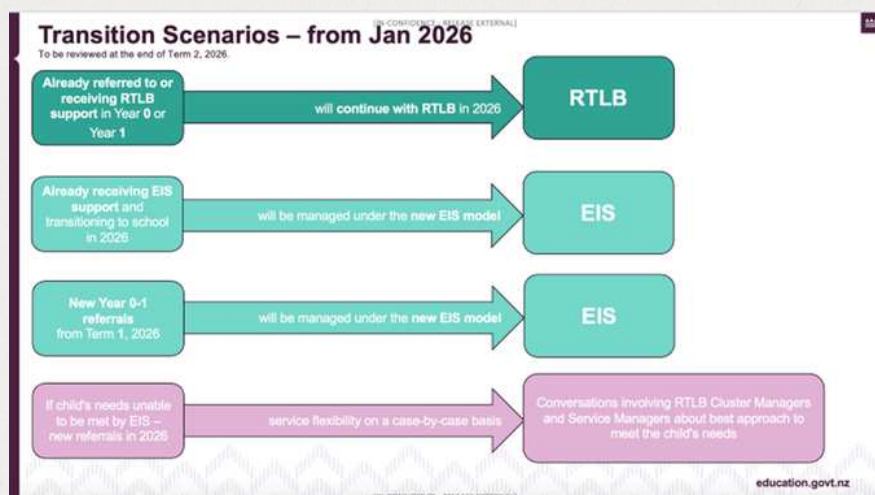
[Links to the online Standards and Procedures for Resource Teachers: Learning & Behaviour](#)

# ROLE OF RTLB VIDEO

One of the requirements of the OS&Ps was to ensure cluster schools were aware how to access RTLB support. Although we feel our schools do have a good understanding of this already, each year, Liaison RTLB are encouraged to offer schools the opportunity to present a short item in a full school staff meeting about the Role of the RTLB. We understand that staff meeting priorities are often highly competing and so this year we have added an additional resource for schools, which is a 5 min video, which briefly covers the key content that the live session would go into. You can access this video by clicking [here](#).

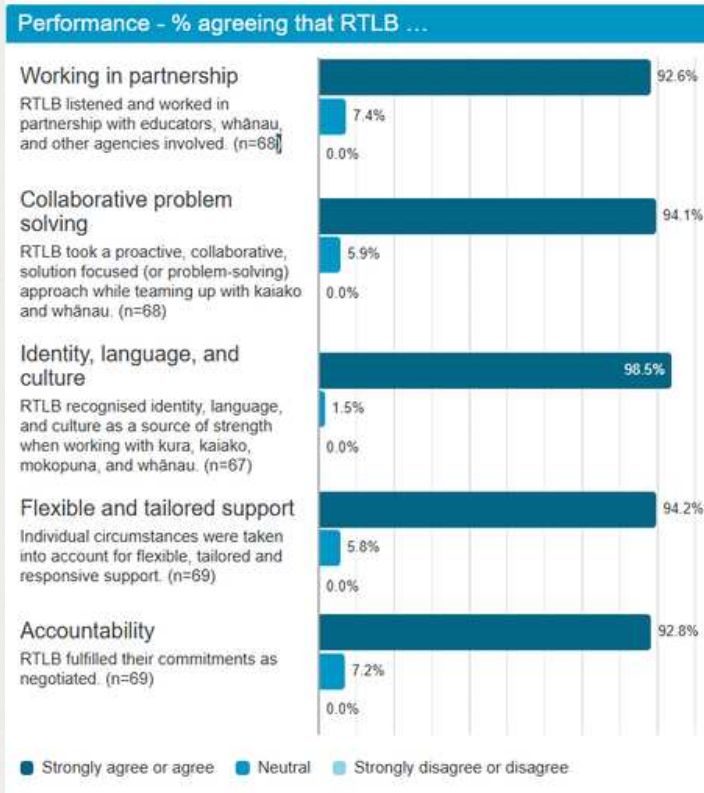
## EXPANSION OF THE EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE

As you will all be aware, the Early Intervention Service (EIS) now supports children from birth to the end of Year 1. This means children already receiving EIS can continue to be supported as they move into school, and practitioners may stay involved up until the end of their time in year 1 where needed. An additional change is that requests for support for mokopuna in Year 0-1 (with parental consent) or their kaiako will now go to the EIS instead of RTLB. It's helpful to share what's already been tried, what's still challenging, and where kaiako would value extra help. Please contact your MOE service manager in the first instance.



