

21 SEP 2015

Tony Meyer
fyi-request-3119-990fa995@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Meyer

Thank you for your email of 2 September 2015, in which you requested the following information:

For each of the seven unsuccessful cases [where the Minister at the time did not give approval for the school to open on Saturday/Sunday as requested],

- A copy of the request from the school to the Minister*
- Any and all internal documentation that dealt with the request (e.g. recommendations from the Ministry to the Minister)*
- A copy of the response from the Minister to the school.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

When a school makes an application to open on Saturday or Sunday, we consider a number of factors including the educational value of the activity for which the opening is requested; the planned programme of learning, and the length of the programme; whether teachers are teaching, or merely supervising students; whether attendance is compulsory; and the impact this would have on students and their families.

Schools' unsuccessful requests, and responses from the Ministry or the Minister

I am providing you with the following applications from schools to open on Saturdays or Sundays, and the responses to the schools (which were sent either from the Ministry, or the Minister):

School	Date of application from school	Date of Ministry/Minister response
McKenzie Residential School	15 April 2006	12 June 2006
Fernridge School	20 September 2007	10 October 2007
St. Theresa's School	21 October 2009	19 November 2009
Multiple schools	26 January 2011	28 February 2011
Papamoa College	22 February 2011	7 March 2011
Hira School	23 July 2014	22 August 2014

I am also providing you with an application from Clevedon School (7 July 2000), which I believe was not successful. However, under section 18(e) of the Act, I am declining to provide you with the Ministry's response to the application from Clevedon

School. This is because, despite a careful search through our records, we have been unable to locate a copy of the Ministry's reply.

I am withholding some information in these documents, either (under section 9(2)(a) of the Act) to protect the privacy of individuals, or because it is out of scope of your request.

Internal documentation

I am providing you with the following document:

Education Report: Application from St Theresa's School, Plimmerton to include two Sundays as School Days (IM60/104/53/3)

This Education Report asks the Minister to sign the response to St Theresa's application. The response, signed by the Minister, is provided to you as one of the documents listed in the table above.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Thank you again for your request, and I trust that you find this information of use. If you have any further queries, please email us at enquiries.national@education.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



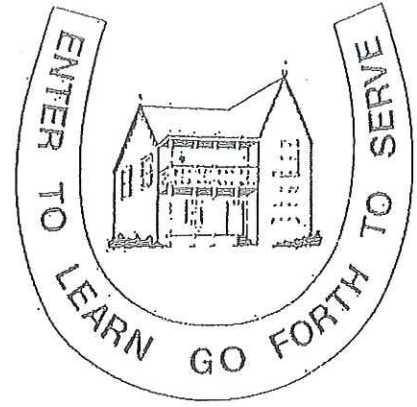
Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

North Road
P.O. Box 74
Clevedon

Telephone 2928-654
Fax 2928-626
Email: clevesch@ihug.co.nz

COPY

RECEIVED
'20 JUL 2000



7 July 2000

Ministry of Education
National Office – Resourcing Division
PO Box 1686
WELLINGTON

Dear Sir or Madam,

Clevedon School seeks Ministry approval to hold the 2000 Agriculture Day event on Saturday, 14 October. This will be classed as an official school day with marking of Attendance Registers as a procedure required by all Teachers.

The compensating day will be Tuesday, 24 October 2000, when the school will be closed.

Thank you for considering this request and I await your response.

Yours faithfully,

G.R. ASHBY
PRINCIPAL

26 April 2006

K Holland, Board Chair
G Healy, Principal
McKenzie Residential School
483 Yaldhurst Road
Christchurch
RD 6



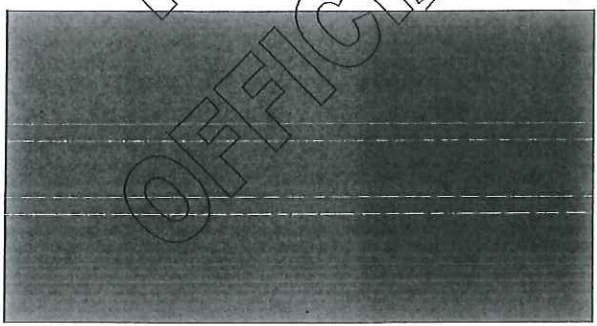
Dear K Holland and G Healy

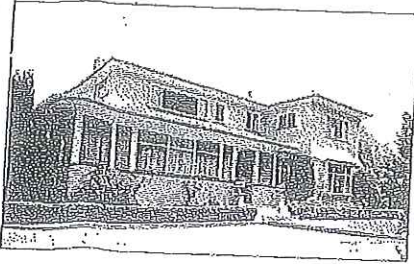
On behalf of Hon Steve Maharey, Minister of Education, thank you for your letter of 15 April 2006 regarding your request that teaching staff be allowed to provide a Saturday curriculum programme at McKenzie Residential School.

