



Education Report: Change of designation for He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru (1667)

To:	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education) Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	10 August 2022	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1291869
Drafter:	Kath Corby, Manager Education	DDI:	09 436 8039
Key Contact:	Hira Gage, Director of Education Te Tai Tokerau Te Tai Raro Te Mahau	Mob:	9(2)(a)
Messaging seen by Communications	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

This report seeks your approval for a change in designation for He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru (1667), from a state school without a specific designation to a Year 1-8, co-educational designated character school (kura-ā-iwi), under section 200(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

In 2021, Minister Hipkins approved consultation on this proposal [METIS 1272330], and the consultation has now been completed.

Summary

1. He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru (previously known as Whangaruru School) is a state co-educational, decile 1, Year 1-8 primary school in a rural area south of Russell in the Bay of Islands. All ākonga, some members of staff and the school Board are associated with the sub-tribes of the Ngāti Wai iwi.
2. In the first half of 2019 the Board carried out consultation with its community and respective tribal entities for a proposal to apply for membership with Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa (NKAI). Among the requirements for membership with NKAI, is initiating a four-year transition plan to operate at Level 1 of Māori Language Resourcing (MLR) funding.

3. In mid-2019 the Board applied for membership with NKAI and was informed it had gained provisional approval later that year.
4. The Board now seeks a change of designation to a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi) under section 200(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020.
5. Approving this proposal will support Maihi Karauna, the Māori language strategy and foster increased participation and success for Māori ākonga through the advancement of Māori education initiatives. It also aligns with Ka Hikitia and the National Education Network Plan (NENP) to support Māori Medium Education in the schooling network.
6. If you agree to the proposed change of designation, we recommend the change takes effect from Term 4, 17 October 2022.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry recommends that you:

- a. **note** that He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is a state school that has been accepted for membership to Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa and has applied to be designated as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi);
- b. **note** that the Ministry has completed consultation about the possible change in designation of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru as a designated character school, and no objections have been raised;
- c. **agree** that the proposed designation of the kura meets the requirements in section 204(3) of the Education and Training Act 2020; and

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**

- d. **agree** to change the designation of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru under section 200(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020, to take effect from the start of Term 4, 17 October 2022.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**

- e. **Note** that the Ministry proposes to approve a maximum roll of 75 ākonga.


And if you approve the designation, you are asked to:

- f. **sign** the attached gazette notice (Annex 1) and letters to the Presiding Member of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru (Annex 2) and local Member of Parliament (Annex 3) advising them of your decision; and
- g. **agree** that this report be proactively released in line with your expectations. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**

Isabel Evans
**Hautū | Deputy Secretary
Te Mahau | Te Tai Raro**


Hon Jan Tinetti
**Associate Minister
of Education
(School Operations)**


Hon Kelvin Davis
**Associate Minister
of Education
(Māori Education)**



12/08/2022

20/08/2022

4/09/2022

Background

1. He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is a state co-educational, decile 1, Year 1-8 primary school in a rural area south of Russell in the Bay of Islands. All members of the Board and most staff are associated with the Ngāti Wai based sub-tribes of Whangaruru.
2. Following the opening of the school in 2005 with a roll of 82, there was a significant drop to 30 ākonga in 2014. The roll then grew to 56 in 2020 and has since dropped again to 50 ākonga as of July 2022. Historically between 80% and 100% of ākonga have been of Māori descent.
3. In 2016, consultation with whānau captured a strong demand for provision of learning experiences in “*te reo Māori and tikanga of Ngāti Wai*”. The Board responded by setting into its strategic plan an initial 2017-2018 timeline to initiate developing *te reo Māori* immersion provision. The Board then set itself to investigate *te reo Māori* immersion models.
4. In 2017, consultation with the school community established there was a demand for more *te reo Māori* and *tikanga Māori* in the kura. That initial demand expanded to include Ngāti Wai heritage, environments, history, narratives, customs, and practices.
5. In 2018, the Board and Tumuaki committed to developing a localised curriculum and support systems for staff and whānau to begin developing their cultural capability and capacity.
6. In the first half of 2019, the Board carried out further consultation with its whānau, community and respective tribal entities for a proposal to apply for membership with Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa (NKAI). Consultation included a presentation from NKAI on its model.
7. The Board gained considerable support from its whānau, community, hapū and iwi, including its tribal trust board and education unit to apply for membership with NKAI.
8. By the close of 2019, NKAI granted provisional approval for Whangaruru School’s application, before full approval was given by the close of 2020. NKAI committed to actively support a kura-ā-iwi designated character school, should this be approved.

