

Amplifying MokoPuna Voice in the Curriculum Refresh

"As Aotearoa has evolved, the curriculum has remained the same. All ākonga (learners) need to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. We have recognised this, and it is time for change." - Curriculum Voices Group

The New Zealand Curriculum is being refreshed to better reflect the aspirations and expectations of Aotearoa, New Zealand. This refresh is taking place until 2025.

Kia kuru pounamu te rongō | All mokoPuna live their best lives

The Children's Commissioner, Judge Francis Eivers (Ngāti Maniapoto, Waikato), advocates for the 1.2 million mokoPuna in Aotearoa. Access to and participation in inclusive and equitable education for all mokoPuna is a crucial priority for the Office of the Children's Commissioner. Together we will amplify, advocate and protect the voices of all mokoPuna throughout this journey.

Use your voice to transform education:

The Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Ministry of Education have come together to ensure the voices of mokoPuna are honoured. This partnership is a shared commitment to mokoPuna being central to and visible in the future of education.

We are inviting **you** to nominate mokoPuna for a Youth Voices Group that will champion *how* the voices of children and young people are heard across the country. They will do this by:

- Sharing their unique perspectives, insights and lived experiences.
- Developing their own ways of working and collective work programme.
- Deciding *how* to interact with and feedback to the other groups involved.
- Designing mokoPuna engagement across the country.

The Youth Voices Group will bring together up to 30 young people from diverse communities and experiences.

Who are we looking for?

MokoPuna aged roughly between 15-17 from all walks of life. Within the wider Youth Voices Group, caucuses (smaller groups) will support safe and open discussion between people with shared experiences. This function is being developed in response to community feedback, and our commitment to ensuring genuine and inclusive participation. The caucuses will evolve and grow to meet the needs of the group, beginning with:

- ***Tangata Whenua Caucus:*** MokoPuna who whakapapa Māori.
- ***Pasifika Caucus:*** MokoPuna who descend from the Pacific nations.
- ***Resettled Caucus:*** MokoPuna with refugee, asylum or new migrant experience.
- ***Disabled Caucus:*** MokoPuna with lived experience of disability.

Make a nomination for the Youth Voices Groups:

It truly does take a village, and we will not ask any mokoPuna to participate without ensuring they are fully supported throughout this kaupapa. While we will provide safe,

positive, and meaningful experiences, the true magic comes from honouring trusted relationships young people already have within their communities.

We are asking schools, kura, communities, hapū, iwi and organisations who work with mokopuna across the education spectrum to make nominations for the Youth Voices Group.

By making a nomination, you are also committing to support the nominated mokopuna throughout their journey in the Youth Voices Group. This is an unpaid responsibility for the support people, but we will cover your expenses and be respectful of your time. We want to build lasting relationships beyond this kaupapa, and we look forward to getting to know you and your community through this work.

Selecting the Youth Voices Groups from nominations:

A bespoke Selection Panel will ensure a comprehensive representation of communities and backgrounds in the Youth Voices Group. Selections will be made using an equity approach to be inclusive of ethnically diverse, rainbow, rural and care-experienced mokopuna, especially those who are currently underserved by the education system and who are not often represented in other youth advisory groups.

What is the workload?

The Youth Voices Group will meet 8 times during 2023 as a collective, or in caucus. The Youth Voices Group will collectively determine their work program, when and how they will meet, and communicate throughout the year. The first and last hui will be held over two days in the capital to open and close the kaupapa for the year, and to determine the path into 2024.

We will keep the process flexible and inclusive. Still, we understand that things change and will support mokopuna through the process if they choose to step away. This could involve a replacement from the same community or the selection of another nominee.

Honouring your contribution:

The selected Youth Voices Group members will receive \$200 for each of the 8 meetings in 2023. All expenses will be paid for by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Ministry of Education. This includes travel, accommodation, food, and resources for all selected nominees to participate fully and freely.

All mokopuna have different pathways to navigate, and we are committed to removing barriers along the way. We will work with the support person or organisation who nominated the mokopuna to overcome any challenges.

Submit the nomination form to educationvoices@occ.org.nz or on the OCC website by 21 November 2022. Or contact us on the above email to connect with the team.

Key dates:

2022

- *21 November:* Nominations close for the Youth Voices Groups
- *29 November:* Selection Panel sits.
- *2 December:* Youth Voices Groups announced, and all nominees notified.

2023

Term 1 (30 January – 6 April):

- *Saturday 15 February:* Mihi Whakatau for Youth Voices Groups | Wellington
- *Sunday 16 February:* Hui Timatatanga | First meeting of Youth Voices Groups

Term 4 (4 October – 20 December *) *Exam period ends 30 November

- *Saturday 10 December:* Final meeting for Youth Voices Groups
- *Sunday 11 December:* Hui Whakanui | Celebration of the year

2024 and beyond will be decided with the Youth Voices Groups as part of their work programme.