



Introduction to the Charter School/Kura Hourua model

Charter schools/kura hourua offer greater flexibility in meeting students' needs

Charter schools/kura hourua aim to offer more choice for parents and students

They offer more flexibility in what is taught and how it is taught, as long as children are safe, attending school and achieving. Alongside the intended greater flexibility, they will be subject to greater oversight and accountability.

They are a new type of state-funded school based on a contract between the Crown and a sponsor (organisation or business).

The Māori name kura hourua draws on waka hourua, a double-hulled canoe. It signifies partnerships between the sponsors and the Government, and the sponsors and their communities.

Charter schools will sign up to deliver results for students

The operator of a charter school (known as the sponsor) will sign a 10-year contract (charter) to meet specified educational outcomes in return for state funding.

The contracts are between sponsors approved by the independent Charter School Authorisation Board, and the Charter School Agency.

All charter schools will meet core legal requirements, set out in the Education and Training Amendment Bill (the Bill) currently before parliament. Individual contracts will cover a broad range of matters relevant to the particular school. These include (but are not limited to)

- performance targets and outcomes for sponsors to meet
- specific measures that will be used to determine if those targets have been met
- the number or percentage of teaching positions must be filled by teachers with practising certificates, or persons holding a limited authority to teach
- the curriculum to be taught at the school and the mode of delivery
- the qualifications to be offered by the school
- the physical capacity of the school premises

This factsheet provides an introduction to the proposed model for establishing and operating charter schools, noting that legislation is still being considered by Parliament so some details may change. This is published by the Charter School Agency, an autonomous agency responsible for operational delivery of charter schools, hosted by the Ministry of Education.

Charter schools will be held to account for delivering results

Charter schools will be closely monitored, with regular reporting and auditing to check they are meeting the terms of their contracts including performance targets and outcomes.

If they are not meeting their contractual or legislative obligations, then there are a series of interventions that the Authorisation Board may take. The Education Review Office may be called in to review a school; the school may be required to take a specific action; and the final sanction is to terminate the contract and close the school.

The accountability measures including reporting, auditing and sanctions are more stringent than the previous Partnership Schools model that operated between 2013-2018. The Ministry of Education has drawn on previous experience to design an improved system for measuring and assessing performance to improve oversight and accountability.

Charter schools will be required to have a complaints policy which includes an independent review process of complaints. Complaints can also be made to an Ombudsman.

A new independent board and agency will oversee charter schools

The **Charter School Authorisation Board** will approve new charter schools, can decide to disestablish charter schools, can provide strategic advice to the Minister of Education, and has oversight of performance management. The Board will be appointed by the Minister and will be independent of the Ministry of Education, while having a close working relationship with the Ministry. Until the legislation is passed and the board appointed, an interim Establishment Board is providing advice.

Under the Bill, the Authorisation Board can delegate its functions to a public service chief executive which includes the chief executive of the Charter School Agency.

The **Charter School Agency** is accountable and responsible for the delivery of charter schools. Its role includes:

- secretariat for the Authorisation Board;
- managing the application process
- ensuring professional expertise is available to support charter schools
- negotiate and sign contracts with successful applicants and deliver funding
- monitor compliance with the contract
- and provide advice on sanctions to the Authorisation Board for non-performance.

