



Briefing Note: Visit to Sommerville School, Mt Richmond School and Alternative Education Campus (ACES)

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education): Hon Kelvin Davis		
Date:	7 February 2023	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1303844
Drafter:	Caren Brodie	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key Contact:	Corrine Peters	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Briefing Note

This briefing note provides information to support the visit of the Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education on Friday 17 February 2023 to:

- Sommerville School (10am-11am)
- Mt Richmond School (11:30am-12:30am) and
- Alternative Education Campus (ACES) (1.30pm-2.30pm).

This Briefing Note identifies key people, outlines the visit itinerary, and gives further information about the programmes and services.

Key People – Ministry of Education

Ministry Official Corinne Peters – Manager Education Southwest, Area 01
9(2)(a)

Sommerville School Information

Sommerville School [1484]

Contact Name: Ms Belinda Johnstone, Principal

Address: 80A Tripoli Road
Panmure Auckland 1072

Key People

Principal:	Ms Belinda Johnson	9(2)(a)
	9(2)(a)	
Deputy Principal	Colleen Figgins	9(2)(a)
	Corey Busfield	9(2)(a)
	Devs Charles	9(2)(a)

Sommerville School Profile Information

Authority	State
School Type	State - Specialist
School Gender	Co-Ed
Education Medium	English
Equity Index Rating	443
Decile	10
Electorate	Manaiakalani
Te Mahau Region	Te Tai Raro

The July 2022 breakdown of roll information by ethnicity is shown below:

July 2022 Roll	Number	Percentage (%)
Māori	42	13
Pacific	67	20.9
Asian	108	33
Other ethnicity	18	5.6
European/Pākehā	86	26.8
Total	321	100%

Sommerville School Context

1. Sommerville special school is in Panmure for students with special educational needs. They support students between the ages of 5 and 21 across 21 satellite sites based in 12 schools in the eastern suburbs of Auckland. It is the largest special school in Auckland with the largest number of students.
2. Sommerville special school has a community based transition unit, *Te Hapori*, located in Pakuranga.
3. Sommerville School's vision is '*Together, learning to live our best lives*' to represent what the school aspires to achieve for their learners, whānau and staff.

4. Their teachers and specialist teams ensure that each student will access programmes at their level, and across curricula subjects using the latest resources and pedagogies to promote learning.
5. There is an emphasis on the curriculum Key Competencies of 'Thinking', 'Relating to Others, Understanding Language', 'Symbols and text', 'Managing Self' and 'Participating and Contributing'.
6. Sommerville follows the New Zealand Curriculum for all students up to 16 years of age.
7. Belinda Johnstone was appointed Principal in January 2020.
8. Their students live within the Eastern Corridor of Auckland city and often qualify for special transport assistance from the Ministry of Education (SESTA).
9. Their student population includes many young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), Global Developmental Delay, Downs Syndrome, and other complex conditions.
10. The pathway for their learners into Sommerville is usually through early intervention programmes from their early education settings. However, many with ORS funding enrol at the school for their Intermediate and Secondary education.

Education Review Office (ERO) 2018

11. ERO comments that the school is successful in promoting consistently equitable and excellent outcomes for students. Most students achieve at or above curriculum level expectations in reading, writing and maths. Māori students now achieve at comparable levels to other students in the school. The school is effectively accelerating learning for Māori and other students who need this. The school is well led by the then principal (the previous principal) who fosters an environment of professional collaboration through distributed leadership opportunities. Staff are respected and empowered to develop their expertise and leadership skills. ERO placed the school in a 4–5-year review cycle.

Kāhui Ako | Communities of Learning

12. The school is part of the Manaiakalani Kāhui Ako. This is a collective of 12 schools in the Tamaki area who were the very first Kāhui Ako. The schools have strong relationships between them, and their lead Principal is Russell Burt from Point England School.

Learning Support

13. There are four scheduled annual meetings between the Ministry's allocated Service Manager, the school's Principal and Senior leadership Team to discuss enrolments, waitlist, satellite units, property, challenges, etc.
14. There are termly meetings with the Service Manager and the Manager of Sommerville's Outreach Service. Topics include, managing demand, enhancing service delivery, improving communication between services, and strengthening connections with schools and the Ministry.

