

Professional Learning for Teachers, Resource Teachers: Vision and Teachers' Aides who support students who are blind, deafblind or low vision

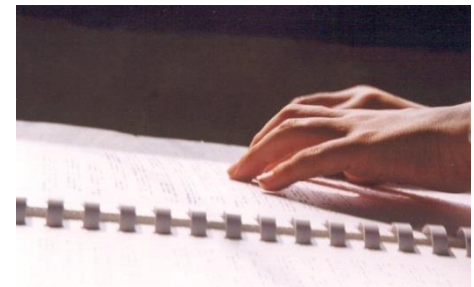
NZMOE/BLENNZ Initiative

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SPEVI - 2015

Understanding

Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te akonga
With my basket and your basket, the learner will live

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides bring different skills and perspectives that when used together, support students' learning and achievement.



Introduction

- * When teachers' aides, RTVs and teachers have good collaborative relationships and shared knowledge of effective practice, it strengthens their work with students.
- * Effective use of teachers' aide time in the classroom relies on good teamwork between the teacher, RTV and the aide.



New Zealand Ministry of Education Statement of Intent 2013-2018

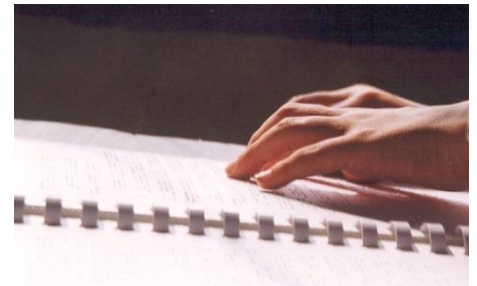
Schools will improve educational outcomes for priority students – Maori students, Pasifika students, students with special education needs and students from low socio-economic areas.

Key to this is a fully inclusive education system for all children and young people.



BLENNZ Initiatives: Teacher Aides

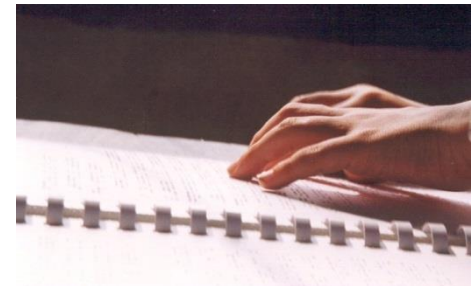
- * Collation of information about Professional Learning occurring regionally
- * Collation of existing resources from each region
- * Literature review relevant to Vision Education
- * Survey of need
- * Guidelines reported back to the organisation



MOE Initiatives: Teachers/Aides

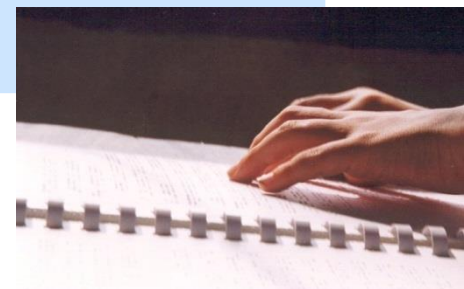
Research based Professional Learning and Development Modules

- * Devised by academics and practitioners
- * Focus on classroom practice
- * Consultative within schools
- * Variation of philosophy and approach to inclusion
- * Variation in policies and provision of PLD
- * Variation in identification of strengths/needs
- * Tools for school use
- * Assumption of established systems for meeting together



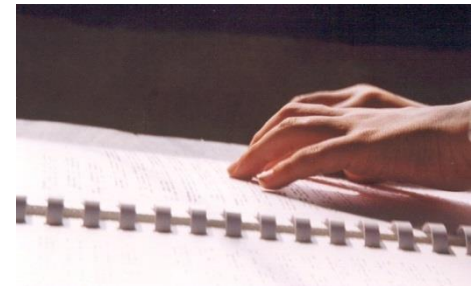
Module Content and Organisation

<i>Our Roles</i>	<i>Our Students</i>	<i>Our Work Together</i>
1. Teachers and teachers' aides: who does what?	4. What do we think about disability and diversity?	7. Understanding the New Zealand Curriculum
2. Keeping our work professional, confidential and safe	5. Identifying students' strengths	8. Fostering peer relationships
3. Supporting students with complex needs.	6. Students participating in their IEP	9. Inclusive classrooms



