



Education Report: Final Report: Change of classification and change of designation for Te Kura o Waitahanui (2068)

To:	Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)		
Date:	8 July 2021	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In confidence	METIS No:	1260596
Drafter:	Hana Crengle, Senior Education Adviser	DDI:	07 349 7396
Key Contact:	Merle Ramsay, Manager Education	DDI:	07 349 7397
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose

This report seeks your approval for a change of designation, and a change of classification for Te Kura o Waitahanui.

In October 2019 you agreed that consultation be undertaken about a possible change of classification and change of designation from a Year 1 – 6 kura to a Year 1 – 13 composite designated character kura-ā-iwi [METIS 1201347]. This consultation has now been completed.

Summary

1. Te Kura o Waitahanui is a decile 1, co-educational contributing primary kura located in Waitahanui, approximately 15 minutes drive south of Taupō.
2. The school was established in 1906 on land gifted for education by local Māori, Ngāti Tutemohuta hapū. Formerly Waitahanui School, the kura first transitioned from English medium to bilingual education, then to Māori medium from 2015. The current education offered at the kura is Level 1 te reo Māori with a kura-ā-iwi curriculum.
3. Te Kura o Waitahanui has been operating under the kura-ā-iwi model for some time, providing Māori medium education. There is local demand for this type of education, including beyond the current Year 1-6. The change is supported by the kura's whānau.

4. The change proposals to Te Kura o Waitahanui would strengthen retention of Māori medium ākonga in a Māori medium pathway for wharekura.
5. If the proposed changes are approved, the kura is capable of reaching a roll of 100 within two years, and they have suggested 200 ākonga as a maximum roll. The Ministry has responded with a proposed maximum roll of 100 to lower the risk of impact on Te Kura o Hirangi and the other state schools in the catchment.
6. After consulting with the boards of schools whose rolls might be affected, they have expressed support for the proposed changes to the kura to increase choice and strengthen access for Māori whānau in Tāupō.
7. The kura meets the statutory criteria for designated character school, kura-ā-iwi.
8. Approval of this application would support *Maihi Karauna*, the Māori language strategy and foster increased participation and success for Māori students through the advancement of Māori education initiatives. It aligns with the *Ka Hikitia* vision of Māori enjoying educational success as Māori and the regional network planning to support Māori medium education pathways.
9. If you agree to the proposed change of classification and redesignation, we recommend the changes take effect from 27 January 2022.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** that in October 2019 you agreed to consult on a proposed change of classification and a change of designation for Te Kura o Waitahanui [METIS 1201347] and that we have completed this consultation on your behalf;
- Noted**
- b. **note** there have been expressions of support, and no objections to the proposed changes. The proposed changes will have minimal effect on the rolls of secondary schools and other composite kura in Taupō;
- Noted**
- c. **note** that if you agree to the recommendations d. and e. below, the Secretary will set an initial maximum roll of 100 ākonga;
- Noted**
- d. **agree** to change the classification of Te Kura o Waitahanui from a Year 1 – 6 contributing primary school, to a Year 1 – 13 composite wharekura under section 198 of the Education and Training Act 2020;
- Agree/Disagree**
- e. **agree** to change the designation for Te Kura o Waitahanui from an ordinary state school to a designated character school, kura-ā-iwi under section 200 of the Education and Training Act 2020;
- Agree/Disagree**
- f. **agree** that both changes take effect from 27 January 2022; and
- g. **agree** to proactively release this Education Report. 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



Helen Hurst
Tumu Te Hāpai ō Rāngai | Te Hāpai ō Rāngai
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

8/7/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

19/7/21

Background

1. Waitahanui School was established in 1906 on land gifted for the school by Māori of the local hapū, Ngāti Tutemohuta. At that time, it was called Waitahanui School. The kura first transitioned from English medium to bilingual education, then to Māori medium from 2015. The current education offered at the kura is Level 1 te reo Māori with a kura-ā-iwi curriculum.
2. The roll of the kura is currently 74, and has grown steadily over the last five years.
3. In April 2018, Te Kura o Waitahanui (the kura) applied for change of classification to Year 1-10 wharekura.
4. In July 2019, the kura completed consultation with whānau, and updated its application for change of classification to a Year 1 – 13 wharekura and applied for redesignation as a designated character school. The quality of the kura-ā-iwi designated character education provided at the kura is supported by the Education Review Office (ERO) review outcomes.
5. The kura is co-located with a kohanga reo, close to Pākira marae in Waitahanui and maintains strong connections to Ngāti Tutemohuta, a hapū of Ngāti Tūwharetoa iwi. The kura teaches Ngāti Tutemohuta based marau-ā-kura (curriculum) and members of the current governance board, school leaders, kaiako and most ākonga of the kura affiliate to the hapū.
6. The kura whānau are asking to stay enrolled at Te Kura o Waitahanui because they believe the education increases belonging, engagement and retention of the ākonga in schooling, and sustains their wellbeing in community, hapū, marae, and iwi.
7. The schooling catchment for Te Kura o Waitahanui includes Waitahanui settlement and Taupō township. At Census 2018, there were 795 people living in Waitahanui, including about 160 Māori under 15 years old, and around 2,640 Māori ākonga on the rolls of Taupō District schools. Of those ākonga, about 350 who live in Taupō District are learning in Māori medium.
8. There are three schools in the Taupō District that currently offer Māori medium education: a composite immersion kura kaupapa Māori, a dual medium full primary school in Taupō township, and a composite (Year 1 – 13) kura-ā-iwi in Tūrangi.
9. The Ministry has had two rounds of consultation as a result of feedback supporting a full wharekura pathway at Te Kura o Waitahanui extending from Year 1 – 13. The proposal was refined during consultation which commenced in 2019.
10. We completed formal consultation on the revised proposal for a Year 1 – 13 change in March 2021. There have been expressions of support from the other kura in the catchment, and no objections from kura or schools to the changes proposed.

