

Education Report: **Closure of Papatawa School (2640) – Final decision**

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
Date:	18 July 2023	Priority:	High
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1313667
Drafter:	Ross Hampton, Senior Adviser, Lower Hutt	DDI:	04 463 8681
Key Contact:	Roy Sye, Director of Education for Wellington	DDI:	04 463 8668
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose

1. This report seeks your decision on the proposed closure of Papatawa School (2640) under section 199(3) of the Education and Training Act 2020. The Board of Papatawa School has requested voluntary closure as there are no students enrolled and nor are there any prospective students in the local community. The Ministry recommends that the school be closed.

Summary

2. Papatawa School is a Year 1-8 full primary state school located 6.1 kilometres from Woodville.
3. On 8 May 2023, the Acting Hautū for Te Tai Runga agreed to initiate consultation under section 209 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), on the possible closure of Papatawa School on your behalf, with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected by the closure. This consultation has now been completed and we are requesting your final decision on the closure of Papatawa School.
4. There are currently no children enrolled at Papatawa School and there are no prospective students in the Papatawa community. The Ministry agrees with the Board that Papatawa School should close.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** the Board of Papatawa School have requested voluntary closure as there are no students or prospective students in the local community (Annex 1).

Noted

- b. **note** that on the 8 May 2023, the Acting Hautū for Te Tai Runga, agreed to initiate consultation under section 209 of the Education and Training Act 2020, on the possible closure of Papatawa School on your behalf. This consultation has now been completed.

Noted

- c. **agree** that having considered the consultation feedback, you are satisfied that Papatawa School should be closed under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020;

Agree / Disagree

- d. **agree** that Papatawa School will close on 30 August 2023.

Agree / Disagree

If you agree, you are asked to:

- e. **sign** the attached letters to the Presiding Member of the Board of Papatawa School and Members of Parliament (Annex 2) informing them of your decision;
- f. **sign** the attached *New Zealand Gazette* notice (Annex 3) to give effect to the closure.

We also recommend that you:

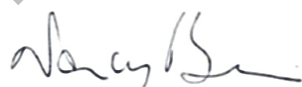
- g. **agree** that this report will be proactively released. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Proactively Release / Not Release

If you are not satisfied that the school should close:

- h. **note** that we will develop alternative letters for your signature.

Noted



Nancy Bell
Hautū | Deputy Secretary
Te Mahau | Te Tai Runga
18/07/2023



Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

23/07/2023

Background

1. Papatawa School is a full primary school located 6.1 kilometres from Woodville in the Tararua region.
2. The roll at Papatawa School has declined over the past year. For the past few years, all Papatawa School students have travelled to the school from Woodville. These families are now choosing Woodville School as their preferred schooling option. In Term 1 of this year, there were two students at Papatawa School. However, as of Term 2 there are no longer any students enrolled at the school.
3. On 22 February 2023, the Board of Papatawa School wrote to the Ministry asking for a voluntary closure of its school (Annex 1).
4. On 8 May 2023, the Acting Hautū, Te Tai Runga, agreed to initiate consultation on the possible closure of Papatawa School on your behalf. Consultation letters were sent to the boards of Woodville, Kumeroa, Mangatainoka, Ballance and Pahiatua Schools, and to local Iwi and Tararua District Council. No feedback was received from any of these schools or bodies.
5. It is the Ministry's recommendation that Papatawa School should close as it is no longer supported by or needed in the community.

Consultation

6. Before making a decision to close a school, under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) section 209 requires that you must first consult with the board of the school concerned and with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might, in your opinion, be affected. We have undertaken this consultation on your behalf.
7. We undertook consultation with the boards of Woodville, Pahiatua, Mangatainoka, Balance and Kumeroa Schools. There was no feedback received from any of these school boards.
8. We have been in regular phone contact with the Presiding Member of the Board, principal and the two remaining families with children enrolled at the start of 2023. It was made clear in these conversations that no decision about closure had been reached. Regular contact has been maintained with a representative member of the Board and the principal by telephone and email since this time.
9. We have also discussed the closure process, staffing, disposal of property and assets with the Board.
10. We undertook consultation with Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tāmaki-nui-a-Rua, Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua, and Tararua District Council. No feedback from these groups was received.

Property Implications

11. If the school closes, and the site is no longer needed for educational purposes, the property would be disposed of in accordance with section 40 of the Public Works Act 1981.

