

# HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

KIA MAU KI TE WHAKAAKO

NZEI · TE RIU ROA  
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## THE GOVERNMENT GIVETH AND THE GOVERNMENT TAKETH AWAY WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa says the Government is giving on one hand and taking away with the other when it comes to early childhood education.

It has just announced a \$4.6 million funding boost to build or extend five early childhood education centres, which will benefit 280 children. The money from the Early Childhood Discretionary Grants Scheme will target greater participation of Maori and Pasifika children and children from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

“While this initiative is welcome, it comes at a time when the Government is slashing \$400 million dollars out of early childhood education funding, affecting 92,000 children around the country,” says NZEI Vice President Judith Nowotarski.

The cuts mean many early childhood services will have to make up funding shortfalls of tens of thousands of dollars and will have to put up fees.

Mrs Nowotarski says that will have a big impact on families, particularly those in lower socio-economic areas, who will have no choice but to reduce their hours or pull their children out of services altogether.

“Technically any of the good being done through these type of targeted grants will be cancelled out by the Government’s wholesale funding cuts,” she says.

The funding cuts affect centres and services which have more than 80% qualified teachers, which the sector has been working towards and is a hallmark of quality early childhood education.

“For the Education Minister to say that this extra grant money is great news for families who want their children to enjoy high quality early childhood education is outright hypocrisy, when the Government is removing quality education for the vast majority of children who are already participating,” says Mrs Nowotarski.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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