Proposal for reclassification

11. Under section 198(1)(b) of the Education and Training Act (the Act) you may declare a primary school to be a composite school. Under section 198(3) of the Act you may specify the class levels for which education must be given at a school and may provide for class levels to be phased in, over a specified period of time.
12. The kura has developed its kaiako and recruited specifically for its Level 1 immersion kura-ā-iwi education programme.

13. The tumuaki is secondary trained and has teaching experience in composite kura. The profiles of other kura kaiako show local kura and composite kura experience.
14. We consider that the school is well placed to provide tuition for Years 1 – 13.
15. In recent years the kura has retained Year 7 – 9 ākonga in anticipation of this change. The retention of these students is through a currently unlawful arrangement, which we are seeking to formalise.

Proposal for designation

16. Under section 200(1)(a) of the Act you may designate an ordinary state school as a designated character school.
17. Section 204 of the Act (which relates to establishment of designated character schools) applies to a school that is being redesignated in the same way as if it were being established as a designated character school for the first time. A designated character school must meet the requirements in section 204(3) of the Act. For the proposed change in designated character, section 204(3) of the Act requires that:
 - a. a designated character school will have a character that is in some specific way or ways different from the character of ordinary state school;
 - b. it is desirable for students [whose parents wish them to do so] to get such an education; and
 - c. ākonga at the school will get an education of a kind that differs significantly from the education they would get at an ordinary state school.
18. The Ministry has conducted consultation on your behalf, with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected by the change of classification and re-designation applications.
19. We have also engaged with the education representative for the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, Ngā Kura ā iwi o Aotearoa, NZEI Te Riu Roa and the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA).
20. No objections have been received.

Education at Te Kura o Waitahanui

21. The October 2018 ERO review indicates the education at Te Kura o Waitahanui reflects the aspirations of the kura for kura-ā-iwi status. This should mean significant changes to curriculum or teaching methods would not be needed alongside change of designation.
22. The proposed change of classification to Year 1 – 13 is likely to strengthen retention of the ākonga in Māori medium education.
23. Designated character will also allow the kura to protect its immersion te reo environment.

Proposed designated character

24. We have undertaken an assessment of the proposed designated character against the criteria in the Education and Training Act 2020.
25. We have concluded that Te Kura o Waitahanui is offering an education whose character significantly differs from the education that is available to the students at any other ordinary state school in Taupō and that it is desirable for ākonga to receive such an education. The kura's proposed designated character statement is attached (Annex 1).
26. The proposed designated character for Te Kura o Waitahanui is focused on education in te reo Māori that supports ākonga to succeed intellectually, culturally, and socially. Although focused on education for ākonga of Ngāti Tutemohuta, the kura is inclusive and enrolls students who do not have hereditary links to Ngāti Tutemohuta, including pākehā.

Network considerations

27. The kura has experienced rapid roll growth since its change of curriculum and teaching in 2015, to te reo immersion and a kura-ā-iwi curriculum. There is support from the kura whānau to keep their ākonga enrolled if the change of classification and change to designated character is approved.
28. In the Taupō network, the Ministry is planning to support engagement with iwi and whānau about increasing participation in Māori medium and retention of Māori students in education in general.

Effects on the rolls of other state schools

29. Including Te Kura o Waitahanui, there are four Māori medium providers in Taupō District. These kura did not object to the proposed changes, and two commented in support of the applications.
30. Te Kura o Hirangi offered a range of support to Te Kura o Waitahanui to help them with retention of ākonga if the proposed changes are approved. Te Kura o Hirangi was considered as an alternative to the change of year levels and the two schools were encouraged to discuss offsite location and NCEA arrangements.

