

2/03/2023

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

**OIA: 1303779 – Truancy, National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) reforms, and Teacher Days in Palmerston North schools**

Thank you for your email of 1 February 2023 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

1. *What deciles are each of the Palmerston North schools?*
2. *What is the truancy rate of each school in Palmerston North by numbers and as a percentage of the school roll in 2017 and for 2022?*
3. *What are the comments coming from Palmerston North teachers and principals to the new NCEA changes tested within the school system in 2022? I do not need identities of who made the comments as this would constitute a breach of privacy but am interested primarily in the opinions of those who took part in the trials.*
4. *How many teachers' days were taken by school and dates?*
5. *How many hours were lost in PN for union meetings?*
6. *How much notice was given to parents to make alternative arrangements for these teachers' days?*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). My response to your request is set out below. Your request has been numbered for clarity when responding.

**Question 1**

As of 1 January 2023, school deciles have been replaced by the Equity Index (EQI). As your request was made after the introduction of the EQI, I am providing you with a link to the 2023 EQI numbers for all schools and kura on our website:

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.education.govt.nz%2Fpublic%2FDocuments%2Four-work%2Fchanges-in-education%2F2023-EQI-numbers-All-schools-and-kura.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>.

I trust that this satisfies this aspect of your request. For further information about how the EQI works, please refer to the following link: <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/changes-in-education/equity-index/>.

## **Question 2**

I am refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist. The Ministry does not measure '*truancy*' specifically. We use two key measures of student attendance, assessed across each term:

- The percentage of students attending regularly (more than 90% of all school time), and
- The percentage of time absent from school by reason for absence (justified or unjustified).

Data for moderate, irregular, and chronic absence are also available.

Regular attendance time series data (2011 Term 2 to 2022 Term 3) for measures of student attendance for all of Palmerston North City are published at the following link:

<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/attendance>.

I am withholding all attendance data collected at an individual school level under section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the Act, to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

Schools are not currently required to submit attendance data to the Ministry. Rather, attendance data is provided to the Ministry voluntarily by schools, and it is important for the Ministry to continue to receive this valuable information. This relies on a relationship of trust with the sector. If the Ministry were to make school-level attendance data public, there would be a risk that it could adversely affect the collection of reliable data.

## **Question 3**

I am refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry, and I have no grounds for believing that individual school feedback is either held by, or more closely related to the functions of, another department or organisation subject to the Act. I can confirm that a Palmerston North school did participate in the NCEA mini-pilot that was run in 2022; however, as all feedback from participating schools was generalised, we are unable to identify feedback from that school.

Similarly, the Ministry does not hold any specific feedback from Palmerston North schools that participated in the 2022 Literacy and Numeracy | Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau pilots. Generalised feedback was gathered by our third-party evaluator who then provided evaluation reports for the Ministry. You can see the Ministry's evaluation report from the first 2022 assessment event online at the following link: <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/results-first-assessment-2022-te-reo-matatini-me-te-pangarau-literacy-and-numeracy-pilot> I can also confirm that the Ministry intends to publish overall data from these pilots in March 2023.

To the extent that we receive individual correspondence from schools regarding the pilot, we have identified one school close to Palmerston North who provided feedback last year. This correspondence has already been released through an OIA request on 4 November 2022. You can find the relevant information the Ministry's website: [https://www.education.govt.nz/our-](https://www.education.govt.nz/our)

<https://www.education.govt.nz/work/information-releases/responses-to-official-information-act-requests/responses-to-official-information-act-2/>

#### **Question 4**

I am refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry, and I have no grounds for believing that the aggregate information is either held by, or more closely related to the functions of, another department or organisation subject to the Act. The Ministry provides schools with a date range in which they can hold Teacher Only Days (TOD), however, we do not collect data on the dates within those periods that individual schools hold those TODs.

Information about the date range in which schools could take Accord TODs in 2022 is available at the following link: <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/school-terms-and-holiday-dates/teacher-only-days-2023-and-2024/2022-accord-teacher-only-days/>.

Information on upcoming Accord TODs in 2023 and 2024 can be found at the following link: <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/school-terms-and-holiday-dates/teacher-only-days-2023-and-2024/>.

Information on additional TODs available in 2023 and 2024 to support implementation across the New Zealand Curriculum refresh, re-design of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the shifts to strengthen NCEA can be found at the following link: <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/whats-new/update-teacher-only-days>.

Please note that all TOD dates listed represent the date range allocated for use, and not a specific date, nor when a specific school held a TOD.

#### **Question 5**

I am refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as above. The Ministry does not collect data on teachers' attendance at union meetings.

#### **Question 6**

Schools have a statutory requirement to give at least two weeks' notice of any upcoming Teacher Only Days (TOD). Date windows for TODs are published in advance to support school decision-making. For further information, please refer to the links provided in my response to Question 4.

Please note, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
**Hautū | Deputy Secretary**  
**Te Mahau | Te Poutāhū (Curriculum Centre)**