



## Education Report: **Second report requesting a decision on the possible closure of Linton Country School (2387)**

<b>To:</b>	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)		
<b>Cc:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Associate Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	23 November 2022	<b>Priority:</b>	High
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1297499
<b>Drafter:</b>	Darryl Leath, Lead Advisor Network, Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū	<b>DDI:</b>	06 757 6477
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Marlene Clarkson, Director of Education for Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose

This report seeks your decision on the proposed closure of Linton Country School (2387) under section 199 (1) of the Education and Training Act 2020.

### Summary

- Linton Country School is a decile 6, co-educational, Year 1–8 state primary school located 14 km south of Palmerston North.
- On 14 October 2021, the Commissioner for Linton Country School (the Commissioner) requested you considered the school for closure for the following reasons:
  - an inability to fill board positions and to maintain stable governance
  - the small size and instability of the roll
  - most students live outside the school community and have easy access to alternative schools
  - strained financial viability due to the maintenance and operational costs of the school.
- On 1 July 2022, Linton Country School had a school roll of 10 students, and has since dropped to eight students with four students confirmed to leave at the end of this year.

4. On 17 July 2022, you agreed that we would consult, on your behalf, with the local boards of all state and state-integrated schools whose rolls might be affected by the closure of Linton Country School, and with iwi and other affected parties [METIS 1285811 refers].
5. There were some concerns raised by staff, ākonga and whānau of Linton Country School regarding the possible closure of their school. These were related to the perceived benefits of ākonga attending a small school.
6. There were some concerns raised by the community about the possible closure of Linton Country School. These largely concerned the future of the buildings and facilities on the school site if the school were to close.
7. We have also consulted with the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), Rangitāne o Manawatū, the Linton Country School staff, ākonga and whānau, and the wider school community.
8. No objections were raised through consultation with school principals and boards that might be affected by the possible closure of Linton Country School.
9. There were no objections raised by New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), or Rangitāne o Manawatū.
10. The Commissioner for Linton Country School supports the closure of the school.
11. If you agree to close Linton Country School, we propose a closing date of 6 April 2023 (end of Term 1) for the school.

### Recommended actions

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The Ministry of Education recommends you:

- a) **note** that on 17 July 2022 you agreed that we would consult, on your behalf, regarding the possible the closure of Linton Country School [METIS 1285811 refers]; Noted
- b) **note** that we have consulted with the boards of all state and state integrated schools whose rolls might be affected by the closure of Linton Country School, and with Linton Country School staff, students, whānau, iwi, and other affected parties; Noted
- c) **note** that following this consultation, the Commissioner supports closure; and Noted
- d) **agree** that you are satisfied that Linton Country School should be closed under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020. Agree Disagree

If you agree, you are asked to:

- e) **sign** the attached letter to the Commissioner of Linton Country School (Annex 1) advising of your decision and asking them if they have any final arguments as to why the school should remain open; and
- f) **sign** the attached letters to the local Members of Parliament (Annex 1) informing them of your decision.

If you are not satisfied that the school should close, you are asked to:

- g) **note** that we would develop alternative letters for your signature.

### Proactive Release

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- 12. **Agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing once a final decision is made by you. Any information that might need to be withheld would be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**



Jocelyn Mikaere  
**Hautū | Deputy Secretary  
Te Mahau | Te Tai Whenua**

23/11/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education  
(School Operations)**

04/12/2022

## Background

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1. Linton Country School is a decile 6, co-educational, Year 1–8 state primary school located in the Palmerston North catchment. Currently there are eight students at the school, with four students confirmed to leave the school at the end of Term 4 2022.
2. Since July 2017, the highest roll at Linton Country School has been 18 students (July 2021).

### *History of Statutory Intervention*

3. Since early 2015, Linton Country School Board has received targeted governance training, provided by the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), relating to student achievement and progress, self-review, strategic planning, and charter development.
4. We have had on-going concerns since 2015 around board stability, governance, and school operations. In October 2015, the Ministry appointed a Limited Statutory Manager (LSM) to the Board with the Board's functions, powers and duties in curriculum management including, teaching and assessment practice, and as an employer (*New Zealand Gazette*, notice number 2015-go5926). In November 2016, this was amended to include the Board's functions, powers and duties to manage financial operations (*New Zealand Gazette*, notice number 2016-go6655).
5. The LSM was revoked on 6 November 2018 (*New Zealand Gazette*, notice number 2018-go551), as it was determined that this intervention was no longer required as the issues had been addressed and the risks had reduced.
6. Since 2019, the Board's understanding of board operations, roles and responsibilities, has not been strong. The Board has received support from both the Ministry and NZSTA during this time. On 6 November 2019, the Board reduced the number of elected parent representatives from five to four due to difficulties in attracting prospective members to stand for election, and in retaining board members.
7. In May 2021, a meeting was held between the Board, the Ministry, and NZSTA. The Board advised they considered a quality (committed, available, capable, and active) Board could not be formed from their school community as the school's pool of parents was small and they did not have the inclination to commit to school governance and training, despite NZSTA being available to support. Past elected members had sometimes only stayed for two to three meetings before resigning.
8. In August 2021, after considering options and recommendations from the Ministry and NZSTA, we were advised that the Board would resign.
9. On 7 September 2021, the Ministry dissolved the Board under Section 181(1) of the act and appointed a Commissioner under section 181(2) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (*New Zealand Gazette* notice number 2021-go3740) due to the risks to the operation of the school.

10. On 14 October 2021, the Commissioner requested that the school be considered for closure for the following reasons:
- a. an inability to fill board positions and to maintain stable governance
  - b. the small size and instability of the roll
  - c. a risk to future financial viability due to the maintenance and operational costs of the school
  - d. staffing difficulties.

### Commissioner's response

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11. The Commissioner conducted consultation with the school community, asking if they would consider investigating the possibility of closing the school. The commissioner gathered the views of parents, staff and other stakeholders. The Commissioners report (Annex 3) identified that:
- a. with sadness, the staff support the reasons for closure and believe all decisions should be in the best interests of current and prospective students.
  - b. whānau prefer their tamariki stay and be educated at Linton Country School as they like the benefits of a small school. They acknowledge that there are closer and more convenient schools for most students enrolled.
  - c. a small number of local community members largely object to the prospect of closure in relation to the future of the school site. Several of these members were involved in previous attempts to resolve the same issues that were identified in this consideration for closure.

### Consultation

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12. Sections 199 and 209 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act) require that, before making a decision to close a school, 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.
13. On 17 July 2022, you agreed that we would consult, on your behalf, with the boards of all state and state integrated schools whose rolls might be affected by the closure of Linton Country School [METIS 1285811 refers].