The ordinary state network of schools

31. The existing ordinary state secondary schools would be minimally impacted by the addition of Years 7 – 13 to Te Kura o Waitahanui.
32. The two local state colleges enrol a combined secondary age population in Taupō of around 1800, Tauhara College has a large urgent temporary accommodation provision project underway, and neither school has spare property capacity. If the change is approved the cohort size of the current roll suggests an approximate 25 ākonga who would otherwise enrol at one or the other of these schools, which does not suggest a sizable impact.

Financial implications

33. Financially, the kura is regarded as in good shape, with the region's financial analysis of 2020 draft accounts showing a budget surplus of \$20,952. Working capital, available cash, equity and assets have all been stable over the past three years and saw improvement from 2019 to 2020. Banking staffing is showing \$11,517 overuse currently. The Finance Advisor does not have any financial concerns regarding the kura and will make contact to see how they are managing their bank staffing.
34. In 2018, ERO found that resources at Te Kura o Waitahanui were allocated in response to priorities identified for student educational needs and wellbeing.
35. The estimated operational cost to the Crown of retaining students at Years 7 – 13 instead of attending local secondary schools is between \$149,000 (excl GST) \$674,000 (excl GST) per year.

Property implications

36. The property implications of the kura change proposal are limited to one further classroom being provided in a future Budget. The kura will need this to grow to its proposed initial maximum roll of 100 ākonga. We will monitor roll growth and apply for roll growth funding as required (recognising it is two to three years for a roll growth classroom and if necessary additional non-teaching space).
37. The kura currently has sufficient space to accommodate its current roll of 74 ākonga.
38. If additional property is provided in future roll growth budgets, the kura is confident that they could grow their roll to 150 in the next three to five years. This will see them at viable composite roll, and close to the Cabinet guideline of 200 for a new composite school. It is noted that kura are usually small schools, and this is a guideline only. We will work with the board to grow the roll as the property is provided.

Transport implications

39. With a Year 1 – 13 change, most of the ākonga at the kura would continue to be ineligible for funding transport because they live within 3.2 – 4.8kms of the school.
40. Change of classification to Year 1 – 13, and redesignation as a designated character school would change transport entitlements for ākonga who attend the kura from outside the immediate area of Waitahanui. The numbers of these students are considered to be small as most students live locally to the school.

Staffing implications

41. Redesignation to a designated character school is not expected to have a significant staffing impact:
 - a. the kura has consulted its staff and is aware of the board's duties to staff and to canvas concerns with the relevant unions should a change of year levels be implemented.
 - b. the kura has been favourably reviewed by ERO regarding the Te Reo teaching capabilities of its kaiako and outcomes for ākonga.

- c. it has developed staff and recruited for its current 100% Level 1 immersion kura-ā-iwi education programme.
- d. the tumuaki is secondary trained and has teaching experience in composite kura. The profiles of other kura kaiako show local kura and composite kura experience.
- e. the kura can draw on the expertise and support of the other composite Taupō kura, who collectively sought to form a Kāhui Ako, and is an active participant in Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa.

Risks and Mitigation

42. There is a small risk that the existing dual medium programme at Mountview School in Taupō township would be affected, as transfers to Te Kura o Waitahanui are occurring by ākonga wanting to remain in a Māori medium pathway. The Ministry's regional office has plans to support stakeholder conversations about strengthening dual medium provision in Taupō township, particularly for ākonga above Year 8.

Conclusion

43. The Ministry recommends you approve the proposed changes to Te Kura o Waitahanui. We have come to this view because:
- a. the proposed designated character meets the requirements of the Act
 - b. the kura has already transitioned to providing education under the kura-ā-iwi model
 - c. local whānau support the change
 - d. the potential effect on the rolls of any other schools in the network are small and would be offset by the value in strengthening the immersion kura pathway.
44. Approval of this application would also support *Maihi Karauna*, the Māori language strategy and foster increased participation and success for Māori students through the advancement of Māori education initiatives. It aligns with the *Ka Hikitia* vision of Māori enjoying educational success as Māori and the regional network planning to support Māori medium education pathways.
45. A decision by the end of Term 3 2021 would make it feasible for the change of class and redesignation to be implemented for 2022, if you approve this.

Next Steps

46. If, after considering the information in this report, you decide you are satisfied the school should change its classification, and change its designation, a draft letter (Annex 2) and *New Zealand Gazette* notice (Annex 3) are attached for you to inform the board and effect the change.
47. You are asked to return the signed letter for the board, to the Ministry to be hand delivered.