2026 is a transition year for the EIS expansion. As the image above reflects, if a mokopuna started school in 2025 and are in Year 1 in 2026 and RTLB was supporting the transition to school, these mokopuna remain being supported by RTLB. If the mokopuna is receiving EIS support and they start school in 2026, they will continue with the EIS. If support is needed in 2026 in Year 0-1, then this request goes to the MOE. Where the support requested is unable to be met by the EIS, for 2026 only, MOE Service Managers and RTLB Cluster Managers will discuss and work out the best way forward for support on a case by case basis. In order for MOE to be aware of the level of needs required in Year 0-1 spaces, Liaison RTLB will be encouraging schools to talk to their MOE Service Manager about support related queries, rather than trouble shooting with RTLB Liaisons. Please reach out to your Service Managers about support related queries, rather than trouble shooting with RTLB Liaisons. Please reach out to your Service Managers about support related queries, rather than trouble shooting with RTLB Liaisons. Please reach out to your Service Managers about support related queries, rather than trouble shooting with RTLB Liaisons. Please reach out to your Service Managers about support related queries, rather than trouble shooting with RTLB Liaisons.

# ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2025



We are very proud of our 2025 annual national satisfaction survey and thank all respondents for taking the time to fill this in. We received 69 responses from 43 schools (response rate of 74%).

92.8% of respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with the quality of our RTLB service (national average = 89.2%, C36 2024 was 89.7%).

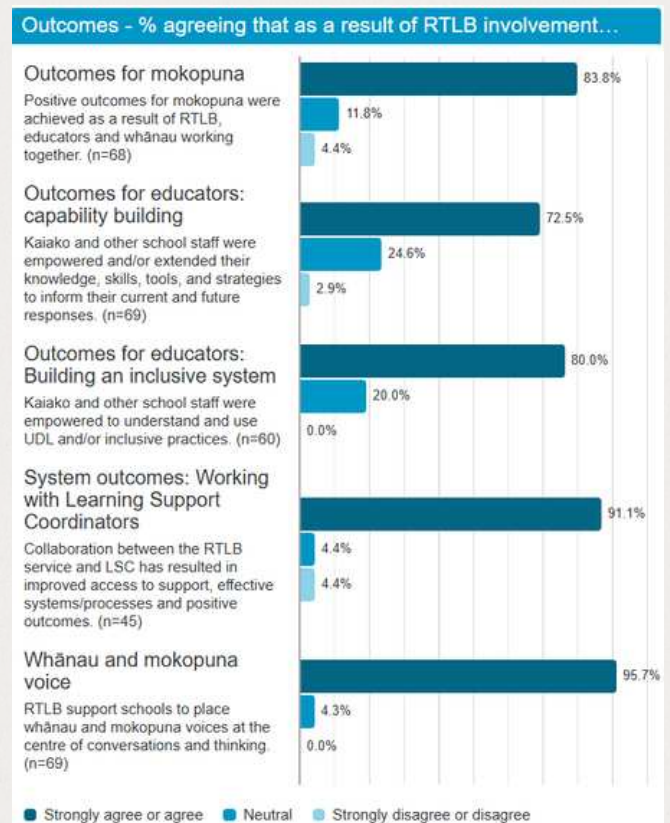
0% were dissatisfied with the overall service.

We outperformed national averages in all performance domains:

- Working in partnership
- Collaborative problem solving
- Identity, language and culture
- Flexible and tailored support
- Accountability.

84.8% of respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with the time it took to access the service (84.7% nationally, C36 2024 81%).

100% of respondents would access our service again in the future. You can access a fully summary of results [here](#).



# 2026 CLUSTER INITIATIVES

As identified through our Needs Analysis and Request for Support data for 2025, the following cluster initiatives have been developed.

## 5 min G.E.M.S

G.E.M.S stands for Growing, Empowering, Manaakitanga Supports. This resource support is a live website for kaiako, which has been designed to share simple strategies to nurture connection, confidence and wellbeing for every learner. We know kaiako and kaiāwhina are really busy and time poor. Our aim is for our cluster school kaimahi to be able to access the fortnightly focus content in about 5 minutes and have something to be able to implement and/ or share easily.