Your letter is with the Minister for his consideration and you may expect a reply shortly.

Yours sincerely

§ 9(2)(a) OIA





McKenzie Residential School

483 Yaldhurst Road
Christchurch RD6

OFFICE OF EDUCATION	
TO: Moe	DATE REQUIRED
PRIORITY 1-10 WORKING DAYS	
PRIORITY 2-20 WORKING DAYS	
SPECIFIED DATE	
DRAFT REPLY / REPORT	
DIRECT REPLY / APPROPRIATE ACTION	
RECORD	

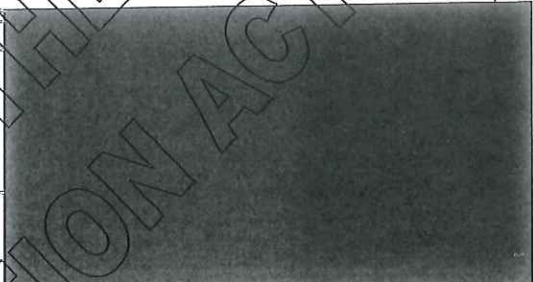
Ref: BOTTerm dates 2006 mck.doc

15 April 2006

s 9(2)(a) OIA

Honourable Steve Maharey
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

RECEIVED
21 APR 2006
Office of
HON. S. MAHAREY



Dear Minister,

I wish to request permission for teaching staff to provide a curriculum programme at McKenzie Residential School on six Saturday mornings during 2006.

McKenzie is a Residential Special School catering for 29 Year 3 to Year 8 pupils whose chronic and extreme emotional, social and behavioural difficulties mean their needs cannot be met in their local situation. Pupils are enrolled for a maximum of 4 school terms.

Being a Residential Special School, most pupils are on site during weekends and we are providing a programme for pupils in residence at that time.

The presentation of a curriculum programme on these mornings would allow the school to meet its legal requirement of 394 half days and close 3 days earlier at the end of the year.

Our experience is that short weeks in this situation are less productive and seem to disrupt the rhythm of curriculum delivery.

The short week at the end of the year is even more so in this category, as both pupils and teaching staff are low in energy and motivation and it requires considerable effort to maintain productivity.

The school has consulted widely on the matter of the presentation of the curriculum during 6 Saturday morning programmes during the year.

The consultation process has involved the following and has found favour with all parties.

Board of Trustees: The matter has been fully discussed at 2 board meetings (January and February 2006) with the unanimous decision that the matter should be pursued.

Teaching staff: This involves 8 individuals including the Principal. All have discussed the idea fully and with one exception, have provided written confirmation of their willingness and availability to teach on Saturday mornings. The one exception has a long-standing regular Saturday commitment which must be honoured.

Staff in other areas of the school's operations are also in favour as the earlier close down will not only advantage pupils but will also allow more time for those staff to carry out their end of year cleaning, organization and close down duties.

Parents: All 24 parents whose children will be involved have been consulted by phone and letter.

Local parents who will be most affected by this proposal have also had the opportunity for discussion on site.

Twenty one parents have responded (13 by post and 8 by phone)

100% are supportive of the concept and can see the advantages of it.

The three parents/caregivers who have offered no opinion can be casual and are difficult to contact at times. If they held a strong view one way or the other, contact would have been made.

In summary, 87.5% of parents and caregivers support the proposition.

Pupils: All 7 local pupils who return home every Friday after school were keen to be involved when the idea was discussed with them. Local pupils are always interested in what happens at the school on weekends and are enthusiastic about being involved in this venture.

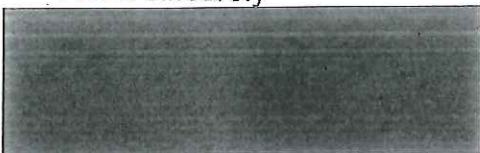
Full time residential pupils are relaxed about the change this would bring to their usual Saturday morning routine.

