




18 December 2020



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 23 November 2020 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

- 1. Please provide all information held by the Ministry of Education relating to the requested use of the terms 'Matua' and 'Whaea' by students, as a gender specific salutation when addressing their teacher.*
- 2. Please advise the Education Minister's position and comments with regard to promotion and support by NZ public schools on Black Lives Matter Activists in the classroom, particularly in reference to its '13 Guiding Principles and if the movement has a documented place in NZ classrooms and if this is deemed appropriate for Year 7 Students.*

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

The Ministry is committed to creating an education system where all children and young people feel understood, respected and valued. We want all communities to feel safe, connected and free from racism and prejudice. Education has a critical role to play in this, and resources used by schools are required to promote and value cultural diversity and be free from discrimination.

Schools in New Zealand are self-governing through school boards and are able to make independent decisions about teaching and learning programmes and the day-to-day running of their school, including on how teachers and other adults are addressed by students. We do not direct schools to use terms like 'mātua' or 'whaea' but we recognise that te reo Māori is taonga and we have obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to preserve and protect it. We are working to ensure te reo Māori is universally available for all students in education, and we recognise enhancing its provision is an important aspect. As part of this, one of a school board's objectives under the Education and Training Act 2020 is to take all reasonable steps to make instruction in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori available in their school. This objective comes into effect on 1 January 2021.

In terms of your request for documentation, there is one document in scope of your request which I am releasing to you in part as **Appendix A**. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons. It is a letter from Minister Hipkins responding to a similar request from a member of the public.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes responses under the Act on our website. As such, 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 this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement & Support