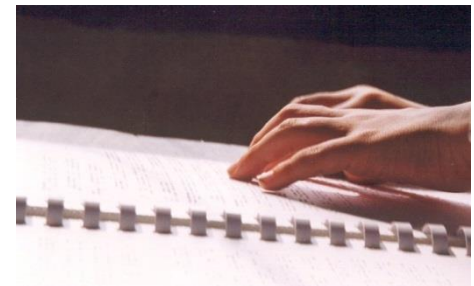
Each Module Includes:

- * The principles that underpin the module
- * Learning outcomes for the module
- * Activities to complete together
- * A teaching strategy embedded in the activity including instructions for use in practice
- * Reflective questions and instructions for planning a strategy for use in practice
- * Questions to guide reflection



What does this mean?

- * Each module follows an inquiry cycle approach, where teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides engage with information about the topic, reflect on an aspect of their work in relation to the topic, plan a new strategy or an approach to try in their work, implement the strategy and then evaluate how it went.



Using The Modules

- * Modules are linked and related
- * Each module is a stand-alone pack
- * Order is interchangeable
- * Each module takes approximately one hour
- * Additional time is required to implement strategies
- * Additional time is required for reflection



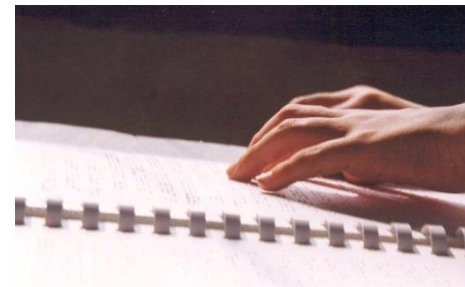
BLENNZ Supplementary Material

The purpose of the supplementary activities and additional readings is to enhance working relationships among teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides through shared professional development.



Module One: Teachers, RTVs and Teachers' Aides: who does what?

School staff, RTVS, family/whānau and students benefit when teachers' aides are included in collaborative education teams. When the team works well together and shares a common goal of supporting inclusive practice, this benefits all. The plan for the teacher's aide should be based on the classroom programme, provide direction for the teacher aide's work and clarification of roles.



Key Principles in Module One

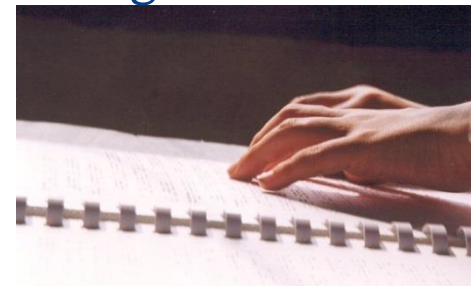
- * Teachers have full responsibility for the learning and behaviour of all the students in their class.
- * The main role of a teacher's aide is to be an aide to the teacher.
- * It works best when teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides are knowledgeable and respectful of each others roles and responsibilities.
- * Effective team work is built on trusting relationships.



Learning Outcomes for Module One

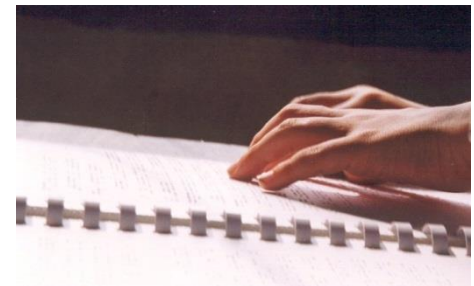
Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will:

- * Recognise the value of taking time to develop relationships, and understand, negotiate and re-evaluate roles and responsibilities.
- * They will develop a shared understanding of what their roles are in their work together.
- * Identify current supports and barriers to working together.
- * They will identify some ways to address the barriers and make use of existing supports.
- * Trial a jointly agreed solution for enhancing their work together.
- * Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of what they have tried together.



