

Editorial

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Recently, the teaching profession has been responding to two significant education developments. Consultation on the draft Years 0–10 curriculum has just closed, and the structure of the new qualification system to replace NCEA has been set out, with a foundational award at Year 11 from 2028, and new qualifications for Years 12 and 13. These intended shifts have sharpened questions about how centrally directed changes to curriculum and assessment should be informed, adapted, and enacted so that reform enables—rather than constrains—sound practice for learners.

This issue of *Set* supports teachers to navigate changing expectations with clarity and care. The articles help unpack curriculum and assessment language, while also offering theoretically-grounded ideas with practical implications for teaching.

In He Whakaaro Anō, Frank Wilson examines the phrase “knowledge-rich curriculum” and asks what it signals in practice. She traces the term’s whakapapa and shows where interpretations diverge. Frank argues that claims of being “knowledge rich” need careful, Tiriti o Waitangi-centred scrutiny. It is a reminder that curriculum language is never just technical: it carries assumptions about what counts as knowledge, and whose knowledge is given authority.

In He Whakaaro Anō, Claire Robertshaw, Awhi Clarke, and Te Hurinui Karaka Clarke draw on kaiako narratives about NCEA. They use he awa whiria to frame assessment thinking, arguing that reform needs to braid Western thinking with mātauranga Māori in ways that value the integrity of both. When assessment is being reshaped, their article reminds policy makers and practitioners to keep in focus teachers’ professional judgements and workload alongside learner equity and wellbeing.

The Teaching and Learning section opens with Maria Perreau and Philippa Nicoll Antipas from the Aotearoa Social Studies Educators Network. Their article examines how primary teachers select and adapt social studies resources amid a growing range of materials of variable quality. With national curriculum change in play, their guided conversation framework

supports teachers to make resource decisions that are grounded in disciplinary knowledge and responsive to ākonga.

Jessica Moffitt and Sally Carson from the Department of Marine Science at the University of Otago report on the Under the Wharf programme. This marine science outreach programme engages primary students in climate-related learning through fieldwork, data collection, and inquiry. Drawing on participant feedback, they identify features that support scientific understanding and attend to the emotional dimensions of learning about climate change.

In Practitioner Inquiry, Rosemary Erlam and Julia Hong present a classroom example of planning an explicit language focus across learning areas. Using linked lessons in English and mathematics, they show how language-learning goals can be planned alongside curriculum content to support multilingual learners in the mainstream classroom.

Keeping with the assessment thread in this issue, Michael Cop and Hunter Hatfield compare student text production when writing by hand and by keyboard under timed conditions. They link these patterns to later university outcomes, raising important considerations as digital assessment becomes more common.

In Assessment News, Vince Wright and Charles Darr use two 2025 Numeracy CAA items to show what the NCEA numeracy co-requisite asks of students. They analyse student responses in relation to interpreting context, selecting information, and explaining their reasoning. The takeaway is that numeracy needs to be taught as co-ordinated thinking, not just how to get a calculation right.

Ngā mihi nui to all contributors and reviewers. As curriculum and qualification settings continue to be revised and debated, I hope this issue provides a timely collection of research and practical examples to support the judgement calls teachers and leaders make.

Josie Roberts
General Editor