



## Education Report: Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai (878) Maramataka calendar

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	19 March 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1253175
<b>Drafter:</b>	Josh Cookson	<b>DDI:</b>	04 439 5375
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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** Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai (the wharekura) has requested a change to its school terms and holidays to align with Maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) from June 2021

**Note** that accommodating this request may require changes to operating settings and systems which may require the agreement of our union partners to accomplish

**Note** it is not a simple process to accommodate changes to terms dates within the Education Payroll system. Any change needs to be carefully worked through to ensure for payroll purposes, that employees are not disadvantaged

**Agree** in principle that Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai can change their term dates and holidays to align with Maramataka

**Agree** to reduce the minimum number of half-days Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai is required to be open in 2021, by no more than 12.

### Summary

- 1 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai has requested approval to adopt a calendar year that follows Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar. They have proposed a longer (by two weeks) June/July mid-year break and a shorter summer break than usual.
- 2 The wharekura consulted with its staff and community in 2020 and continue to engage with whānau to identify and address any challenges raised such as identifying a provider for holiday programmes.

- 3 The Ministry supports the desire of the wharekura to operate a calendar based on Maramataka, giving the wharekura the agency to decide what's best for them and their community and aligning with Ka Hikitia.
- 4 In their first-year transitioning to the new calendar, the wharekura are proposing a reduction by no more than 12, the required number of half-days they will be open for instruction in 2021. In future years they will adhere to the minimum half-day requirements.
- 5 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai will work with the Ministry and Ngā-Kura-ā-Iwi to agree a plan to address learner needs as a result of the proposed reduction in half-days in 2021, and in particular for their tamariki who are undertaking NCEA.
- 6 The Education and Training Act 2020 supports flexibility for schools and kura to change their term dates, with authority to approve this delegated to manager level in the Ministry. You have authority to reduce the number of half-days on which a school must be open.
- 7 The Ministry's collective employment settings and payroll system are not designed to accommodate the degree of flexible school calendar arrangements which can be put in place under legislation. We will work through with the wharekura to identify the possible impacts including holiday pay, recording of sick leave, accumulated service and annualisation of support staff salaries. There is however no simple process to accommodate this within the Education Payroll system. A manual workaround is possible, although will be complex.
- 8 The current conditions of employment for teachers and support staff do not envision the proposed wharekura calendar. If a material variation to the current collective agreements is identified, union agreement will be required before the proposal can be put into effect.
- 9 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai may set an example for other kura and wharekura to align their terms and holidays to Maramataka. Through our work with Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai and Ngā Kura ā Iwi, we will be able to develop guidance to support other schools and kura considering a change to their term dates. Guidance would identify risks, issues and other considerations to strongly inform the consultation process and decisions.
- 10 Substantive changes to the conditions of employment for education sector workforces to enable schools and kura to set a unique calendar would require to be bargained as the relevant collective agreements are renewed.
- 11 If more schools were to request approval to amend their term dates, a longer-term system change will be required. We would need to seek an impact assessment from Education Payroll Ltd to determine the potential cost and timeframe for any change.



## Recommended Actions

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The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a. **note** Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai has requested a change to its school terms and holidays to align with Maramataka (Māori lunar calendar), from June 2021 onward  
**Noted**
- b. **note** the Education and Training Act supports flexibility for schools and kura to change their term dates, with authority to approve this delegated to manager level in the Ministry  
**Noted**
- c. **note** that in this transition year, Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai will not be able to meet the minimum half-day requirement for 2021 and will work with the Ministry of Education to agree a plan to ensure the learning needs of their tamariki will be met  
**Noted**
- d. **note** wharekura staff and whānau have been consulted with on the proposed changes, and are supportive  
**Noted**
- e. **note** the Ministry and Ngā Kura ā Iwi will work closely with the wharekura to support their transition to a Maramataka calendar, including identifying and resolving any payroll system and employment agreement constraints that may be identified, and to ensure employees are not disadvantaged  
**Noted**
- f. **note** that adjusting the employment settings to accommodate the proposal may require the agreement of the Post Primary Teachers' Association Te Wehengarua (PPTA), NZEI Te Riu Roa, the Amalgamated Workers Union of New Zealand (AWUNZ), and E Tū and that, should these unions have significant concerns with the proposal, it may not be possible for Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai to proceed with its proposed changes to the standard school term dates  
**Noted**
- g. **note** there is no simple process to accommodate changes to terms dates within the Education Payroll system. Any change needs to be carefully worked through to ensure for payroll purposes, that employees are not disadvantaged  
**Noted**
- h. **agree** in principle to Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai implementing its proposed terms and holidays

