



## Education Report: Redesignating Te Kura o Ōmanaia (1060) as a designated character school

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>CC:</b>	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)		
<b>Date:</b>	8 March 2021	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1251550
<b>Drafter:</b>	Mark Scott	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Hira Gage, Director of Education for Tai Tokerau	<b>Mob:</b>	
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

This report seeks your approval to redesignate Te Kura o Ōmanaia (1060), formerly Omanaia School, as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi), under Section 200 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

You approved consultation on this proposal on 16 December 2020 [METIS 1244433 refers]. That consultation has been completed.

We recommend you agree to this redesignation.

### Summary

1. Te Kura o Ōmanaia (the kura) is a state co-educational decile 1, Year 1 – 8 primary school located in a remote rural area south of the Hokianga Harbour between the communities of Waimā and Rāwene. 2021 marks 140 years since its establishment in 1881 under the Native Schools' Act 1867.
2. Other than a drop to 14 students in 2014, the kura roll has remained between 29 and 64 since 2010 and was 52 in July 2020. Between 80 – 100% of students have historically been of Māori descent.

3. All current students, most of the staff, and members of the board are descendants of the Ōmanaia community based sub-tribes Ngāti Kaharau and Ngāti Hau of the Ngāpuhi tribe.
4. Our local records show the board first began processing a proposal to be redesignated as a designated character school with Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa (NKAI) in 2011. The last consultation by the Ministry was initiated in 2013 before internal issues led to the kura becoming the subject of a statutory intervention, which caused the process to stall.
5. Following the revocation of the statutory intervention in December 2014 and the recruitment of the current school leader in 2015, the board reset the process to be redesignated as a designated character school. This included a transition to operate as a te reo Māori immersion school, and in 2017 a full transition to level 2 te reo Māori immersion was formalised.
6. In 2019 the Education Review Office (ERO) reported a dedicated approach to the implementation of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, including professional learning to implement and develop effective teaching and assessment practices.
7. Consultation with its community throughout 2018 and 2019 lead to the board renewing an application to NKAI for membership. In late 2019 NKAI accepted the application and have been actively supporting the kura.
8. At the close of 2020 you approved consultation on the proposal to redesignate the kura as a designated character school under Section 200 of the Education and Training Act 2020 [METIS 1244433 refers].
9. The consultation period has now closed, and full support for this new direction for Te Kura o Ōmanaia is expressed by its community and whānau.
10. Should you agree to this change of designation it will be implemented from 3 May 2021 (the start of Term 2).

## Recommended Actions

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The Ministry recommends you:

- a. **note** that Te Kura o Ōmanaia is a state school that has been accepted for membership to Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa and has applied to be redesignated as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi);

Noted

- b. **note** that the Ministry considers that Te Kura o Ōmanaia meets the criteria and has completed consultation about the possible redesignation of Te Kura o Ōmanaia as a designated character school, and no objections have been raised;

Noted

- c. **agree** that Te Kura o Ōmanaia be redesignated under Section 200 of the Education and Training Act 2020 as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi);

☒ Agree / ☐ Disagree


- d. **note** that the Secretary for Education proposes to approve a maximum roll of 100 students;

Noted

- e. **sign** the attached letter to Te Kura o Ōmanaia Board and local Members of Parliament advising them of your decision;

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

☒ Release / ☐ Not release

  
Katrina Casey  
Deputy Secretary  
Sector Enablement and Support

23/02/21

  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education

2/4/2021

1/1/



## Background

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1. Te Kura o Ōmanaia (the kura) is a state co-educational decile 1, Year 1 – 8 primary school located in a remote rural area south of the Hokianga Harbour between the communities of Waimā and Rāwene. 2021 marks 140 years since its establishment in 1881 under the Native Schools Act 1867.
2. Other than a drop to 14 students in 2014, the kura roll has remained between 29 and 64 since 2010 and was 52 in July 2020. Between 80-100% of students have historically been of Māori descent.
3. The kura's board first began processing a proposal to be redesignated as a designated character school with Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa (NKAI) in 2011. The last consultation by the Ministry was initiated in 2013 before internal issues led to the kura becoming the subject of a statutory intervention and caused the process to stall.
4. Following the revocation of the statutory intervention in December 2014 and the recruitment of the current school leader in 2015, the board reset the process to be redesignated as a designated character school. This included a transition to operate as a te reo Māori immersion school, in 2017 a full transition to level 2 te reo Māori immersion was formalised.
5. In 2019 the Education Review Office (ERO) reported a dedicated approach to the implementation of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA), including professional learning to implement and develop effective teaching and assessment practices.
6. NKAI accepted an application for membership at the close of 2019, and is actively supporting the kura. Unfortunately the redesignation process was again delayed in 2020 due to COVID-19, but it is now ready to be progressed.
7. A condition of membership with NKAI is a four year transition plan to operate as a Level 1 te reo Māori immersion school, and Te Kura o Ōmanaia is undertaking this transition.

