



Charter School Agency

5 December 2024

New charter schools announced

The five new charter schools announced today represent the diversity in education choices that will help lift achievement levels, Charter School Agency Chief Executive Jane Lee says.

The new charter schools were announced in Auckland by Associate Education Minister David Seymour. The five schools are:

- Christchurch North College (Christchurch)
- The BUSY School NZ (Auckland)
- Te Rito, Te Kura Taiao (Kaitaia)
- École Française Internationale (Auckland)
- North West Creative Arts College (Auckland)

Six new charter schools are now confirmed to open from term one 2025. The first, Mastery Schools New Zealand – Arapaki was announced in Christchurch last week.

“This is a huge day for education in New Zealand and recognition that diverse learning options have a place in our communities,” Ms Lee says.

“One of the five charter schools announced today will instruct students in te reo Māori, while lessons at École Française Internationale will be in French. This is a great example of how charter schools will provide greater flexibility in teaching and innovation in learning, and it’s the students who will benefit – the disengaged learners and those with learning difficulties.

“I welcome these schools to the charter school network and applaud the sponsors and education leaders for their vision and strategic approach to lifting student outcomes.

“These new charter schools will allow children from a range of backgrounds with various learning challenges, abilities and interests, the opportunity to learn in environments that help them progress and achieve, fostering growth in confidence, boosting self-esteem and empowering them to reach their potential.

“I also recognise that while we’ve reached a milestone today, there is a lot of work still to do and the true celebration for these new charter schools will be on their respective opening days,” she says.

Chair of the independent Charter School Authorisation Board, Justine Mahon, says a high bar has been set for charter schools to succeed.

“There has been a rigorous and highly competitive process to get to this point and today is an exciting step towards the ultimate goal of providing meaningful education alternatives for young people and their families.”

The Charter School Agency will now begin to focus on supporting the establishment of these schools and monitoring their performance.

There will be a further application round next year. Applications from those who were unsuccessful in the first round will have an opportunity for their applications to be reconsidered.

Editor’s notes:

Christchurch North College

Christchurch North College (CNC) is a school initially for years 7-10. It is sponsored by Christchurch Education Limited. The focus will be on students who have become disengaged from the education system, getting them ready and excited for secondary school. CNC will do this by providing individualised education and striving for educational equity.

Barriers to learning have been identified as a significant factor in a student’s disengagement. To combat this, CNC will remove barriers to education by providing things like uniforms, stationery, access to technology and meals for its students at no cost.

The BUSY School NZ

The BUSY School NZ, based in Auckland, is the New Zealand campus of The BUSY School which has nine campuses in Australia.

It will target disengaged year 11-13 students who are at risk of ‘falling through the cracks’ by providing education using a dual curriculum. Students will learn the national curriculum, as well as a vocational curriculum which focuses on their chosen career path.

The school will also provide students with a holistic wrap-around support system focused on mental wellbeing to ensure they get the most out of their education. It aims to help students gain meaningful employment opportunities after they graduate by creating a clear pathway from education to employment.

Te Rito, Te Kura Taiao

Te Rito, Te Kura Taiao will provide Kaitaia families with an option for educational immersion in reo Māori for mokopuna at primary school level.

Their innovation is their unique landscape and the intentional move to work together on the whenua. The 22-hectare property sits at the foot of Taumarumaru reserve in Doubtless Bay and encompasses three historical pā, connecting mokopuna to the land and its legacy.

The land will serve as the school's pūtaiao (science) classroom for exploration, species identification, kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and research.

Ecole Francaise Internationale Auckland

Ecole Francaise Internationale Auckland will offer an Agency for French Education Abroad (AFEA) accredited education which will ultimately be offered to both primary and secondary school students.

AFEA is supervised by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, ensuring the quality and consistency of the French curriculum is high. AFEA accreditation gives access to the French educational network abroad, which is the world's largest educational network.

The school's mission embraces the NZ International Education Strategy: Delivering an excellent education and student experience; Ensuring international education is resilient and sustainable and Developing global citizens. The school will support the passing of language, culture, and heritage to generations and improve the ability for international companies' recruitment and presence in NZ.

North West Creative Arts College

North West Creative Arts College will ultimately provide Auckland-based year 7-13 students with a co-education where they are taught the New Zealand Curriculum alongside a creative art of their choice. This innovative model will help students develop their creative talents while working towards NCEA, benefiting the students, families, and community.

The college will focus on a strong pastoral care programme as-well-as community outreach which will help students build connections through community-based projects.