Module Two: Keeping our work professional, confidential and safe

In this module teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides build a shared understanding of confidentiality and safety, and how to work together professionally in ways that respect the privacy of students, family/whanau and colleagues.



Key Principles in Module Two

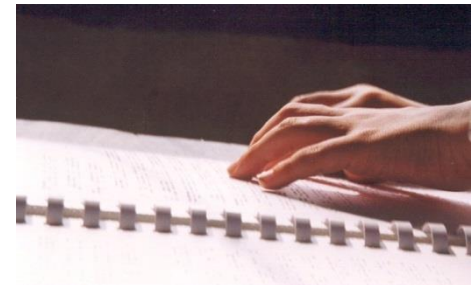
- * Teachers, RTVs and teacher aides have professional roles and responsibilities
- * The ways the personnel are connected both at school and in the wider community provides opportunities and conflicting demands
- * Relationships are strengthened by clear guidelines about confidentiality, advocacy and safety
- * Regular meetings are essential



Learning Outcomes for Module Two

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Develop awareness that people are connected in many different ways, which can have benefits and challenges for their professional roles.
- * Identify and discuss the opportunities and challenges of those connections.
- * Choose one challenge or situation in their work relating to confidentiality, safety or advocacy, identify strategies and develop an approach to address it. Trial this approach.
- * Discuss how the new approach is working and make any necessary changes.



Module Three : Supporting Students with Complex Needs

This module recognises that supporting students with complex needs requires empathy and respect for students' preferences, dignity and access to appropriate support to meet individual needs.



Key Principles for Module Three

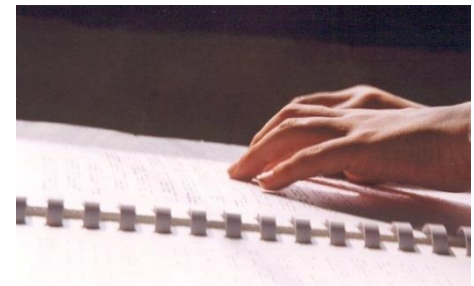
- * Some students require extra support at school for their physical and personal care and communication. Teachers' aides are a valuable resource in providing this.
- * Physical and personal care and communication support should be provided in a way that respects the student, treats them with dignity and considers how they want to be supported.
- * Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides are powerful role models in the ways they support students with complex needs because this may impact the way other students view and treat their peers.
- * Schools should have a documented plan, developed collaboratively by those involved, ie, the student, their family/whānau, teachers, RTVs, teachers' aides and specialists, on how to provide physical and personal care for individual students who need this support.
- * Teachers' aides providing personal and physical care for students should have access to appropriate training and support.
- * Teachers' aides supporting a student with high communication needs help other people, including peers, communicate effectively with the student.
- * Teachers aides supporting a student with vision needs require assistance to work effectively with the student.



Learning Outcomes for Module Three

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Recognise that supporting students with complex needs requires: empathy and respect for students' preferences and dignity, access to relevant school policies, students' individual plans and other appropriate support, e.g: training.
- * Identify ways to show respect for students and access support for meeting students' needs.
- * Trial a jointly agreed strategy for working with students who require physical or personal care or who have communication and/or vision needs.
- * Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, using the questions in this module.



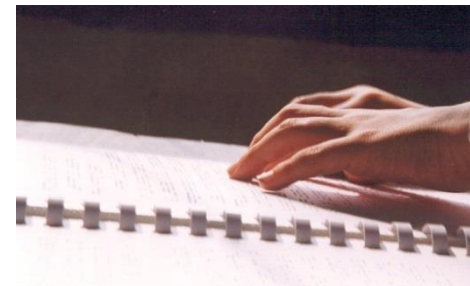
Module Four: What do we think about disability and diversity?