Process for the proposed change

9. Under section 200(1)(a) of the Act, a state school that is not a designated character school can be designated as a designated character school by notice in the *New Zealand Gazette*, following consultation with the school’s board. Under section 209(2)(g) of the Act you must first consult with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might, in your opinion, be affected if this proposal is approved. The Ministry has undertaken the required consultation on your behalf and there have been no objections raised.
10. For you to designate a school as a designated character school, the school must meet the requirements in section 204(3) of the Act. These are the same as for establishing a new designated character school. The three key requirements that apply are:
 - a. the school will have a character that is in some way specific or different from the character of ordinary state schools, and
 - b. it is desirable for students whose parents want them to do so to get such an education, and

- c. students will receive an education that differs significantly from the education they would receive at an ordinary state school.
11. If you agree to designation of the kura, the Secretary for Education must set a maximum roll for the school. This is required by section 204(7) of the Act. We propose the maximum roll be set at 75 students.

Consultation

12. Section 209 of the Act requires the Minister of Education to consult the boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected before deciding whether to change the designation of an existing state school.
13. The Ministry has consulted with the boards of Hikurangi School (35.3km southwest), Te Kura o Waikare (37.2km northwest), Russell School (43.7km drive northwest), Karetū School (48.5km drive northwest), Maromākū School (51.9km drive west), and Pāihia School (67km drive northwest).
14. Te Kura o Waikare located 37.2km northwest, is the sole dedicated Māori medium kura among the schools consulted, they are also a member of NKAI. The response received from Te Kura o Waikare expressed full support for the change of designation.
15. None of the other schools consulted provided any comments.

The proposed designated character

16. For you to designate a school as a designated character school, the school must meet the requirements in section 204(3) of the Act. These are the same as for establishing a new designated character school. The three key requirements that apply are:
- a. the school will have a character that is in some way specific or different from the character of ordinary state schools, and
 - b. it is desirable for students whose parents want them to do so to get such an education, and
 - c. students will receive an education that differs significantly from the education they would receive at an ordinary state school.
17. The proposed designated character includes a tailored approach to teaching and learning. This is detailed in the application as follows:
- He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru *would integrate Māori Medium Education into all aspects of the school in the local dialect.*
 - He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru *will ensure that, alongside Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, it will operate in accordance with the cultural practices of the hapū and iwi of Ngāti Wai.*
 - The He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru *curriculum would specifically reflect the mātauranga and tikanga of the tangata whenua of the hapū and iwi of Ngāti Wai. This fits within the Ka Hikitia education strategy for Māori to achieve education success as Māori.*

18. The designated character meets the legislative criteria for being different from a mainstream state school. The character will deliver on the identity, language and culture demand by integrating them in all aspects of the operation of the school, and working with the hapū and iwi of Ngāti Wai.
19. The Ministry considers that the application has detailed that:
 - a) the designated character school will have a character that is different from mainstream state schools, in that the kura-ā-iwi model is already established as having such character
 - b) it is desirable for students whose parents wish them to get such an education, as it fits within the Ka Hikitia education strategy for Māori to achieve education success as Māori
 - c) the kura-ā-iwi model provides education of a kind that differs significantly from the education students would receive at an ordinary state school
 - d) the Whangaruru curriculum would specifically reflect the mātauranga and tikanga of the tangata whenua of the hapū and iwi of Ngāti Wai.
20. Approving this proposal will support Maihi Karauna, the Māori language strategy and foster increased participation and success for Māori students through the advancement of Māori education initiatives. It also aligns with Ka Hikitia and the Te Tai Tokerau network plan to support Māori Medium Education in the schooling network.

Education at the Kura

21. The Education Review Office (ERO) last reviewed the school in February 2019. The report states:

“There has been a dedicated approach to the implementation of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA). The school’s curriculum design is responsive to the aspirations of students, whānau, hapū and iwi. Together they have identified authentic and meaningful contexts for learning, and the environmental conditions required for children to learn.”

“Teachers have undertaken effective professional learning about teaching and assessment practices. They have implemented new assessment tools. These continue to be further modified to support the implementation of TMoA and to help teachers provide positive outcomes for children.”