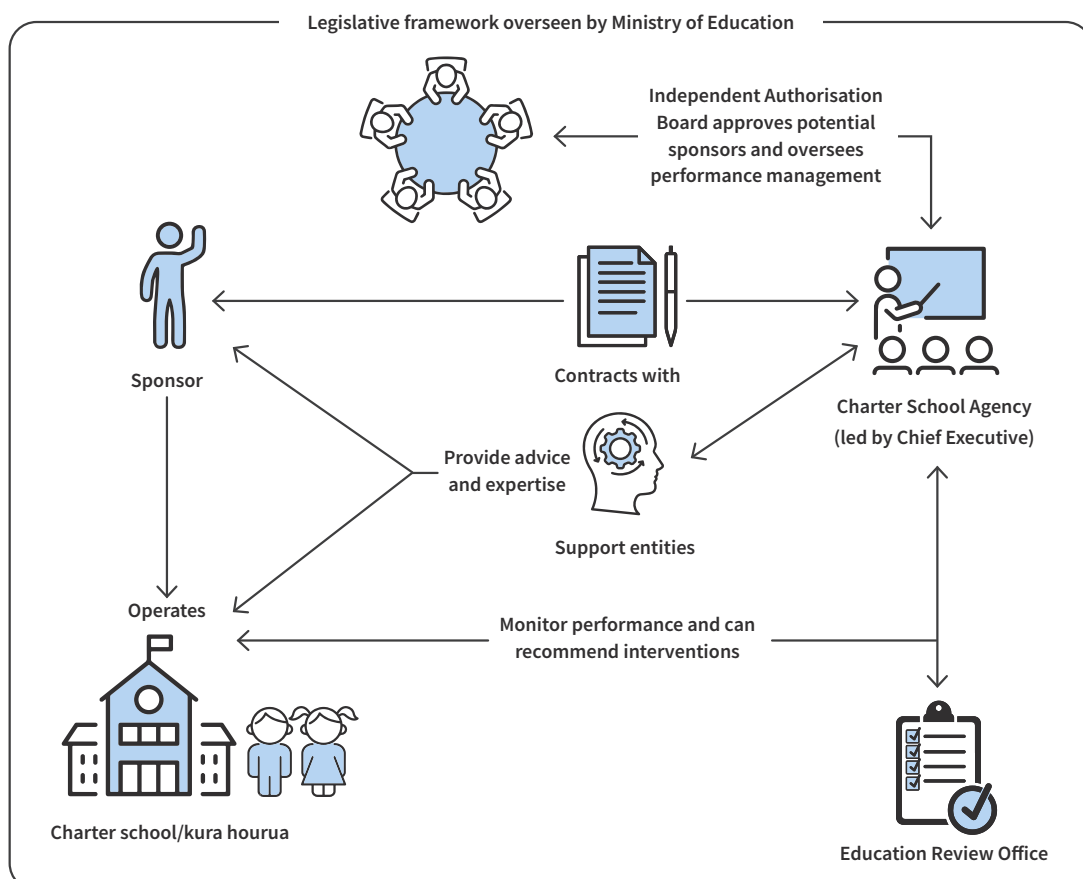
The Charter School Agency is an autonomous agency. It started work on 1 July 2024 and is still in the establishment phase.

The Ministry of Education will continue to be responsible for the policy and legislation setting the overall framework for the New Zealand education system. The Ministry of Education and ERO will have a role in providing advice to the Authorisation Board on specific elements of a charter school application.

Expert support will be available to charter schools

State schools have access to a wide range of support services, including support for school governance, finance and property matters. Contracted organisations will provide similar support services to prospective and new sponsors for charter schools through to their establishment, and ongoing running of school operations. Details will be provided once this is underway.

Key elements of the Charter School/Kura Hourua Model



State schools could become charter schools with the support of the community

There is an option for a state school board or community to work with a prospective sponsor to apply to become a charter school. The applicant would need to provide evidence of community support for the change and the Authorisation Board would need consult before making a decision on whether to accept the application. Under the Bill a specialist school cannot convert.

There is also scope for the Minister of Education to direct a state school to apply to convert to a charter school. The community would be consulted before decisions are made.

There's a robust process for approving charter schools

This year (2024) there's a process to select sponsors to open schools in term 1 next year and through 2025 and 2026. Decisions will be made later this year after the legislation has passed but we can get the process underway.

The Authorisation Board will be responsible for deciding which applicants are successful.

The first stage of the process is open until **9 August 2024** for applications from potential sponsors. The application pack is on the [Government Electronic Tender Service \(GETS\) website](#). Go to www.gets.govt.nz and search Charter School Agency.

This stage is intended to understand applicants' intentions and establish their suitability.

Applications that pass the 'fit and proper persons test' and are assessed as viable will be recommended to progress to the next stage.

There will be further opportunities to apply and the process may be refined in future.

Indicative timetable

11 July 2024	Applications open
9 August	Deadline for Stage 1 applications
First week September	Applicants contacted about next steps
September	Legislation expected to be passed
September	Authorisation Board appointed
September-October	Authorisation Board makes decisions on applications
October-November	Contracting
2025	First charter schools open



**Charter School
Agency**

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