



Education Report: Proposal to combine Porirua Activity Centre and Alternative Education Provision in 2022

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	17 December 2021	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1278957
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to consider a proposal from the Principals of the host and contributing schools of Porirua Activity Centre to a one-year trial which would combine the Alternative Education provision in Porirua and the Porirua Activity Centre.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- note** a proposal from Principals in Porirua for a one-year trial combining the Alternative Education and Activity Centre provision, commencing term 1 2022
- agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**

Dr David Wales
Poutohu Matua | Te Hāpai Ō Rāngai
National Director Learning Support Delivery

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Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

20/12/2021

Background

Activity Centres

1. Activity Centres provide educational and pastoral support to secondary students in Years 9 to 13. There are 13 centres across the country, each with a notional roll of 20 students. Centres are operated by a managing school that employs two registered teachers to provide a specialised learning programme for students who are at-risk of disengaging from schooling and/or at-risk of low educational, social or vocational outcomes.
2. Managing schools have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education and receive resourcing to manage the Activity Centre. A requirement of the Memorandum of Understanding is that the managing school report to the Ministry on outcomes and student achievement to ensure accountability for public funds. Property for Activity Centres is funded by the Ministry.
3. Mana College is the fund holder and host school for the Porirua Activity Centre.

Alternative Education

4. Alternative Education provides educational and pastoral support for students between 13 and 15 years of age who have disengaged from mainstream schooling. Students can remain enrolled in Alternative Education until the end of the year in which they turn 16. The student's enrolling school must keep the student on their roll while they are attending Alternative Education. Each student is supported by an Individual Learning Plan and they are able to be dual enrolled at Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu – The Correspondence School and access up to four subjects.
5. Managing schools are contracted by the Ministry of Education and, with the Ministry's consent, they may subcontract a third party to deliver the Alternative Education. The funding is used to employ staff, lease property and provide education including addressing social and emotional wellbeing. The funding is not adequate to employ registered teachers. Porirua College holds the contract for Alternative Education provision in Porirua. They sub-contract the community organisation Praxis to provide the service to 24 ākonga.
6. All contracts for Alternative Education expire in December next year and the Ministry is now beginning to plan the scope and process for contracting in 2022.

Issue and proposed solution

7. 9(2)(ba)(i)
[Redacted text block]
8. The Porirua Principals met with the Ministry on 2 December 2021 to discuss the issues and present a solution for their community for 2022.
9. The five contributing schools that feed into the Porirua Activity Centre wish to trial an approach which would combine the resources provided for Alternative Education with the Activity Centre. Porirua College would continue to hold the contract for Alternative Education and would also become the host school managing the Activity Centre and

employ the two registered teachers. The current subcontracted Alternative Education provider Praxis would provide the entire service. This would include having registered teachers taking responsibility for the core curriculum needs of ākonga in both the Alternative Education and Activity Centre. The service would be for at-risk students in Porirua in Years 9 to 13 and could accommodate 44 ākonga at any one time.

10. Teaching and learning for ākonga entering under either pathway would happen at the Porirua Activity Centre, which is located on Kenepuru Drive, Porirua (not on a school site). All social and emotional learning will happen at various sites according to the context in which ākonga are learning.

11. Praxis and the Porirua Activity Centre would start the one-year trial in Term 1 2022.

Risks and Benefits

12. The benefits of this trial would be:

- Ākonga in Alternative Education will be able to learn in a safe and positive physical environment at the Porirua Activity Centre and will benefit from having registered teachers to facilitate core curriculum subjects.
- Activity Centre ākonga will benefit from having their social and emotional needs met from the expertise that Praxis offer. They will also benefit from a supported transition back to their mainstream schools.

11. There is a risk that combining both Alternative Education and Activity Centre ākonga in a larger group and across a wider age group could expose some ākonga to inappropriate behaviour. The schools and the provider are aware of and will seek to minimise this risk. In the proposal, to mitigate this risk it is noted that the younger ākonga will be separated from their older peers.

12. The Ministry does not believe there are any legislative or policy considerations that would preclude this trial from progressing. The contract and Memorandum of Understanding with schools for the delivery of Alternative Education and Activity Centres are sufficiently flexible to enable this change to the delivery model, and Porirua College would continue to be required to meet their obligations in terms of reporting.

13. The proposal fits with the key actions of priority six of the Learning Support Action Plan, to improve education for children and young people at risk of disengaging from education. The proposal has been designed by educators, is an adapted and flexible system of at-risk provision for the Porirua community that will better meet individual needs and is integrated with schools.

14. The trial will provide an opportunity to test a new model and enable us to understand what works and what issues may need to be worked through, in developing broader changes to the operating model for intensive provision.

15. This one-year trial is inclusive of the Ka Hikitia strategy including education provision that responds to learners within the context of their whanau and the community in which they live. This one-year trial is inclusive of the Pacific Education plan including providing a safe, environment where Pacific ākonga feel safe and valued.

Financial Implications

13. There are no financial implications. Funding and associated reporting requirements would remain the same.

Next Steps

14. If you approve this proposal, the Ministry will transfer the hosting responsibilities for the Porirua Activity Centre to Porirua College. Governance arrangements involving all the contributing schools will be agreed. We will also work with the schools to develop an evaluation plan.

Proactive Release

15. We recommend that this briefing is released in full once it has been considered by you.