#### *Consultation with the Commissioner*

14. The Commissioner has provided a submission endorsing the closure (Annex 2).

#### *Consultation with the boards of schools that could be affected*

15. We have consulted with the boards of Aokautere School, Linton Camp School, Opiki School, Palmerston North Intermediate, Tokomaru School and Turitea School (Annex 4). Of the boards consulted, there were no objections received and no concerns expressed that the closure of Linton Country School would affect the management of their school rolls.

### *Other consultation*

16. We consulted kanohi ki te kanohi with Rangitāne o Manawātū, Linton Country School staff, students, whānau, and with the wider school community. During these discussions, local iwi expressed their total support of the closure and the Commissioner responded to all other parties in writing (Annex 3).
17. The wider school community was consulted through the Ministry of Education Consultation Hub, as advertised in the local newspaper. This was supported in a local newspaper article published 25 August 2022. One response was registered on the Ministry of Education Consultation Hub, and they were in favour of the closure of the school.
18. We also consulted with the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), and with Rangitāne o Manawātū (Annex 4). There were no objections about the proposed closure of Linton Country School.

### **Ministry assessment**

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19. Should you agree to the closure, we would be available to support whānau to enrol their tamariki in other schools. In addition, our school closure process would address community concerns regarding the future of the buildings and facilities on the school site if the school were to close.
20. Should you decide to close Linton Country School, we would also appoint a change manager and residual agent. As well as this, both the New Zealand School Trustees Associate (NZSTA) and New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) would support the school and staff through a closure process. Rangitāne o Manawātū would also support the Ministry and the school transition.
21. The closure of Linton Country School would have very little impact on the rolls of state schools in the network due to the small size of its current roll, and the existing capacity at the other local schools that those students are likely to enrol at.
22. We recommend closure for the following reasons:
  - a. despite ongoing support, the school has an inability to maintain stable governance.
  - b. there is a small (four students) and unstable roll at the school.
  - c. most students live outside the local community and have easy access to alternative schooling options.
  - d. there is a continued risk to future financial viability due to the maintenance and operational costs of the school.

### **Financial implications**

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23. The Commissioner has concerns about the ongoing financial viability of the school due to the maintenance and operational costs of the school.

24. The school ran at a \$58,000 deficit in 2020 and budgeted for a \$18,278 deficit in 2021. In February 2022, the school had projected a year end operating surplus of \$2,581.
25. If you decide to close the school, the operational savings to the Crown are estimated to be approximately \$104,000 in the first year, and approximately \$234,000 annually thereafter.
26. When a school closes, permanent staff can access the surplus staffing provisions of the relevant principal and teacher collective agreements which includes up to 40 school weeks leave, plus holiday entitlements. This means that teachers' salaries savings may not be realised until up to one year following the school's closure.

## Risks and Mitigations

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27. We are currently consulting on the proposed establishment of a new primary school in the Summerhill area of Palmerston North, where Linton Country School resides. There is a risk that the proposed opening of a new school may be seen as contradictory to the closing of another school in the catchment, which is not an area of growth. We plan to mitigate this through clear and accurate communication to the community, highlighting future growth areas and dominant travel routes of those residing in that area.
28. Consultation identified there is community concern around the future of the school buildings and facilities should you agree to close Linton Country School. We plan to mitigate this through community meetings focussed on the disposal process and how we can work with the community to ensure all needs are met.
29. There is a risk that closure would heighten whānau anxiety as consultation identified a small number of concerns about the proposed school closure due to the perceived benefits of students attending a small school. We are already working with the Commissioner to ensure there is a plan for all remaining students to enrol at other schools should you decide to close Linton Country School.
30. There was also concern expressed during consultation about what will happen to taonga such as trophies, cups and plaques, should you agree to close Linton Country School. There is a risk that not all taonga and assets are correctly identified and distributed as required under the closure of a school. We plan to mitigate this by appointing an experienced change manager to oversee this process.

## Draft Timeline

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31. If you agree to close Linton Country School, we propose, a closing date of 6 April 2023 (end of Term 1) for the school.
32. There are currently no new enrolments for 2023. We have been informed that four students will be leaving at the end of this year, with the remaining four students likely to transition to new schools for the start of Term 1 if closure is to occur.
33. This proposed closure date allows for the school to remain open if the remaining current students do not enrol at other schools before term 1 2023 commences. We will continue to monitor this situation.

## Next steps

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34. Section 199 of the Act requires that, if you are satisfied that Linton Country School should close, the Commissioner of Linton Country School must be provided 28 days to submit final arguments as to why the school should remain open.
35. A letter to the Commissioner is attached for your signature (Annex 1). If you agree to proceed, the Ministry will deliver this letter to the Commissioner on your behalf.
36. Following the 28 days we will prepare a final report considering any submissions from this period, to assist you in reaching a final decision on the closure.

## Proactive release

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37. This education report will be proactively released once a final decision is made. Any information that might need to be withheld would be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.



## Annexes

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- Annex 1: Letters to the Commissioner and local Members of Parliament
- Annex 2: Commissioner's submission
- Annex 3: Evidence of consultation with Linton Country School and community
- Annex 4: Evidence of consultation with boards of schools and other institutions

Proactively Released

Proactively Released

# Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Internal Affairs  
Minister for Women  
Associate Minister of Education



Andrew Murray  
Commissioner  
Linton Country School  
77 Akers Road  
R D 2  
Palmerston North 4472

Tēnā koe Andrew

## Proposed closure of Linton Country School

Following consultation with all parties who might be affected by the proposed closure of Linton Country School, I have reached a decision on whether your school should close.

Having considered all information provided to me, I am satisfied that Linton Country School should close.

The reasons I have come to this decision are:

- an inability of the school to maintain stable and effective governance
- a declining roll and 96% of students that live within the Linton Country School zone, travelling to attend other schools
- strained financial viability due to the maintenance and operational costs of the school.

I now invite you, in accordance with section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), to advise me in writing if you have any additional arguments in favour of the school staying open. The Act allows 28 days, from the date of this letter, for you to reply. You should address your letter to Marlene Clarkson - Director of Education, Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū. Marlene may also be contacted on [Marlene.Clarkson@education.govt.nz](mailto:Marlene.Clarkson@education.govt.nz).

You may be assured that no final decision on the closure of the school will be made until I have carefully considered all the information you provide.

Nāku noa, nā

Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)**

cc: Marlene Clarkson, Director of Education, Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū

# Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Internal Affairs  
Minister for Women  
Associate Minister of Education



Ian McKelvie  
Member of Parliament for Rangitīkei  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Tēnā koe Mr McKelvie

## **Proposed closure of Linton Country School**

I have received a report from the Ministry of Education about the proposed closure of Linton Country School in Palmerston North.

The Ministry of Education has consulted on my behalf with the boards of other schools whose rolls might be affected if the school closes, with iwi, and with other affected parties.