There has been considerable thought given to maximizing the benefits. An example of this is that the curriculum could be presented on the Saturday following Queen's Birthday thereby giving pupils a 4 ½ day academic week. The same could apply following Labour Weekend.

You can be assured that the wellbeing and progress of pupils are our priorities as we know that pupils do best when their environment and programme are in balance.

I would be more than willing to provide additional information if requested and in the meantime appreciate your consideration in this matter and look forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely



Board Chair

s 9(2)(a) OIA



Principal

M125775
Ray Burkhill
IO31/50/00/3
12 June 2006

Kevin Holland and Greg Healy
Board Chair and Principal
McKenzie Residential School
483 Yaldhurst Road
RD6
CHRISTCHURCH

Dear Mr Holland and Mr Healy

Thank you for your letter of April 15 seeking permission to open McKenzie Residential School for instruction on Saturday mornings during 2006 and 2007.

I have been advised that you have been unable to achieve full agreement with all interested parties in the course of the consultation you undertook in support of your application. In particular, the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) is opposed to your proposal on principle. It is concerned to maintain the provisions detailed in section 2.9 of its collective agreement. For that reason, I must decline your application to open McKenzie Residential School for instruction on specified Saturday mornings during 2006 and 2007 and to close the school early at the end of those years by the equivalent number of half days.

I appreciate that your application and the consultation process you undertook was made in good faith.

Thank you for your letter and I wish you and McKenzie Residential School well.

Yours sincerely

Steve Maharey
Minister of Education

27 SEP 2007

26 September 2007

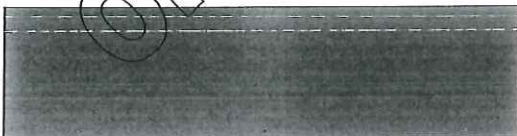
Sherryl Richards
Chairperson
Fernridge Board of Trustees
Fernridge School
Upper Plain Road
RD 8
MASTERTON

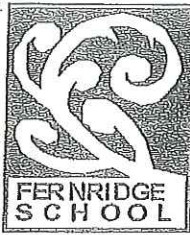
Dear Sherryl Richards

On behalf of Hon Steve Maharey, Minister of Education, thank you for your letter of 20 September 2007 requesting permission for Fernridge School to be open for two weekend days next year.

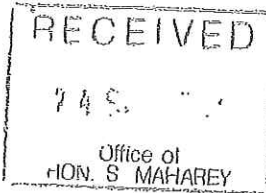
Your letter is with the Minister for his consideration and you may expect a reply at his earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely





Fernridge School,
Upper Plain Road,
RD 8, Masterton.
Phone 06 378 6535
Fax 06 378 7483



§ 9(2)(a) OIA

20 September 2007

Minister of Education
Steve Maharey



Dear Mr Maharey

I'm writing on behalf of the Fernridge School Board of Trustees to seek your permission for this school to open on two weekend days next year as part of the school year.

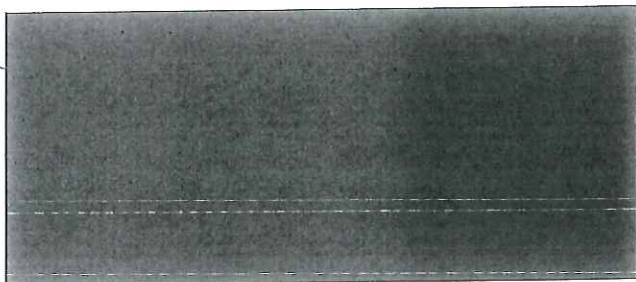
We have traditionally opened for school net day, school gala and school concerts and prize-giving events on Sundays as this suits most of our community. Many are simply unable to attend such functions on school days during school hours.

This year we have had to revert to holding all such events on school days after a letter from the Ministry of Education informing us that we are unable to change to a weekend day with your express approval, even though we in fact did more days than was prescribed for the school to be open last year. This Board was under the impression that they had been empowered by 'Tomorrow's Schools' to make such decisions, especially as the decisions made in no way affected the legal requirement as to number of days we were open for instruction.

Therefore we would like to formally ask for your permission to open the school on two weekend days next year and count these as part of the official school year.

Yours sincerely

§ 9(2)(a) OIA

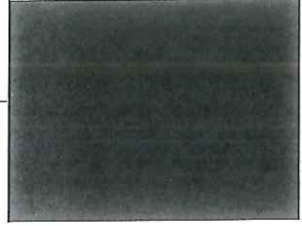


Sherryl Richards
Chairperson
Fernridge Board of Trustees.

