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Transformation of the Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) Service 2011

Regional meetings May, June

success for all
Every school Every child

Success for all – Every school, Every child

– achieving an inclusive education system

- Our vision for special education
- Initiatives such as Positive Behaviour for Learning and RTLB Transformation are ways we will implement that vision

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Alignment with a package of actions

- Higher expectations and increasing accountability.
- Making it easer for parents and students to get the support they need.
- Better value from Government's investment in special education so more students get better support.
- Developing capability and confidence.

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The Situation

Special Education 2000 Policy

- eliminate fragmentation

Very useful initiative

- when the service works well, there are positive impacts for students at risk of low achievement and teachers

RTLB service established 1998/9

- consistent approach supporting students with additional needs

About 780 RTLB, grandparented conditions

- Variable understandings of the role and variable experience/background

Clusters formed by Ministry

- some volunteered, others not

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Complications (1)

However:

ERO 2004 said:

- highly variable RTLB practice, quality, governance and management

Toolkit developed by RTLB 2007

ERO report 2009

- continued variability
- highlighted governance and management as key barriers to performance

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Complications (2)

From other sources:

Capture of RTLB resource by individual schools

- e.g. RTLB in classrooms and special units, playground duty

Principals comments and concerns

Lack of evidence-based practice

- e.g. sand and aroma therapy

Some unsuitable practices

- e.g. withdrawal of individuals rather than supporting integration in the classroom

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Complications (3)

Some management of RTLB and the funding

- leaving RTLB to own devices, lack support; own school needs taking priority
  - and so, some RTLB unprofessional in the management of their time

Some misuse of RTLB funding by schools and clusters

- building property, buying assets, using bank interest for other school purposes; so funding not used to deliver services to students
- some local cluster decisions inappropriate

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Complications (4)

GAP analysis of 2009 cluster annual reports showed

- similar grounds for the concern voiced by ERO about RTLB practice containing a proliferation of evidence and non-evidence based programmes and practices, variable evidence of service effectiveness and limited service cohesion
- ¼ of RTLB clusters unable to meet requirement for transparency and accountability by filing a financial report
- lack of consequence for non compliance and the MoE ineffective monitoring and support systems
- around $1,200,000 of LSF reported as under-spent
- variable methods that individual RTLB practitioners use to gather data, analyse, plan, evaluate and report within and across RTLB clusters
- around 1/3 of RTLB clusters appeared unable to systematically collect, collate and analyse data in order to inform planning and programme improvement
- absence of formal self review process resulting in RTLB clusters being unable to be responsive and adequately meet the learning and behavioural needs of students

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Complications (5)

Difficult when things go wrong to establish accountability

- management of funds
- complaints about clusters difficult to untangle

Concept of “moderate needs” is unhelpful

- inconsistently defined and implemented, and a barrier to some students getting needed support.

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Doing nothing was not an option

“Nothing we can do can change the past,
but everything we do changes the future.”
- Ashleigh Brilliant

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Achieving better outcomes

We want to see:

- stronger governance and management of clusters, and better alignment with other special education services and support
- stronger professional leadership and more consistent practice

We want to make sure good practice occurs across the whole country.

More consistent practice = better deal for students

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Challenges

To get the governance right

To ensure good management of RTLB and funds

To ensure consistent RTLB practice

To ensure that the right students get appropriate help – Māori focussed, Pacifika focussed