15. There are two meetings a year with the whole Ministry Learning Support Team and Outreach Service brokering Ministry services as required, which includes cultural support (Kaitakawaenga), shared responsibility, common goals and partnership around providing a service for best outcomes for ākonga and advice and support on growing the outreach service.

16. Currently, there are considerable waitlists for student placements in all Tāmaki Makaurau Specialist Schools, including Sommerville special school.

17. Risks:

- Currently buildings at Sommerville School base site are not fit for purpose, but the base site is being re-designed, and master planned and is currently in the detailed design phase.
- We are working with Sommerville School around their vision for the new base school.
- There are ongoing challenges with suitable property at satellite units where some are not well integrated within host schools.
- At the present time there are limited spaces on the specialist school roll, and parents who wish to send their students to Sommerville School may instead need to attend their local school.
- Sommerville School leadership team are very adaptive and try very hard to find a placement for a student if needed by that students' specific circumstances.
- Ongoing consistent complaints raised by a parent with a child at Howick college Satellite unit, which is being managed by the CE's office

18. The Network Team is planning for new satellite classes for Sommerville School. This includes additional provision in secondary school settings where Sommerville is experiencing pressure on their roll.

Participation in Government Programmes

School Donations Scheme

19. Yes. Sommerville school has opted in and received \$49,318.40 (GST excl.) in 2023.

Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunch Programme

20. Not eligible.

Ikura | Manaakitia te whare tangata – Period products in schools initiative

21. Yes, Sommerville school is participating.

Creatives in Schools

22. Sommerville School applied for Round 4 of Creatives in Schools and was successful. The name of their project is Music Therapy for Neurodiverse children which involves students from Years 1-5 and their creative is Raukauri Music Therapy Centre.

**Note: we have a signed agreement, however their success has not been publicly announced via the Arts Online website.*

Property – Sommerville School

23. The school is located on a seven-hectare site that also accommodates the former Tāmaki Intermediate School (closed) as well as Tamaki School (primary school). Sommerville School occupies the base site as well as the former Tamaki Intermediate buildings.
24. As of 1 December 2022, the total student roll is 337 students: with a base site roll of 162 students and 175 students in various satellites across the network.
25. The school is entitled to 34 teaching spaces, currently they have 36 teaching spaces. The teaching space estimate is based on 162 students comprising 40% ORS Very High, and 60% ORS High.
26. The overall school property condition is poor, with ageing infrastructure at both Sommerville School (base site) and the former Tamaki Intermediate School site.
27. In 2018 the Minister of Education announced a major redevelopment of Sommerville School, following the approved master plan for up to 300 students. The Ministry's property team is now under way with delivering the build roll for 200 students. The 200-student development will be delivered in two stages – the first being completed by approximately the end of 2025, and the second being completed by the end of 2026.
28. There have been delays in delivery of the redevelopment projects, for reasons including the Covid disruption but also working through the right entitlement and property response for a new base special school and the necessary requirements for the delivery of a hydro-therapy pool. With an agreed scope and programme, the Ministry has established a good relationship with the school.
29. The Board is pro-active in addressing property issues; the annual maintenance grant is \$73,000. There is a potential risk of accommodation pressures through the period of development which may see the school close off its roll temporarily while the redevelopment is completed.
30. There are a range of short-term property works in progress, and planned works to be undertaken, to ensure students have sufficient, and fit for purpose, temporary accommodation until the new school has been built.
31. SIP funding of \$200,000 has been used to complete:
 - Installation of artificial turf to courtyard (Tamaki Intermediate site).
 - Installation of new playground matting (Tamaki Intermediate site).
 - Installation of new shade structures.
32. The recent flooding/storm event between the 27 to 30 January 2023 did not affect the school.

Mt Richmond School Information

Mt Richmond School [1379]

Contact Name: Ms Juanita Corbett 9(2)(a)
Address: 30 Albion Road Otahuhu, Auckland 1062

Key People

Principal: Ms Juanita Corbett 9(2)(a)

Profile Information

Authority	State
School Type	Specialist School
School Gender	Co-Ed
Education Medium	English
Equity Index Rating	500
Electorate	Panmure-Otahuhu
Te Mahau Region	Te Tai Raro

The July 2022 breakdown of roll information by ethnicity is shown below:

July 2022 Roll	Number	Percentage (%)
Māori	27	14.1%
Pacific	111	57.8%
Asian	44	22.9%
Other ethnicity	6	3.1%
European/Pākehā	4	2.1%
Total	192	100%

Mt Richmond School Context

33. Mt Richmond is a specialist school catering for ORS funded students from 5 to 21 years of age. The school has a team of therapists and specialists to support student learning. The base school is in Ōtāhuhu with satellite classes at six schools. The school also provides outreach support for students enrolled in schools who require specialist support.
34. The new principal, appointed in 2022, is experienced in specialist education. The school has a long history of student-centred, culturally responsive, innovative practice integrating the New Zealand Curriculum with Reggio Emilia principles and the Circle of Courage Framework. All students have individual education plans written in consultation with whānau and professionals.
35. In addition to the adapted national curriculum, the school delivers a range of programmes that have been developed in New Zealand and overseas for students with intellectual and physical disabilities.

Education Review Office Report 23/09/2016

36. The school provides well for students with special educational needs in close partnership with families. Comprehensive systems and ongoing professional learning support the management of this complex setting. School leaders continually explore ways to enhance school practices and provision for students and their families. The school is well-placed to sustain current good practices and to continue improving provision for students, whānau and the Mt Richmond community.

Kāhui Ako | Communities of Learning

37. The school is part of the Ōtāhuhu Community of Learning which comprises six schools: Ōtāhuhu School, Ōtāhuhu Intermediate, Ōtāhuhu College, Pacific Advance Secondary School, Panama Road School with Mt Richmond. Funding from the regional response fund has enabled the kāhui ako to develop a hauora based project using a recognised community Pacific mental health provider to address identified issues of ākonga wellbeing and attendance in all six schools over the past year.

Learning Supports

38. Mt Richmond has satellites at Flatbush Primary, Bairds Mainfreight Primary, Papatoetoe Intermediate, Te Uho o te Nikau Primary, Rongomai Primary and Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate.
39. Mt Richmond provides in-school therapists and specialists; specialised programmes (Riding for the Disabled, Bee Keeping, Swimming, Flying, Dance and many others.); hosts whanau hui's, parent training sessions and outside agency meetings. Each student has an IEP.

40. The “Circle of Courage” provides a strengths-based approach with a focus on education and empowerment of students.

- Belonging - Whanaungatanga
- Mastery - Maturanga
- Independence - Mana Motuhake
- Generosity - Mana'akitanga

Participation in Government Programmes

School Donations Scheme

41. Yes. Mt Richmond School has opted in and received \$29,591.04 (GST excl.) in 2023.

Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunch Programme

42. Mt Richmond School has opted in and is receiving lunches.

Ikura | Manaakitia te whare tangata – Period products in schools initiative

43. Yes, Mt Richmond School is participating.

Creatives in Schools

44. Mt Richmond School applied for Round 3 of Creatives in Schools and was successful. The name of their project was Mātauranga which involved students from Years 1-6.

Impact of COVID-19

45. COVID-19 was a challenging time for students and their whānau. Many of the students suffer from physical disabilities that mean they were particularly vulnerable. In addition, some families also confronted severe behaviour issues with their students confined at home. The Ministry provided support to extend the hours of the school social worker and for Internet, laptops, and iPad provision where appropriate to enable learning. The school worked effectively alongside affected families to support integration back into education after the 2022 lockdown.

Property – Mt Richmond School

46. Richmond School is located in Ōtāhuhu Auckland with a school roll of 188 students; 76 (40%) are located at the base site in Ōtāhuhu. The remaining 112 students (60%) are spread across six satellite schools. The students age range is from primary school to post-secondary (18-21years). Richmond School has five additional satellites in the pipeline, the master planning for these is underway.

47. Overall, the school property is in poor condition, the layout is not fit for purpose. Block C is the newest block with one teaching space and a resource space on the first floor. The school has 11 teaching spaces some of which are very small – less than 40 square meters; the school has converted the administration and resource space to make extra classrooms.