## Process for the proposed change

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8. Under Section 200(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), a state school that is not a designated character school may be redesignated as a designated character school by notice in the *New Zealand Gazette*, following consultation with the school's board. Under Section 209(2)(g) of the Act you must first consult with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might, in your opinion, be affected if you take this action. The Ministry has undertaken the required consultation on your behalf.
9. If you agree to redesignation of the kura the Secretary for Education must set a maximum roll for the school. This is required by Section 204(7) of the Act. We expect to set a maximum roll of 100 students.

## Consultation

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10. The Ministry has consulted with the boards of Waimā School (7.9km south), Rāwene Primary School (8.7km north), Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Tonga o Hokianga (17.7km west) and Opononi Area School (21.1km west). We also consulted with the Hokianga Kāhui Ako.
11. Three responses were received:
- TKKM o Te Tonga o Hokianga (Hokianga) is notably the sole dedicated Māori medium kura on the southern side of the Hokianga Harbour, whose roll might be affected by the redesignation. The response received from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Tonga o Hokianga expressed full support for the redesignation.
  - Hokianga Kāhui Ako and Rāwene Primary School also expressed full support for the redesignation.

## The proposed designated character

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12. It is proposed that the kura would become a kura-ā-iwi designated character school from 3 May 2021 (the start of Term 2). This model has already been recognised as meeting the requirements of Section 204(3) of the Act.
13. The proposed designated character centres on Ōmanaia and its hapū, Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau. The wider context of its designated character encompasses the place of Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau in Hokianga and its tribe Ngāpuhi:

*Te Kura o Ōmanaia will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Ōmanaia identity centred within the worldview of Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau, and further by its wider Hokianga and Ngāpuhi tribal kinship.*

14. The described character meets the legislative criteria for being different from that of an ordinary state school and delivering an education of a kind that differs significantly from the education students would get at an ordinary state school. This will better deliver on the language, culture, and identity demand by the Ōmanaia community and hapū.

15. The Ministry considers that the application has detailed that:

- the designated character school will have a character that is different from the character of ordinary state schools, in that the kura-ā-iwi model is already established as having such character.
- it is desirable for students (whose parents wish them to do so) to get such an education, that fits the expectations implemented through *Ka Hikitia*, the Māori Education Strategy, and *Tau Mai Te Reo*, the Māori Language in Education Strategy.
- the kura-ā-iwi model provides education of a kind that differs significantly from the education students would receive at an ordinary state school. The kura's



curriculum would specifically reflect the mātauranga and tikanga of the tāngata whenua of Ōmanaia and iwi of Ngāpuhi.

## Education at the kura

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16. ERO last reviewed the school in February 2019. Its report states:

*There has been a dedicated approach to the implementation of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA). The school's curriculum design is responsive to the aspirations of students, whānau, hapū and iwi. Together they have identified authentic and meaningful contexts for learning, and the environmental conditions required for children to learn.*

*Teachers have undertaken effective professional learning about teaching and assessment practices. They have implemented new assessment tools. These continue to be further modified to support the implementation of TMoA and to help teachers provide positive outcomes for children.*

*Most students in the school have had less than two years in total immersion learning. Their achievement outcomes progress steadily during their time in this setting. Appropriate systems are in place for data management. The principal analyses student achievement well to identify next steps to support learning progress.*

*The board and staff have implemented a strategic approach to ongoing improvements. Good internal evaluation processes are in place to guide strategic development. The implementation of TMoA has been evaluated and this process is ongoing.*

17. ERO's overall judgement of the school's performance determined them as "well placed".

## Education in the local area

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18. The kura is part of the Hokianga Kāhui Ako, which includes four full primary schools and two area schools.

19. The Ministry considers that the proposed change in designation of the kura would have a minimal effect on the schooling network.

20. TKKM o Te Tonga o Hokianga is a co-educational composite Year 1 – 15 kura, situated 17.7km west of Te Kura o Ōmanaia. TKKM o Te Tonga o Hokianga had a July 2020 roll of 95 students. The applicant has kept TKKM o Te Tonga o Hokianga fully aware of their intention to transition to operate as a full te reo Māori immersion school, including expressing a desire to create a primary-secondary schooling pathway to the wharekura of Te Tonga o Hokianga.

21. Kaikohe is the nearest town centre to the Ōmanaia community, situated 34.8km to the east. There is a range of primary, intermediate and secondary schools in Kaikohe, but it is unlikely any would be affected by this proposed change for Ōmanaia.

## Property

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22. There would be no change in property requirements.

## Financial Implications

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23. The significant change in resourcing relates to Māori Language Provision funding (MLP).
24. Currently the whole kura operates at Level 2 of the Māori Language Provision funding (MLP), generating \$33,376.00 (GST incl) of funding. The kura intends to make a full transition to MLP Level 1. Based on 58 students the projected MLP Level 1 funding would increase to \$68,389.00(GST incl) per annum.