To ensure strong external and internal accountability mechanisms are in place

To ensure that RTLB receive appropriate support and have a career structure

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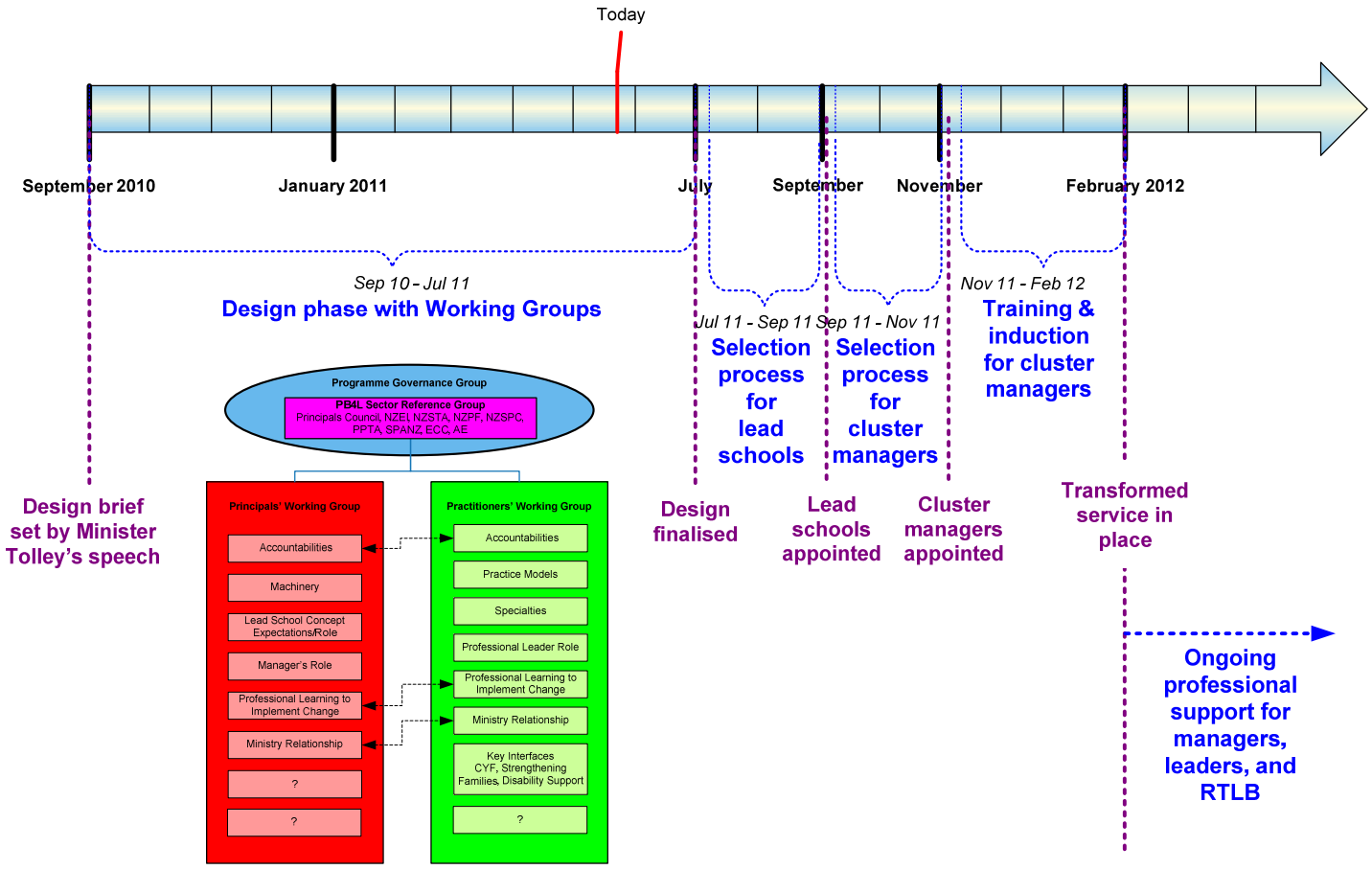
Programme Timeline



Development of the design (1)

Some conditions were established in advance

- the appointment of Lead Schools, Managers, Practice Leaders
- 40 odd clusters
- approximately 20 RTLB per cluster
- seamless service provision with Special Education

Working Groups established to assist with design

- Principals group; Practitioners group (including RTLB, teachers and others)
- members nominated under auspices of peak bodies on the PB4L sector reference group
- NZEI and PPTA invited to participate as observers

Development of the design (2)

Working Groups process

- worked collaboratively with Ministry officials
- influenced every decision within the given conditions
- all details on TKI website for all to see
- worked through the 'how' questions:
  - size of cluster, so far 42 clusters with a range in size from 7 to 32 RTLB
  - appointment of Lead Schools and the characteristics needed by Lead Schools
  - roles of Cluster Manager, Practice Leader, Cluster Advisory Committees
  - ensure a focus on achievement – Māori, Pasifika, *"Success for All"*

Nothing is final until July – hence our presence here

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Development of the design (3)

The reallocation

- based on student population
- not reallocated for 3 years, despite population changes
- resourcing not the same and funding resources in many cases insufficient

Opportunity in the transformation to rectify imbalances

Allocation formula redeveloped, taking account of need

- population, then
- decile, then
- Māori students, Pasifika students, then
- isolation factor

- clusters are not perfect!

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Approach: the Transformation project (1)

A. Structure

Lead school

- fund holder and employer
- clarity of where responsibility lies and efficiency of fund holding

Management structure

- a dedicated manager for each cluster
- practice leaders

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Approach: the Transformation project (2)

Contractual relationship Lead School and Manager focused on delivery of outcomes and accounting for how this is done

Consistency:

- performance management
- supporting good practice

Driven from the cluster Needs Analysis

- national priorities + local priorities
- developed with RTLB
- allocation of RTLB and funding
- avoids capture
- local cluster input through Cluster Advisory Committee; Ministry as backstop

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Approach: the Transformation project (3)

B. Making the structure work

200 clusters unmanageable

- doesn't generate sufficient management resource
- so unable to continue with present arrangements

For resourcing to make sense:

- about 40 clusters of average size 20 RTLB: generates 1 manager per 20 people
- reallocation based on student population
- economies of scale
  - reduced reporting (Ministry able to act on reports)
  - aggregating overheads
  - flexibility of deployment in a bigger pool

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Approach: the Transformation project (4)