Each fortnight, those on the mailing list will be emailed a link to the new content, as well as be able to see all previous 5 Minute G.E.M.S.

Theme 1 which runs for the beginning of the 2026 school year is 'Setting up for Success'. So far the G.E.M.S that have or will be launched by the end of Term 1 are:

G.E.M. 1 - Visual Timetables

G.E.M. 2 - Relationship Building & Connections

G.E.M. 3 - Cultivating Calm Learning Environments

G.E.M. 4 - Understanding triggers, strengths, and sensory profiles

You can now access our 5 Minute G.E.M.S website [here](#).

Click on the image to access the 5 Minute G.E.M.S poster to put up in your schools to encourage others to sign up to these alerts. There are already over 80 subscribers to the fortnightly inbox drops!



## Leading Inclusive Practices for Maximum Impact - Collaborative Inquiry Project



The SENCOs, LSCs, School Leaders and RTLB that have teamed up for the collaborative inquiry into Inclusive Practice for Maximum Impact have had two sessions together this term. The first session provided deep reflection and provocation using the [Neuro-inclusive school code, Aramai He Tētēkura](#) and the [A-Z of a Nurturing Environment](#). Session two explored the concept of belonging and looked at the 7 Dimensions of Children's Emotional Wellbeing, as well as the 10 Dimensions of Belonging.

## Provisional Kaiako and Mentors Professional Learning Opportunities

In response to needs within our cluster schools, Te Horanui RTLB Cluster 36 are excited to be able to offer the following professional learning workshop opportunities for kaiako that you feel would benefit. We have listened to the feedback from last year and kept all the positives from our 2025 courses, but responded in ways we can strengthen this PLD for your beginning kaiako and their mentors. You will see there are 6 x 1-hour zoom sessions across Term 1 and the start of Term 2.

Once registered, kaiako will be able to view the recording of these sessions and PCTs and mentors will be able to revisit the content. Having these sessions with rich knowledge building content will allow for the two kanohi ki te kanohi workshops to be more hands on and interactive. The interest for these full day sessions has been extensive, with all places now full. Luckily, all cluster schools can access the recordings of the zoom sessions.

So far in Term 1, the following sessions have taken place. I have linked in the videos below.

Session 1 - [Setting Up For Success: What is neuro-inclusive practice and how do I set up a neuro-inclusive classroom?](#)

Session 2 - [Relational Approaches](#)

Session 3 - [The Concrete Mind and the Sensory Storm: Autism, Sensory Processing and Support Strategies](#)

Session 4: [Understanding how to support the mind that wanders to many things - Executive Functioning and ADHD](#)

Coming up soon in Term 2 are the final two zoom sessions:

Session 5: What is a Dyslexic Friendly Classroom?

Session 6: Follow-up Q&A Zoom Drop-In - to discuss any of the topics from previous zoom sessions prior to the full day sessions

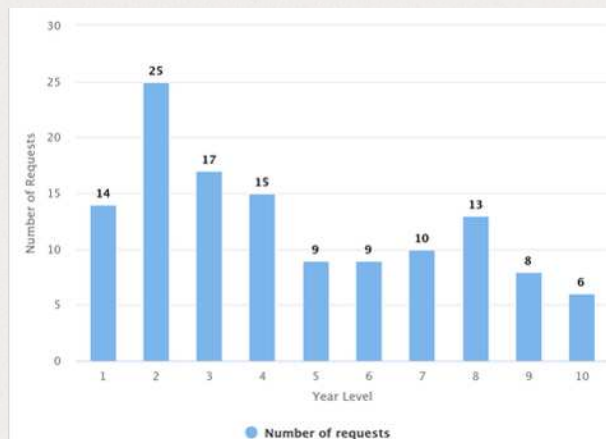
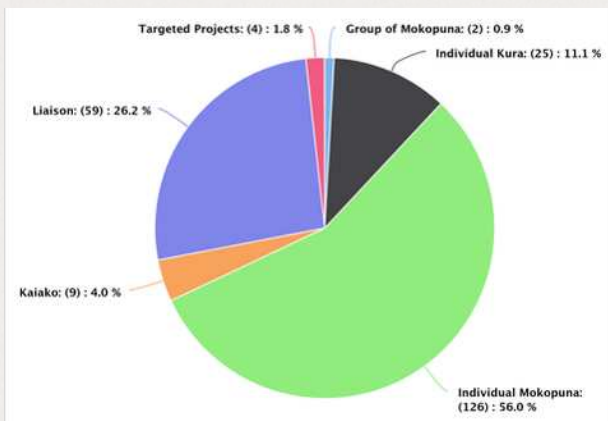
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## Neuro-inclusive practices in rural schools