Financial Implications

12. The cost to the Crown of the Educational Development Initiative (EDI) funding will be \$201,500. This is in line with the Ministry's EDI policy and based on the 1 July 2022 roll of 23 students. It is estimated there will be ongoing annual savings of \$125,000.

Staffing implications

13. Currently the school has two Full Time Teacher Equivalent (FTTE) comprised of a principal and a full-time teacher. The principal resigned at the end of 2022 but revoked their resignation in order to continue to help the school.
14. After consultation for the proposed closure was approved, the school has not made any permanent appointments (teaching or non-teaching). The principal and staff member have been working to wrap up the school.

Risks and mitigations

15. There are no known risks identified for the proposed closure of Papatawa School.

Legislation

16. Under section 199(4) of the Act, if the Board advises or indicates in writing that it agrees to or does not oppose the closure of its school, you may close the school at any time after you have received the Board's written advice of this fact. The Board has indicated to you in writing that it wishes to close the school. (Annex 1).

Conclusion

17. The Ministry supports the closure of Papatawa School as:
 - there are no enrolled students or potential students in the area
 - families from Woodville are now choosing Woodville School as their preferred schooling option
 - There were no objections or concerns raised during consultation on the proposed closure.
18. We recommend the closure takes effect from 30 August 2023, as this will give time for this report to be processed and the gazette notice to be published.

Next steps

19. If, after considering the information in this report and the Board's letter, you agree the school should close, a letter and *New Zealand Gazette* notice are attached for you to inform the Board and to give effect to the closure. The closure would take effect on 30 August 2023.
20. If you agree to this proposed closure, a Memoranda of Agreement which itemise the Educational Development Initiative funds and the process for accessing them as well as details of the distribution of assets from Papatawa School, will be negotiated with the relevant boards.

Proactive release

21. It is intended that this Education Report is proactively released. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Annexes

The following are annexed to this paper:

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|----------|--|
| Annex 1: | Letter from the Board requesting voluntary closure |
| Annex 2: | Letters to the Presiding Member of the Board and Local Members of Parliament |
| Annex 3: | Draft <i>New Zealand Gazette</i> Notice |

Proactively Released

Proactively Released

Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Education
Minister for Women
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction



Gwynn Capinig-Veale
Presiding Member
Papatawa School Board
262 Valley Road
Woodville 4998

Tēnā koe Gwynn

Decision to close Papatawa School

Thank you for your letter of 22 February 2023 asking for the closure of Papatawa School.

The Ministry of Education has consulted on my behalf with your Board and with the boards of schools whose rolls might be affected by the closure of Papatawa School.

After considering all the information provided to me, I am satisfied that Papatawa School should close. The closure will be gazetted to take effect on 30 August 2023.

Please ensure you follow the surplus staffing processes regarding school closure that are outlined in the relevant collective agreements. The Board's employment relations advisor organisation will be able to assist you with these matters.

Even though you have agreed to the closure of Papatawa School, I realise that it is not an easy matter for a board and a school community to take these actions. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation of the service that the Board, its previous members and the school staff have given to Papatawa School and its community.

Nāku noa, nā

Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

CC: Roy Sye, Director of Education, Wellington

Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Education
Minister for Women
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction



Hon Kieran McAnulty
Member of Parliament for Wairarapa
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe Kieran

Decision to close Papatawa School

On 22 February 2023 the Board of Papatawa School wrote to the Ministry of Education requesting the closure of the school.

The Ministry has consulted on my behalf with the Board of Papatawa School and with the boards of all State schools whose rolls might be affected if the school closes.

After considering all the information provided to me, I have decided that Papatawa School should close. A notice will be published in the New Zealand Gazette giving effect to my decision, for the school to close on 30 August 2023.

I have expressed my appreciation for the service that the Board, its previous members and the school staff have given to Papatawa School and its community. The Ministry will continue to support the board during this time of transition.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Tinetti'.

Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Education
Minister for Women
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction



Hon Meka Whaitiri
Member of Parliament for Ikaroa-Rāwhiti
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe Meka

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The Ministry has consulted on my behalf with the Board of Papatawa School and with the boards of all State schools whose rolls might be affected if the school closes.

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Nāku noa, nā

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Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

***New Zealand Gazette* notice**

Papatawa School (2640) Closure Notice

Under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020, I hereby declare that Papatawa School (2640), Tararua District will close on 30 August 2023 and will cease to be established on that day.

Dated at Wellington this 23rd day of July 2023



Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education