

# Converting a public school to a charter school – what parents need to know

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## A public school converting to a charter school means big changes for your child's education

Under Government legislation, when a public school becomes a charter school it will continue to be funded through taxes but it will be privately operated. This means significant differences to your child's education because charter schools do not need to operate like public schools.

### How charter schools will operate

**Teachers:** Charter schools do not need to appoint qualified and registered teachers

**School boards:** Democratically elected school boards give public schools a strong connection to their community. In contrast, charter schools will operate according to a contract with a Minister-appointed body.

**Curriculum:** Charter schools can set their own curriculum and mode of delivery.

**Commitment to Te Tiriti:** Public schools must take reasonable steps to provide instruction in Te Reo Māori and tikanga Māori. Charter schools do not need to do this.

**Less transparency:** Public schools are required to make information available to parents who also have rights to seek information through the Official Information Act. There will be no requirement for a charter school to adhere to the same levels of transparency.

**Pay and conditions:** Charter school legislation means staff at your child's school may not receive the same pay and conditions as their colleagues in public schools and there are

restrictions on how charter school employees can negotiate fair pay.

**Resolving problems:** If things go wrong in a public school the Ministry of Education can intervene, working with the school to get things back on track. If a charter school does not meet its contractual obligations it could be closed, and you could lose your community school.

**Safeguarding:** Charter schools do not need to follow the education guidelines and safeguards required of public schools.

### How public schools become charter schools

Under Government legislation, existing public schools can be converted into privately operated charter schools. A proposal to convert a public school to a charter school can be instigated by the Minister, an individual in the school community or the school board.

The Minister of Education can also force a school to start the process of becoming a charter school.

Technically a community consultation is required, but the decision to privatise a school does not need to align with community sentiment.

**Because several months of planning goes into the proposal stage, it is best to get ahead and say NO to privatisation of your school BEFORE it is proposed by making a public stand against conversion. Look out for the NZEI Te Riu Roa campaign materials telling you how to do this:**

<https://bit.ly/nzeiteriuroacharterschools>