**Agree** Disagree

- i. **agree** that Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai (878) reduce the number of half-days it is required to be open in 2021, by up to 12 half-days

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

- j. **agree** that this Education Report is proactively released as part of the next publication

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree



Katrina Casey  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Sector Enablement and Support**

22 / 03 / 2021



Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister of Education**

19 / 4 / 2021

## Background

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- 12 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai has requested approval to adopt a calendar year that follows Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar. The Maramataka aligns the appearance of Matariki and therefore will have a flow-on effect to the up and coming Public Holiday recently announced. They believe Maramataka offers a pathway for tamariki, kaiako and ultimately whānau, to implement a more intentional and mindful way of going about life and benefiting from an authentic Māori tradition and worldview.
- 13 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai is a year 1-15, state, co-educational, Māori medium school in Rotorua. The 1 July 2020 roll was 109 Māori students.
- 14 The wharekura is a kura-ā-iwi designated character school that opened in January 2019. Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa (NKAI) supports the proposal.
- 15 The wharekura is approved to deliver level 1-2 immersion education in te reo Māori in accordance with Ngāti Rongomai tikanga, mita/ dialect and history. They currently have an establishment board in place.

### *Proposed changes and consultation*

- 16 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai have proposed the following changes (see Annex 1 for further detail):
  - a longer (by two weeks) June/July mid-year break, making a longer holiday during the rise of Matariki in June
  - a shorter summer break than usual, through an earlier start for their January term and finishing at the latest possible end date for all schools and kura (20 December)
- 17 The wharekura annual planning, reporting and roll returns will remain aligned with the dates set for all other schools and kura and the proposed Maramataka calendar would not change Operational Funding or other Ministry resourcing for the wharekura.
- 18 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai also intends employing staff from the beginning of the Gregorian calendar year.
- 19 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai consulted with its staff and community in 2020 and continue to engage whānau, seeking their whakaaro and questions about the proposed change (see Annex 2):
  - whānau have raised positive aspects of a long break during the coldest and wettest time of the year and the ability to take leave and holidays during 'off-peak' times.
  - some challenges have also been identified through the consultation process including:
    - holiday programmes and childcare not matching other local schools
    - sports seasons continuing during the proposed holiday period
    - whānau teaching or working in other schools would have a different school year than their tamariki
    - the summer holiday would be shorter.
- 20 The wharekura is working with its whānau to address these challenges, including for example already identifying a holiday programme provider, Waiariki Puea Trust, for their tamariki.



- 21 The wharekura is also working closely with Professor Rangi Mātāmua to learn more about Maramataka and how to implement its principles in their practice and teaching and learning programmes, from the middle of 2021.
- 22 The wharekura as part of its proposal submitted in November 2020, had planned for an earlier than normal start in 2021, to ensure the minimum half day requirements were met. However as they had not yet received agreement from the Ministry to their proposal, did not pre-empt any approval by changing their calendar.
- 23 Therefore in their first-year transitioning to the new calendar, the wharekura are proposing a reduction by no more than 12, the required number of half-days they will be open for instruction in 2021. In future years they will adhere to the minimum half-day requirements.
- 24 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai will work with Ngā-Kura-ā-lwi and the Ministry, through the Director of Education, to agree a plan to address learner needs as a result of the proposed reduction in half-days in 2021, and in particular for their tamariki who are undertaking NCEA.
- 25 Consideration will also need to be given to managing potential impacts on learning with two longer breaks, rather than just one. The “summer learning effect” is where students’ school literacy achievement plateaus or declines over summer (S McNaughton et al, *School achievement: Why summer matters*). The proposed Maramataka calendar reduces the very long summer break but also introduces a 4-week break between Term 2 and Term 3. If this is an area of concern identified by the wharekura, there are a range of interventions that can improve school-related learning over a long break.