LI

FROM: OFFICE OF HON. S. MAHAREY	
TO: MDC	
DATE REQUIRED	
<input type="checkbox"/>	PRIORITY 1-10 WORKING DAYS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PRIORITY 2-20 WORKING DAYS
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPECIFIED DATE
DRAFT REPLY / REPORT	
DIRECT REPLY / APPROPRIATE ACTION	
CCOM	

s 9(2)(a) OIA



Sherryl Richards
Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Fernridge School
Upper Plain Road
RD 8
MASTERTON

Dear Sherryl Richards

Thank you for your letter of 20 September 2007 requesting permission for Fernridge School to be open on two weekend days in 2008 as part of the school year.

The key phrase in the Education Act 1989 (the Act) that has to be considered in an application such as yours is whether or not the school can be regarded as being 'open for instruction' on the days you specify. While no-one doubts the value of events such as pet days and galas, the fact is that on such days the school is not 'open for instruction'.

The Act also specifically states that schools must be closed on Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays and while extra-ordinary circumstances might mean that an exemption would be granted, we come back to the fact that the school would not be 'open for instruction'.

A board of trustees may exercise the flexibility to close a school for teacher-only days, local gala or show days and in-service training days for no more than three days in a school year. Schools have more flexibility to do this in 2008 since they have greater flexibility to set their own opening dates. However, this flexibility applies to school days (week days) only and primary schools must still make sure that they are open for at least 384 half days in 2008, like all other primary schools.

I am sure all of Fernridge School's community will enjoy the days you are planning, whether or not they are held on Saturdays or Sundays, and I acknowledge the value of those days. However, I cannot approve your request to count weekend days as part of the prescribed school year.

Yours sincerely

Steve Maharey
Minister of Education

St. Theresa's School

James Street, Plimmerton 5026
Tel: 04 233-8093 Fax: 04 233-1075
Email: office@st-theresas.school.nz



25 OCT 2009

21st October 2009

The Hon. Anne Tolley
Minister of Education
Freeport Parliament
Private Bag 18888
WELLINGTON 6140

FROM: MINISTER OF EDUCATION
TO: MOVED TO / UNASSIGNED
URGENT 1-8 WORKING DAYS
PRIORITY 2-13 WORKING DAYS
SPECIFIED DATE
DRAFT REPLY / RECORD / DIRECT REPLY
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

Draft Reply to
12/10/09

Dear Mrs Tolley

On behalf of the St Theresa's School Board of Trustees, I write to you with a special request regarding days open for instruction.

As you know, we are a school of Special Catholic Character, where instruction in Religious Education is one of our required curriculum areas. In order to enrich this area for our children by providing an authentic context, the school opens for instruction on two Sunday mornings per year (9am - 12 midday). These mornings involve participation in the Parish Mass followed by parent/child activities organised by the children. It involves the full school and parish community, helping to make the children's learning contextual and therefore more meaningful. The roll is taken, and the children wear their school uniforms.

The first of these took place on Sunday 7th June and the next will be Sunday 1st November.

We respectfully request that these two mornings be counted as one school day in the school year for St Theresa's.

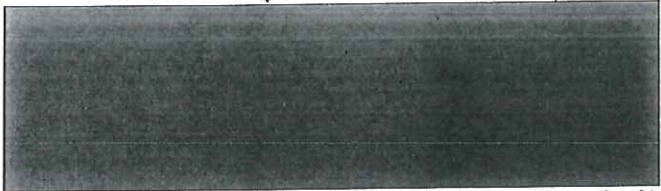
The New Zealand Curriculum requires all schools to provide authentic contexts for learning, and to engage and make connections with the wider community, and so we are confident that you will support our request.

I also extend a warm invitation to you to join us on the 1st November if you are able to spare time in your very busy schedule.

Many thanks

Yours sincerely

s 9(2)(a) OIA



Principal (on behalf of St Theresa's Board of Trustees)



Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

Minister of Education

Minister for Tertiary Education

Minister Responsible for the
Education Review Office

19 NOV 2009

Zita Smith
Principal
St Theresa's School
James Street
Plimmerton 5026

Dear Zita Smith

Thank you for your letter of 21 October 2009 concerning days the school is open for instruction.

