

Ministry of Education Support for Migrant and Refugee Students in the Compulsory School Sector

In addition to the standard operational funding that each student generates there are other special funding entitlements available to schools to address the particular needs of migrant and refugee background students.

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Funding

Schools apply, on behalf of individual eligible school students, for ESOL funding to provide language support programmes and resources. There are currently 27,472 students (including 1871 from a refugee background) from 1,142 schools provided with ESOL funded tuition. Approximately 76% of these students are in Auckland.

Funding Levels

In the 2004 budget the government increased the level of ESOL funding for students from migrant and refugee backgrounds who have English as an additional language. By 2007-8 the total yearly funding to schools for the provision of English language support programmes will be approximately \$24 million.

The increased funding levels reflect the more intensive provision required for migrant and refugee students in their first years in New Zealand schools. The longer period of eligibility recognises research findings that consolidating the language for learning in school may take at least five years.

Additional funding is required for supporting those who are beginning to learn English as older learners at intermediate and secondary levels. The challenge of providing for learning new skills across a range of curriculum areas in a new language is acknowledged in the higher rate of funding for students from Year 7 onwards.

Newly arrived migrant students (in their first year in a New Zealand school):

- \$800 a year at primary level (Years 0 - 6),
- \$1,100 at intermediate level (Years 7 and 8)
- \$1,400 a year at secondary school (Years 9 -14)

Students in their second and third years of ESOL funding

- \$600 a year at primary and intermediate level
- \$800 a year at secondary school level

Students from refugee backgrounds

- In their first two years refugee background students at primary and intermediate schools receive \$1,200 a year
- In their first two years refugee background students at secondary school levels receive \$1,800 a year
- In their third, fourth and fifth year, students from refugee backgrounds at primary and intermediate levels receive \$600 a year
- Students at secondary schools are funded at \$800 a year

All migrant, as well as refugee background students, are entitled to receive ESOL funding support for up to 5 years (20 terms).

New Zealand born students in Years 1 - 4 (of migrant or refugee parents) are eligible for 3 years (12 terms) funding after their first 2 terms in school. They are funded at \$600 a year.

Additional Support Initiatives

In addition, the Ministry of Education supports schools to meet the needs of migrant and refugee students through the provision of:

- Refugee Education Co-ordinators and Migrant Education Co-ordinators in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch whose role is to liaise with schools, families and communities to ensure the learning needs of refugee and migrant students are met.
- approximately 120 scholarships are awarded each year to teachers in schools to study for a Teaching English in Schools to Speakers of Other Languages (TESSOL) qualification;
- a range of courses and additional professional development opportunities for teachers and teacher aides working with new learners of English;
- the development and distribution of a range of appropriate ESOL teaching resources;
- the “*Families Learning Together*” booklets in English, Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Arabic, Somali, Amharic, Farsi, and Khmer. These booklets include information on levels of schooling, how schools are managed, the rights and responsibilities of caregivers, attendance, fees, dealing with problems, uniforms, discipline, homework, school terms and holidays and how parents can support their children’s learning in the home.
- *Frequently asked Questions (FAQs) – Information for Migrant Parents* in Chinese (Tuesday) and Korean (Friday) newspapers on a weekly basis in Auckland. The FAQs support migrant parents to better understand the New Zealand education system including what schools teach, how schools are run, and how parents can support their children. The information is from Ministry’s publications, including the Team-up website etc.
- additional initiatives to support students from a refugee background.

The **Flexible Funding Pool** provides for a ‘wrap around service’ to enable schools to provide the support that refugee students need in order to achieve in mainstream education. Some of the initiatives developed include:

- the co-ordination and the development of individual educational plans for refugee students;
 - homework programmes for academic support for secondary students;
 - the employment of bilingual liaison workers to engage with the families, and liaise with school staff on the needs of refugee students;
 - supporting the participation of refugee children in early childhood education programmes;
 - the development of youth mentoring programmes particularly for unaccompanied refugee students or those from one-parent families; and
 - establishing individual career pathways for transition from school to post-school training and/or vocational options.
- The **Computers in Homes** for refugee families (CIH) project aims to empower the refugee background communities by providing them with the tools and skills to become active participants in online activities. The scheme gives approximately eighty families a year a computer, a phone line where necessary, internet access, training and technical support. A bilingual family liaison worker is employed by the local CIH provider to assist with training, monitor use of the computers, and so on.

For more information go to www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/esol

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