

Education Report: Consideration of the Future of Turakina Māori Girls' College (194)

Executive Summary

1. This report provides you with information to support your consideration of the future of Turakina Māori Girls' College. The report is consequent on *Education Report: Next Steps for Turakina Māori Girls' College 2 July 2015*, and your agreement to initiate consultation with the Proprietor and Board of Trustees of the school about its possible closure under the provisions of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975.
2. This report provides a summary and analysis of the 15 submissions and two petitions received during the subsequent consultation and provides two possible options for the next step.
3. Four substantive submissions were received from the school's Board of Trustees, the Board of Proprietors, Ngā Wāhine Tawhito o Turakina Ngā Hara Inc (the Old Girls' Association), and the Putauaki Māori Pastorate, a Pastorate of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. Many other submissions were received from a number of interested groups and individuals, including two petitions from many alumni of the school.
4. The previous report outlined the Ministry's serious concerns about the Proprietor's ability to meet its obligations under its integration agreement, including maintaining financial viability. There are also challenges faced by the school in a number of other areas. These have been the subject of ongoing discussion between the Proprietor's representative and the Ministry since 2012.
5. The recent consultation process has shown a widespread and dedicated commitment to the future of the school and a preparedness on the part of all parties to work collaboratively to secure its future. However, the Ministry considers that proposals in the submissions are optimistic and provide little evidence that the Ministry's concerns about the Proprietor's financial situation can be addressed effectively in the short to medium term. In particular, the Ministry is not convinced that the Proprietor can achieve financial sustainability.

6. After considering all the submissions, the Ministry is providing two options for your consideration:

Option 1 (Ministry's preferred option)

- make an interim decision that the school should close with a view to this being implemented in January 2016, and
- initiate a second round of consultation on your interim decision with the Proprietor and the Board of Trustees. This would run from 12 October to 6 November 2015.

Option 2

- note the information in this report and decide to defer your interim decision so that you provide extra time for the Proprietor, the Board of Trustees, Ngā Wāhine, the Putautaki Māori Pastorate and the wider Turakina Māori Girls' College community to implement their strategies for 2016.
- Direct that the Proprietor report to you by 1 February 2016 and again by 1 July 2016 on its financial situation based on the school's 2016 school roll:
 - the 1 February report would require the Proprietor to provide a budget and cash flow forecast for the full year including assumptions, and
 - the 1 July report would compare actual operations with the forecast provided in February, including an income statement and balance sheet for the five months period including budget figures, an updated cash flow statement and all accompanying notes relevant to the financial information.
- If, having considered these reports, you decide to make an interim decision to close the school, further consultation would take place in August-September 2016 and, if following consideration of the feedback it was decided that the school would close, implementation would take place on 27 January 2017.

Recommendations

We recommend that you:

- a. **note** the information provided to you in this report; and

OPTION 1 (Ministry's recommendation)

- b. **agree** to make an interim decision that the school should close with a view to this is implemented on 27 January 2016, and;
- c. **agree** to initiate a second round of consultation on your interim decision with the Proprietor and the Board of Trustees. This consultation would run from 12 October to 6 November 2015.

AGREE / DISAGREE

Or OPTION 2

- d. **agree** to defer your interim decision;
- e. **agree** to provide extra time for the Proprietor, the Board of Trustees, Ngā Wāhine, the Putautaki Māori Pastorate and the wider TMGC community to implement their strategies for 2016;
- f. **direct** that the Proprietor report to you on:
- 1 February with a budget and cash flow forecast for the full year including assumptions; and
 - 1 July with comparisons of actual operations with the forecast provided in February, including an income statement and balance sheet for the five months period including budget figures, an updated cash flow statement and all accompanying notes relevant to the financial information, and;
- g. **note** that if you decide on Option 2, after considering the reports you could you decide to make an interim decision to close the school and initiate further consultation to take place in August-September 2016. If following consideration of the feedback it was decided that the school would close, implementation would take place on 27 January 2017.

AGREE / DISAGREE

④ If this information cannot be provided in an accurate and reliable way then the credibility of the proposals is not compelling and I will have no option but move to an internal decision for closure.

h. note that once your decision is known, the Ministry will develop letters and a press release to announce this and next steps, if any.



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

Encls



Hon Hekia Parata
Minister of Education

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② I suggest, notwithstanding the outstanding request since April this year, that this financial information, properly authenticated, is sought from the Proprietor and that 10 working days be provided.