This module examines the key beliefs and assumptions about diversity and asks teachers, RTVs and teachers aides to identify ways these beliefs can support or challenge their relationships with students.



Key Principles in Module Four

- * People's beliefs and values determine how they see and work with others.
- * By examining our beliefs and values about disability we can identify our own assumptions that support inclusive practice and also identify any barriers we may create to students participating and learning. It's necessary to identify these before we can start changing our attitudes, behaviour and ways of working.
- * When teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides think everyone is a capable learner, they provide opportunities for everyone to participate and learn.
- * When teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides get to know each student, they are more likely to see them as a whole person who is competent and capable.
- * When educators expect a student to succeed it is more likely they will succeed. Having high expectations is important.
- * Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides show they value diversity and students' language, identity and culture when these are reflected in teaching and learning.
- * In inclusive communities everyone is a teacher and a learner – people learn from each other.



Learning Outcomes for Module Four

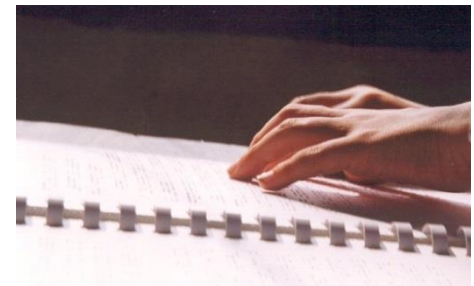
Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Examine and articulate their key beliefs and assumptions about diversity.
- * Examine their own practice and identify ways their beliefs can support or challenge their relationships with students.
- * Try a strategy for adjusting the way they view, respond to or work with a student.
- * Reflect on and evaluate what they have tried, using the questions in this module.



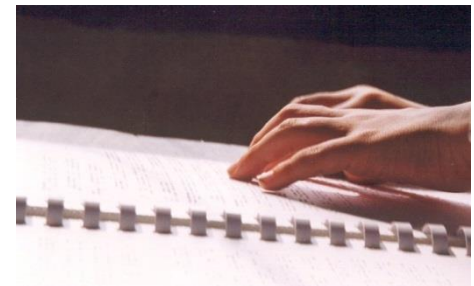
Module Five

In this module, teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides develop a shared understanding of why it's important to know and celebrate their students' strengths, and how narrative assessment and student profiles can support this.



Key Principles for Module Five

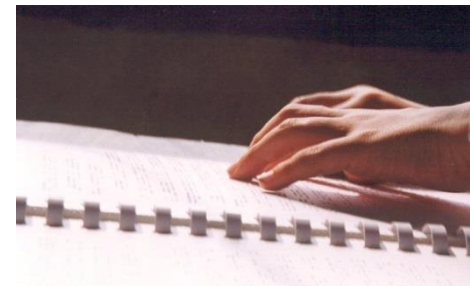
- * All students are active learners. Students learn different things, in different ways, at different rates.
- * The best way to learn about a student is to ask them and include them in assessment and curriculum processes.
- * Teachers and RTVs are responsible for student assessment; teachers' aides support this.
- * Narrative assessment and student profiles are two ways educators can identify students' strengths and preferred ways of working. They can help educators understand students' interests, aspirations and challenges.
- * Narrative assessment draws on the knowledge of the student's team, including family/whānau, and identifies teaching and learning across key competencies and the learning areas.



Learning Outcomes for Module Five

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Develop a shared understanding of why it's important to know and celebrate what students can and love to do.
- * Explore and discuss narrative assessment and student profiles to gather information about students' strengths and interests.
- * Trial narrative assessment or a student profile in collaboration with students, family/whānau.
- * Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of what they have tried together and make any necessary changes.



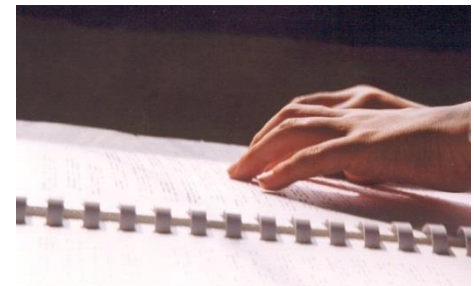
Module Six

In this module, teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides identify ways the IEP process can support students to be actively involved in decision-making about their learning.