As an emerging need, we are exploring options for a cluster initiative that is designed to cater to our smaller, more rural schools in our cluster and considering what neuro-inclusive practice looks like when there are less adults on the ground and less resources to spread around. If you feel like this sounds like your school and you would like to be part of co-constructing what this rural schools neuro-inclusive support could look like, please reach out to me at [manager@rtlb36.school.nz](mailto:manager@rtlb36.school.nz).



# TERM 1 2026 REQUEST FOR SUPPORT DATA



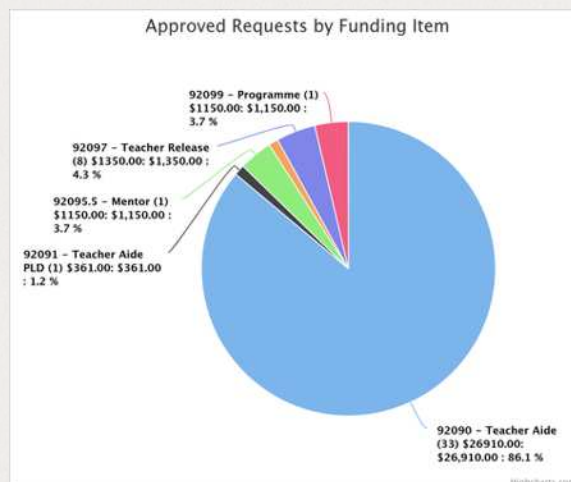
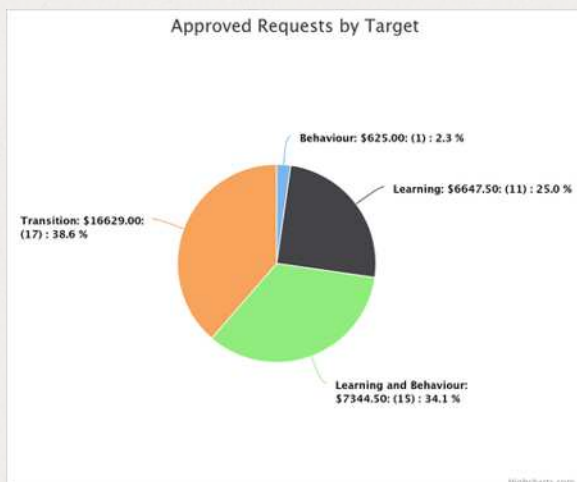
So far in Term 1, we have allocated 112 new requests for support (R4S). There are currently 3 R4S to allocate at the start of Term 2 and 15 incomplete R4S started but not completed by schools that our Liaison RTLB are supporting schools to complete.

You will see from the image above that our current individual mokopuna R4S spike is in Year 2 with 20% of all individual R4S currently in Year 2.

We are proud of our allocation rate so far this year which is sitting at 1.5 weeks from submission to allocation, compared to the RTLB national average of 3.3 weeks. The timeframe detailed in our OS&Ps is 2 weeks. Thank you to everyone that has supported this to happen by playing your parts to get information into our database system ready for allocation.

# TERM 1 2026 LEARNING SUPPORT FUNDING DATA

So far in Term 1, we have approved 44 learning support funding applications and \$31, 246.00 has been distributed out to our cluster schools. As you can see, 38.6% of this funding was allocated to support transition into new settings.



86.1% has been used to increase adult presence in learning spaces, 4.3% for teacher release to attend meetings or implement supports, 3.7% for mentoring supports, 3.7% for targeted learning and engagement programmes and 1.2% on Teacher Aide PLD opportunities.

