

Hon Kelvin Davis

MP for Te Tai Tokerau

Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti

Minister for Children

Minister of Corrections

Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)



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I.E.S 12 De Outubro 15 MAR 2021
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Tēnā koe Carlos

Thank you for your letter, received on 7 December 2020, to the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern. Given the broad themes raised relate to the Māori Crown relationship, I have been asked to respond in my capacity as the Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti.

In your letter, you first talk about Aotearoa New Zealand being an example to the international community. We are proud of our achievements as a small country in multiple areas such as policy, sport, culture, international relations and health. However, we do not shy away from our complex history when it comes to the severe negative impacts that colonisation has had on Māori as our indigenous population.

Our complex history came to the forefront in a series of hui (meetings) held across the country in 2018. New Zealanders were asked what they thought we needed to do to strengthen the relationship and how we can shift it from one focused on historical grievance to one focused on true partnership. This process reminded me how important and valuable local voices are and reinforced the exciting opportunity before us. These voices are captured in *Te ara whakamua ā tatou: Our path ahead*.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi

One of New Zealand's founding documents, Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed on 6 February 1840 in the spirit of partnership between two cultures. It allowed Britain to govern the country and new settlers, and Māori to retain rangatiratanga (self-determination) over their lands and treasures. Despite this, Māori have endured the loss of their land, culture, as well as suffered conflict and intergenerational trauma. These impacts were only heightened and accelerated due to the actions and omissions of the Government, in breach of Te Tiriti / the Treaty.

Today, the New Zealand Government is committed to engaging and partnering meaningfully with Māori on initiatives that, ultimately, will benefit the entire New Zealand population. Being a true Tiriti / Treaty partner means providing equal opportunities and input into the future of the nation and its people.

As Minister for Māori Crown Relations, it is one of my key responsibilities to make sure that the public service is equipped with the skills and capability to do this work. I recognise that this will be a long journey, but it is a necessary one if we are to move away from historical grievances and towards building a brighter future for Māori and their tūrangawaewae (ancestral land).

Respecting Māori, their history and their culture today

In order to make sure future generations are well educated about our country's history, there is provision for both English-medium learning through schools and Māori-medium learning through kura (Māori schools). Learning about New Zealand's history will be compulsory for all schools in 2022. Schools and kura can design their own local curriculum/marau ā-kura, guided by *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. This ensures schools and kura are teaching a curriculum that meets the needs of their community of learners whānau (extended family groups).

The new curriculum aims to span the full range of New Zealanders' experiences and will include the discovery of these islands by the voyaging ancestors of Māori, with their subsequent histories of settlement, migration and transformation, and the arrival of people from elsewhere. So not only will there be a more dedicated focus on Māori history, but also a focus on how New Zealand has become the diverse and inclusive nation it is.

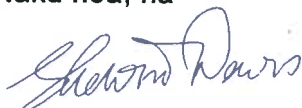
The Government recognises the broad and important role Māori have in the community, especially as tāngata whenua (indigenous people of the land). As a country, we are making good progress to integrate Māori culture more into the everyday lives of New Zealanders. Te reo Māori (the Māori language) is considered a taonga (treasure) and there are a number of initiatives to revitalise the language, including the Crown's Māori Language Strategy called *Maihi Karauna*. As a nation, we also recognise the legitimacy of tikanga Māori (Māori customary laws and practices) across a range of engagement and interactive settings.

Māori contribute to all aspects of life in New Zealand. We have just under 20 per cent of Members of Parliament with Māori ancestry and this Government is making changes to legislation to allow for greater representation of Māori at a local government level. Many Māori continue to be active in their own communities at a whānau, hapū and iwi level, whilst also contributing to broader society through their employment.

I have attached further websites you may find useful as you conduct research on Māori and New Zealand. You can find these at **Attachment One**.

As a former schoolteacher and principal, it is encouraging to know you are teaching your students to think critically about indigenous populations and how they have been impacted by the challenges of colonisation and globalisation. I have no doubt that, in doing so, they will be more well-rounded citizens who can help build a more prosperous environment for all peoples.

Nāku noa, nā



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Further information

- Treaty of Waitangi: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty-of-waitangi>
- NZ History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/>
- Te Ara: <https://teara.govt.nz/en>
- Te ara whakamua a tatou: Our path ahead:
<https://www.tearawhiti.govt.nz/assets/Maori-Crown-Relations-Roopu/3ca45b2b2b/Final-Submissions-Summary-Report.pdf>
- Draft Aotearoa New Zealand histories' curriculum:
<https://www.education.govt.nz/news/aotearoa-new-zealands-histories-in-our-national-curriculum-now-open-for-consultation/>
- Maihi Karauna: <https://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/a-matou-kaupapa/maihi-karauna>
- Māori culture: <https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/settling-in/maori-culture>