#### *Setting Terms and Holidays*

- 26 The Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) gives you the ability to authorise a board to open and close any particular school it administers in accordance with terms and holidays that differ from those otherwise required by the Act to be observed. This is delegated to manager level within the Ministry of Education.
- 27 Some schools already vary their start dates including starting earlier in January, for example to accommodate Cambridge exams, religious holidays, or adjust later terms to better accommodate anniversary weekends for boarding students. Typically these changes would vary terms and holidays by up to a week from the standard term dates.
- 28 Schedule 21 s4(1) of the Act empowers you to reduce the number of half-days on which a school must be open.

#### *Education Payroll and collective agreements*

- 29 The Ministry’s payroll system is built to business requirements that use the same start date and term breaks for all schools. It is not designed to accommodate more flexible school calendar arrangements which the legislation allows. There are a number of considerations we will therefore need to work through with the wharekura including possible impacts to:
- holiday pay
  - recording of sick leave
  - accumulated service
  - annualisation of support staff salaries
  - new staff joining the kura
  - staff transitioning to another school or kura

- 30 The wharekura has advised that currently, they have no staff that also work at other kura or schools. If in the future they do have employees working at multiple kura/schools with different calendars, it will add complexity to payroll calculations.
- 31 The conditions of employment for staff employed at Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai are determined by the Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA), Area School Principals' Collective Agreement (ASPCA), the Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement (SSSCA), the Caretakers', Cleaners' and Canteen Staff Collective Agreement (CCCSCA), and the Secondary and Area School Groundstaff Collective Agreement (SASGCA). These agreements do not envision the school calendar arrangements being proposed. Where required, we will consult with the PPTA, NZEI, AUWNZ and E Tū. Should these unions have significant concerns with the proposal, it may not be possible for Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai to proceed with its proposed changes to the standard school term dates.

### *Recognising and valuing Māori*

- 32 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. This request aligns with celebrating Matariki so will be recognised by Māori in this manner.
- 33 A Maramataka calendar aligns with Ka Hikitia, the education sector's Māori Education Strategy, particularly the outcome domain Te Rangatiratanga: Māori exercise their authority and agency in education.

### **Conclusion**

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- 34 The Ministry supports the desire of the wharekura to operate a calendar based on Maramataka, giving the wharekura the agency to decide what's best for them and their community.
- 35 The legislation supports flexibility of term dates and many schools already change their school terms and holidays.
- 36 There will however be implications for employees whose pay and employment terms and conditions are based on requirements that are set at a national system level. It is important we work closely with the wharekura and Ngā Kura ā Iwi to identify and address any risks or issues that may arise.

### **Wider Implications**

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- 37 Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai may set an example for other kura and wharekura to align their terms and holidays to Maramataka.
- 38 The Ministry's current school payroll system has a planned useful life to 2027. The calendar is currently hard coded in the system and cannot support individual school calendars. To support a more flexible approach to school term dates, such as being proposed by Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai, the payroll system will need significant development work. If more schools were to request approval to amend their term dates, a longer-term system change will be required. We would need to seek an impact assessment from Education Payroll Ltd to determine the potential cost and timeframe for system change.



- 39 Similarly, substantive changes to the conditions of employment for education sector workforces to enable schools and kura to set a unique calendar would require to be bargained as the relevant collective agreements are renewed.
- 40 Through our work with Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai and Ngā Kura ā Iwi, we will be able to develop guidance to support other schools and kura considering a change to their term dates. Guidance would include identifying risks, issues and other considerations to strongly inform their consultation process and decisions.

