

Thank you for the opportunity to feedback on Responding to Diverse Cultures: Schools' practice. Consultation to develop a Long-Term Insights Briefing. This submission is made by Asian Family Services.

1. Do you agree with the topic and proposed scope of the Long-Term Insights Briefing?

Asian Family Services is pleased to see the Education Review Office (Te Tari Arotake Matauranga (ERO) propose the Long-Term Insights Briefing topic – “Responding to Diverse Cultures: Schools' Practice” for African, Asian, Continental European, Latin-American, and Middle-Eastern to provide a clear picture of the increasing diversity in schools, understand the educational experiences of learners from diverse backgrounds and their whānau, and explore how schools can best respond to increasing diversity.

2. Are there any other questions/focus areas you think we should consider?

The demographic of New Zealand is changing with the increasing ethnic diverse population. According to the 2018 census, it is estimated that those aged between 0 – 14 account for 153,400 and those 15 – 39, 366,500, were identified as Asian.

Ethnic diverse youth who grow up in New Zealand draw references from their family and school environment. Migrant parents from either Asia or MELAA often bring their collective approach into their home environment, which contradicts to the school's preferred individual approach. These unique experiences can be heightened when they lack acknowledgment from their parents or teachers, and young people are left to negotiate the two different cultures without reference, which could lead to isolation. The latest can be a strength when one finds their feet in walking both worlds. However, it can lead to marginalisation when the two worlds collide.

Research by Chan¹ shows that many Chinese immigrants come to New Zealand to seek a better education for their children. To support their children to achieve in New Zealand society, many immigrants commonly use education as capital for upward social mobility.

Research also found that many migrant parents maintained significant emotional and economic ties in their country of origin, i.e. New Zealand and their country of birth, China. They had strong ties with their homeland because most of their extended family members were still in China. Telecommunications were frequent and regular, as was travel between their country of origin and New Zealand. The parents also insisted on maintaining their mother tongue and culture and, at the same time, were eager for their children to acquire and develop perceived traits of being New Zealanders, particularly in being fluent in the English language and linguistic abilities. The rationale behind this is so that their children can maintain the Chinese linguistic ability to communicate with extended family members in China. The parents' emotional connections with their homeland were particularly evident when they frequently compared parenting and education practices in their country of origin and New Zealand. Consequently, it is common for immigrants to experience cultural dilemmas and acculturative stress, such as the pressure to maintain their traditions and home languages and integrate and adopt the host country's practices. Often, these emotions can manifest in their parenting style; such as concerns about the Chinese cultural and linguistic ability of their children; ongoing tension between whether to allow their children to have a “relaxed” attitude towards education or to insist that their children go through a regimented Chinese style of learning.

Asian Family Services understood and witnessed the concern from the migrant parents. We ran an Incredible Year parenting workshop to equip Asian parents to adopt Cultural flexibility and support

them through navigating and negotiating between the cultural expectations of the two countries. We believe Asian parents will have the opportunity to practice and evolve through learning and adopting new practices from the parenting workshop, balanced with relinquishing certain traditional expectations that were perceived to be no longer practical and applicable. Many studies had shown that immigrant families, including Chinese parents, were prepared to adapt to the cultures of host countries when opportunities were to be provided.

Hence, Asian Family Services believe the school can play a crucial role in using the school setting as a platform to facilitate dialogue to support children to articulate the co-existing environment and help them to make sense of the conflicting worldviews between school and home environment.

Asian Family Services also believe it is critical to share early Asian settlers' history with the ethnic diverse children by acknowledging Chinese, Indian, and Korean migration history and refugees.

- History of Chinese in New Zealand <http://www.thebigfoody.com/about-us/blog/history-of-the-chinese-in-new-zealand>
- History of Indian in New Zealand
 - <https://teara.govt.nz/en/indians/page-2#:~:text=Indians%20have%20come%20to%20New,to%20pick%20up%20homeward%20cargoes.>
 - The story of a New Zealand South Asian community <https://www.otago.ac.nz/press/books/otago067043.html>
- History of Korean in New Zealand <https://teara.govt.nz/en/koreans/page-1>
- Refugees in New Zealand <https://teara.govt.nz/en/refugees#:~:text=Since%201840%20thousands%20of%20refugees,sick%2C%20disabled%20or%20elderly>

In 2021, Asian Family Services launched “Project Connect,” an initiative funded by the Ministry of Education’s International Student Wellbeing Strategy. The project aimed to address the gaps in the provision of support for Asian international students with mental wellbeing and social integration into New Zealand society.

It aimed to promote intercultural interactions, foster links between international students and the community, and provide information on health, safety, and support services (see Appendix B).