“Most students in the school have had less than two years in total immersion learning. Their achievement outcomes progress steadily during their time in this setting. Appropriate systems are in place for data management. The principal analyses student achievement well to identify next steps to support learning progress.”

“The board and staff have implemented a strategic approach to ongoing improvements. Good internal evaluation processes are in place to guide strategic development. The implementation of TMoA has been evaluated and this process is ongoing.”

22. The kura was on a three year ERO review cycle and is now on Te Ara Huarau, ERO's review cycle.

Network considerations

23. He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is not part of the local Peowhairangi Kāhui Ako.
24. The Ministry considers the proposed change in designation for He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru would have a minimal effect on the schooling network.
25. Te Kura o Waikare, the other designated character school in the area, is a co-educational composite Year 1-10 kura, situated 37.2km northwest of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru. Te Kura o Waikare had a March 2022 roll of 90 students. Whangaruru has kept Te Kura o Waikare fully aware of their intention to seek permission to transition to operate as a full te reo Māori immersion school. Waikare has assisted the kura through the process.
26. Whangārei is the nearest town centre to the Whangaruru community, situated 51.1km to the south. There are a number of primary, intermediate and secondary schools in Whangārei, but it is unlikely any would be affected by this proposed change for Whangaruru.

Property

27. If this proposed change is approved, there would be no immediate change in property requirements at the kura. The change of teaching ratios associated with transitioning to Māori Medium Education means that the four existing teaching spaces on site will be utilised, whereas prior to this, there were intentions to demolish a classroom that was not required. It is anticipated that at least one of the existing classrooms will require refurbishment to improve its condition.
28. He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru has indicated that at some time in the future the Board will apply for a change of classification from operating as a Year 1-8 full primary school to become a Year 1-10 composite school. The property implications for this would be considered at the time of a future application.
29. While operating as an English medium school, the teacher/student ratio determines a capacity for 100 students in the current teaching spaces. As the kura progresses a transition to operate as Māori medium kura, the teacher/ākonga ratio will reduce capacity to 72 ākonga, meaning if the roll was to exceed 72, and be growing the kura will be entitled to additional teaching spaces.
30. It is proposed that the maximum roll be set at 75 ākonga so that any future roll growth requirements are aligned with reviewing the maximum roll.

Financial Implications

31. The only change in resourcing is Māori Language Resourcing (MLR) funding.
32. Currently He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is in the final year of a four-year staggered transition to operate fully at Level 1 MLR. Its 2020 Year 1-3 cohort was the

first to be moved to Level 1 now generating \$38,336. The remainder of the classes sit across Levels 2-4 generating respectively \$1,169, \$2,836, and \$995.

33. Based on the current roll of 50 ākonga, the projected MLR Level 1 funding would increase to \$58,956.03 (GST incl.) this year. In 2023, the projected MLR funding would then be \$90,560.20 following a Budget 22 initiative to increase MLR Level 1 funding to support Māori language education provision and growth.

Transport

34. He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is entitled to apply for school transport assistance (STA) in the form of a Daily Bus Service or Conveyance Allowance. The kura currently does not receive any STA from the Ministry. A change in designation would not change the school's entitlement to apply for STA under the Māori Medium School (MMS) service agreement.
35. A change in designation entitles He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru to the *School Transports' MMS service agreement* transport funding. The per-student rate is \$9.34 plus \$3.35 per student per quarter admin rate for a rural based decile 1 school. Eligibility for this funding is based on the criteria for the distance to school.
36. Using school data from the 2021 July roll return, under MMS an estimated school transport assistance funding for He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru is calculated at \$17,109 per quarter. This funding is currently calculated based on the number of eligible ākonga attending the kura, the decile level, and the per-student rate as noted above. The funding figure is an estimation and subject to change.