I consider both the request and the timeline to be

③ reasonable given that this process has been underway for three years, that this same request has been on notice for 6 months now, and all submissions hinge on achieving financial sustainability.

① I propose a short term middle course. In effect, accepting unquestioningly the concern + commitment of the submitters to the school and its history, the real questions remain unanswered: 1) the capacity of the Proprietor to ensure the safety of the property and 2) the sustainability and viability of the school now and thus the resourcing of a quality curriculum for the girls.

To assess the likely practical success of the aspirations I need to know what the actual financial situation is.

Education Report: Consideration of the Future of Turakina Māori Girls' College (194)

Purpose of report

1. This report provides you with information to support your consideration of the future of Turakina Māori Girls' College. The report is consequent on *Education Report: Next Steps for Turakina Māori Girls' College 2 July 2015* (METIS 929282 refers), and your agreement to initiate consultation with the Proprietor and Board of Trustees of the school about its possible closure under the provisions of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975 (PSCI Act). The report is attached as Appendix 1.
2. This report also provides a summary and analysis of the subsequent consultation and provides recommendations about the possible next steps you may decide to take.

Background

3. Turakina Māori Girls' College (TMGC) is a state-integrated, decile 3, Year 9-13 secondary boarding school located in Marton. The Proprietor is the Turakina Māori Girls' College Trust Board (the Proprietor).
4. The school's 1 July 2015 roll was 60 students, 100% of Māori ethnicity. As at 11 September 2015 the roll was approximately 49 students.
5. Since 2012 there have been serious concerns about the ongoing viability of the school due to the Proprietor's financial situation and its ability to meet its obligations under its Integration Agreement. Over the same period the school has experienced challenges in other areas as well. In December 2012, a Limited Statutory Manager, with responsibility for curriculum, employment and finances, was appointed.
6. In February 2015, in *Education Report: Update on Turakina Māori Girls' College* (METIS 909478 refers), the Ministry advised you that it was asking the Proprietor to provide specific evidence that it was able to meet its obligations. If this was not satisfied, the Ministry would provide you with a further report recommending that you invoke the provisions of PSCI Act.
7. In July 2015, following receipt and consideration of the Proprietor's response, the Ministry provided you with the further report *Next Steps for Turakina Māori Girls' College* (attached as Appendix 1). You agreed to initiate consultation with the Proprietor and Board of Trustees of the school about its possible closure. At the same time, the Ministry initiated consultation with relevant sector groups and other schools in the network.
8. On 27 August 2015, you met at the school with representatives of the Proprietor and Board of Trustees to discuss your decision to initiate the consultation process. Rev Wayne Te Kaawa of the Putauaki Māori (a pastorate of Te Aka Puaho the Presbyterian Māori Synod) was present at that meeting. He had previously sought a meeting with you at Parliament but withdrew that request following the Marton meeting.

9. On 10 September 2015, a hikoi in support of TMGC gathered in Parliament grounds. You had earlier advised the organisers that you would not be able to meet representatives of the hikoi at that time as you would be away from Parliament. There were 200-250 people at the gathering.
10. On 11 September 2015, the period of consultation ended. This report summarises and provides an analysis of the 15 submissions and two petitions received as part of the consultation process. Submissions were received both by your Office and the Ministry and are attached in full to this report (Appendices 2-7).

Submissions received in the Consultation Process

11. The substantive submissions are those received from:
 - the TMGC Board of Trustees, dated 11 September 2015, submitted by Trish Biddle-Amoroa, Chairperson (This submission includes a copy of the submission presented to you during your visit to the school on 27 August 2015.) Refer to Appendix 2.
 - the TMGC Board of Proprietors, dated 11 September 2015, submitted by Dr Kathie Irwin, Chairperson and Commissioner. Refer to Appendix 3.
 - Ngā Wāhine Tawhito o Turakina Ngā Hara Inc., the TMGC Old Girls' Association (Ngā Wāhine Tawhito), dated 11 September 2015, submitted by Hemaima Eichstaedt, President (This submission incorporates information provided in an earlier submission from Ngā Wāhine Tawhito, dated 19 August 2015.) Refer to Appendix 4.
 - the Putauaki Māori Pastorate: A Pastorate of Te Aka Puaho (the Māori Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ)), dated 8 September 2015, submitted by Rev Wayne Te Kaawa, Contact Person. Refer to Appendix 5.
12. Other submissions were received from a number of interested groups and individuals, including one that supported closing the school. They are attached to this report as Appendix 6.
13. You have also been provided with two petitions with signatories against closure of the school. They are attached as Appendix 7.
14. Within the consultation period, your Office and the Ministry also received and responded to four letters expressing concerns about the possible closure of TMGC, and four requests for information, including two from the media, under the Official Information Act 1982.
15. The Ministry also consulted with seven sector interest groups. Responses were received from two. Brother Sir Pat Lynch of the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools stated the Association would like to see the school survive but acknowledge that it was *probably not possible without a significant injection of human and financial resources*. A representative of the New Zealand Education Institute stated it had no comment on the possible closure.