After considering the information provided to me, I have decided that Linton Country School should close.

Before I make a final decision as to whether or not the school will close, section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 requires that I give the Commissioner for Linton Country School 28 days to make any further arguments against closure. After I have considered any further feedback, I will make a final decision about the closure of the school.

Nāku noa, nā

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

Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)**

# Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister of Internal Affairs  
Minister for Women  
Associate Minister of Education



Rt Hon Adrian Rurawhe  
MP for Te Tai Hauāuru  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Tēnā koe Adrian

## **Proposed closure of Linton Country School**

I have received a report from the Ministry of Education about the proposed closure of Linton Country School in Palmerston North.

The Ministry of Education has consulted on my behalf with the boards of other schools whose rolls might be affected if the school closes, with iwi, and with other affected parties.

After considering the information provided to me, I have decided that Linton Country School should close.

Before I make a final decision as to whether or not the school will close, section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 requires that I give the Commissioner for Linton Country School 28 days to make any further arguments against closure. After I have considered any further feedback, I will make a final decision about the closure of the school.

Nāku noa, nā

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

Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education (School Operations)**

## Annex 2: Commissioner's Submission

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13 September 2022

Minister of Education,  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Tēnā koe Minister,

Re: Submission re Linton Country School closure investigation

On 7 September 2021, I was appointed as the Commissioner for Linton Country School, under section 181(2) of the Education and Training Act 2020. My appointment was made by the Ministry of Education following a request for support by the school Principal and the now dissolved Board of Trustees.

After my appointment I reviewed the recent history, current operations and scoped the issues that confront the school. Since my appointment I have closely governed the operations of the school. These actions ultimately led me to asking if you would consider investigating the possibility of closing the school.

On 22 July 2022 the Associate Minister advised that before a decision on closure could be made, the school would enter a process of consultation over the matter and asked that I input into the consultation process by gathering the views of parents, staff, and other stakeholders. That is now complete and the subject of a separate Consultation Report.

Following consultation with staff, whānau and the local community, I would recommend that Linton Country School should close.

The reasons for my recommendation are:

- An inability to maintain stable governance
- A declining and unstable roll
- Most students reside outside of the local community and have easy access to closer schools
- A risk to future financial viability.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ngā mihi

Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

### Annex 3: Evidence of consultation with Linton Country School and community

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13 September 2022

Minister of Education,  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Tēnā koe Minister,

Re: Report, Commissioner input to consultation from seeking input from parents, staff and other stakeholders

On 7 September 2021, I was appointed as the Commissioner for Linton Country School, under section 181(2) of the Education and Training Act 2020. My appointment was made by the Ministry of Education following a request for support by the school Principal and the now dissolved Board of Trustees.

After my appointment I reviewed the recent history, current operations and scoped the issues that confront the school. Since my appointment I have closely governed the operations of the school. These actions ultimately led me to asking if you would consider investigating the possibility of closing the school.

On 22 July 2022 the Associate Minister advised that before a decision on closure could be made, the school would enter a process of consultation over the matter and asked that I input into the consultation process by gathering the views of parents, staff, and other stakeholders.

That process is now complete, and the resulting Consultation Report follows.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ngā mihi

Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

Background	
Process of consultation	<p>On 22 July 2022, the Associate Minister of Education, Hon. Jan Tinetti, wrote to Linton Country School to advise that it had formally entered a process of consultation over closure.</p> <p>Advice of closure investigation consultation letter [Attachment 1] sent to all staff, parents and/or guardians, school community email contacts (40) and letter dropped to 100 additional households in the local area on 1 August 2022. Ministry of Education established a consultation page on their website.</p> <p>Three consultation meetings were held at Linton Country School on 10 August 2022, with staff, parents/whanau and local community members.</p> <p>Meeting agendas [appendix 2].</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents – attended by 11 parents and 1 apology, representing 100% of the enrolled children</li> <li>2. Local community – attended by 10 people representing 7 households. 1 was a prospective future parent. 3 apologies received. [attendee list appendix 3] 1 set of questions submitted with request for them to be tabled [included as a written submission, later in this report]</li> <li>3. Staff – 3 (all) permanent long-term staff attended</li> <li>4. MoE representatives attended the parent and community meetings.</li> </ol> <p>Written or other submissions closed on 31 August 2022 [Appendix 4]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents – no written submissions received</li> <li>2. Local community – 2 written submissions received. 1 against and 1 supporting possible closure.</li> <li>3. Staff – 1 written submission received. Sad, understanding, wants for the best interests of children.</li> </ol> <p>All groups to receive the Commissioners consultation report.</p> <p>Where responses were provided to questions raised in the consultation these are in <b>blue</b> and identify the respondent as Commissioner or MoE</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

Summary of views	
Staff	With some sadness support the reasons for closure that are being considered. Believe all decisions should be in the best interests of current and prospective children.
Parents	Prefer their children to stay and be educated at Linton Country School. Acknowledge that for most children enrolled there are closer more convenient schools but like their children attending a small rural school.
Local Community	The small number of local community members interested in the school (many are also alumni) largely object to the prospect of closure and are concerned about the future of the campus facility. Some of the interested community members have been involved in previous attempts to resolve the same issues identified as the current reasons that closure is being investigated. A submission supported closure due to the "waste of taxpayers' money going into supporting so few children". There is a desire amongst the local community to better understand the closure process.
Reason for considering closure	An inability to maintain stable governance
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LSM appointed 2016. At conclusion of the intervention an external co-opted member was appointed Chair.</li> <li>• 12 trustees in the last 3 years cycle. This is reflective of the instability in the school roll, see below.</li> <li>• 2019 the school board reduced the number of elected parent representatives from five to four due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining board members.</li> <li>• September 2021. No one willing to take up Chair, board dissolved, Commissioner appointed</li> </ul>
Staff	No feedback was received from the staff on this consideration
Parents	No feedback was received from the parents on this consideration
Local Community	Were there any nominees at the last elections?
	No [Commissioner]
	Councils can't fill their positions either.
	What would happen if a Board of Trustees was established?

