

Closing and Merging schools

– what happens now

key messages to staff

This fact sheet includes information for staff – teaching and support staff, and those on permanent and fixed term agreements – on the implications for them if the final decision is that their school will close or merge.

Staff are encouraged to discuss their situation and seek advice from their union or if not a union member with an appropriate advisor.

Employers/Change Managers can contact the NZ School Trustees Association for advice.

- » There will be a process which:
 - will cover all employees whether permanent or fixed term
 - is contained in a collective agreement or an individual employment agreement.
 - » Boards will have a change manager to work through the process with both employees and the relevant union.
 - » The first step will be to confirm who is permanently employed and who is employed fixed term.
Note: *some employees may have both a permanent and a fixed term role and both roles will need to be confirmed.*
 - » For fixed term employees their termination will be in accordance with their letter of appointment and the applicable employment agreement.
 - » For permanent employees, there are various options outlined in their employment agreement, depending on their current role, the outcome could be reassignment or reconfirmation or appointment to a new position or disestablishment of the existing position and access to the surplus staffing options contained in the applicable collective or individual agreement.
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Closing schools

- » All employees will get written notice from the Board – the actual amount of notice that must be given is outlined in their employment agreement.
- » The Board will need to support permanent employees during this process while they decide which surplus staffing option/s are applicable, depending on the options contained in their employment agreement.



Merging schools

- » The appointed Board (i.e. the continuing board) of the newly merged school (i.e. the reorganised or continuing school) will manage the process to:
 - appoint a principal to the school being formed by the merger
 - undertake a needs analysis and establish the new staffing structure (following consultation with the employees in the schools to be merged and relevant union) for the school being formed by the merger
 - seek, in writing, any expressions of interest for voluntary options
***Note:** the Board is not bound to agree to any voluntary offer.
However, their decision, once in writing, is final*
 - reconfirm or reassign permanent employees to suitable positions in the new staffing structure
 - advertise any unfilled roles
 - give written notice to any employee in the schools being merged who do not secure a position in the new staffing structure and support permanent employees while they decide which surplus staffing option they wish to elect.

Further information is available
on the *Shaping Education* website
www.shapingeducation.govt.nz