I acknowledge your Special Catholic Character and the importance of Religious Education as part of your school's required curriculum. However, allowing for your request would make attendance compulsory for all students on the mornings in question. This is likely to place an unfair burden on both families and your staff, particularly those who have prior commitments. Your Board would also be required to take action against any truancy which occurred. Families would need to be aware of this possibility.

I have decided to decline your request to include the activities of two Sunday mornings as two of the 360 half days a primary school is required to be open in 2009. Please note that this in no way means that you cannot encourage students and families to participate in events on weekends. However these cannot be treated as compulsory school days.

Best wishes for the rest of the school year.

Yours sincerely

Hon Anne Tolley
Minister of Education

16 November 2009

IM/60/104/53/3

Education Report: Application from St Theresa's School, Plimmerton to include two Sundays as School Days.

Recommendations

We recommend that you:

- a. note the contents of the report; and
- b. sign the attached letter to the principal of St Theresa's School, Plimmerton.



s.9(2)(a) OIA

Acting Senior Manager - Implementation Planning
Schools and Student Support

enc

Anne Tolley
Hon Anne Tolley
Minister of Education

18/11/09

Education Report: Application from St Theresa's School, Plimmerton to include two Sundays as a School Day.

Purpose of Report

1. You have received a letter from the Principal of St Theresa's School, Plimmerton, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, requesting that the Board be approved to include two Sunday mornings that it opens for Parish Mass followed by parent/child activities be included as half days in which it must be open.
2. This report provides information about the complexities of the request to include the activities of two Sunday mornings as two of the 386 half days the school is required to be open in 2009.

Background

3. St Theresa's School, Plimmerton is a co-educational contributing school with a roll of 166 students.

The Legislation and Regulations

4. Section 65C (1) of the Education Act 1989 (the Act) states every board shall ensure that all schools it administers are closed on Saturdays and Sundays.
5. Section 65C (2) of the Act allows for the Minister at any time to prescribe the circumstances in which boards may open the schools they administer, or any of them, on Saturdays or Sundays; and schools may be open accordingly.
6. The prescribed length of the primary school year is 386 half days for 2009.

