Education Report: Proposed recapititation of Waianiwa School (4034)

To: Hon. Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education

Date: 26 November 2019
Priority: High

Security Level: In Confidence

Drifter: Maryse Anderson-Kereti

Key Contact: Julie Anderson, Director of Education for Otago-

Messaging seen by Communications team: No

Round Robin: No

Purpose of Report

This report asks you to agree to recapititate Waianiwa School (4034) under section 150(1) of the Act, from a Year 1 to 6 (contributing) primary school to a Year 1 to 8 (full) primary school.

You approved consultation on this proposal on 22 October 2019 [METIS 1202340 refers]. Consultation has been completed.

We recommend you agree to the proposal.

Summary

1 Waianiwa School is a decile 9, Year 1 to 6 contributing primary school, located in Waianiwa, Southland, 18 km from Invercargill. The July 2019 roll was 51.

2 In the application, and through its consultation, the board has provided the following reasons why it is seeking to recapititate:

   a. There is no pathway for students to attend a Year 7 to 15 co-educational school in Invercargill or Winton, which is where most of the school’s students choose to go for secondary schooling.

   b. Many students therefore move to one of the Year 7 and 8 full primary schools in the area, before moving to secondary education at Year 9. This creates an additional transition for students.

   c. When these students move to such a school after Year 6, the younger siblings often enrol also, as parents do not want to have to travel between two different schools. This has a significant impact on Waianiwa School’s roll. The board is particularly concerned about this, and would like to retain these families in the school and local community.
d. Recapitation would enable students, and their younger siblings, to remain at Waianiwa School, strengthening the sustainability of education in the area, and providing a more coherent education pathway.

e. Allowing for Year 7 and 8 provision would mean that students would have an additional two years maturity before moving to a Year 9 to 15 schooling option.

f. A group of parents is actively lobbying the board, so that their children can remain at a single local rural school until they attend secondary school.

Waianiwa School has a close relationship with Waianiwa Kindergarten, which is the only Early Childhood Education centre in the area. The kindergarten staff consider that that the recapitation will be positive for the community.

Parents of current students generally support recapitation, and most have advised they would retain their children at the school if this were to eventuate.

Waianiwa School’s Education Review Office’s (ERO) report of February 2017 indicated this school responds effectively to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration. The school works collaboratively with families and external specialists to design individualised programmes for children with high needs. ERO is due to conduct its next review in 2020.

A network impact assessment report has been completed. We consider that recapitation would not impact on the wider school network.

We have completed formal consultation on this proposal with the boards of schools whose rolls might be affected if you approve recapitation. Of 10 local schools one supports the application, six have no concerns, and three oppose recapitation (although few if any Waianiwa students attend these schools).

We also consulted NZEI and the PPTA. No response has been received.

Students in Year 7 do not have automatic entry to co-educational provision in Invercargill City or Winton, which is the preferred pathway for parents.

We recommend that you approve recapitation of Waianiwa School.
Recommended Actions

We recommend that you:

a. note that you have agreed to consultation on a proposal to recapitulate Waianiwa School (4034), from a Year 1 to 6 (contributing) primary school to a Year 1 to 8 (full) primary school [METIS 1202340 refers], and this consultation has been completed;

b. agree, under section 150(1) of the Education Act 1989, to recapitulate Waianiwa School from a Year 1 to 6 contributing primary school to a Year 1 to 8 full primary school;

c. sign the attached letters to the Board of Trustees chairperson, and local Members of Parliament, informing them of your decision;

d. agree that this Education Report be proactively released in line with your expectations that information be released as soon as possible. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

26/11/2019

Release / Not release
Background

1. Waianiwa School is a Year 1 to 6, decile 9 co-educational contributing primary school, situated in Waianiwa, 18 km west of Invercargill.

2. The 2019 July actual roll was 51, composed of 32 (62.7%) NZ European/Pākeha, 9 (17.6%) Asian, 8 (15.7%) Māori, 1 (2%) Pacific student, and 1 (2%) other ethnicity.

3. The school has a 2019 assured staffing entitlement of 3.50 Full Time Teacher Equivalents (FTTE). The roll increased to 51 students in June 2019, meaning an increase in FTTE and a change in Principal U grade status.

4. The school has four teaching spaces with an approximate capacity for 100 students. It was 45% utilised as at October 2018. The roll at Waianiwa School has been fairly consistent at around 40 to 55 students over the last six years.