48. Richmond School received \$19,000 for property maintenance in 2022. A new 10Y Property Plan for Richmond School will be started in 2024; this planning process will identify any property issues to be resolved to ensure the school buildings and site are fit for purpose.
49. The school is badly laid out with the relocatable classrooms close together. The driveway is long and very restrictive, with a small inefficient drop off and pick up zone that can cause traffic jams. There is also potential for the area to become a safety risk for students as they are dropped off and picked up.
50. There is restricted inadequate green space, the space slopes off to a Council drain which is not maintained by the Council; the water runs through a pipe however the area is wet and marshy. This area floods in heavy rain when the water can reach the decking of the surrounding school buildings.
51. Because of the restricted nature of the site, the school finds it challenging to separate the age groups; the Ministry's network team are currently exploring two options:
- a. The possibility for Network to lease property in the Ōtāhuhu town centre for the post-secondary cohort of students (approximately 30 students) to give them more community involvement, for example using public transport, work experience.
 - b. Seed funding has been approved to investigate purchasing the land directly behind the school, this is a potential site for the relocation of an existing school currently operating out of a temporary site. The possibility to combine the two sites and better distribute the land could benefit Richmond School. The current owner of the land would prefer it be used for education purposes.
52. A project to replace the block seven access ramp has been completed, other 5YA projects underway and/or authorised to start includes:
- Block 6: a weather tightness remediation report to be completed.
 - Block 1, 6 & 7: essential Infrastructure Upgrade.
 - Blocks 1 & 7: replace joiners and removal of asbestos cladding.
 - Blocks 1 & 7: AMS ILE/DQLS upgrade.
 - Block 1: partial roofing replacement.
 - Block 7: Life-cycle upgrades to student toilets.
 - School driveway resealing.
53. Other projects proposed for the school included
- Block 6: Bathroom refurbishment
 - Site: Installation of a new stormwater manhole
 - Blocks 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7: Replacement of the fluorescent lighting with LED lights
 - Block 6: Weathertightness remediation.
54. SIP funding of \$200,000 is nearing completion, this is being used to extend the cover for the covered area and the deck.
55. Other property issues include:
- Leaky buildings, mostly in the old relocatable classrooms.
 - Restricted site/Inadequate green space.
 - Some bathrooms still contain communal toilets with multiple toilets in one room separated by shower curtains.

Alternative Education Campus (ACES) Information

Alternative Education Campus (ACES)

Contact Name: Karyl Puklowski,
Manager Auckland Central Education Services (ACES)

Address: Level 2, 520 Queen St, CBD, Auckland 1025

Key People

Manager: Karyl Puklowski

Principal of fund managing school: Patrick Drumm, Mt Albert Grammar School
managing school for this alternative education provision.

Profile Information

Not applicable for ACES.

Alternative Education Campus (ACES) Context

58. Mount Albert Grammar School is the managing school for the alternative education provider ACES and is contracted by the Ministry of Education to provide alternative education for Auckland City and Howick / Pakuranga.
59. ACES deliver the Ministry's contract ensuring the Alternative Education Programme is meeting the individual educational, social and wellbeing needs of students.
60. ACES is presently contracted to provide alternative education for 110 students.
61. ACES is also an Attendance Service provider across Central and East Auckland.
62. ACES provides a successful model of education where they focus on the individual needs of the young person. They have a focus on building the cultural identity of students to help build their confidence to engage with further education and employment pathways.

Participation in Government Programmes

Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunch Programme

63. Yes

Ikura | Manaakitia te whare tangata – Period products in schools initiative

64. Yes, Alternative Education Campus (ACES) is participating.

Creatives in Schools

65. Alternative Education Campus (ACES) did not apply for Rounds 1, 2, 3 or 4 of the Creatives in Schools projects.

Property – Alternative Education Campuses (ACES)

66. ACES operate two campuses, and the visit is to their campus located on Queen St.

67. Each campus site is leased. Leases can only be rolled over when a signed funding agreement is in place. Property for alternative education is provided by the managing school, which is funded by the Alternative Education funding agreement.

68. ACES moved three years ago to leased sites on Queen St and Panmure. Mt Albert Grammar School contributed significant additional funds from their school operational grant to cover set up costs at the new sites.

Proactive Release

agree that the Ministry of Education release this briefing once it has been considered by you and the visit has occurred.

Agree

Deidre Alderson
Director of Education for Auckland
South, East and Central Tāmaki Makaurau, Area 1
Te Mahau | Tamaki Makaurau | Auckland

___/___/___

Tanya Harvey
Director of Education for Auckland – Area 2
Te Mahau | Te Tai Raro (School Operations)

___/___/___



Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

11/02/2023