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

	This is a role for the Commissioner, to try to return a school to self-governance. On the assumption the school remains open this would be important. The Board was dissolved largely due to lack of prospective Trustees and none of the few remaining Trustees wanting to take up the role of Presiding Member. Given the schools recent governance history, there would be concerns about a new Boards sustainability. [Commissioner]
Reason for considering closure	A declining roll
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2016 board of trustees considered closure however deemed it appropriate not to largely due to the prospect of good support from local families to enrol their preschool children at the school once of age. These enrolments at the school did not eventuate.</li> <li>96% of the 51 year 1-8 students within the Linton Country School TEZ prefer to attend other schools.</li> <li>Highly transitory roll. In the last five years, the average length of student enrolment has been less than two years. In the same period 42 students have enrolled, and 40 students have left the school before finishing their primary education.</li> <li>Stated reasons for students leaving in last 5 years priority frequency order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocation of home due to family circumstances or employment new postings</li> <li>Place in nearer school</li> <li>Socialisation in larger classes</li> <li>Exit before year 8 for an intermediate school</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Staff	Staff find high turnover of students difficult and disruptive to other students learning.
Parents	<p>Manawatu is experiencing significant growth and Palmerston North has specific development plans. For example, a proposed bridge at the end of Camp Road. The NZ Transport Agency 2021 Palmerston North Integrated Transport Initiative (PNITI) report was specifically sighted.</p> <p><a href="https://www.pncc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/participate-palmy/have-your-say/kiwirail-freight-hub/pncc-technical-evidence/key-docs-referred-to-in-the-technical-reports/pniti-1.pdf">https://www.pncc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/participate-palmy/have-your-say/kiwirail-freight-hub/pncc-technical-evidence/key-docs-referred-to-in-the-technical-reports/pniti-1.pdf</a></p> <p>Are these plans and growth information taken into account when considering the need for the school?</p> <p>Yes, these and other regional plans, the MoE work closely with the City and Regional councils [MoE]</p> <p>Are the other local schools at capacity and who determines their roll sizes?</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

	<p>No, the other local schools are not at capacity. The MoE approve maximum roll caps in schools. [MoE]</p> <p>We chose this school because it was small.</p> <p>Should there be more of an advertising campaign to attract students?</p> <p>Much effort has gone into this previously to little avail. State schools are in place to meet the community's needs. Analytical studies of the number of students eligible to attend LCS clearly show a strong and long preference to attend other schools. [Commissioner]</p> <p>Will new enrolments still be taken?</p> <p>Yes, with complete disclosure as to where the school is at in this process. We are open and operating until we know differently. [Commissioner]</p>
Local Community	<p>Due to work visa requirements, international workers cannot bring families to NZ</p> <p>Are there any plans to attract new students?</p> <p>Much effort has gone into this previously to little avail. State schools are in place to meet the community's needs. Analytical studies of the number of students eligible to attend LCS clearly show a strong and long preference to attend other schools. [Commissioner]</p> <p>Is the school looking to establish a playcentre or other ECE pathway to the school?</p> <p>No. This is not a school management matter and would have to be led by others. ECE pathways and regulations explained [MoE]</p>
	<p>What was the feeling amongst current parents?</p> <p>Some were already in the process of leaving Linton Country School. For the others there is a preference for their children to stay. Some acceptance that this as it has "been on the cards for a while now". Strong need to know when they will find out when a final decision will be made and what support will be available getting our children into other schools. [Commissioner]</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

	How many 4-year-olds in pipeline? 7 under 5-year-olds currently live near the school.
	Concern expressed about the high % of high needs students enrolled at school and impact on other students.
Reason for considering closure	A majority of students reside outside of the local community
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60% of the enrolments at LCS in the last 5 years have been “non-local” (outside the TEZ) enrolments.</li> <li>96% of the 51 year 1-8 students within the Linton Country School TEZ prefer to attend other schools.</li> <li>11 current students, 8 reside either outside the TEZ or closer to other schools.</li> </ul>
Reason for considering closure	Risk to future financial viability of the school operation
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 actual performance was; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$58,000 deficit</li> <li>\$21,000 working capital, and</li> <li>\$52,000 public equity</li> </ul> </li> <li>2021 budgets was; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$18,278 deficit</li> <li>negative working capital, and</li> <li>further declining public equity.</li> <li>There is currently a small overspend on banked staffing</li> </ul> </li> <li>Finances tight with little reserves. Can be done, but difficult running such a small school well.</li> </ul>
Staff	No feedback was received from the staff on this consideration.
Parents	No feedback was received from the parents on this consideration.
Local community	<p>Have other income streams been investigated?</p> <p>There are not enough students attending the school to generate sustainable operational funding long-term. Most schools fundraise for extra resources which sit outside day-to-day operations of the school. [MoE]</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

	<p>Staffing doesn't increase until roll at 26 children. Multiyear level class can be difficult to learn in. Difficulty to get teacher aide staff for only an hour or two a day</p> <p>Discussion about how learning support funding works</p>
	<p>Water upgrade who paying for that?</p> <p>This is a MoE funded infrastructure property project. On hold at present. May need to go ahead if water supply deemed a health and safety risk to current students. [Commissioner]</p> <p>The school cannot employ staff or spend on capital projects without MoE permission from now until Ministers decision is taken [Commissioner]</p>
Other input received at consultation meetings, not in scope of the reasons for considering closure, and/or questions	
From parents' consultation	Are there other schools that do not have bullying?
	Are heritage and age of school considered?
	The school hall is used for General Election Voting Poll, where will that be now?
	When will we know the outcome of the decision to close?
	Unknown. Ministers' discretion.
	Will there be help to get children into school that are zoned and the children are out of zone?
	Does the unique [country?] character of the school get taken into consideration?
	How many schools have dogs? My child has overcome a fear of dogs due to there being one at school.
	What sort of scenario might change the process? Fire at another local school and it needing to be relocated temporarily for example.

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

From community consultation	<p>What would happen if the school closes and the buildings are left empty?</p> <p>If the school was to close the school goes through the Ministries disposal process. We can, if requested, clear the site. A contract to maintain the facility will be put in place.</p>
	<p>What about the Hall?</p> <p>The Ministry will investigate all past ownership as part of the disposal process. Ministry advisors will identify if any buildings or assets on the school site have a community equitable interest. Where a school's community has identified that community funds contributed to assets that cannot be removed a pro-rated amount can be returned to the community.</p>
	<p>Isn't the school a necessary Civil Defence post?</p> <p>No, it is not.</p>
	<p>One attendee expressed concern about not receiving the local community consultation meeting notice. Need to share how meeting notice was distributed.</p> <p>Identified as the one wrong email address the school used to distribute some of the notices. See Process of consultation above.</p>
<b>MoE website consultation submissions from parents, community and / or staff</b>	
There were no submissions from this constituency (staff, parents or local community members) on the MoE consultation website	
<b>Written submissions</b>	
Two written submissions were received from local community members. One was tabled at the local community consultation meeting and the submission follows. One submission was supporting closure, also follows. [see Appendix 4 for copies of original submissions]	
Will you be publicly advertising this community meeting – perhaps in the Guardian and not just relying on 'word of mouth' and the current email lists that are probably outdated? This is an urgent matter.	