Asian Family Services is delighted to see that the Long-Term Insights Briefing topic will focus on

- reflecting our linguistically and culturally diverse nation
- affirm learners’ different cultural identities
- incorporate learners’ cultural contexts into teaching and learning programmes
- is responsive to diversity within ethnic groups
- help learners understand and respect diverse viewpoints, values, customs, and languages.

Enhancing CALD Cultural Competency training courses (eCALD¹) have been made available to the health workforce in New Zealand. The eCALD programme aims to ensure health professionals are equipped with basic knowledge of cultural competency and safety when working with diverse

¹ <https://www.ecald.com/> CALD cultural competency courses

eCALD offers a range of face-to-face and online courses for both caring for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) patients from Asian, Middle Eastern and African backgrounds, as well as for working in culturally diverse workplaces. All courses focus on enhancing learners' cultural awareness, sensitivity, knowledge and practical skills.

patients. Asian Family Services believe it is critical to equip school teachers and education professionals to be culturally competent when working with diverse students. Hence, we hope the review will consider adopting a similar approach in ensuring a cultural competence workforce among educational providers and professionals.

Finally, Asian Family Services also believe that mental health and wellbeing courses for Diverse students should be taught in school. The Youth19 survey series asks more than 7,000 students about everything from family life to sexual activity. The report highlights the high rates of mental distress and discrimination experienced by East Asian and South Asian young people. One-in-three East Asian and South Asian girls experienced significant depressive symptoms. AFS believes that a holistic approach is a long term solution to build our future diverse population.

3. Would you like to participate in this work?

Asian Family Services is interested in participating in this work. However, we hope that the Education Review Office will consider reimbursing organisations for their time and effort. An organisation such as Asian Family Services have limited resource to cope with daily demand. As the only Asian mental health and addiction provider in New Zealand, we have been inundated with requests from various government agencies. A sustainable approach to consider in supporting an organisation like AFS is crucial and appreciated to ensure it can still effectively serve the Asian communities and the time involved will be adequately compensated.

Reference

ⁱ Chan, A. (2017). Transnational parenting practices of Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*. SAGE Journals.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1463949117691204>

Appendix A

Asian Family Services

Asian Family Services is an NGO service provider for people of Asian backgrounds affected by mental health issues and gambling harm. Our gambling harm minimisation services are delivered under a Ministry of Health contract and funded from the gambling levy. Asian Family Services also operates an Asian Helpline (telephone counselling) for Asian clients wishing to access immediate mental health support or guidance. Our services are offered face to face in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington by qualified counsellors, psychologists, social workers, public health practitioners who speak Cantonese, English, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Thai, and Vietnamese. All our counsellors and social workers are registered with either the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, the Social Worker Registration Board New Zealand or the Drug and Alcohol Practitioners Association Aotearoa New Zealand as requested by the Ministry of Health the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act.

For over 20 years, AFS has had a strong public health programme and is well known, regarded and most importantly, trusted in the Asian community and among Asian health practitioners.

In 2016 AFS established Asian Wellbeing Services to provide non-gambling related counselling, psychological intervention, tailor-made psychoeducation and therapy workshops to individuals and related organisations. All these services are offered by qualified counsellors, social workers and public health practitioners who speak English, Cantonese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Thai, and Vietnamese.

In addition, AFS uses its website and social media channels Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and WeChat to share mental health and addiction information and resources in Asian languages and promote our services to Asian communities nationwide.

Appendix B

Project Connect

Webinar 1: Supporting Your Mental Wellbeing as an International Student

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH26qbYMwFk4WAziFlmsp2QmKmSjm-F1D>

In this webinar, we will discuss the migration journey and adjustment difficulties (Tree Model), understanding and recognising the symptoms of stress and how to manage it, time management, and mental health and wellbeing.

Webinar 4: Intercultural Communication

URL: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH26qbYMwFk5s2_xvxQt252PZQHBaYJiU

In this webinar you will gain the knowledge and skills to help you develop cultural awareness of New Zealand society, learn how to break down cultural barriers and build cultural awareness, and enhance self-awareness, communication skills and your ability to negotiate in different situations.

Webinar 5: Health and Safety

URL: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH26qbYMwFk5RN_tOzTp-DZGzBqQsb86H

In this webinar you will gain knowledge on what to do in the event of a car accident, how to keep yourself safe at home or out and about, how to deal with health and travel insurance, and coping with tenancy issues.

Webinar 6: Real People Real Journeys (toward employment in NZ)

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH26qbYMwFk7R0drX2yrVJNTjsFcqBSaV>

In this webinar, you will gain knowledge from former students' experiences about moving from being an international student to employment, career development, the different career paths the speakers have taken, and what needs to be done to enhance your employability, while pursuing your higher education in New Zealand.