Key Principles for Module Six

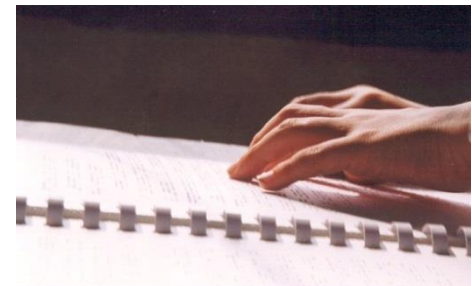
- * When the student is at the centre of teaching and learning, their knowledge, contributions, strengths and desires are central to planning.
- * For some students, planning is through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). An IEP draws on knowledge from the student and those who know them the best. It gives students a say in their learning.
- * An IEP is a collaborative learning plan that recognises the student's strengths and achievements and focuses on new learning.
- * The IEP is a way of adapting the school programme to the student rather than the other way around.
- * Not all students need an IEP. An IEP is used when additional teaching strategies are required to support a student



Learning Outcomes for Module Six

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Recognise the IEP process as a means to support students having a say in their learning.
- * Identify and discuss some of the ways to support students to be actively involved in decision-making about their learning.
- * Select one new way to support students as decision-makers in their learning and trial a strategy to support the student through the IEP process.
- * Discuss how the trial strategy worked and make any necessary changes as they also consider the needs of other students they teach and support



Module Seven

This module supports teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides to develop a shared understanding of the New Zealand Curriculum together with the Expanded Core Curriculum (BLENNZ Curriculum).



Key Principles for Module Seven

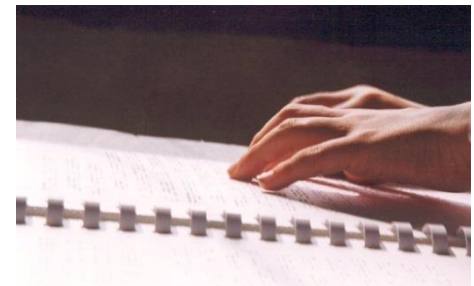
- * The *New Zealand Curriculum* is for all English-medium New Zealand schools and all students.
- * The *New Zealand Curriculum* provides guidance for schools as they design, implement and review their curriculums.
- * The *New Zealand Curriculum* has a vision, values, principles, key competencies and eight learning areas.
- * Inclusion is one of the principles of the *New Zealand Curriculum*.
- * The teacher is responsible for the national curriculum and learning decision-making for all their students. The teacher's aide supports the teacher in this work.
- * Making the school and classroom curriculum accessible and relevant to all students requires teachers and RTVs to make adaptations and adjustments to the classroom program
- * The Expanded Core Curriculum content is situated within the NZC and shows clear links as a supportive framework to this document.



Learning Outcomes for Module Seven

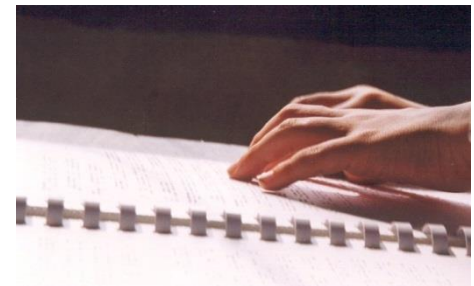
Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Explore the *New Zealand Curriculum* and understand its components
- * Identify how the *New Zealand Curriculum* promotes inclusion.
- * Relate the *New Zealand Curriculum* to the school and classroom curriculum and students they work with.
- * Reflect on and evaluate how they relate the *New Zealand Curriculum* to their work with all students.
- * Explore the BLENNZ Curriculum and understand its components



Module Eight

This module acknowledges teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides' challenges in supporting students who have additional needs, while fostering their connections to peers and their sense of belonging at school. This includes Orientation and Mobility in order to be confident and safe in inclusive settings.