Staffing implications

37. The change of designation would not have any staffing impact.

Risks

38. Including the responses received from consultation, we have not identified any risks associated with this proposal.

Conclusion

39. The Ministry's recommendation is that you approve the change in designation for He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru because:
- the board completed due diligence following community consultation that captured a demand for provision of learning experiences in "*te reo Māori and tikanga of Ngāti Wai*", "*Ngāti Wai heritage, environments, history, narratives, customs and practices*". This included:
 - *holding discussions on Māori medium models and possible peak body membership*
 - *completing a process of application, approval, and induction with NKA*

- *including into its strategic plan the development of te reo Māori immersion provision*
 - *the development of a localised curriculum and support systems for staff and whānau to begin developing their cultural capability and capacity*
 - *the initiation of a staggered transition from English medium to te reo Māori medium provision.*
- alongside Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, it is intended the localised curriculum that will be developed in association with hapū and the iwi Ngāti Wai, will strengthen the delivery on identity, language and culture demand which is becoming increasingly common across Māori communities of the Tai Tokerau region
 - as a kura-ā-iwi, He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru would have the support of NKAI
 - the consultation carried out by the Ministry indicated that those consulted were positive about the change
 - approving this proposal will support Maihi Karauna, the Māori language strategy and foster increased participation and success for Māori ākonga through the advancement of Māori education initiatives. It also aligns with Ka Hikitia and the National Education Network Plan to support Māori Medium Education in the schooling network.

Next Steps

40. If you agree to the change of designation, please sign the notice for the *New Zealand Gazette* (Annex 1), the letters to the board (Annex 2) and local Members of Parliament (Annex 3).
41. The Secretary will set a maximum roll for the school as required by section 204(7) of the Act.

Proactive Release of this Report

42. It is intended that this Education Report is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Annexes

- Annex 1: Notice for the *New Zealand Gazette*
- Annex 2: Letter to the presiding member
- Annex 3: Letters to the local Member of Parliament

New Zealand Gazette Notice

Change of designation of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru (1667)

Under sections 200, 204 and 205 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), I hereby designate He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru, Russell, Bay of Islands, as a designated character school. This designation will take effect from 17 October 2022.

He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru will operate in accordance with section 204 of the Education and Training Act 2020. The designated character of the school will be recorded as:

He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Punaruku identity centred within the worldview of its Whangaruru based marae and hapū of Ngāti Wai, and further by its wider Ngāti Wai and Tai Tokerau tribal kinship.

The constitution of the He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru School Board shall not be changed by this notice.

Dated at Wellington this 04 day of September 2022.



Hon Kelvin Davis
Associate Minister of Education
(Māori Education)

Annex 2: Letter to the presiding member

Hon Kelvin Davis

MP for Te Tai Tokerau

Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti

Minister for Children

Minister of Corrections

Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)



4 September 2022

Nicki Wakefield
Presiding Member
He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru
2916 Old Russell Road
Punaruku 0184

Tēnā koe Nicki

Thank you for your Board's application asking me to change the designation of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru, located in Russell, Bay of Islands, to that of a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi).

The Ministry of Education consulted on this proposal on my behalf. After considering all the information presented to me, I have decided to change the designation of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru to a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi). This will take effect from 17 October 2022.

A notice giving effect to my decision will be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*:

<https://gazette.govt.nz/>

The Ministry of Education has indicated it will approve a maximum roll of 75 students as agreed to by the Board and will inform you of this through written notice. If, in the future, the kura wishes to increase this maximum roll then it will need to follow a process with the Ministry of Education.

I wish to acknowledge the work your Board has done to date to enable the school to operate as a kura-ā-iwi and look forward to hearing of your future success under this designation.

If you have any further questions, please contact Kath Corby, Manager Education, in the Ministry of Education's Whangārei office. Kath can be contacted on (09) 436 8039 or at kath.corby@education.govt.nz.

Heoi anō

Hon Kelvin Davis
Associate Minister of Education
(Māori Education)

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou
ōku whanaunga nō
Ngati Wai.

Hon Kelvin Davis

MP for Te Tai Tokerau

Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti

Minister for Children

Minister of Corrections

Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)



4 September 2022

Willow-Jean Prime
MP for Northland
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Kia ora Willow-Jean

I have received an application from the Board of He Puna Ruku Mātauranga o Whangaruru asking that I change the designation of their school to a designated character school, kura-ā-iwi.

The Ministry of Education has consulted on my behalf, with boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected by these changes.

After considering all the information provided to me, I have decided to approve these changes, to take effect from 17 October 2022. A notice giving effect to my decision will be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

I consider this change in designation will enable the school to provide even greater support for Māori to achieve educational success as Māori.

Heoi anō

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Kelvin Davis'.

Hon Kelvin Davis
Associate Minister of Education
(Māori Education)