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

The Commissioner contacted 140 local households, both by email and letterbox drop. The Ministry of Education will be conducting consultation via their online consultation page. This will enable anyone, anywhere, to comment on the possible closure of the school.
<p>Is there an agenda?</p> <p>Yes, distributed at meeting and attached to this report as an appendix</p>
<p>Who from the MoE will attend? Are the media welcome to attend?</p> <p>Two MoE representatives attended from the regional office. The schools front line adviser and a regional Education Manager.</p> <p>This was not an open public meeting but a local community consultation meeting. Local community members were invited and asked to RSVP.</p>
<p>Will there be minutes taken and disseminated to people – if so I would like a copy please</p> <p>At the meeting with local community members (held on Wednesday August 10 2022) it was agreed that instead of simple minutes of the meeting, my consultation report to the Associate Minister would be made available to attendees and anyone else interested.</p> <p>This would allow for increased transparency as my consultation report will incorporate both the discussion from the meeting and the written submissions. It would also allow for the school community to have the consultation input provided by the parents and staff.</p>
<p>At what stage (date) did the Associate Minister of Education make a recommendation for consultation of the school's closure and what was this based on?</p> <p>22 July 2022. It was based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an inability to maintain stable governance</li> <li>• a declining roll</li> <li>• a majority of students reside outside of the local community</li> <li>• risk to future financial viability.</li> </ul>
I know current families with pre-schoolers in the area have not been contacted by the school to date and this is concerning. As a rural community – the dairy season starts 1st June and this is when new families with school age children shift to farm positions – were these people canvassed or even farm owners who employ staff?

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

<p>Currently 96% of the 51 year 1-8 students within the Linton Country School TEZ prefer to attend other schools. Since 2019 fewer than 14% of students within the TEZ have chosen to attend LCS. 11 current students, 8 reside either outside the TEZ and closer to other schools. [Commissioner]</p> <p>When a similar exercise was completed in 2017, 40 prospective pre-school students were identified by the community. None of those identified ended up enrolling at Linton Country School. [Commissioner]</p> <p>A list of those families was requested and provided for the school to contact to ascertain interest.</p>
<p>It is clearly noted that the community haven't received any communications or newsletters (electronically) on the school's progress, achievements or assistance required. Is this not part of the Charter and community input?</p> <p>Commissioner engaged face to face with the community, including this submitter, on the reasons for their appointment and has remained available to interested parties. Community Updates have been distributed in September 2021, December 2021.</p> <p>Community input is usually collected to support the review of a schools Strategic Plan (Charter) we are not that process at present.</p>
<p>Is "inability to maintain stable governance" is this referring to inability to form a BOT – even with new elections due in September – so how has this been established by canvassing existing parents and/or community members? Or does this reflect on perhaps Principal or staffing exits?</p> <p>See background above. No correlation with staffing and no known staff exits.</p>
<p>Have the MOE or the School or you as the Commissioner consulted with other educational providers re interest in the school facilities – perhaps changing the culture of the Primary School and focusing on preschool/childcare/before &amp; after school care, Maori emersion, Special Needs, Private entrepreneurial educators, ESOL or vocational training? If so what were the outcomes?</p> <p>Linton Country School is a state registered primary school. This consultation is regarding the closure of this primary school. If the school were to close, the facilities will be disposed of through the Ministry's disposal process which will address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other government organisations who may wish to use the land</li> <li>• Former owners having the opportunity to buy the land or take back the land in the event the land was originally gifted</li> <li>• Māori Land Court procedures and the Treaty Settlement process</li> <li>• Issues such as the separation or amalgamation of titles in the instance that land is across multiple parcels</li> <li>• Consideration of heritage buildings.</li> </ul>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

<p>To begin consultation now regarding this would pre-empt any decision yet to be made by the Minister.</p>
<p>What marketing has been done to encourage enrolments – Canvassing local preschool families, Open Days, New branding, New signage, Hall rental or usage, promotion within local preschool facilities, 4yr old sessions, sponsorship and community partnerships? Are there analytical numbers available or feasibility study results concluded?</p> <p>Schools serve the needs of the local community, there is little to no local community demand. Analytical studies of the number of students eligible to attend LCS clearly show a strong and long preference to attend other schools.</p>
<p>Why have Wright Tanks been contracted to install water tanks recently at the school – when the topic of closure is on the horizon? And you have clearly stated that there is a risk to future financial viability of the school. Have other financial streams been investigated to bring money into the system – like sponsorship, creative business ventures, community gardens, establishing wetlands, motorhome camping during school holidays/weekends, cycling club hubs.....</p> <p>The water tank replacement project is a MoE funded infrastructure property project. On hold at present. May need to go ahead if water supply deemed a health and safety risk to current students.</p> <p>The school cannot employ staff or spend on capital projects without MoE permission from now until Ministers decision is taken.</p> <p>Other income streams as suggested have not been investigated. These appear unsustainable and who would do the investigation and then run these businesses on the schools behalf? There are not enough students attending the school to generate sustainable operational funding long-term. Most schools fundraise for extra resources which sit outside day-to-day operations of the school. [MoE].</p>
<p>Hi Andrew</p> <p>Thanks for your letter of 1<sup>st</sup> August advising of the potential closure of the Linton Country School.</p> <p>I have no affiliation with the school, or vested interest in it (through having current or past pupils there), but as a resident, I have observed very small numbers attending the school over the years. I have felt for some time that it appears a waste of taxpayers' money to be funding a school with such a fluctuating and it would seem, declining roll. This is not the first time closure was mooted, but for what it's worth I would support the closure of it.</p> <p>I feel there is adequate schooling in the area which people can select, at little inconvenience (Linton Army Camp, school at Tokomaru, Tutileta etc.) and obviously this is where the majority of people choose to place their children.</p> <p>I can't attend your meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> August, but if my opinions help to be part of the views canvassed, by all means feel free to use.</p> <p>9(2)(a)</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

Other input received from written submissions, not in scope of the reasons for considering closure, and/or questions
<p>If the school is to close and realising this is a process – will the 2 removal buildings be removed from the site?</p> <p>If the school was to close the school goes through the Ministries disposal process. We can, if requested, clear the site.</p>
<p>What is the process on offering a closed school to local Iwi?</p> <p>There is a legal process we must follow (Crown Disposal Process). Part of this consultation included discussion with Rangitāne.</p>
<p>If the school closes how is vandalism contained and will the lawns still be mown?</p> <p>As above, it is part of the disposals process. A contract will be put in place to maintain the facilities.</p>
<p>What will happen with the school pool – could the community run it?</p> <p>As above, it is part of the disposals process</p>
<p>What is the actual history/ownership and further use of the school Hall?</p> <p>The Ministry will investigate all past ownership as part of the disposal process.</p>
<p>What happens to the newly refurbished/donated hall kitchen?</p> <p>The Ministry will investigate as part of the disposal process. Ministry advisors will identify if any buildings or assets on the school site have a community equitable interest. Where a school's community has identified that community funds contributed to assets that cannot be removed a pro-rated amount can be returned to the community.</p>
<p>Is there still a time capsule buried on the school grounds – if so what happens to this?</p> <p>This is part of the closure process. The Ministry appoint a closure manager that oversees the closure of the school. This is a very well developed and legal process. All Taonga are identified and returned where appropriate or kept as decided in consultation with the community</p>

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## Linton Country School – Commissioner Consultation Report

<p>Memorabilia/old school records – what happens to these? Trophies cups and plaques – what happens to these – will families be contacted who donated these to the school?</p> <p>As above</p>
<p>What happens with all the treasures still stored in the hall – ie table tennis tables from years gone by – perhaps there should be a garage sale at some stage.</p> <p>As above</p>
<p>Currently the back school paddock which is not in use – what happens to this?</p> <p>If the land is crown land it is part of the disposals process.</p>

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## Appendix 1 - Advice of closure consultation



1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

Linton Country School community,

Recently, the Associate Minister of Education has advised that Linton Country School is formally in a process of consultation over its closure.