Summary of Submissions

TMGC Board of Trustees

16. The Board appointed TeHuia Bill Hamilton to facilitate its consultation process between 19 August and 11 September 2015.
17. The Board's submission, *Taonga Turakina*, stated that the Board found no support for possible closure of the school and, instead, based its consultation on the proposal that the school was *keen to strengthen relationships with the broader community to provide for (its) sustainable growth and development*.
18. The Board identified key themes from the feedback it received and the issues identified as needing to be addressed. It stated that it recognised that there are changes *that must happen immediately if Turakina is to remain open and further changes are needed if Turakina is to be sustainable*.
19. The Board noted that consultation feedback had reinforced a view that there was a *breakdown in relationships and focus amongst key groups at Turakina*. The submission included a proposed new model of governance and management to strengthen relationships and achieve broader representation.
20. The Board and the Board of Proprietors had *agreed to work together... as one Board in exercising Governance and that energy and thought has been given to uniting all parts of the school based on a new Mission and measurable goals...to achieve that Mission*. The new mission statement is *Miria te pounamu piata ana: Polish the gem till the brilliance shines through*.
21. The Board presented its priorities for necessary change including three immediate actions to be achieved by 15 January 2016:
 - to provide a safe physical and emotional environment
 - to address financial viability
 - to increase enrolments.With respect to financial viability, the Board provided a list of current and prospective investors with whom it had or might develop strategic supportive relationships.
22. The Board's change plan specified groups who would drive the change process immediately and in the longer term. In particular, the recently revived Old Girls' Association was leading the priority *to have a roll of at least 80 for 2016... and is confident of achieving the target*.
23. The submission recommended that you note *what has been achieved to change Turakina to achieve a sustainable future*, and work with the Boards *to initiate another round of consultation before a final decision is made about the future of the school*.
24. Letters of support for the future of the school, in some cases making suggestions for actions to secure this future, were attached to the Board's submission.

25. The Board's submission indicates strong commitment to the future of the school, acknowledges that changes are urgent, and provides strategies to achieve these changes based on a new vision with a unified approach by both Boards and the wider school community, including the recently revived Ngā Wāhine (Old Girls' Association). The Board asks for time to demonstrate that by 15 January 2016 it has achieved its three short term priorities to provide a safe environment, an effective plan for financial sustainability and a roll of at least 80 students for 2016.

Ministry comment

- The Ministry's view is that the Board's aspirational vision for the necessary rapid change is optimistic. Its three short term priorities for change have long been the focus as key sustainability issues in discussions between the Ministry and the school without significant progress being made. The Board's submission does, however, indicate a greater unity and sense of purpose in the wider school community to secure its future.

TMGC Board of Proprietors

26. The Proprietor's submission stated that it had agreed to adopt a joint approach to the consultation process with the Board of Trustees. *Both Boards agreed to oppose the proposal to close the school and to present plans which set out ideas to strengthen and grow Turakina moving forward... The submission is that the school is transformed and that a new twenty five year strategic plan for TMGC, Tihei Turakina 2040, is developed and implemented.*
27. The submission provided a detailed historical context for the current position of the school and a vision for its future over the next 25 years. The vision is that of a *world class, self-sustaining academy of Mana Wahine. Set in a peaceful rural location, Turakina will become a Māori, Christian, boarding school, a global outreach programme for girls, a seedbed of cross cultural, interfaith, leadership and educational excellence.*
28. The Proprietor referred to its special relationship with the Presbyterian Church and the necessary support of Te Aka Puaho in realising its strategic plans. The submission noted that, on 15 August 2015, Te Aka Puaho had *given expression to its long held view that Turakina is "the jewel in the crown" of the Presbyterian Church... and that In Tihei Turakina 2040 the PCANZ retains a loving and supportive spiritual legacy and historical connection with TGMG, independent of an operational link, throughout its life.* At a further meeting of Te Aha Puaho, on 22 August, a wānanga was held to explore a vision for the future of Turakina.
29. The submission noted that the Proprietor was only halfway through the period of implementing a current version of *Tihei Turakina 2014-2017*. Crown funding had been received for a three year work programme which included reviews of the hostel, the Proprietor's Trust Deed, and policy manuals, alongside upgrading the financial management systems and administration, the production of marketing tools amongst other actions.

