

Ngātiwai Trust Board

129 Port Road, Whangarei 0110
P O Box 1332, Whangarei 0140, New Zealand
Telephone +64 9 430 0939 Fax +64 9 438 0182
Email: ngatiwai@ngatiwai.iwi.nz Website: www.ngatiwai.iwi.nz



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Phillipa Pidd
Manager Education Network
Ministry of Education

Tēnā koe Phillipa,

Thank-you for the opportunity for Ngātiwai Trust Board to respond to the *"Possible cancellation of the integration agreement and closure of Hato Pētera College"* on behalf of our iwi members. Ngātiwai is committed to educational achievement and appreciates its close working relationship with the Ministry.

Many Ngātiwai have had a long history (several generations) as students, parents and supporting whānau of Hato Pētera College particularly those Catholic whānau from the Bay of Islands, Whangārei and its districts, Whananāki, Matapouri, Ngunguru and Aotea (Great Barrier Island).

We have since consulted with some of our Hato Pētera whānau on this issue after reading some of the information fact sheets about the school's current predicament.

Some whānau recall the actual signing of the integration agreement itself in late 1970s/early 1980s by the then Minister of Education, the late Hon. Merv Wellington at Te Kāmaka Marae. Some talk about their development from teenagers to young adults, the leadership qualities they gained, the blend of tikanga Māori and Catholic values, and their various journeys to independence. Needless to say, it is with great disappointment and sadness that the possible closure of Hato Pētera College after nearly 90 years of providing education and leadership development for our Māori rangatahi seems imminent.

Ngātiwai understand that the Minister and the Bishop of Auckland need to make a rational decision between school's future viability and upholding the traditions and legacy of the College. For what it's worth, we hope that any future decision is considered fairly, equitably and positively, taking into account that the problems haven't happened over night, they have been accumulating over a long period of time. In hindsight, the College may be bearing the brunt of well intentioned decisions made some time ago.

It is fair to say though that there are some strongly held concerns from whānau that we can only express on their behalf. Some may be true and some may be misperceptions. However they need to be expressed:

- The decision to close the boarding facilities coupled with negative media over governance issues seems to have only ushered the severe drop in roll. It isn't fair to judge the current year's situation as enrolments seemed fairly stable from 2008 to 2011.
- There are strong feelings of injustice and resentment at the long term under-investment in the school's boarding facilities while other Catholic schools appear to be modern, state of the art, elite and are flourishing. Rightly or wrongly, the boarding hostel has been substandard since the 1970s.
- Unhappiness over the dysfunction between the Board, the hostel and the Diocese. Some of it may be driven by the previous point culminating in a Treaty Claim.
- A lack of strategic direction and vision for the school and possibly slow adaptation to the changing educational environment, demographic trends and parent circumstances;
- Some whānau say that Hato Pētera had been unfairly used to manage students with behavioural problems which impacted negatively on other students and the school's reputation as a whole.
- A perception that Māori have a long history and relationship with the Catholic faith, but have not been the priority.
- Both Hato Paora and St Joseph's Māori Girls College seems to still be doing well, and Te Aute has recovered. What has happened to Hato Pētera? How has it come to be in breach of its special character criteria?

Having shared these thoughts, Ngātiwai whānau wish to remain positive and support any option that ensures that kaupapa Māori Catholic education in Tāmaki Makaurau has a future. They feel it would be very difficult to resurrect the College once it is closed.

We know that our whānau find the following issues important for their tamariki today:

- The costs of accommodation to live in and access to top schools, universities and economic opportunities in Tāmaki Makaurau;
- The need to have access to a broad curriculum;
- Access to and development of te reo and tikanga Māori;
- The Catholic faith and its values,
- Development of social skills, self control, and independence;
- Sport, health, culture, technology and arts;
- Developing teamwork and whanaungatanga.
- Māori leadership development;
- Being effective global citizens.

Response to consultation questions:

1. *What do you believe is the long term viability of the Hato Pētera?*

- Catholic whānau will need to believe in the school and look to re-building it back up. This will require a united and cohesive vision, a clear strategy, plus a transition period with support from key stakeholders. The proposed kainga development is the only new visionary piece of work Hato Pētera whānau have seen in their time.
- A series of strategic decisions need to be made as to whether the school will cater for local whānau (i.e. North Shore) or provide a boarding facility for Māori out of location, or indeed provide a mix. Whether it returns to being a boys' only school or remains co-ed. Whether it moves to years 7-13. Whether the school actively promotes non-Māori enrolments but retains a Māori kaupapa and whānau environment.
- The school and the hostel need to be integrated.

2. *What do you think has to happen to make Hato Pētera the College of choice for our Catholic Māori rangatahi and their whanau?*

- the College needs to offer something more or different to the traditional education model as a platform e.g. self directed learning, sports conditioning, technology, engineering, science, health studies, languages, digital media, etc
- A new inviting modern campus. Schools are symbolically judged by what they look like, that's why the kainga development vision is seen as important and deserving. Valuable land needs to be either leased, sold or reconfigured to invest in a new modern campus and ensure that the hostel has a sustainable income and is viable in the future;
- Opportunities and pathways for further education in Tāmaki Makau-rau e.g. AUT, etc
- Gain fluency in te reo Māori while they are there;
- Leadership development;
- Tailored learning;
- Developing life skills and resilience;
- Global skills
- Access to role models

3. *What elements of Hato Pētera College do you want kept? And what needs to change to ensure the school's long term viability?*

Keep:

- Catholic values and faith;
- Boarding options, high quality, safe pastoral care promoting independence, a work ethic, whanaungatanga and community service;
- Sport –small team or individual development. Specialise in sports that have a small team and a strong Catholic base (e.g. Basketball). Catholic rangatahi are making decisions about their secondary pathways based on their interests.

Change:

- Explore collaboration with Rosmini College and Carmel College to expand curriculum options for Hato Pētera students.
- Develop clear career pathways and transition to university, business or vocational training;

4. *What's your vision for education of Catholic Maori rangatahi at Hato Pētera College?*

- High quality NCEA achievers;
- Strong independent thinking Māori leaders;
- Guaranteed fluency in te reo Māori and another global language regardless of the competency on entry;
- Critical analysis;
- Creative thinkers;
- Healthy living, disciplined and sports conscious;
- Independent and Resilient;
- Reasonably affordable boarding facilities and fees;
- Sound relationship skills;
- Commitment to their faith;
- Project management and teamwork;
- Financially savvy;
- Well rounded practical skills e.g. drivers licence, manual skills, maintenance, self care, grooming, food provision, budgeting etc.

Whānau believe that academic learning is only one half of the Hato Pētera experience, the true potential is the life experience gained through what happens after school in a nurturing whānau environment.

Once again, thank-you for the opportunity to comment, we have compiled this feedback on behalf of our Catholic whānau and felt it important that we express their views.

Ngā mihi



Haydn Edmonds
Chairman

On behalf of Ngātiwai whānau of Hato Pētera.