Proactive Release of this Report

48. It is intended that this report be proactively released. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Proactively Released

Annexes

Annex 1: Designated Character Statement

Annex 2: Letter to the board

Annex 3: Letters to the MPs

Annex 4: Draft *New Zealand Gazette* notice

Proactively Released

Annex 1: Designated Character Statement

Proactively Released

Designated Character Statement

Te Kura o Waitahanui provides a Level 1 Māori medium education under Ngā Kura ā Iwi. Te Tihi o Angitu clearly describes the special character that the kura and its whānau aspire to achieve with each student:

- Uri are culturally autonomous and influential as Ngāti Tutemohuta
- Uri are intellectually and academically independent as Ngāti Tutemohuta
- Uri are physically, emotionally and socially intelligent as Ngāti Tutemohuta
- Uri are decision makers who contribute to society as Ngāti Tutemohuta.

For the purposes of this Designated Character statement, the term 'uri' is inclusive of all tamariki (children) whose parents accept the education offered by the kura and seek to enrol.

Proactively Released

Hon Chris Hipkins

MP for Remutaka

Minister for COVID-19 Response

Minister of Education

Minister for the Public Service

Leader of the House



Ms Janice Wall
Presiding member
Te Kura o Waitahanui
State Highway 1
RD2
Taupō 3378

Dear Janice

Thank you for your board's application asking me to redesignate Te Kura o Waitahanui as a designated character kura-ā-iwi, and to change the classification of the kura from a Year 1 – 6 primary kura to a Year 1 – 13 composite wharekura with a maximum roll of 100 ākonga.

I am pleased to advise you I have approved change of designation and change of classification for Te Kura o Waitahanui. The kura will be a designated character school, kura-ā-iwi, and a composite Year 1 – 13 provider, taking effect from 27 January 2022. Both changes are required to be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

In making the transition to become a composite kura there will be a number of matters your board will need to consider. Please contact your board's support organisation to ensure a smooth transition. Similarly, staff may transition to a new Collective Agreement and teacher unions will be able to support them in this change.

The Ministry's Rotorua office will contact you regarding next steps in implementing these changes.

I would like to acknowledge the service that the members of the current and previous boards, and staff, have given to the students of Te Kura o Waitahanui.

Yours sincerely

A blue ink signature of Chris Hipkins, written in a cursive style.

Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

Proactively Released

Hon Chris Hipkins

MP for Remutaka

Minister for COVID-19 Response

Minister of Education

Minister for the Public Service

Leader of the House



Hon Nanaia Mahuta
MP for Hauraki-Waikato
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Nanaia

I have received an application from the board of Te Kura o Waitahanui in Taupō for a change of classification from a Year 1 – 6 kura to become a Year 1 – 13 wharekura, and a change of designation to kura-ā-iwi.

After considering all the information provided to me, I have decided to approve both applications. I have made this decision to enable the wharekura to be able to offer students and their whānau a seamless educational pathway to the completion of their secondary education in a Māori Medium immersion environment.

This change will be notified in the *New Zealand Gazette* and take effect from 27 January 2022.

Yours sincerely

A blue ink signature of Chris Hipkins.

Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

Hon Chris Hipkins

MP for Remutaka

Minister for COVID-19 Response

Minister of Education

Minister for the Public Service

Leader of the House



Tim van de Molen
MP for Waikato
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Mr van de Molen

I have received an application from the board of Te Kura o Waitahanui in Taupō for a change of classification from a Year 1 – 6 kura to become a Year 1 – 13 wharekura, and a change of designation to kura-ā-iwi.

After considering all the information provided to me, I have decided to approve both applications. I have made this decision to enable the wharekura to be able to offer students and their whānau a seamless educational pathway to the completion of their secondary education in a Māori Medium immersion environment.

This change will be notified in the *New Zealand Gazette* and take effect from 27 January 2022.

Yours sincerely

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Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

Proactively Released

Hon Chris Hipkins

MP for Remutaka

Minister for COVID-19 Response

Minister of Education

Minister for the Public Service

Leader of the House



New Zealand Gazette Notice

Change of classification and change of designation for Te Kura o Waitahanui, Taupō (2068)

Under section 198(1) and (3) of the Education and Training Act 2020, I hereby declare that Te Kura o Waitahanui, will become a Year 1 – 13 composite wharekura on 27 January 2022 and cease to be a Year 1 – 6 primary school on that day.

Pursuant to Sections 200, 204 and 205 of the Education and Training Act 2020, I hereby designate Te Kura o Waitahanui (2068) as a designated character school kura-ā-iwi. This designation will take effect from 27 January 2022.

Te Kura o Waitahanui will operate in accordance with section 204 of the Education and Training Act 2020. The kura will teach in te reo Māori and the designated character of the school will be:

Te Kura o Waitahanui will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Waitahanui identity centred within the worldview of Ngāti Tutemohuta;

The constitution of Te Kura o Waitahanui Board shall not be changed by this notice.

Dated at Wellington this 19th day of July 2021

A blue ink signature of Chris Hipkins.

Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education