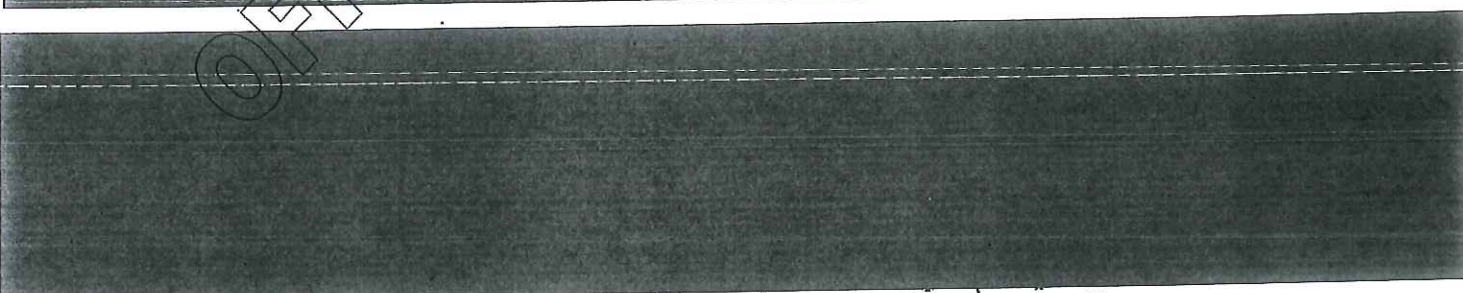
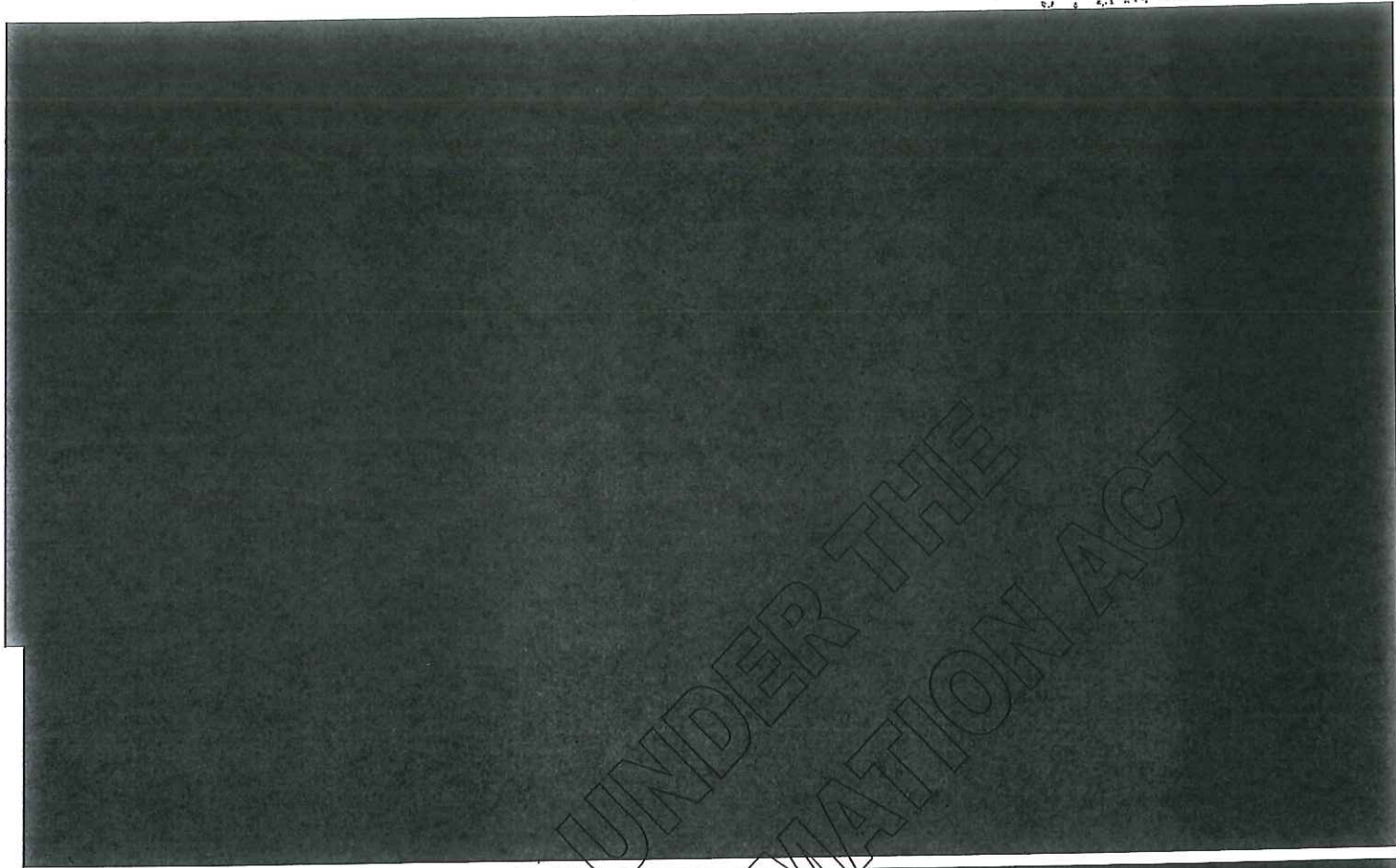
Implications of Request

7. The following is a list of concerns regarding the request:
 - Impact on students and their families as a result of compulsory attendance.
 - Impact on staff having to attend on a Sunday.
 - Whether non-attendance would be treated by the school in the same way as it is on a normal weekday.
 - The educational value of parent/child activities and whether this can be considered equivalent to regular tuition.

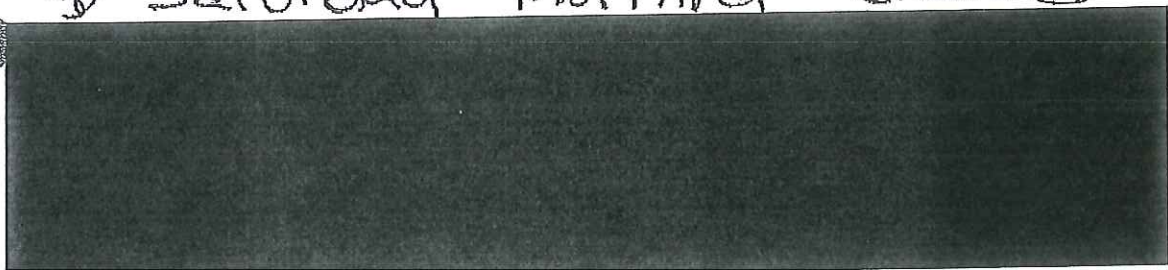
Ministry Comment

8. Approving the request will make attendance compulsory for all students on the mornings concerned. The Ministry is concerned that this would place an unfair burden on both families and school staff. There is also a risk that truancy issues would arise. Therefore the Ministry recommends that the request is declined.
9. However, should you wish to consider approving the request, the Ministry recommends that a number of issues, including potential industrial ramifications and the nature of the tuition to be delivered on these mornings, be further investigated before such a decision is considered.