## Transport

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25. Te Kura o Ōmanaia has three Ministry contracted school bus routes with Ritchies Transport Holdings Ltd. Two are daily routes split between two schools; the third route a technology service that has not been accessed since the School Transport Resourcing Administration System came into existence in late 2015.
26. These routes have been included in the recent national tender for school bus routes, for a new contract to start January 2022. The current contract will expire December 2021. As the redesignation will occur from 3 May 2021, and the kura will change on to the Māori Medium School transport funding it may affect the provision.
27. A redesignation entitles it to Māori Medium School (MMS) transport funding. The per-student rate is \$9.34 plus \$3.35 per student per quarter admin rate for a rural based decile 1 school. Eligibility is based on a distance to school criteria.

## Staffing implications

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28. The redesignation would not have any staffing impact.

## Risks

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29. Including the responses received from consultation, we have not identified any risks associated with this proposal.

## Conclusion

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30. The Ministry's view is that you should approve the redesignation because:

- the application meets the legal criteria for a designated character school
- the board has consulted locally with overwhelming support from its community, the local hapū, and wider Hokianga tribal representation
- as per Section 209(2)(g) of the Act, your consultation carried out by the Ministry received only positive responses
- the school has been operating at Level 2 te reo Māori immersion status since 2017
- the kura is now into its fourth year implementing TMoA including professional learning for its tumuaki and teaching team to inform their teaching, learning and assessment
- evidence suggests the formation of a localised curriculum at the kura has been in development for at least 20 years. Since the appointment of the current tumuaki in 2015, the localised curriculum was accelerated and is visually evident across the kura, and at events it both hosts and participates in
- the kura has been an active member of the Hokianga Kāhui Ako since 2016
- the kura is now into its second year as an active member receiving support from NKAI since becoming a member in 2019.

## Next Steps

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31. If you agree to redesignation, please sign the notice for the *New Zealand Gazette* (Annex 1), and the letters to the board (Annex 2) and return these to the Ministry.
32. Please also sign the attached letters to local Members of Parliament (Annex 3).
33. The Ministry will set a maximum roll for the school as required by section 204(7) of the Act.

## Proactive Release of this Report

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34. The Ministry recommend that this report be proactively released, in line with your expectations. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.



## Annexes

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Appendix 1: Notice for the *New Zealand Gazette*

Appendix 2: Letter to the board

Appendix 3: Letters to the local MPs

Proactively Released

Appendix 1: New Zealand Gazette notice redesignating Te Kura o Ōmanaia  
as a designated character school

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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

### Redesignation of Te Kura o Ōmanaia (1060)

Pursuant to Sections 200, 204 and 205 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), I hereby designate Te Kura o Ōmanaia, Hokianga, as a designated character school. This designation will take effect from 3 May 2021.

Te Kura o Ōmanaia 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 Ōmanaia will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Ōmanaia identity centred within the worldview of Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau, and further by its wider Hokianga and Ngāpuhi tribal kinship.*

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

Dated at Wellington this 2nd day of April 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'CH', over a large diagonal watermark that reads 'Proactive Release'.

**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



Angela Pōmare  
Chairperson  
Te Kura o Ōmanaia Board of Trustees  
Ōmanaia Road  
RD 3  
KAIKOHE 0473

Dear Angela

Thank you for your board's application for redesignation as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi).

The Ministry of Education has consulted on this proposal on my behalf. After considering all the information presented to me, I have decided to redesignate Te Kura o Ōmanaia as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi). This will take effect from 3 May 2021.

The Secretary for Education has indicated she is likely to approve a maximum roll of 100 students. If, in the future, the school wishes to increase this figure then the Board will need to reapply to the Ministry of Education.

I wish to acknowledge the work your board has done to date to enable the school to operate as a kura-ā-iwi and look forward to hearing of your future success under this designation.

If you have any further questions, please contact Mark Scott, Senior Education Advisor - Māori Medium, in the Ministry of Education's Whangārei office. Mark can be contacted on 09 436 8910 or at [mark.scott@education.govt.nz](mailto:mark.scott@education.govt.nz)

Yours sincerely

**Chris Hipkins**  
**Minister of Education**

### Appendix 3: Letters to the local MPs

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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



Willow-Jean Prime  
MP for Northland  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Willow-Jean

I am writing to let you know that I have agreed to redesignate Te Kura o Ōmanaia, Hokianga, as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi). This will take effect from 3 May 2021.

The designated character will be as follows:

*Te Kura o Ōmanaia will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Ōmanaia identity centred within the worldview of Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau, and further by its wider Hokianga and Ngāpuhi tribal kinship.*

I consider this school will support Māori achieving educational success as Māori.

Yours sincerely

**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



Hon Kelvin Davis  
MP for Te Tai Tokerau  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Kelvin

I am writing to let you know that I have agreed to redesignate Te Kura o Ōmanaia, Hokianga, as a designated character school (kura-ā-iwi). This will take effect from 3 May 2021.

The designated character will be as follows:

*Te Kura o Ōmanaia will function, operate and frame its curriculum within its primary Ōmanaia identity centred within the worldview of Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau, and further by its wider Hokianga and Ngāpuhi tribal kinship.*

I consider this school will support Māori achieving educational success as Māori.

Yours sincerely

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**Chris Hipkins**  
Minister of Education