30. The Proprietor acknowledged its responsibility in the school's dysfunctional governance and deteriorating financial position over time. In this context it noted that from February 2014, with the authority of PCANZ, Dr Kathie Irwin has acted virtually alone in a governance role. In order to enhance governance of the school, Te Aka Puaho had now agreed to *appoint at least 75% of the trustees as independent trustees with the experience and skills equivalent to those required of Accredited Director status at the New Zealand Institute of Directors.*
31. The submission proposed a business model to improve financial viability which included sponsorship and marketing with the support of Ngā Wāhine. However, the Board believed a whole of Government approach was warranted in considering the school's future, including a whānau ora approach in the case of Māori boarding schools.
32. The Proprietor requested that *the government enable a longer conversation about Turakina's future to be held so that a 110 year taonga in this country's educational landscape is given the chance to undertake further due diligence on Tihei Turakina 2040 proposal.*
33. The Board's submission is similar to that of the Board of Trustees' in stating a strong belief in and a bold 25-year vision for the future of the school. It believes the future can be secured through a new-found unified approach by both Boards, PCANZ through Te Aka Puaho, and the wider school community, especially the revived Ngā Wāhine. It noted that it is only halfway through its current three year *Tihei Turakina* work programme.

Ministry comment

- As with the Board of Trustee's submission, the Ministry's view is that the Proprietor's proposed visionary change is very optimistic in the short term. However, it provides evidence of an increasingly productive level of cooperation between the Boards, the Church and Ngā Wāhine to address the urgent issues and avert the closure of the school.

The Putauaki Māori Pastorate, a Pastorate of Te Aka Puaho, the Presbyterian Māori Synod

34. The submission, prepared by Rev Wayne Te Kaawa, proposed that the concerns highlighted in the possible closure of TMGC be addressed in four proposed actions:
 1. *That TMGC not be closed at the beginning of 2016.*

The Pastorate's submission stated that the school was established as a special mission of the whole Presbyterian Church which has continued to support it over the years and regards it as *a jewel in the Presbyterian crown*. It asks you to *give (it) one year's grace to turn the fortunes of the school around through a number of practical, realistic and measureable methods.*
 2. *That TMGC be fully funded by the Government until the end of 2016. This includes paying off any debts owed by the school.*

The submission based this proposed action on the Putauaki Māori Pastorate's perception of support for Wanganui Collegiate School and Te Pumanawa o te Wairua. Using these examples as a model, it asks you to *provide financial assistance to TMGC to the maximum amount of \$1,000,000 to pay all outstanding debts.*

3. *That the Presbyterian Church as Proprietor establish the 'Turakina Foundation' between September 11th 2015 and January 31st 2017.*

The Pastorate proposed to petition and advocate to PCANZ to establish a Turakina Foundation to provide financial assistance to undertake repairs, maintenance and modernisation of the Proprietor's property, to provide scholarships to assist families and to provide recruitment and support services to the school. Its targeted budget would be \$1.8 million.

4. *That the Minister of Education appoint a Commissioner for 2016 to TMGC.*

The Pastorate acknowledged that some identified concerns about the educational performance and culture of the school were not the direct responsibility of the Board of Proprietors. However, it considered that a more significant intervention than exists with the current Limited Statutory Manager is appropriate to address some issues. Thus, it proposed to urge PCANZ to request the Ministry to *intervene and appoint a Commissioner to TMGC for the interim period of at least 1 year (2016) to be reviewed at the end of 2016.*

35. The Pastorate's submission urges that any decision on the closure of TMGC be deferred for at least one year in order to provide time for the Pastorate to petition PCANZ to provide its support as recommended above. To address the immediate financial concerns facing the school, the Pastorate has sought significant additional Crown funding referring to perceived precedents in the Government's recent financial support of Wanganui Collegiate School and also incorrectly references Te Pumanawa o te Wairua as a similar situation.