The school is being considered for closure for the following reasons:

- an inability to maintain stable governance
- a fluctuating and declining roll
- most students residing outside of the local community
- limited prospective students in the local area
- that particular student needs may be better served in another school with specialist resources
- easy accessibility to other schools for local students
- risk to future financial viability

Before a decision is made regarding a school's closure there will be a consultation process. While there is no defined timeframe for this consultation, it usually takes about six weeks.

The Ministry of Education will undertake consultation with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected if the school were to close, relevant sector bodies, local iwi and hapū, and community groups as appropriate.

As the Commissioner, I will provide input into the consultation process by gathering the views of parents, staff, local residents and other stakeholders as appropriate.

To this end I will be holding a meeting on Wednesday August 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM at the school to receive any input or feedback on the reasons the school is being considered for closure (above) from local residents. Please do not hesitate to pass this information on to other local residents if they have not received my letter. If you are attending, please indicate this by RSVP, by email to [amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

If you are unable to attend the meeting or have reflections you would like considered at other times, please do not hesitate to write to me with your views before Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022. The best way is to email [amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz) or to deliver it to me via Katy, the Principal.

I recognise that this news may create some anxiety for parts of the school community. If after the meetings you have questions or wish to contact me, please do not hesitate to do so. Know that I will be guided by what is in the best interests of the current and prospective students of the school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

## Appendix 2 - Consultation Meeting Agenda



### Agenda

Linton Country School – possible closure consultation - local community  
5:30PM August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Linton Country School.

1. Introductions
2. Register of attendees and declarations of interest.
3. Purpose of meeting: the Commissioner provides input into the consultation process by gathering the views of local residents.
4. Discuss each reason that consideration is being given for closure, and receive input and feedback from local community on each:
  - an inability to maintain stable governance
  - a declining roll
  - most students residing outside of the local community and easy access to other schools for local students
  - limited prospective students in the local area
  - that particular student needs may be better served in another school with specialist resources
  - risk to future financial viability
5. Other reasons that the Minister should consider when making their decision.
6. Questions and answers
7. What is the process from here?
8. Wrap up and close

Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

#### Appendix 4 - Written Submissions

amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz

From: 9(2)(a)  
Sent: Tuesday, 2 August 2022 3:15 AM  
To: amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz  
Cc: 9(2)(a)  
Subject: RE: Linton Country School - local residents/community

Such disappointing news – unfortunately we are away when you have planned a community meeting so please register our apologies. However I have some questions that should be tabled at the meeting and some other comments.

1. Will you be publicly advertising this community meeting – perhaps in the Guardian and not just relying on ‘word of mouth’ and the current email lists that are probably outdated? This is feel is an urgent matter.
2. Is there an Agenda?
3. Who from the MOE will be in attendance? Are the media welcome to attend?
4. Will there be minutes taken and disseminated to people – if so I would like a copy please
5. At what stage (date) did the Associate Minister of Education make a recommendation for consultation of the schools closure and what was this based on? I particularly raise a point in your letter “limited prospective students in the local area”. I know current families with pre schoolers in the area have not been contacted by the school to date and this is concerning. As a rural community – the dairy season starts 1<sup>st</sup> June and this is when new families with school age children shift to farm positions – were these people canvassed or even farm owners who employ staff?
6. It is clearly noted that the community haven’t received any communications or newsletters (electronically) on the schools progress, achievements or assistance required. Is this not part of the Charter and community input?
7. I am assuming noted in your letter “inability to maintain stable governance” is this referring to inability to form a BOT – even with new elections due in September – so how has this been established by canvassing existing parents and/or community members? Or does this reflect on perhaps Principal or staffing exits?
8. Question – have the MOE or the School or you as the Commissioner consulted with other educational providers re interest in the school facilities – perhaps changing the culture of the Primary School and focusing on preschool/childcare/before & after school care, Maori emersion, Special Needs, Private entrepreneurial educators, ESOL or vocational training? If so what were the outcomes?
9. What marketing has been done to encourage enrolments – Canvassing local preschool families, Open Days, New branding, New signage, Hall rental or usage, promotion within local preschool facilities, 4yr old sessions, sponsorship and community partnerships? Are there analytical numbers available or feasibility study results concluded?
10. Why have Wright Tanks been contracted to install water tanks recently at the school – when the topic of closure is on the horizon? And you have clearly stated that there is a risk to future financial viability of the school. Have other financial streams been investigated to bring money into the system – like sponsorship, creative business ventures, community gardens, establishing wetlands, motorhome camping during school holidays/weekends, cycling club hubs.....
11. If the school is to close and realising this is a process – will the 2 removal buildings be removed from the site? What is the process on offering a closed school to local lwi? If the school closes how is vandalism contained and will the lawns still be mown? What will happen with the school pool – could the community run it? What is the actual history/ownership and further use of the school Hall? What happens to the newly refurbished/donated hall kitchen? Is there still a time capsule buried on the school grounds – if so what happens to this? Memorabilia/old school records – what happens to these? Trophies cups and plaques – what happens to these – will families be contacted who donated these to the school?
12. What happens with all the treasures still stored in the hall – ie table tennis tables from years gone by – perhaps there should be a garage sale at some stage.
13. Currently the back school paddock which is not in use – what happens to this?

We fully support that the best interests of the current and prospective students of the school is paramount and it has shown within the history of Linton Country School a decline in enrolments has been the demise of this



situation. There is no blame apportioned, the community, staff, students and stakeholders will be completely disappointed that a school of 135yrs+ and deep history cannot survive in the current educational system.

