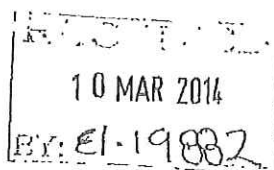




Appendix 1

Cathedral House on Washington
2/9 Washington Way
PO Box 4544
Christchurch 8140
New Zealand



5 March 2014

Hon Hekia Parata
Minister of Education
Private Bag 18041
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Dear Minister Parata

**Re: Proposal to Close St Paul's School (MOE No. 3541) &
Our Lady of Fatima School (MOE No. 3460) and
establish St Francis of Assisi Catholic School**

I write regarding our agreement in principle to reorganise Catholic primary schooling within the Catholic parish of Mairehau to provide a new state integrated full primary school entity (to be named St Francis of Assisi Catholic School), with a maximum roll of 495 students, situated on the St Francis of Assisi Parish site at 370 Innes Road (commencing in term 1, 2016).

I have undertaken a third and final round of consultation on two options for developing this Catholic schooling provision. This third round of consultation was limited to the affected parties - the staff (the employees) and the boards (the employers) of the two schools.

The independent facilitator's report on this consultation is enclosed.

I have given serious consideration to the consultation responses. The detail and results of my considerations and deliberations on the feedback I have received to my consultation are enclosed.

My decision and proposal to you is to close both St Paul's School and Our Lady of Fatima (OLF) School and establish and integrate a new school, St Francis of Assisi Catholic School, on the current OLF site.

Yours sincerely

† Barry Jones
Bishop of Christchurch

Encl. 1 (Executive Summary & Decision Proposal)
Encl. 2 (Independent Facilitator's Consultation Report)

St Francis of Assisi Catholic School (Mairehau) – Process for Establishment

Executive Summary

1. I undertook a third and final round of consultation on two options for developing this agreed in principle Catholic schooling provision; the two consultation options were:

Option A: Cancel the integration agreements for both current schools and establish a new state integrated school on the current Our Lady of Fatima (OLF) School site. In this option all positions at both schools would be terminated and positions at the new school would be advertised nationally.

Option B: Cancel the integration agreement and close St Paul's School and increase the maximum roll of Our Lady of Fatima School and manage the staffing of the larger (and re-named) Our Lady of Fatima School as a merger. In this option the staff from both schools would have the first option of equivalent positions in the 'new schooling entity', with the principal's position being advertised nationally. This option could only apply in the event that both boards and all staff unanimously support this as the appropriate option.

2. No consensus of support for any particular option resulted from this third round of consultation:

(a) 21 staff responded to the survey on the two options; of these, 13 staff (62%) voted in favour of option A and 8 staff (38%) voted in favour of option B.

(b) 15 of the OLF staff did not respond to the survey on the two options and chose to put in a submission in favour of the option we withdrew from the consultation process following the second round of consultation – the continuation of OLF School and the closure of St Paul's School; an option that the staff of St Paul's School would not support.

(c) The submission from the Board of Trustees of St Paul's School notes benefits in both option A & option B and they would support either option, as determined by me (as Bishop and Proprietor) and by you (as the Minister of Education).

(d) The submission from the Board of Trustees of OLF seeks the reinstatement of the option we withdrew from the consultation process following the second round of consultation – the continuation of OLF School and the closure of St Paul's School; an option that Board of Trustees of St Paul's School would not support.

3. The submission of the OLF School Board of Trustees provided their view that the implementation of option A would lack the genuineness that a reorganisation requires should redundancies arise.

I do not concur with this point of view.

My proposal, regardless of the option chosen to develop our agreed in principle new schooling entity, is a genuine reorganisation of Catholic primary school provision in St Francis of Assisi Parish due to an earthquake.

OLF School was the parish school of Our Lady of Fatima Parish and St Paul's School was the parish school of St Paul's Parish. Neither Our Lady of Fatima Parish nor St Paul's Parish currently exists.

In January 2012 I, Bishop Barry Jones, established the new parish entity of St Francis of Assisi Parish by the amalgamation of Our Lady of Fatima Parish and St Paul's Parish (along with Holy Family Parish).

The new schooling entity of St Francis of Assisi School will be the parish school of St Francis of Assisi Parish.

This is a genuine reorganisation of Catholic primary school provision in St Francis of Assisi Parish due to an earthquake.

4. As Bishop and Proprietor of the two schools, and having regard for the widest interests of St Francis of Assisi parish and its new schooling entity, it is incumbent upon me to make a decision in this matter.

As the Bishop responsible for this parish community I acknowledge and understand the pain of my parishioners. I accept and understand that earthquake enforced change is difficult to accept. It is the "goodbye" to the familiar and much loved cultures that hurts us all; but the earthquakes necessitate change to Catholic primary school provision in St Francis of Assisi Parish.

At such a time of renewal a Catholic parish school community is called beyond itself to unite and renew itself in fidelity to the understanding the Catholic Church has of parish primary schooling; bringing consistency with the mind of the Church in a time of enforced change.

5. Given the lack of consensus, my decision must be to seek your agreement to the implementation of option A (as detailed above).
6. In addition, I would ask your consideration of all surplus operations grant funds of both schools being retained in the new schooling entity and not being absorbed into the consolidated fund.