

02 SEP 2015

Tony Meyer
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Dear Mr Meyer

Thank you for your email of 5 August 2015 in which you requested the following information:

- 1) *A list of the cases, since 1989, where the Minister has prescribed circumstances that permitted a school to open on a Saturday or Sunday. Please include the dates where the opening was permitted, the school(s) affected, and all other specifics of the prescribed circumstances*
- 2) *All documentation around the five most recent cases, i.e. the request from the school, any internal documentation around the request, and the response provided to the school.*

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

School openings on Saturdays or Sundays

Section 65C(1) of the Education Act 1989 states that schools must be closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays. Section 65C(2) allows the Minister to prescribe circumstances in which Boards of Trustees may open their schools on a Saturday or Sunday.

School terms and holidays are published in the *Education Gazette*. You can access the *Gazette* at www.edgazette.govt.nz (click 'Notices' for terms and holiday dates).

From 2001 to 2005, the Minister of Education gave Boards of Trustees the authority to open their school for instruction on a Saturday or Sunday (except for public holidays), if they were satisfied that this would be in the best interests of students. From 2006, Boards of Trustees have been required to apply to the Minister of Education if they wish to open their school for instruction on a Saturday or Sunday.

The cases, since 1989, where the Minister has permitted a school to open on a Saturday or Sunday

I am partially declining this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, because information relating to the cases which occurred prior to 2000 is held in archives and cannot be made available without considerable use of Ministry resources. In order to respond more effectively to you, I considered consulting with you, or extending the due date of your request, or charging you, but decided against

these because the information you have requested would still take a long time to find and collate.

Since 2000, the various Ministers of Education have received 9 requests from schools to open on Saturday or Sunday. The Minister concerned gave permission in 2 of these cases.

Documentation about the five most recent cases

I have interpreted this part of your request as relating to those cases where school opening was permitted. I am providing you with the documentation which relates to the two cases mentioned above, in which the Minister gave permission for the schools to open on Saturday or Sunday:

School	Documents
Te Rapa Primary School	Education Report (SS01/52/00/3): Application to open Te Rapa Primary School on Saturday 25 March 2006. Attached to the Report is a letter from the Minister of Education to Paul Winter, Chairperson of Te Rapa School Board of Trustees
Hagley Community College	Request from the Principal to the Minister of Education, 25 June 2009 Response from the Minister of Education to the Principal, 21 July 2009

You may be interested in the following information relating to these two cases.

Te Rapa Primary School

In December 2005, the School requested approval from the Minister of Education to open for instruction on a Saturday, in order to celebrate its centenary. It planned formal lessons and a full school production on that day, which all students and teachers were required to attend. The Minister gave his approval, as the school had correctly applied for permission to open on a Saturday, for an education programme which equated to a normal school day, and the attendance of students and teachers was compulsory.

Hagley Community College

In June 2009, the College requested approval from the Minister to open at weekends and during term breaks to deliver community courses and qualification-based programmes. Approval was not required by the Minister, provided that all students under the age of 16 attended school full-time during normal school hours. Any programme which involves attendance outside normal school hours, including weekends or during holidays, is an optional choice for senior students.

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.

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 614

Yours sincerely



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support