



29/09/2023

Erika Whittome

[fyi-request-24022-09fc1c3b@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-24022-09fc1c3b@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe Erika,

**OIA: 1317267 – Hiring back of unvaccinated teachers**

Thank you for your email of 3 September 2023 to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

*I refer you to <https://fyi.org.nz/request/19702-total-no-teachers-terminated-due-to-mandates> which says that 447 teachers left their teaching positions with an exit reason coded by the school as 'covid'.*

*As we all know, many teachers' employments were terminated under the vaccination orders and these orders were repealed Sept 2022.*

- 1. How many of these 447 teachers have you hired back to teaching positions?*
- 2. Please would you share the number of open teaching vacancies as of 16Nov 2021 and as of today.*

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

Regarding **part one** of your request, as outlined in the Ministry's previous response linked in your request, the Ministry introduced a payroll category in November 2021 to record the number of teachers who left their positions for COVID-19-related reasons. Under this payroll category, a teacher may be recorded as leaving a position for several COVID-19-related reasons, such as health or family obligations.

It is important to note that the category does not isolate whether teachers voluntarily left the workforce or left due to the vaccine mandate. Therefore, reliable conclusions cannot be drawn regarding the volume of teachers who may have left their position due to the vaccine mandate.

We can, however, confirm that, between November 2021 and 12 September 2023 (when the data was extracted), 457 teachers left their teaching positions with an exit reason coded by the school as 'COVID'. As of 12 September 2023, 216 of these teachers had been rehired.

Regarding **part two** of your request, teachers and early learning educators are directly employed by schools and early learning services. There is no central staffing agency or government



department responsible for staff placement. As all job applications are made directly to the employing school or early childhood service, information regarding open vacancies is therefore held by schools and early childhood services.

I am therefore refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the Ministry does not hold this information, and we have no grounds for believing that the aggregate information requested is either held by, or more closely connected to the functions of, another department or organisation subject to the Act.

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



Anna Welanyk  
**Hautū | Deputy Secretary**  
**Te Pou Ohumahi Mātauranga | Education Workforce**