# NEURO-INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

## Karina Schreurs Behaviour Series

Karina Schreurs who is well known to many of our cluster schools and has been partnering with our cluster for the last few years has some online PLD opportunities for kaiako during the upcoming term break. She has also included [a video teaser](#) about brain states. Your kaiako can register using the QR code below.

## BEHAVIOUR Series

**ESCALATION & DE-ESCALATION**

10th April 2026 (1/2 day)

*The science and evidence of behaviour*

What drives behaviour  
The escalation cycle  
Key principles for de-escalation

Register Here 

**PROACTIVE BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES**

16th April 2026 (1/2 day)

*Minimising escalation in the classroom*

Creating consistent regulation practices  
Supporting social interactions and emotional responses  
Lowering stress  
Increasing reward

Register Here 

**RESPONSES THAT DE-ESCALATE**

17th April 2026 (1/2 day)

*Responses that increase recovery and lower escalation repeating*

Our regulation  
Body & sensory strategies  
Problem identifiers and solvers  
What has our attention?

Register Here 



9am - 1pm (with a 10 minute break)  
Recorded, and includes:  
Workbooks, Slides and Resources  
**\$150 per person or \$400 for the series**



Behaviour Series '26  
Registration QR Code



## Young Neurodiversity Champions

During Term 1, we had the privilege of hosting Holly Earl, one of the Young Neurodiversity Champions based in Ōtautahi came to talk to SENCos and LSCs from Rolleston, Lincoln, Ellesmere and Banks Peninsula. The authentic voice of lived experience from a young person who has just come through our education system was powerful, motivating and thought-provoking. She was able to share her experiences, strategies she found useful (and what she didn't), how schools can become more neuro-inclusive and her personal story around her diagnosis journey. The Neurodiversity in Education Project has a range of Young Neurodiversity Champions that can talk to your kura and community about their experiences. You can find out more [here](#). There is a kōha and associated travel costs involved.



**Young  
Neurodiversity  
Champions**

## Building a Neuroinclusive school partnership

As a cluster, we firmly believe in the important mahi that the Neurodiversity in Education Project do, especially Building a Neuroinclusive School. When the Government decided to change their funding so their mahi was only supporting high schools, as a cluster, we partnered with them, so that our primary and intermediate cluster schools could still benefit from their resources and expertise. Here is an update from Head of Programmes Madelaine Armstrong-Willcocks.



### Building a Neuroinclusive School

Building a Neuroinclusive School has been exploring ways for educators, and well as students themselves, to gain insights directly from students, taking a wide lens not just an individual one, and focusing on strengths to enable rather than deficits to remedy.

Exploring sensory preferences is an essential first step, and we have a suite of free resources ready for you to use:

- [My Sensory Needs](#) - helping students 'pin down' their own preferences
- [Sensory Audit](#) - helping teachers put this information together
- [Co-Design Guide](#) - a guide making this process work for all
- And a webinar to guide you through it all:  
[BNS Cafe Mar 2025 - Taking a sensory stocktake - and what to do with it!](#)

Building on this, we are currently trialling a new resource to use with students to help them explore their own strengths and sticking points, based on our [Neurodivergent Learner Characteristics Tool](#). This includes a lesson plan (and adaptations across phases), a student resource and suggested next steps. We'd love for you to trial this with us! This would involve at the most one hour of teaching time, and time to reflect on the process and share your feedback with us. If you'd like to be a neuroinclusive pioneer with us, let us know here: [bns@neurodiversity.org.nz](mailto:bns@neurodiversity.org.nz)

#### **New! Neuroinclusive School Planning Workshop:**

Many schools want to better support neurodivergent learners, and all their learners, but may be unsure about moving from good intentions to coordinated actions that really 'fit' in their own school context. Our **Building Your Neuroinclusive School Workshop** is a structured half- to full-day workshop that helps schools tackle this challenge. Using a hands-on, practical, step-by-step process, educators can envision neuroinclusion in their own context, explore the key systems in their school that currently support (or hinder) neuroinclusion, and then focus in on their own priorities. By the end of the workshop, everyone has a clear, realistic workplan with defined outcomes, actions, and ownership, giving school leaders a concrete starting point for sustained, whole-school change. Get in touch if you'd like to book this in during term 2 by emailing [bns@neurodiversity.org.nz](mailto:bns@neurodiversity.org.nz).