Ministry comment

- The Ministry's view is that the circumstances pertaining to Wanganui Collegiate and Te Pumanawa o te Wairua were unique to each of those situations and did not establish a precedent for other such support. Earlier in 2015 you indicated that you did not wish the Ministry to seek funding outside of policy for the school. Your decision to provide additional financial support as requested by the Pastorate would be dependent on your reassessment of the current unique circumstances at TMGC.

Ngā Wāhine o Turakina Ngā Hara Inc (Old Girls' Association)

36. The submission from Ngā Wāhine o Turakina Ngā Hara Inc (Ngā Wāhine) noted that this Association was first formed at a hui celebrating the 110th anniversary of TMGC in May 2015. It stated that *in little over 3 months the NWT committee has been faced with the enormous task of establishing its internal infrastructure while responding to perhaps the most serious crisis which any past pupil association may ever have to deal with.*

37. Ngā Wāhine stated that its forthcoming national conference, open to all Māori boarding schools, was to be scheduled for mid-February 2016. *The purpose of this conference will be to discuss and formally approve our strategic plan to support the school to overcome its current financial, governance and proprietary difficulties.*
38. Ngā Wāhine requested that any final decision regarding the closure of the school be deferred until [its] *Maranga Mai Turakina* petition has been investigated by the Māori Affairs Select Committee. The Ministry understands that this petition urges the Māori Affairs Select Committee to request that a decision about closure of the school not occur until after the planned national conference in February. Meanwhile Ngā Wāhine will be working to coordinate a nationwide consultation process for submissions to be made which will inform [its] *Strategic Development Plan*. The purpose of the plan will be to achieve financial sustainability and educational excellence for TMGC.
39. Attached to the submission are 13 'supportive testimonies' from school alumni. These provide often lengthy and eloquent testimony of the influence of the school in their lives and, in some cases, detailed proposals and suggestions to secure the future of the school. Also attached to the submission is a copy of the material presented to you at the time of your visit to the school in August 2015.
40. The submission from Ngā Wāhine provides evidence of a very recent but clearly strongly motivated and organised momentum on the part of a large number of school alumni to support the school. The submission emphasises the significant progress made in a short time to establish Ngā Wāhine on a sound footing and its immediate focus on developing its own strategic plan *outlining options to achieve financial sustainability and educational excellence for TMGC*. It intends to discuss and formally approve this plan at its proposed conference in February 2016.

Ministry comment

- The Ministry's view is that Ngā Wāhine's engagement and energy, and its willingness to work closely with all parties in an attempt to secure the school's future, are positive factors. While it is possible it could bring short term benefits, for example in terms of some increased enrolment, Ngā Wāhine is not in a position to directly influence its own identified priorities of *financial sustainability and educational excellence* for the school in other than a much longer timeframe.

Other submissions

41. A number of submissions were also received from interested groups and individuals. These submissions provide detail about the valued place TMGC holds both in the Māori and Marton communities, and the unique education it offers for young Māori women. Concerns were raised about the timing of the closure process and the opportunity to consult. Some submissions offered to support the school to resolve its issues and become sustainable.

Ministry analysis

42. In its previous report in July 2015, *Next Steps for Turakina Māori Girls' College*, the Ministry outlined its serious concerns about the Proprietor's ability to meet its obligations, including maintaining financial viability. These concerns have been apparent since 2012 and the subject of continued discussion during that time between the Proprietor's representative, Dr Kathie Irwin, and the Ministry.

43. In a letter dated 20 March 2015 to the Proprietor's representative, the Ministry requested it be provided with the following specific information by 30 April 2015 so that it could assure the Minister that the Trust Board was a viable partner in the Integration Agreement:
- *details of the current financial position of the Trust (as at 1 March 2015)*
 - *the Trust's 2015 projected budget (income and expenditure) based on its 1 March 2015 roll of 70 students. This should include its operating costs, maintenance programme for 2015, funding for any building assessments which will take place this year, funding for general and long term cyclical maintenance*
 - *the projected budgets for 2016 and 2017*
 - *a list of current trustees.*
44. Information that has been provided subsequently has not given the Ministry the required assurance of the Proprietor's ability to meet its financial obligations. In addition, the Ministry remains concerned that other issues at the school that have required the continued appointment of a Limited Statutory Manager remain largely unresolved. The Ministry considers the Proprietor has already had sufficient time to make progress towards addressing the problems it has faced.
45. The recent consultation process has shown a widespread and dedicated commitment to the future of the school and a preparedness on the part of all parties to work collaboratively to secure the school's future. However, the submissions provide little evidence that the Ministry's concerns which have continued to exist for at least three years can be addressed effectively in the short to medium term.
46. If, for example, the Board of Trustees were to achieve its goal of having 80 students enrolled in January 2016, the Ministry's view is that this would be insufficient evidence in itself of change, unless it was demonstrated that these enrolments were fully funded (i.e. attendance dues are fully paid), that the Proprietor's current debt was managed through other sources and that such an increase in roll (with ongoing full payment of the attendance dues) was sustainable in the medium to long term.

