

School Curriculum and Assessment Changes: NZAEE Overview and Advice for Environmental Education Providers

Stay updated using these Tāhūrangi links: [Curriculum Consultation](#) [Implementation Supports](#) [Professional Learning](#)

Note: the 2026 column paints a picture of the realities for teachers/school leaders this year and 2027 assumes no change in government*

This document does not have scope to include the changes for [Te Marautanga o Aotearoa](#), but these are also significant with similar timing.

Level	2026 - Curriculum, Assessment and PLD	2027 and beyond	Advice for Support and Resources
Early Childhood	Te Whāriki continues to be the mandated document for early childhood education. Note that some new resources related to literacy and maths have been developed.	No changes imminent	Continue to align support and planning with Te Whāriki, but discuss changes happening for new entrants at schools.
Primary and Intermediate Yr 0 – 8	<p>Curriculum MUST use: New English and maths curriculum Drafts for Sci, SS, HPE, Tech, Arts, Languages out for consultation until April 24th. *Engage with consultation, but these are not ready for classroom use yet.</p> <p>Resources Maths workbooks are new again this year, since the maths curriculum changed in October, adding an extra layer of work. Free Science Kits will become available sometime this year.</p> <p>Assessment Yr 0 – 2 teachers twice yearly phonics checks AND Yr 3 – 8 twice yearly reading/writing/maths assessment, with schools still able to use PATs and e-asTTle in 2026, but MoE is encouraging use of new SMART tool (noted concerns with this).</p> <p>Reporting (more here) All schools must use the same Progress Descriptors for maths, reading and writing, adding a lot of work / changes to reports.</p> <p>Professional Learning and Development (more here) Structured literacy, maths, assessment (SMART tool). Note: no longer MoE funding for cultural capability or local curriculum design. ELC funding has gone back to LEOTC funding.</p>	<p>MUST use the new curriculum for: English, Maths, Science, Social science, Health & PE.</p> <p>Others (Technology, the Arts, Languages) to be used from 2028.</p> <p>MUST use: SMART tool or PATs, with e-asTTle no longer available.</p>	<p>The strong focus on literacy and numeracy continues this year and schools now have extra layers with new assessment and reporting requirements. The messaging they are receiving is that these two areas should be the focus and other learning areas are less important. This applies to teaching time and PLD allocation.</p> <p>Support teachers by: Sharing case studies and resources that enable integration of maths & literacy within cross-curricular EE contexts: Measuring the Mighty Exploring Biodiversity through Stats Nature Books: Storytelling, Curiosity</p> <p>Make it easier for them to connect with the local environment and community by helping to overcome barriers (adult ratios, resources, cross-curricular inquiry ideas, experts visiting school, using school grounds etc).</p> <p>Deliver short PLD at staff meetings/lunch or alongside working with students.</p>

*Information accurate at time of publication on 23 / 02 / 26 but please refer to Tāhūrangi links for the most updated information and dates.

Level	2026 - Curriculum, Assessment and PLD	2027 and beyond	Advice for Support and Resources
<p>Junior Secondary</p> <p>Yr 9 - 10</p>	<p>MUST use new English and maths curriculum. Resources (unit and lesson plans) to support implementation released in early Term 1, but the quality is questionable. E.g. Yr 9 English learning kit here.</p> <p>Draft curriculum for other learning areas is out for consultation until April 24th. Note: MoE has been encouraging use of drafts for Yr 9 this year, because they are the cohort for the proposed new national qualification in 2028, if this proceeds. NZAEE is not encouraging this, as the drafts still need a lot of work.</p> <p>Assessment and reporting: English and maths teachers will need to adjust assessment and reporting to align with the new curriculum. MoE may encourage schools to learn about/ trial SMART tool but not mandated yet.</p> <p>PLD: English and maths centrally funded PLD this year, but teachers are already expected to implement the new curriculum. Other learning areas: support from subject associations (NEX)</p>	<p>MUST use new curriculum for ALL learning areas at both Yr 9 and 10.</p> <p>e-asTTle no longer available</p> <p>Teachers will need to start planning pathways into new senior courses / subjects to align with proposed changes to NCEA and curriculum (see more below).</p>	<p>Check whether school leaders are encouraging use of the draft curriculum or not – this will vary across schools. Support teachers to give feedback through consultation. See NZAEE webinar and other supporting resources.</p> <p>Encourage continued use of NZC and environmental learning that embeds local, cross-curricular contexts.</p> <p>Remind teachers that NZAEE and other subject associations (e.g. EONZ, ASSEN) have MoE funding to support secondary teachers this year with 1:1 planning, workshops, networking etc. Complete NZAEE Secondary form here.</p>
<p>Senior Secondary</p> <p>Yr 11 - 13</p>	<p>NO changes to curriculum or reporting - use existing NZC. New curriculum for Phase 5 (Yr 11 - 13) is being written in the first half of 2026, with release for consultation likely in Term 2.</p> <p>Assessment: No changes this year. The current government has proposed replacing NCEA with a new national qualification (they are actively campaigning on this). The proposal includes removing Education for Sustainability as a subject. We are still waiting for the summary public feedback to be shared...</p> <p>PLD: Subject associations (including NZAEE) have NEX funding to support secondary teachers.</p>	<p>2027: No changes to curriculum or assessment for Yr 11 - 13</p> <p>2028: Yr 11 must use new curriculum for all subjects and NCEA proposed to be replaced with new cert.</p> <p>2029: Yr 12 must use new curriculum / national assess.</p> <p>2030: Yr 13 must use new curriculum / national assess.</p>	<p>Remind senior secondary teachers that they can continue using Education for Sustainability and other senior EE courses and programmes for at least two more years. NZAEE can support this (see info and form link above).</p> <p>Support engagement with consultation for Phase 5 curriculum and NCEA proposed changes, when this becomes available (likely in Term 2).</p>