Thank you for your time and look forward to the results/minutes of the meeting. I have copied 9(2)(a) into this email for reference at the meeting.

murray@lintoncountry.school.nz <amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz>  
Sent: Monday, 1 August 2022 4:13 pm  
To: 'Andrew Murray' <amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz>  
Subject: Linton Country School - local residents/community

Kia ora Linton Country School local residents/community

Please refer to the attached letter.

ngā mihi  
Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)

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amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz

From: 9(2)(a) <[REDACTED]@outlook.com>  
Sent: Friday, 5 August 2022 2:56 AM  
To: amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz  
Subject: School closure

Hi Andrew

Thanks for your letter of 1<sup>st</sup> August advising of the potential closure of the Linton Country School.

I have no affiliation with the school, or vested interest in it (through having current or past pupils there), but as a resident, I have observed very small numbers attending the school over the years. I have felt for some time that it appears a waste of taxpayers' money to be funding a school with such a fluctuating and it would seem, declining roll. This is not the first time closure was mooted, but for what it's worth I would support the closure of it.

I feel there is adequate schooling in the area which people can select, at little inconvenience (Linton Army Camp, school at Tokomaru, Turitea etc.) and obviously this is where the majority of people choose to place their children.

I can't attend your meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> August, but if my opinions help to be part of the views canvassed, by all means feel free to use.

9(2)(a)

Palmerston North 4410

9(2)(a)

amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz

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**From:** Linton Country School Office <linton.office@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 1:49 AM  
**To:** Andrew Murray  
**Subject:** Investigation of school closure

Hi Andrew

In light of our staff meeting last week regarding the investigation of school closure, I offer my feedback as an employee and community member. I am saddened by the thought that this fantastic little rural country school could be up for closure. I have worked at this school for the last 11 years and have been part of this community for 14 years. For some young children starting school, a smaller school environment gives them the crucial start that they need in their journey through education and for others for different reasons they may also benefit from a smaller school environment. On the other hand I can understand the reasons why the investigation is in place with no stable BOT, student numbers and the effects this has on their social development as young children and the number of other primary schools in the area are some of the issues that we are facing at this present time and under these circumstances it may not be viable to keep the school open. At the end of the day the most important issue is the hauora of our students.

Regards

9(2)(a)

Linton Country School

-----Original Message-----

**From:** 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Friday, 9 September 2022 4:31 PM  
**To:** J Tinetti (MIN) <J.Tinetti@ministers.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Linton Country School

Hello - I'd just like to make some brief points on the possible closure of Linton Country School. Unfortunately there have been a number of dates published for submissions and I read that 9th Sept as advertised is being correct.

It is with a heavy heart and disappointment to hear of the pending closure of a country school that is 135 yrs+- steeped with history and the education of 100's of students. Questions have to be asked about if Linton Country School had a firm marketing plan in place back when the roll was 1 student and was this actioned?

I was unable to attend the community consultation on 10 Aug but I believe the MOE had at sometime identified 51 children in the surrounding area that were not attending LCS - were these families surveyed to ask the reasons for not enrolling - perhaps in hindsight some reasons could of been rectified and made enrolment more appealing.

I also see financial viability as being a factor in the current concerns - the hall attached to the school (which I believe is fully functioning) has never been advertised for use by closer or wider community. Also the back paddock is utilised for grazing stock - has there ever been a payment or lease agreement to bring \$ into the school?

I was involved on the BOT for a while as a community co-opted member and the roll was increasing past the present 9 students. There were multitude ideas for marketing ideas, events, community involvement, business sponsorships and it appears that the then chairperson resigned under a cloud of extenuating/inappropriate circumstances I realise that your decision is not an easy one - but with the right support and direction I believe LCS can be viable with a change of direction, leadership and community input. It is disappointing that the community have not been communicated with over the last 3 yrs until this latest information on consultation. The community has always been a strong advocate for the school / regard 9(2)(a)

Sent from my iPhone

## Annex 4: Evidence of consultation with boards of schools and other institutions

- i. Letter sent to the Presiding Members of Aokautere School, Linton Camp School, Opiki School, Palmerston North Intermediate, Tokomaru School and Turitea School.



2 August 2022

Debbie Perera  
Presiding Member  
Aokautere School Board  
Fitzherbert East Road  
Palmerston North

Email: 9(2)(a)

Tēnā Koe


### Consultation on potential closure of Linton Country School

The Minister is proposing the closure of Linton Country School under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

Before making a decision, the Minister of Education is required to consult with the board of any state school whose rolls might, in the opinion of the Minister, be affected if the closure proceeds. The Ministry is carrying out this consultation on behalf of the Minister.

If your board has any comments regarding the proposed closure that it would like to draw to the Minister's attention as she considers this decision, or wish to discuss any concerns, please contact Elizabeth Schaw at [elizabeth.schaw@education.govt.nz](mailto:elizabeth.schaw@education.govt.nz) or 1-3 Oxford Street, Palmerston North by 30 August 2022.

Nāku noa, nā

  
Marlene Clarkson  
Director of Education  
Te Mahau | Te Tai Whenua  
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatu

Whanganui Office

93 Ingestre Street  
Private Bag 3012  
Whanganui 4015

Phone: 06 349 6300

[education.govt.nz](http://education.govt.nz)

ii. Replies from Turitea School, Linton Camp School and Opiki School

To: Elizabeth Schaw[Elizabeth.Schaw@education.govt.nz]  
From: 9(2)(a)  
Sent: Wed 3/08/2022 1:04:50 p.m  
Importance: Normal  
Subject: Linton Country Closing Letter  
Received: Wed 3/08/2022 1:05:20 p.m

Kia ora Elizabeth,

Perfect timing of your letter re Linton Country School potentially closing as we had a BoT meeting last night. It was a unanimous decision in favour of the closure and support your decision in this. One question that was asked was would this increase the size of our zone to accommodate absorbing the families in that zone. Subsequently, we have a family attending here that live within the zone anyway that were taken in the out of zone ballot.

Do you require anything more from us?

Troy

9(2)(a)

[Turitea School](#)

208 Old West Road, RD 2, Palmerston North 4472.  
Ph: (06) 354 8845

To: Elizabeth Schaw[Elizabeth.Schaw@education.govt.nz]  
From: 9(2)(a)  
Sent: Tue 9/08/2022 8:04:58 a.m  
Importance: Normal  
Subject: Re: Ministry of Education consultation  
Received: Tue 9/08/2022 8:05:21 a.m

Tena koe Elizabeth,

Thank you for considering Linton Camp School in discussion of the closure of Linton Country School.

At this stage our Board does not have any immediate concerns on the impact the closure may have on us.

At Linton Camp School, we feel we are well equipped with classroom resources and staffing abilities to accommodate any enrollments resulting in the closure. We also are well resourced to provide excellent support for whānau and their akonga with additional learning needs. We warmly welcome any whānau that wish to enquire about enrolling at Linton Camp School.