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT



& Saturday morning classes



out of scope



Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

Minister of Education

Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office

28 FEB 2011

s 9(2)(a) OIA



Thank you for your letter of 26 January 2011 to the Prime Minister, Rt Hon John Key regarding health and education in New Zealand. I am responding on behalf of the Prime Minister to the education suggestions in your letter.

The Education Act sets out the days on which schools can operate. Under the Act, schools are not permitted to open on either Saturdays or Sundays. New Zealand also has one of the highest levels of teaching hours per year in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). There are no plans to extend the number of days that schools remain open.

It is important for New Zealand students to learn languages in order to be equipped for living in a world of diverse people, languages and cultures. *The New Zealand Curriculum* encourages students to participate actively in New Zealand's diverse multicultural society and in the global community. The Ministry of Education does not direct schools to teach a particular language, however, it does provide a range of evidence-based resources and initiatives that support the development of effective and enduring language programmes. As a result, the number of language learners has increased over the past decade, from 140,662 in 2001 to 192,982 in 2010.

Many school boards of trustees already offer breakfasts at school through a number of programmes. One such programme is the New Zealand Red Cross Breakfast in Schools programme which offers children attending decile one primary schools throughout New Zealand the opportunity to eat a healthy breakfast before they start school. It's a face-to-face, friendly approach to providing a healthy, nutritious breakfast and encourages healthy eating behaviour. The number of schools supported continues to grow and currently over 1600 healthy breakfasts are served through the programme every school day.

Thank you for taking the time to send the Prime Minister your thoughts.

Yours sincerely

Hon Anne Tolley
Minister of Education



PAPAMO
COLLEGE

Minister of Education
45-47 Pipitea Street
PO Box 1666
Thorndon
Wellington 6011

22 February 2011

Dear Minister

Re: Papamoa College Open Day for the community Saturday 12 March 2011.

Papamoa College has had a great start to the year! It is good to finally have students on campus and have the buzz of student learning and activity.

There is significant interest from the community to have a look at their new school. We have already had a very successful parents afternoon and now it is time to showcase the school to the public by way of an open day. This will occur on Saturday 12 March 10am-12pm.

Unfortunately the current PPTA industrial action will severely affect the availability of most of the teaching staff to be part of this event. Already this year, teaching staff have been very supportive and generous with their time for the start up of the school. They returned to work from holiday early and have even been involved in overnight camps.

Education Act 1989 65C (1) The Minister may at any time prescribe the circumstances in which a board may open the schools they administer or any of them on Saturdays or Sundays; and schools may be open accordingly.

I request that as Minister of Education you permit Papamoa College to finish early on Friday afternoon and then classify two hours on Saturday 12 March as being open for instruction. This will provide staff with the opportunity to be involved with the open day and also making sure we meet the legal requirements for student instruction.

It has been a real challenge starting up a school while dealing with teaching staff on industrial action. It couldn't have come at a worse time for us. I am encouraged though by the commitment and professionalism of all our staff who are working long hours and trying to do what is right for the school and also the PPTA.

I thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours sincerely



s 9(2)(a) OIA



Principal

151 Doncaster Drive
PO Box 11 150
Papamoa 3151
T. 07 542 0676
F. 07 542 9069

FROM: MINISTER OF EDUCATION
TO: MOE/ERO/NZQA/TEC
URGENT 1-8 WORKING DAYS
PRIORITY 2-13 WORKING DAYS
(SPECIFIED DATE)
DRAFT REPLY/RECORD/DIRECT REPLY
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

RELEASED UNDER THE INFORMATION ACT



Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

Minister of Education

Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office

1 March 2011

Steve Lindsey
Principal
Papamoa High School
151 Doncaster Drive
Papamoa

Dear Steve Lindsey

On behalf of Hon Anne Tolley, Minister of Education, thank you for your letter of 22 February 2011 regarding the Papamoa College Open Day and your request to change school hours to suit.