Waianiwa School historic March, July, and October rolls; 2013-2019

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The application

5. In its application, and through its consultation, the board has provided the following reasons why it is seeking to recapitate:

   a. The board identifies that there is no pathway for students to attend a Year 7 to 15 co-educational school in Invercargill or Winton, which is where most of the school's students choose to go for secondary schooling.

   b. Many students therefore move to one of the Year 7 to 8 full primary schools in the area, before moving to secondary education at Year 9. This creates an additional transition for students.

   c. When these students move to such a school after Year 6, the younger siblings often enrol also, as parents do not want to have to travel between two different schools. This has a significant impact on Waianiwa School's roll. The board is particularly concerned about this, and would like to retain these families in the school and local community.

   d. Recapitation would enable students, and their younger siblings, to remain at Waianiwa School, strengthening the sustainability of education in the area, and providing a more coherent education pathway.

   e. Providing for Year 7 and 8 provision would mean that students would have an additional two years maturity before moving to a Year 9 to 15 schooling.

   f. The closure of Isla Bank School (Year 1 to 8) in late 2018 meant a change to the Transport Entitlement Zones (TEZs) for neighbouring Year 1 to 8 schools. These new TEZs now encroach on Waianiwa School's catchment.
g. A group of parents is actively lobbying the board, so that their children can remain at a single local rural school until they attend secondary school.

6 Waianiwa School has a close relationship with Waianiwa Kindergarten, which is the only Early Childhood Education centre in the area. The kindergarten staff consider that that the recapitation will be positive for the community.

Network analysis

7 A map of schools in the area, the 2019 student distribution, and a table of Year 7-15 options are included in Annex 1.

8 The education pathway for Waianiwa students is disjointed. The education review of Invercargill schools in 2004 removed access for students in Waianiwa to enrol for Year 7 at Collingwood Intermediate, which was located on the western edge of Invercargill. This school was closed as part of the review.

9 Some Year 7 and 8 students previously attended Isla Bank School, approximately 14 minutes from Waianiwa School. This was closed in 2018. There are two Year 7 to 8 primary schools at a similar distance (16 – 17 minutes) – Drummond Primary School and Lochiel School. A third Year 1 to 8 primary school, Otautau School, is about 26 minutes’ drive away.

10 Waianiwa School’s catchment area falls outside the enrolment schemes for Invercargill secondary schools, which are Year 7 to 15. The northern end of Waianiwa School’s catchment area is included in the Central Southland College’s enrolment zone. Aparima College, Riverton, is the closest (24km west) Year 7 to 15 co-educational provision that does not have an enrolment scheme. Historically, students do not attend Aparima College. Access to this school is restricted by Waianiwa School’s catchment area falling outside the Transport Entitlement Zone (TEZ) for Aparima College.

11 In March 2019 the school held a 58% market share. 23% of Year 1 to 6 students who resided within the Waianiwa Planning Network Catchment (PNC) attended state integrated provision. There is no set pathway for students attending Waianiwa School. This might be due to ineligibility to enrol as of right in Year 7 to 15 provision in Invercargill and limited TEZ access.

12 Retaining Year 7 and 8 students would not put Waianiwa School at risk of overcrowding. If the school were to retain 100% of Year 7 and 8 students in the PNC the roll is projected to increase by approximately 10 students and be between 50 and 55 students.

13 Based on our analysis it is estimated that the proposed increase would have a negligible impact on the wider network.

Education Review Office

14 The Education Review Office (ERO) visited the school in February 2017. The report confirmed the following points:

- The school’s student achievement information shows that more than 70% of children achieve at expected levels in reading. Achievement in writing and mathematics has improved over recent years. Children with high needs make good progress against individual goals.
• This school responds effectively to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

• The board’s commitment to improving student achievement and progress is evident in the number of children receiving additional help and the extra resources the board is providing for this.

• The board and principal agree that a deeper understanding of internal evaluation would lead to the implementation of more robust processes.

• The board and principal are strongly focused on improving student achievement and are putting in place the necessary guidelines, expectations, systems and practices to support this.

Initial engagement

15 Waianiwa School has carried out consultation with its parent community, as part of its self-review process.

16 The feedback from the survey showed a desire amongst parents to become a Year 1 to 8 school and to increase the school’s roll. The survey of parents indicates a preference for the rural setting and opportunities for developing leadership skills in a smaller school.

17 Parents of Year 4, 5 and 6 students indicated that their children would remain at Waianiwa School if it were to recapitulate - 75%, 63% and 83% respectively.

Consultation

18 We have completed formal consultation on this proposal with the boards of schools whose rolls might be affected if you approve recapitulation. One of the 10 local schools supported the application and six had no concerns. Three opposed the application.

a. Aparima College Board of Trustees considers that there is a viable composite (Year 7 to 15) option for Waianiwa School students in Riverton. The board views the application to be in the self-interest of the school and does not see how a recapitulation would benefit the wider context of education options in Southland.

b. Riverton (primary) School indicated support for Aparima College. The board believes that recapitulating country schools could have a ‘huge’ impact on contributing schools and the surrounding high schools. A change in the network could mean a change to the TEZs and eventually affect Year 7 to 8 students attending Aparima College.

c. Southland Boys' High School did not support the recapitulation. The board did not believe that a recapitulation would benefit the wider network, and considers that, for the number of students involved, it is an unnecessary action.
The Waianiwa School Board of Trustees provided a response to the opposing views of Aparima College and Riverton School, stating that Riverton is not a viable pathway for their students. Historically, students do not attend Aparima College, with two students attending in the past five years. The Waianiwa School Board indicated that parents work in Invercargill and therefore enrol their child in schools in this vicinity. Other families choose the option of integrated schooling available in Winton with the foresight of enrolment at Central Southland College, Winton.