If the Linton Camp School Board has any further concerns in the near future, I will be in touch before the 30th August, 2022

Ngā mihi,

9(2)(a)

Linton Camp School  
ph: 9(2)(a)

To: Elizabeth Schaw[Elizabeth.Schaw@education.govt.nz]  
From: 9(2)(a)  
Sent: Fri 19/08/2022 1:11:48 p.m  
Importance: Normal  
Subject: Re: Ministry of Education consultation  
Received: Fri 19/08/2022 1:12:10 p.m

You don't often get email from noarofarms@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Elizabeth,

We have discussed this at our Board meeting. We have no comments or objections with regard to this other than sending our condolences to the team at Linton Country School, as I am sure this is a difficult time for them.

Thanks

9(2)(a)

3. Emails sent to New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) and Rangitāne o Manawātū.

 Consultation re Linton Country School.docx 59 KB	 Commissioner re Linton Country School Closure Consultation - parents.pdf 149 KB
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Re: the possible closure of Linton Country School

Tēnā koe,

I trust all are well and getting through what has been a very wet few months.

We have been requested by the Minister to consult on the possibility of closing Linton Country School. Sadly, the roll at this school has been constantly declining and now serves only 10 ākonga (3 Māori and 7 European). Only 2 of the ākonga are local to the area. I have attached a letter that we are sending out to all affected parties and I am happy to collate and record any feedback as part of the formal report back to the Minister. The school will be holding a community meeting for whānau and the community at 3:00pm, 10 August, at the school. For your information, I have attached the letter that was sent to whānau and the community.

Thank you for your consideration of this closure and of any feedback.

Ngā mihi

Darryl

Darryl Leath | Lead Adviser Network  
Te Mahau | Te Tai Whenua

DDI +6467576477 | Mobile 9(2)(a)  
Taranaki Office

[education.govt.nz](http://education.govt.nz)

He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga  
We shape an education system that delivers equitable and excellent outcomes



Te Mahau

4. Attachments sent: a letter requesting comments on the possible closure of Linton Country School and a copy of the Commissioners letter to the parents of Linton Country School.



2 August 2022

Tēnā koe

**Consultation on potential closure of Linton Country School**

The Minister is proposing the closure of Linton Country School under section 199 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

Before making a decision, the Minister of Education is required to consult with the board of all state and state integrated schools whose rolls might be affected if the closure of Linton Country School, with iwi, and with all affected parties. The Ministry is carrying out this consultation on behalf of the Minister.

If you have any comments regarding the proposed closure that you would like to draw to the Minister's attention, can you please forward them to me at [darryl.leath@education.govt.nz](mailto:darryl.leath@education.govt.nz) and I will collate and include these in the required education report.

Nāku noa, nā



Darryl Leath  
Lead Advisor Network  
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū



1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

Dear parents of Linton Country School students,

Recently, the Associate Minister of Education has advised that Linton Country School is formally in a process of consultation over its closure.

The school is being considered for closure for the following reasons:

- an inability to maintain stable governance
- a fluctuating and declining roll
- most students residing outside of the local community
- limited prospective students in the local area
- that particular student needs may be better served in another school with specialist resources
- easy accessibility to other schools for local students
- risk to future financial viability

Before a decision is made regarding a school's closure there will be a consultation process. While there is no defined timeframe for this consultation, it usually takes about six weeks.

The Ministry of Education will undertake consultation with the boards of all state schools whose rolls might be affected if the school were to close, relevant sector bodies, local iwi and hapū, and community groups as appropriate.

As the Commissioner, I will provide input into the consultation process by gathering the views of parents, staff, local community and other stakeholders as appropriate.

To this end I will be holding a meeting for parents on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:00PM at the school. There will be a teacher present in a separate room to supervise your children if that helps you be able to attend.

If you are unable to attend the meeting or have reflections you would like considered at other times, please do not hesitate to write to me with your views before Monday 22 August 2022. The best way is to email [amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz) or to deliver it to me via Katy, the Principal.

I recognise that this news may create some anxiety for you and your child. If after the meetings you have questions or wish to contact me, please do not hesitate to do so. Know that I will be guided by what is in the best interests of the current and prospective students of the school.





With kindness

Andrew Murray  
Commissioner, Linton Country School  
[amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz](mailto:amurray@lintoncountry.school.nz)



RE:

 9(2)(a) <[redacted]@nzei.org.nz>  
To: Darryl Leath  
Follow up. Start by Thursday, 18 August 2022. Due by Thursday, 18 August 2022.


 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Tue 2/08/2022 8:31 AM

Thanks Darryl...we will provide any support to the members at the school once the final decision is made...

5. Responses from NZEI and Rangitāne o Manawatū. We did not receive a reply from NZSTA.

RE: Update re Linton Country School and the new school Ruapehu Drive

 9(2)(a) <[redacted]>  
To: Darryl Leath; hohepa  
You replied to this message on 3/08/2022 7:48 AM.  
This message is part of a tracked conversation. Click here to find all related messages or to open the original flagged message.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Tue 2/08/2022 2:10 PM

Tena Koe Darryl,

Nga mihi o te wa kia koe.

Thanks for the comms and early signal about the forthcoming closure of Linton Country School and formal consult with new school on Ruapehu Drive.

I have the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> (Morning only), 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>. Let's start with those and see how you're placed. I can host at our humble Kohanga Reo offices if needed, or alternate if otherwise desired.

Kindly,

6. Advertisement regarding consultation in the Manawatū Standard on Wednesday 24 August.

***"Linton Country School – Recently, the Associate Minister of Education has advised that Linton Country School is formally in a process of consultation over its potential closure. To share your views, see the Ministry of Education consultation website. Consultation closes at the end of August."***

7. Response from the Ministry of Education Consultation Hub

-----Original Message-----  
From: 9(2)(a) <[redacted]>  
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2022 11:17 am  
To: Darryl Leath <Darryl.Leath@education.govt.nz>  
Subject: Re: Linton Country School - possible closure

Good morning Darryl

Thanks for your email and reaching out. Yes, the system didn't seem to work for me as I tried to navigate a response.

My comment in short is I support the closure of the school.

Having been a small school principal struggling for numbers to make teams for sports and cultural events etc - there's a benefit to our tamariki in being part of something bigger. Scale is important.

I, myself, went to a small school of 50 right up to Year 8 and there are certainly benefits to a small country school. However, on the balance of things, unless the distance is a really large barrier, schools under 100 should look to merge in my opinion. It's largely an unpopular decision for small country/traditional communities but a wiser use of taxpayer's dollars and likely to give children far wider options and opportunities.

I would encourage the ministry to keep looking at this piece of work - ways in which schools might combine for the betterment of the children - not just because years ago it was a certain way.  
(Taonui/Colyton/Bunnythorpe) (Baines/Oroua Downs) etc.

Ngā mihi nui

9(2)(a)