I have passed your letter to the Minister for her information. I have also passed a copy of your letter to officials at the Ministry of Education so that they can respond to you as a matter of priority.

Yours sincerely

s 9(2)(a) OIA

cc Ministry of Education
Thompson
Wellington

7 March 2011

National Office

Education, Curriculum and
performance
45-47 Pipitea Street
PO Box 1686
Thorndon
Wellington 6011
New Zealand

Phone: 04 463 8000
Facsimile: 04 463 8252
www.minedu.govt.nz
D549382
IM60/104/51/3

Steve Lindsey
Principal
Papamoa College
PO Box 11 150
Papamoa 3151

Dear Steve Lindsey

Thank you for your letter of 22 February to the Minister of Education, Hon Anne Tolley about your school's open day. I have been asked to reply to your letter directly.

The Education Act 1989 (the Act) allows the Minister some discretion to prescribe the circumstances in which school boards may open on a Saturday or Sunday. However in using that discretion the Minister would need to consider the overall intent of the Act. This would include the requirements under section 65A to remain open for instruction for a specified number of half-days. It is unlikely that holding a school open day could be considered as being open for instruction.

The Minister's discretion is also only likely to be used in exceptional circumstances. Making it easier for your school's teachers to attend an open day would not usually be considered exceptional circumstances.

You may wish to consider scheduling your school open day during normal school hours which would allow the school to provide instruction for those students that are not directly involved.

I wish you all the best for your open day.

Yours sincerely

§ 9(2)(a) OIA

Education, Curriculum and Performance

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 23 July 2014 3:16 p.m.
To: Parliament - Hekia Parata
Subject: alternative school day

E1.20773

Dear Hon. Hekia Parata,

My name is Anthony Uiterwijk, Principal of Hira School in Nelson.

Earlier today I contacted the Ministry of Education to check whether we could list one Sunday next month as a school day.

Our school has struggled to get all parents to come to school interviews and reporting sessions, because most of our parents both work and often unusual hours as well.

We would like to organize a "Student Led Conferences Day" similar to the way they do them in IB and other International Schools and use a whole school day for it. (I have worked in an IB School for the last 2.5 years)

We realized that the best way of doing this and ensuring high parental participation as well as improving school/community partnership, would be to do this on a weekend day.

Both students and staff are prepared to organize such a day and we thought it would fit with the minister's ideas about a more flexible school day.

However, our first response from the ministry has been that it could not be counted and approved as a school day.

We find this really disappointing and it is not in line with the Government policy of improving community involvement in schools.

Is there any thing you could do for us, or give us an exemption?

Looking forward to your personal response.

Kindest regards,

Anthony Uiterwijk
Principal



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

National Office

Sector Enablement and Support
45-47 Pipitea Street
Thorndon
PO Box 1666
Wellington

Phone: 04 463 8000
www.minedu.govt.nz

880695
IM60/104/51/3

22 August 2014

Anthony Uiterwijk
Principal
Hira School





§ 9(2)(a) OIA

Dear Anthony

The Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, has asked me to reply to your email of 23 July 2014 about your request to include one Sunday as a school day to increase participation at school interviews and reporting sessions.

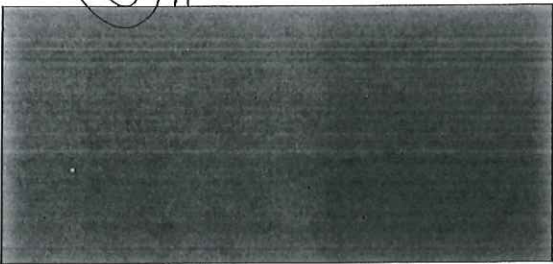
As you may be aware the Education Act 1989 sets out the requirements for when state schools must be open. There is a provision for schools to open on a Sunday and have it counted as a school day in certain circumstances. These include that each student needs to be involved in a planned programme of learning for at least two hours for each half day. Teachers would need to teach, not just supervise students during this time.

The Board of Trustees (the Board) can hold events such as parent teacher interviews on a Saturday or Sunday, but it would not be counted as a school day. The Board would need to consider the employment implications for the teachers and staff working, and would not be able to make student or teacher attendance compulsory.

I understand  Director of Education for Nelson/Marlborough and West Coast, has contacted you about this. If you have any further questions, please contact  who will be happy to discuss it further.

Yours sincerely

§ 9(2)(a) OIA



Manager School Support and Governance
Sector Enablement and Support