



1 MAR 2017

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Dear Jake

Thank you for your requests of 31 January 2017 for the following information:

- *A summary of absence rates around secondary schools in Wairarapa for 2016*
- *How many people dropped out of secondary school in 2016 in Wairarapa?*

Your requests have been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

### **Absence rates**

We collect data through an annual voluntary attendance survey of state and state-integrated schools in term two of each year, which is used to provide a week-long snapshot of national attendance and an analysis of national attendance over all of term two. A report based on the 2015 data was published in August 2016, and we anticipate the 2016 report will be available in the second half of this year. Accordingly, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not yet exist. The 2015 report is available from our *Education Counts* website at the following address:

<http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2503/attendance-in-new-zealand-schools-2015>.

This webpage contains two spreadsheets with data tables showing a breakdown of attendance data, including for students attending schools in Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa Districts.

- The spreadsheet "Attendance Survey Data.xls" contains the analysis of attendance over all of term 2 for 2011-2015.
- The spreadsheet "Survey Week Data.xls" contains the one-week national snapshot for 2002-2015.

This snapshot is based on attendance in all of school term two 2015. The percentage of students attending regularly is defined in this report as more than 90 percent of the time. The 2015 data shows that the numbers of students who meet this definition of attending school regularly in the three Wairarapa districts has been steady since the 2012 survey.

Students attending regularly by year				
District	2012 (%)	2013 (%)	2014 (%)	2015 (%)
Masterton	73.1	70.9	69.1	74.0
Carterton	78.7	74.8	76.2	77.4
South Wairarapa	69.3	63.1	68.5	67.3
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>69.4</b>

In 2015, the number of students in each district attending classes less than 75% of the time was as follows:

District	2015 (%)
Masterton	5.7
Carterton	2.6
South Wairarapa	7.1
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>7.0</b>

While schools, parents and guardians are legally responsible for ensuring children are attending school, we all have a part to play when it comes to the education of students. The Ministry set up an integrated attendance service in 2013 to get more children engaged in schooling. Schools can refer regularly unjustifiably absent students to their local attendance service for additional support, when contact with the student's family or whānau doesn't improve attendance. We contract sixteen regional attendance service providers around the country to work with students and families.

Our website provides information for parents about non attendance, and what they can do to encourage their children to attend school regularly. You can find this information at <http://parents.education.govt.nz/when-your-child-is-ditching-school/>

### Number of school leavers

I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information is not yet available. We will start collecting information about student retention and achievement in March, once schools have had time to finalise their rolls. We anticipate making this information available later this year.

By law, all children aged 6 to 16 in New Zealand must be enrolled in school. There are some situations where a 15 year old can get permission to leave school early, such as to go onto other training, or to take up employment. It's important to note that students who leave school early may continue with education by other means, for example through a polytechnic, or an apprenticeship, or through special admission to university after their twentieth birthday.

The total number of school leavers in each Wairarapa district in 2015, broken down by the age they left school is shown in the table below.

	age				
	15	16	17	18	19+
Wairarapa school leavers, 2015	4	84	211	221	18
Leavers with qualifications above NCEA level 2 or equivalent	—	55	184	210	12
Leavers with qualifications below NCEA level 2 or equivalent	4	29	27	11	6

Students not engaged in learning who leave school without a qualification are at a disadvantage compared to the rest of the population. Finishing high school allows students to pick up the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in our knowledge-based society. Research shows students who leave schools with Level 1 NCEA or below have a higher risk of unemployment than students with Level 2 NCEA or higher.

We have been working closely with schools to provide an increasing amount of practical help to individual students, with a focus on identifying how many students are at risk of leaving school without Level 2 NCEA, who they are, and what help they need to achieve. These options include:

- **Achievement Retention Transitions 2013-17 (ART)** is part of the Ministry's successful Youth Guarantee initiative, and is designed to support students identified as not being on track to achieve Level 2 NCEA. Our Youth Guarantee advisors support schools to raise the number of students achieving Level 2 NCEA by focusing on student pathways and on how schools can best meet the needs of students. Two of the ways we make this possible are by developing individual education plans or through monitoring schools to develop learning programmes, or providing access to other learning through our Vocational Pathways programme to further study, training or employment. You can read more about ART and Vocational Pathways on our Youth Guarantee website at: <http://www.youthguarantee.net.nz/start-your-journey/>.
- **Trades academies** deliver trades and technology programmes to secondary students, based on partnerships between schools, tertiary institutions, industry training organisations and employers. Students in years 11 to 13 interested in a career in trades or technology are able to combine study at a trades academy with studies towards NCEA and a nationally transferable tertiary qualification. As at September 2016, Wairarapa schools have access to 100 trades academy places at Weltec in Wellington, U-Skills at UCOL and Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre.

A 2016 Ministry monitoring report found students who attend trades academies were more likely to achieve NCEA Level 2, and more likely to stay on in education at age 17 than students in an equivalent comparison group who did not take part. The report also indicated that trades academy students were more likely to be in full employment and less likely to receive welfare benefits after completing their study. Information about trades academies is available on our website at <http://www.education.govt.nz/trades-academies/>.

- **Count Me In** started in 2015 to increase the number of Māori and Pasifika 16-18 year olds currently outside the education system achieving Level 2 NCEA. The aim of Count Me In is to re-engage students with learning and provide targeted and tailored support so students can work towards attaining NCEA Level 2 or an equivalent

qualification. Count Me In works with a range of agencies, including the Police, Child, Youth and Family and community organisations to find and support these young people. We have a contract with Rangitāne o Wairarapa to run Count Me In locally. You can find more information about this on our website at <http://www.education.govt.nz/count-me-in/>

- **ARoNA** supports more than 2,000 students at risk of not achieving nationwide. In the Wairarapa, Rangitāne o Wairarapa is contracted to support students to achieve NCEA Level 2. ARoNA provides tailored support to individual students, career guidance, holiday programmes and engaging with parents, family, and whānau to gain their commitment to supporting students. We're currently helping schools to track the credits being attained by 2,778 students to ensure all ARoNA students know how many credits they need to attain NCEA. Additional mentoring allows us to reach most of the identified ARoNA students that would benefit from such support. This support is particularly effective, because it can be tailored to meet the specific needs of students.

Thank you again for your request. If you have any further questions about this or any other matters, please contact The Ministry's Media Team in the first instance at [Media.Team@education.govt.nz](mailto:Media.Team@education.govt.nz).

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to refer this response to an Ombudsman. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.govt.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



Katrina Casey  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Sector Enablement and Support**