C. Attention to practice

Closer support for effective practice and performance

- Practice Leaders responsible for professional supervision
  - case help available,
  - team discussion of case progress etc
- performance reviews
- teams that focus on specific areas: e.g. Māori, Pasifika and secondary
- larger clusters allow broader spread of expertise

Separate work streams through the RTLB workshops

- practice framework
- document guides etc

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What won't change

- RTLB continue to reside in current schools (i.e. they don't need to be located/reside in the employing school)
- Employment terms and conditions
- Strong links with Ministry and other providers
- Ongoing emphasis on evidence-based practice
- Commitment to supporting inclusive practice
- Need for efficiency and effectiveness

"Any change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by drawbacks and discomforts." - Arnold Bennett

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In developing new cluster boundaries:

- merge neighbouring clusters where possible to avoid moving individual schools between clusters, and therefore minimise the impact for schools and RTLB (18 out of 200 cluster proposed to be split)
- rural and urban clusters need different consideration
- maximum of 30 RTLB per cluster
- changes for all clusters including those that are currently functioning well

"There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction" - Winston Churchill

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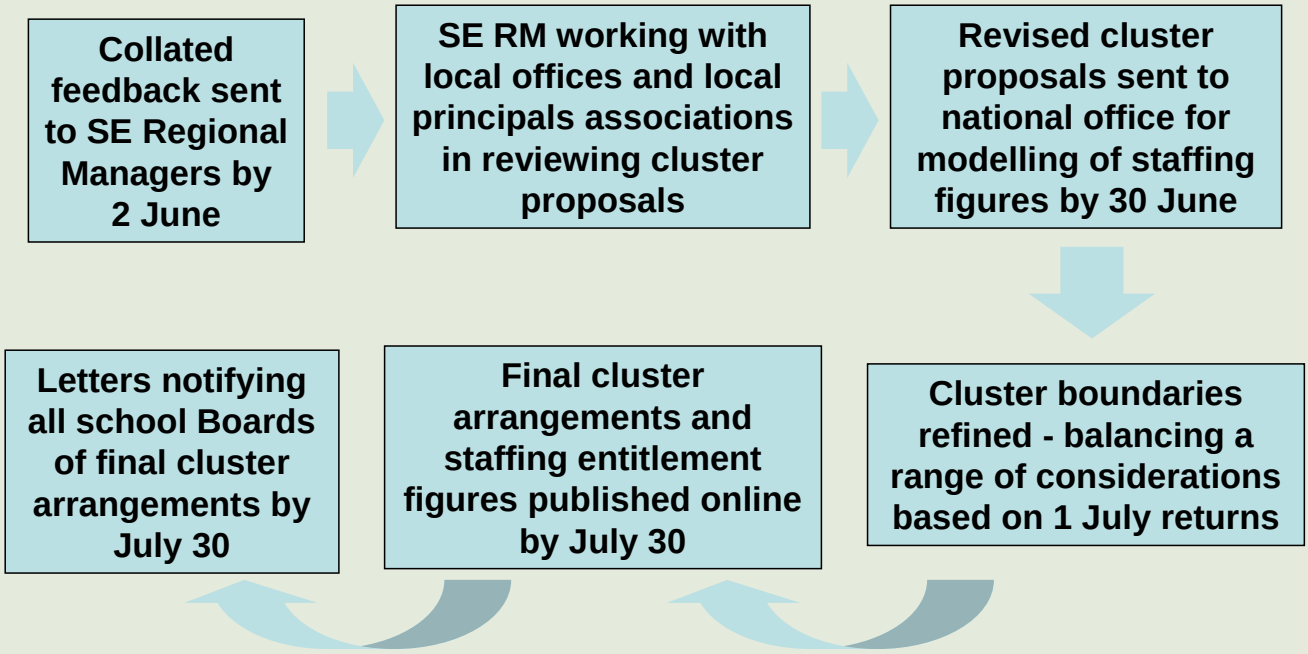
Reviewing proposed cluster boundaries



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Issues around implementation brought to our attention (1)

Why would schools become Lead Schools?

Accommodation - some Principals have suggested that they want space back, or to transfer RTLB to less desirable spaces

Some RTLB concerned about relocation

Employment issues

Resource transfers: funding, liabilities, physical locations, accommodation

Performance and competency management - employment challenges for Lead Schools

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Issues around implementation brought to our attention (2)

Some clusters are doing well currently

Canterbury schools face a particular challenge after the earthquake

Training and support for Lead Schools and Cluster Managers

The support required for the LS in order to remove barriers

The geography of some clusters is awkward

Minister has asked us to think about SLS integration with RTLB

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Please discuss with those seated around you

Nominate the 3 key issues that you believe need attention

We will list, then discuss

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Information available on our websites

- Continuous updates on the *RTLB Transformation Programme*, including Questions and Answers and Working Groups' development and updates

http://rtlb.tki.org.nz/Transforming-RTLB-service

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

- John F. Kennedy

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