Proposal

47. After considering all the submissions, we are providing two options for your consideration:

Option 1 (Ministry's preferred option)

- make an interim decision that the school should close with a view to this being implemented in January 2016, and
- initiate a second round of consultation on your interim decision with the Proprietor and the Board of Trustees. This would run from 12 October to 6 November 2015.

Option 2

- note the information in this report and decide to defer your interim decision so that the Proprietor, the Board of Trustees, Ngā Wāhine, the Putautaki Māori Pastorate and the wider TMGC community have time to implement their strategies for 2016.
- direct the Proprietor to report to you by 1 February 2016 and again by 1 July 2016 on its financial situation based on the school's 2016 school roll:

- the 1 February report would require the Proprietor to provide a budget and cash flow forecast for the full year including assumptions, and
 - the 1 July report would compare actual operations with the forecast provided in February, including an income statement and balance sheet for the five months period including budget figures, an updated cash flow statement and all accompanying notes relevant to the financial information.
 - If having considered the information provided in the two reports you decide to make an interim decision to close the school, further consultation would take place in August-September 2016 and, if following consideration of the feedback it was decided that the school would close, implementation would take place on 27 January 2017.
48. The Ministry prefers Option 1. This is because the Ministry has already requested this information from the Proprietor, and it has not been forthcoming.
49. Option 2 has been provided as a show of good faith following the recent submission efforts from the wider TMGC community. The Ministry considers it would be extremely unlikely for the financial position of the Proprietor to change during this time, but acknowledges the offers of support it has received.

Legal Process

50. The process for the cancellation of a school's integration agreement is determined by section 11 of the PSCI Act. While there is provision for cancellation of a school's integration agreement by mutual consent between the Minister and Proprietor, we have not received any indication from the current membership of the Trust Board that they would be open to initiating this process.
51. Section 12 of the PSCI Act provides for closure of an integrated school by the Minister without the Proprietor's agreement. This section can be used if the Minister is concerned that the Proprietor is not sufficiently carrying out its functions and obligations that were accepted at the time of integration.
52. Based on the evidence and reasoning provided to you in this and previous reports, the Ministry considers that the Proprietor is not in a financially sound position to be able to sufficiently undertake its obligations. The Proprietor has been unable to provide assurances that this is not the case.

Financial implications

53. In the event of closure of the school, it is estimated that there would be operational costs to the Crown in the first year of approximately \$98,000, and subsequent annual savings of \$706,000.
54. The cost of Education Development Initiative (EDI) funding would be \$385,000 GST inclusive, based on the school's 1 July 2015 roll of 60 students.

Risks

Option 1

55. If the school closes in January 2016, there is a risk that the opportunity to build on the collaborative approaches proposed in the submissions, which may lead to the rejuvenation of the school, would have been lost.

Ministry comment

- The Ministry's view is that this risk is outweighed by a concern for the educational outcomes for the students, as well as their health and safety while the school is open.
- Also see risks identified for Option 2.
- We also note that if Option 1 is not successful in improving the financial position of the Proprietor it would lead to further financial loss.

Option 2

56. If the school remains open for 2016, there is a risk that there will be a low roll (affecting the Proprietor's financial position as well as the school's resourcing). There is also a risk that the school could become dysfunctional during the year to the point where closure is necessary because of its operational issues. In this context the health and safety issues and achievement concerns experienced at the school may not be able to be effectively addressed.

Ministry comment

- The operational issues could be mitigated by the Ministry along with other sector groups continuing to support the school through 2016.
- We also note that should the school close part way through 2016, the Ministry would have to continue to pay teaching staff through to January 2017. This is because the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement only provides for school closures to take place in January of any year. The school currently has an entitlement of 9 (FTTE) Full Time Teacher Equivalents.

Next steps

57. Once your decision is known, the Ministry will provide you with letters to announce this to the Proprietor, Board of Trustees, and local Members of Parliament.
58. A press release will also be developed, updating previous Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).