### Proactive Release

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- 41 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

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- Annex 1: 2021 Maramataka proposal (including a comparison of the Maramataka calendar with the current school calendar).
- Annex 2: Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai brief to the Ministry



Below is a comparison of the MOE 2021/ 2022 calendar and our proposed Maramataka 2021/2022. Please be aware, this Maramataka Calendar is still just an example to guide our thoughts. All the normal statutory holidays would be observed by the kura maramataka calendar

Please note: the kura will have the exact same amount of time at school and on holiday - even though sometimes at different times as other kura.

## Mainstream School Year - 2021/ 2022

Term 1 - 2021	Tuesday 2nd Feb - Friday 16 April	11 weeks	102 half days
Term 2 - 2021	Monday 3rd May- Friday 9 July	10 weeks	200 half days (98)
Term 3 - 2021	Monday 26 July - Friday 1 October	10 weeks	300 half days (100)
Term 4 - 2021	Monday 18 Oct - Friday 10 Dec	8 weeks	380 half days (80)
Term 1 - 2022	Tuesday 1 Feb - Thursday 14 April	11 weeks	104 half days
Term 2 - 2022	Monday 2 May - Friday 8 July	10 weeks	202 half days (98)
Term 3 - 2022	Monday 25 July - Friday 27 September	10 weeks	302 half days (100)
Term 4 - 2022	Monday 17 October - Friday 9 Dec	8 weeks	380 half days (78)

## Proposed Maramataka changes - 2021/ 2022

Our kura will change to new Maramataka School year in June 2021 when marking the rising of Matariki.

We hope to have our long holidays during the rise of Matariki, which adjusts slightly each year. We will make up our 380 half days by returning to kura earlier in January having only approximately 3 week break during the Xmas/ New Year period and staying at kura until around the 20-23 of December each year

	Dates	Term time	Half days	Holiday Time	Notes
Term 1 2021	Monday 25 Jan - Friday 16 April	12 weeks	112 half days	2 weeks.	<i>Term and holiday the same as other kura</i>
Term 2 2021	Monday 3rd May- Friday 2 July	9 weeks	200 half days (88)	4 weeks	<i>Our holidays start one week earlier in order to go on break by Matariki rising (between 2-10 June) Normal Term 2 holidays are within our Matariki holidays.</i>
Term 3 2021 <b>Matariki Term 1</b>	Monday 2 August - Friday 8th Oct	10 weeks	300 half days (100)	2 weeks	<i>Our Matariki Maramataka Calendar begins. Our holiday starts one week before other kura, and ends one week after other schools have returned for Term 4.</i>
Term 4 2021 <b>Matariki Term 2</b>	Tuesday 26 Oct - Friday 17 Dec	9 weeks	380 half days (80)	4 weeks	<i>Exam prep starts Xmas holiday is shorter. Our term finishes around the same time as other kura.</i>

Term 1 2022 <b>Matariki Term 3</b>	Monday 17 Jan - Friday 1 April	11 Weeks	106 half days	2 weeks	<i>Our holidays are two weeks earlier than other kura, but we all enjoy Easter together.</i>
Term 2 2022 <b>Matariki Term 4</b>	Wed 20 April - Friday 17th June	9 Weeks	190 half days (84)		<i>Our holidays start 3 weeks early in order to go on break by Matariki rising (between 2-10 June) Normal Term 2 holidays are within our Matariki holidays.</i>
Term 3 2022 <b>Matariki Hou Term 1</b>	Monday 25 July - Friday 30 Sept	10 weeks	290 half days (100)	2 weeks	<i>Start term and term time same as other kura</i>
Term 4 2022 <b>Matariki Term 2</b>	Monday 17 Oct - Monday 19 Dec	9 weeks	380 half days (90)	TBC	<i>Start term same as other and finish at 90 half days within time frame to close schools according to MOE</i>

### **WHATS NEXT?**

As kaiako, our immediate and major task is to learn more about the the Lunar Maramataka and start following and implementing its principles in oour practice, doing will give us a greater understanding of how we will apply the maramataka to our teaching and learning programs mid 2021.

For whānau - we ask you to think about this proposal and how you may be able to support the kura. We realise that it will affect whanau differently, and we do not underestimate its impact on whānau for childcare etc.