We also consulted NZEI and the PPTA. No response has been received.

Staffing

The school roll is currently on the threshold for having either two or three teachers. There have previously been two teachers, with a third teacher approved earlier in 2019 as the roll has increased to 51. The teaching entitlement for 2019 is 3.5 FTTE. Recapitation would not affect the number of teachers, though it would increase the FTTE to an estimated 3.7.

It is unlikely that the difference of around 10 students would have any impact on the staffing at any other local schools.

Financial Implications

The potential financial impact revolves around whether the school would sustain a roll of 51 or more without the Year 7 and 8 students. It currently sits around this threshold. There is no significant difference in staffing for the expanded roll compared with the current roll of 51. The principal's U Grade has recently been increased to U2, due to the increase in the July roll.

Based on the former roll of 50 or less, the change would have resulted in increased costs of around $77,000 (excl GST) per annum.

School transport

School transport assistance is provided to students who are attending their closest appropriate school and where suitable public transport is unavailable. If the recapitation were to be approved the school's Transport Entitlement Zone (TEZ) would be altered to reflect the increase in year levels and the TEZs of adjacent Year 1 – 8 schools would correspondingly reduce.

Any students currently receiving School Transport Assistance in Years 7 and 8 in the area whose eligibility is affected by the recapitulation would continue to be able to receive this assistance until they complete their Year 8 schooling, or if their address or the school they are attending were to change.

Property

The school has adequate teaching spaces to accommodate approximately 100 students. The board owns a two teaching space building, which is used as a library/multipurpose space area. There is no concern about the risk of exceeding the accommodation capacity as a result of recapitulation.
Conclusion

28 We recommend that you agree to the proposal, for the following reasons:
   
   a. There are sound reasons for the school pursuing recapititation in terms of student pathways.
   
   b. There is overall support for the proposal. Parents of current students, and the local kindergarten, support recapitation. Seven of the local schools either support or do not oppose the application. Of the three that oppose it, none attracts a significant number of Waianiwa School students.
   
   c. Consultation with sector bodies has not elicited any response.
   
   d. Waianiwa School's ERO report indicates confidence in the achievement of students and the operation and management of the school.

Risks

29 We do not perceive any significant risks in approving recapitation.

Next Steps

30 If you approve recapitation, please sign the attached letter to the Waianiwa School Board of Trustees and return it to the Ministry (Annex 2).

31 Please also sign the attached letters to local Members of Parliament, to be sent once the board has been informed of your decision (Annex 3).

32 Ministry staff will support the school as necessary in implementing the change.

33 The school will update its strategic plan and charter to reflect the change.

Proactive Release

34 It is intended that this Education Report be proactively released as soon as practical, in line with your expectations. Any information that might need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Annexes

Annex 1: Map of surrounding schools, map of student distribution, and table of access to Year 7-15 provision [Withheld in accordance with s 9(2)(a) OIA 1982]

Annex 2: Letter to the Board Chair

Annex 3: Letters to local MPs
Matthew Strang
Chairperson
Waianiwai School Board of Trustees

Dear Matthew

Further to my letter of October 2019, the Ministry of Education has completed consultation on my behalf with the boards of schools whose roles might be affected by your proposed recapitulation, to become a Year 1 – 8 full primary school. The Ministry has provided me with the consultation feedback and I have taken the time to consider it.

Having considered all the information put before me I have determined that Waianiwai School will cease to be a contributing school and will become a full primary school. As from Term 1 2020 Waianiwai School may enrol students and provide education at Years 7 and 8.

I trust this change will assist in providing local students with improved pathway options for their education.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education
Sarah Dowie  
MP for Invercargill  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Sarah

I am writing to let you know that I have agreed to increase the year levels provided at Waianiwa School, changing it from a Year 1 – 6 contributing primary school to a Year 1 – 8 full primary school. This will take effect from Term 1, 2020.

This will enable students to remain at Waianiwa School until Year 8, before moving onto secondary school at Year 9, whereas currently they must change school at Year 7.

I do not expect this change to have any material impact on any other schools in the area.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education
Rino Tirakatene  
MP for Te Tai Tonga  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Rino

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This will enable students to remain at Waianiwa School until Year 8, before moving onto secondary school at Year 9, whereas currently they must change school at Year 7.

I do not expect this change to have any material impact on any other schools in the area.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hipkins  
Minister of Education