

Te Whānau o Ōtūmatua Board of Trustees

Opening and Closing the Kura Policy

Purpose

This policy will ensure the kura meets all legislative and regulatory requirements for opening and closing the school, including the number of required half days, term dates, emergency closures, and any variations to kura hours or timetables.

Policy

The kura complies with the Education and Training Act 2020 and the Education (When State Schools Must Be Open and Closed) Regulations 2024. The board ensures the kura:

- is open for the required number of half days each year
- operates during the term dates set by the Ministry of Education
- closes only in accordance with legislative criteria
- follows all directives from the Ministry of Education and the Secretary of Education

The tumuaki assures the board that the kura has met all opening, closing, and reporting requirements.

Guidelines

1. Opening Requirements

The board ensures the kura is open:

- for two half days per day, Monday to Friday
- during the official term dates set by the Ministry of Education
- for the required number of half days each year

The board may vary when half days occur or apply to be open for fewer half days if required.

2. Planned Closures

The board may close the kura for a specified number of half days each year, as permitted by the Minister of Education. The board ensures that:

- any planned closure meets the legislative criteria
- closures beyond the permitted number of half days receive Ministerial approval
- applications for approval are made through the local Ministry of Education office

Strike or lockout:

If the kura is closed due to a strike or lockout, the affected half days are treated as if the school was open.

Paid union meetings:

The kura remains open for instruction during paid union meetings.

3. Unplanned Closures

The kura may close due to:

- epidemic
- flood

- fire
- natural disaster
- any other emergency

If the kura closes for these reasons:

- the Ministry of Education is notified
- the board may apply to the Secretary of Education to reduce the required number of half days (Education and Training Act 2020, s 659)

The kura follows all directives from the Secretary of Education regarding opening or closing during:

- a state of emergency
- an epidemic
- a transition period from a state of emergency (Education and Training Act 2020, s 653–657)

4. Varying Kura Hours in a Kura Day

The kura must be open for two half days each day. The board may vary start and finish times provided that:

- one half day (minimum 2 hours) ends before noon
- one half day begins after noon
- the board has adequately consulted with:
 - the school community
 - anyone else the board believes may be affected
- the board is satisfied that students will not receive less instructional time than students at comparable kura
- reasonable steps are taken to notify students and parents

Short-term operational variations:

If the variation is for operational reasons and lasts no more than two days and no variation has occurred in the previous six weeks, then consultation and notification requirements do not apply.

5. Board Assurance

The tumuaki assures the board that:

- the kura has been open for the required number of half days
- the kura has operated during the correct term dates
- any closures or variations have met legislative requirements
- all required notifications and approvals have been completed

6. Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed according to the Board's Review Schedule or earlier if required due to legislative change or identified need.

Prepared by: Gabrielle Wall, Commissioner
Date of Approval: 01 August 2026
Review Date: August 2029
Version: 1