



## Education Report: Matariki public holiday and the school year

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	19 March 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1251145
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<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

**Note** that the Government has committed to making Matariki a public holiday that distinctly recognises and celebrates Te Ao Māori, with the first Matariki public holiday being celebrated on Friday, 24 June 2022.

**Note** you have already set the term dates and half-day requirements for schools for 2022 and 2023, which are published on our website.

**Agree** to re-specify the minimum number of half-days schools are required to be open for in the 2022 school year, to reflect the impact of the Matariki public holiday.

**Note** we may need to provide further advice on treatment of the half-day requirement for 2023 once the Matariki Public Holiday date is confirmed for that year.

**Note** the Ministry of Education work programme to support the introduction of the Matariki public holiday is underway and we will provide a briefing to you on this work, in due course.

### Summary

- 1 The Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) empowers you to prescribe the number of half-days on which schools must be open in any school year.
- 2 You have already set the State and State Integrated Schools Terms and Holidays and prescribed the minimum half-days schools must be open for in 2022 and 2023.
- 3 The Government has committed to making Matariki a public holiday that distinctly recognises and celebrates Te Ao Māori, with the first Matariki public holiday being celebrated on Friday, 24 June 2022.

- 4 Friday, 24 June 2022 falls within Term 2, thereby reducing the number of days available for schools to be open in 2022. Many schools may have already planned their year based on the published dates and may not be able to accommodate the additional statutory holiday and still be open for the minimum number of half-days.
- 5 Schedule 21 in the Act allows you to, prior to 1 July 2021, re-specify the minimum half day requirements for 2022. After 1 July 2021, you can instead authorise schools to open for fewer half-days than required in 2022.
- 6 We recommend using your power to re-specify the minimum number of half-days on which schools must be open in 2022, before 1 July this year, to reduce these by two.

## Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **Note** that the Government has committed to making Matariki a public holiday that distinctly recognises and celebrates Te Ao Māori, with the first Matariki public holiday being celebrated on Friday, 24 June 2022.

Noted

- b. **Agree** to re-specify the number of half-days on which schools must be open in 2022 before July this year, reducing the 2022 school year by two half-days to reflect the impact of the Matariki public holiday on the length of the school year.

Agree / Disagree

- c. **Note** we may need to provide further advice on treatment of the half-day requirement for 2023 when the Matariki Public Holiday date is confirmed for 2023.

Agree / Disagree

- d. **Proactively release** this Education Report as part of the next publication

Release/Not release

  
Katrina Casey  
Deputy Secretary  
Sector Enablement and Support

18/3/21



Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education

8/4/2021

## Background

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- 1 Schedule 21 S1(1) of the Act empowers you to prescribe the number of half-days on which schools must be open in any school year. Schedule 21 S2(1)(a) empowers you to establish the school term dates that must be observed.
- 2 The Act requires the half-days and dates to be set by 1 July in any year, for the following year. Ideally the required half-days and term dates will be set more than two years ahead of time.
- 3 Schedule 21 S4(1) empowers you to reduce the number of half-days schools must be open, at any time.

### Half days

- 4 The minimum number of half-days prescribed for secondary schools and composite schools is always 380.
- 5 The minimum number of half-days for primary schools varies each year and is influenced primarily by when Auckland Anniversary Day and Easter fall. For 2011 – 2023, the average number of prescribed half-days for primary schools is 386 (minimum of 380; maximum of 390). In 2022 the minimum number of half-days is 386.
- 6 If Matariki had been a known statutory holiday at the time of setting the minimum half-days for 2022, the current model for setting terms and dates would have taken this into account.
- 7 You have two options to reduce the number of half-days on which schools must be open:
  - Before 1 July this year, you may re-specify the number of half-days on which schools must be open under Schedule 21 S1(1) of the Act. This would give schools and their communities more notice of the change.
  - At any time you may authorise all schools to open for fewer half-days than the current half-day requirements under Schedule 21 S4(2) of the Act. This gives you the ability to do so after the Holidays Act (2003) has changed to include Matariki. Waiting until the Holidays Act is amended would give schools and their communities less time to plan their year.

### Consultation and education

- 8 A significant part of implementing Matariki as a public holiday will be consultation and education, including developing quality education resources to support the embedding of the holiday into the conscience of the country. We are working collaboratively with the cross agency steering group to confirm what activities, national and regional, will occur in the first two years of celebrating Matariki.

### Risks

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- 9 While the day for the Matariki public holiday in 2022 has already been announced, if the Holidays Act (2003) is not amended to specify Matariki as a public holiday you will have unnecessarily reduced the minimum number of half-days by two, for 2022.

- 10 If the number of half-days schools are required to be open is not reduced this may disrupt schools' planned calendars or mean they are unable to meet this required number in 2022.
- 11 Parents and whānau may be displeased if the half-days are reduced, as for many it will result in an extra day for which they will need to arrange childcare.
- 12 A delay in reducing the number of half-days required may impede schools' and their communities' planning for 2022.

### Proactive Release

- 13 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: Proposed 2022 Terms and Holidays for State and State Integrated Schools

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2022 – School Terms and Holidays			
Term	Start Date	End Date	Holidays
<b>1</b> (10-11 weeks)	Between Monday 31 January (at the earliest); and Tuesday 8 February (at the latest), and ends	Thursday 14 April (96-106 half-days)	Waitangi Day (observed) Monday 7 February, Easter: Good Friday 15 April.  School holiday: Saturday 16 April to Sunday 1 May (includes Easter Monday 18 April, Easter Tuesday 19 April (a school holiday), and ANZAC Day Monday 25 April)
<b>2</b> (10 weeks)	Monday 2 May	Friday 8 July (98 half-days)	Public holidays: Queen's Birthday Monday 6 June, Matariki Friday 24 June.  School holiday: Saturday 9 July to Sunday 24 July.
<b>3</b> (10 weeks)	Monday 25 July	Friday 30 September (100 half-days)	Public holidays: None.  School holiday Saturday 1 October to Sunday 16 October.
<b>4</b> (up to 10 weeks)	Monday 17 October	No later than Tuesday 20 December (92 half-days) *	Public holidays: Labour Day Monday 24 October, Christmas Day Sunday 25 December, Boxing Day Monday 26 December, and New Year's Day Sunday 1 January 2023.  School holiday: 5 or 6 weeks (from school's closing date until opening date of school the following year).

\* For primary, intermediate and special schools: or to a day in December that ensures that the school has been open for instruction for a minimum of **384 half-days** in 2022.

\* For secondary and composite schools: or to a day in December which ensures that the school has been open for instruction for **378 half-days** in 2022.