Key Principles of Module Eight

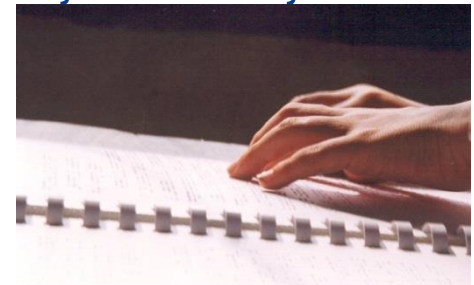
- * A teacher's aide classroom time enhances relationships between the teacher, RTV, students and peers.
- * A teacher's aide time is best used to ensure students with special education needs learn alongside their peers, rather than being withdrawn to work with one adult.
- * A teacher's aide support for individual students needs to foster independence, perseverance and spontaneous interactions with peers and teachers.
- * The identity, language and culture of every student is recognised, respected and included in all relationships, environments and programmes.



Learning Outcomes for Module Eight

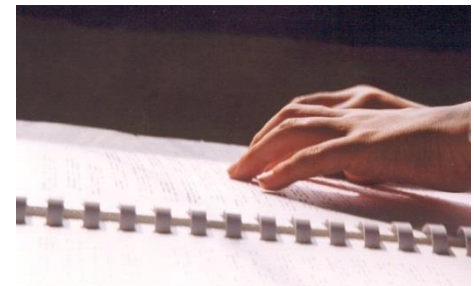
Teachers, RTVS and teachers' aides will aim to:

- * Identify and describe how teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides can impact on a student's sense of belonging and their connections with their peers.
- * Discuss what they currently do in their classrooms to support students' connections with their peers and sense of belonging in the classroom.
- * Plan and implement a new strategy or approach for fostering peer relationships in their class/school.
- * Discuss how the new approach is working and make any necessary change



Module Nine

In this module, teachers, RTVS and teachers' aides identify effective and ineffective ways of creating an inclusive learning environment. Supporting students in the classroom, reducing one-to-one time with a teacher's aide and reducing excessive teacher's aide proximity are discussed



Key Principles of Module Nine

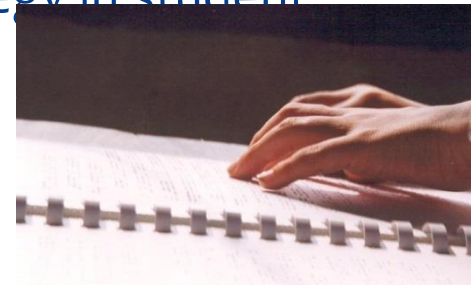
- * Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides have a responsibility to create learning environments that support all learners.
- * In inclusive classrooms, all students have opportunities to be as independent as possible, connected to others and self-determining in their everyday decisions.
- * The ways some teachers' aide support is used may have negative impacts on students.
- * Excessive one-to-one support for a student may reduce teacher engagement with, and sense of responsibility for, that student.
- * Excessive teachers' aide proximity may make a student over-dependent on adults and get in the way of peer interactions.
- * Teachers' aide support should ultimately lead to keeping all students in the classroom, learning alongside and with their peers and teacher.
- * Natural supports are the everyday relationships and opportunities in a school that can help all students participate. These supports (e.g. peers) should be considered for students with special education needs



Learning Outcomes of Module Nine

Teachers, RTVs and teachers' aides will aim to

- * Identify and describe how they can influence the opportunities all students have to engage and participate in learning.
- * Identify effective and ineffective ways of creating an inclusive learning environment.
- * Plan and implement a new strategy that supports opportunities for students to participate and contribute in a shared learning activity.
- * Reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy in student contributions and participation



Value of Professional Learning and Development

- * Understanding and valuing our diverse roles
- * Respect and understanding of the learner
- * Working together to enhance inclusion so that the dream for tomorrow becomes the reality for today

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