We need you to:

- Have an understanding of the Maramataka and Matariki by accessing different websites etc
- Think about the impacts the proposed calendar will have on you and your whanau.
- Provide feedback to the kura either by email or via the surveys

Possible challenges for whanau:

- Childcare during new holiday times
- The potential for other activities, sports to run through our holiday time and vice versa.
- Whānau being out of 'sync' with their tamariki.

Possible benefits for whanau:

- Taking annual leave from mahi at low uptake times during the year
- Travel at off-peak times of the year
- Rest and rejuvenate during winter

We plan to have another wānanga with whānau around understanding the Maramataka.

We have also have really positive kōrero with Waiariki Pūrea Trust, who are confident they will be able to run holiday programs for our tamariki for our holidays. Some of our tamariki with the most need

We will also send out two surveys, the first to gather in whakaaro and any questions whānau may have about the proposed changes. The second to decide on our path in to the future.

<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/discover-collections/read-watch-play/maori/matariki-maori-new-year/nights-maramataka-maori-lunar>

<https://thespinoff.co.nz/atea/07-08-2018/move-over-astrology-its-time-to-return-to-the-maori-lunar-calendar/>

## NGĀTI RONGOMAI ARA AKE

*Tupua ki te marae, tukua ki te ao, ka tau ha!*



Maramataka Briefing - Te Wharekura o Ngāti Rongomai for 2021 calendar Year

Tuesday 24 Noema  
Ariroa o Whitiānaunau

Tēnā kōtou ngā pia o Te Tāhūhū o Te Mātauranga,

Our consultation process with key stakeholders around the introduction of following a Maramataka Māori Calendar from June 2021 and onwards.

	Timeline	Stakeholders	Key discussion points	Outcome
1	June 2020	Kaiako	Discussed the histories of the Gregorian and Māori Calendars and the key conceptual differences between them. Discussions around how the Maramataka is uniquely Māori, is in tune with our environments and energies, and how we could align these things to our timetables, planning and goals by following the Maramataka.	All kaiako committed to the idea of following a Maramataka Calendar in 2021.
2	July 2020	BOT	Discussed what the Maramataka is, its unique place in our culture. How could the kura be more aligned to meeting its goals and objectives in a more authentic way by following the Maramataka Māori.	BOT members supported the proposal introducing the Maramataka to the Kura in 2021.
3	August	Whanau (Whanau hui - all whānau required to have a representative attend the meeting.	Discussed the histories of the Gregorian and Māori Calendars, the key conceptual differences between them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the Maramataka?</li> <li>• Why do we want to follow it?</li> <li>• What are its benefits?</li> </ul> Keynote speaker: Te Rangi Matamua	Things whānau were asked to think about and feedback to the Kura: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) We asked whānau to find out more about the Maramataka,</li> <li>2.) Impact of the differences in the term calendar on them.</li> <li>3.) Challenges with childcare.</li> </ol>



4	Sept	MOE Merle Ramsey	Delivered proposal to Merle Ramsay of MOE Rotorua, to pursue proper channels for MOE tick off for 2021.	
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*Some challenges/ issues raised by whānau;*

- 1.) Finding Holiday programs/ childcare options during holidays that don't coincide with the rest of the Schools.
- 2.) Sports, and sports seasons would 'run through' our new holiday times.
- 3.) For some whānau, either teaching or working in other schools, or studying - being 'out of sync' with their tamariki.
- 4.) Having a shorter summer holiday.

*Positives:*

- 1.) Having a long break during the coldest/ wettest time of the year.
- 2.) Workers can take leave from their mahi in 'off-peak- times.
- 3.) Whanau can holiday during 'off-peak' times.

*Options the Kura will explore to help alleviate challenges identified by the whānau:*

- 1.) Find a Holiday Program provider who will partner with the Kura to deliver programs during our holiday times.

Ngā manaakitanga o te wā

Tukiterangi Curtis  
Tumuarotahi

Renata Curtis  
Tumuarotahi