



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

Kāhui Ako

Guidance for Employers



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

Overview

This document provides information and guidance to schools involved in the changes to Kāhui Ako which come into effect from 28 January 2026.

The changes

As per [Budget 25 announcement](#), all Kāhui Ako will be disestablished, effective from 28 January 2026.

The moratorium on establishing new Kāhui Ako remains in place, in addition schools will be not able to join or move between Kāhui Ako after 22 May 2025.

Schools will not receive Kāhui Ako maintenance allowances, travel grants, or networking and induction funding for Kāhui Ako roles after 31 December 2025.

Schools will not receive resourcing for the operation of Kāhui Ako after 27 January 2026.

Who is affected by the changes

The changes impact the funding and staffing for Kāhui Ako member schools.

As Kāhui Ako roles will not be funded from 28 January 2026. School Boards will need to consider the implications of this for all school employees who are working in Kāhui Ako roles, including principals and teachers who hold leadership roles, across or within school teacher roles, recognition of leadership expertise or responsibility allowances, and any other positions which school boards have established for the operation of the Kāhui Ako.

We anticipate that all those currently holding roles in Kāhui Ako would continue with their mahi until the end of their fixed-term agreement or 27 January 2026, whichever is later.

ECE and tertiary institutes do not receive funding or resources to participate in Kāhui Ako and so are not included in this guidance.

What schools need to do

- ☐ Consider the implications of the disestablishment of your Kāhui Ako for your school. [Work through any changes with affected employees, in line with their employment agreement and your school's policies for managing change.](#)
- ☐ If changes in staffing entitlement for 2026 result in the school being overstaffed get advice from NZSBA, or your alternative employment adviser. Normal processes for overstaffing will apply.

Schools

Staffing

School Boards need to work through the impact of the changes with those leaders and teachers who hold Kāhui Ako roles. This will be different in every school depending on the arrangements that the Board has put in place. Most Kāhui Ako leaders, across and within school teachers receive release time from their substantive leadership or classroom teaching role to undertake their Kāhui Ako responsibilities. Teachers who hold Kāhui Ako roles are most likely to return to their usual roles.

As Kāhui Ako will be disestablished, we anticipate they will stop working in these roles no later than the start of the 2026 school year.

Notice

Schools will not receive release time for Kāhui Ako roles from 28 January 2026.

Employing school boards must consult with principals or teachers holding Kāhui Ako roles leadership responsibilities or providing leadership expertise on the implications of the disestablishment of Kāhui Ako. They must also give at least three months' written notice of the change to their roles and responsibilities. In most cases that notice will be given by 27 October at the latest.

Employing school boards must consult with teachers holding Kāhui Ako roles on the implications of the disestablishment of Kāhui Ako. They must also give at least two months' written notice of the change to their roles and responsibilities. In most cases that notice will be given by 27 November 2025 at the latest.

Note, school boards will have to give notice within the required timeframes if the employee holds a fixed-term Kāhui Ako role which finishes prior to 27 January 2026.

Permanent employees should not need new employment agreements as the notice of change to their roles and responsibilities suffices.

Salary protection

Teachers whose Kāhui Ako appointment extends beyond the start of the 2026 school year will have the Kāhui Ako salary protected for 12 months, or for the fixed term period of their appointment if that is earlier, provided the teacher remains employed in that school.

Teachers whose fixed term Kāhui Ako fixed-term role which finishes before 27 January 2025 will not be entitled to salary protection as their role was not contracted to continue in 2026. This salary protection is a provision in the teacher collective agreements.

Principals' Collective Agreements do not include salary protection of the Kāhui Ako allowance.

School boards will continue to receive Kāhui Ako release time staffing until 27 January 2026.

Resourcing

Schools will not receive Kāhui Ako maintenance allowances, travel grants, or networking and induction funding for Kāhui Ako roles after 31 December 2025.

Schools are not required to return any unspent Kāhui Ako maintenance allowances, travel grants, or networking and induction funding to the Ministry. However, we encourage you to continue to use this funding to support opportunities to work together.

If member schools have pooled their funds, the school holding these funds on behalf of the Kāhui Ako should return them to their contributing member schools.

Type of role or allowance	Removal of resourcing after 27 January 2026
Leadership role	\$1000 for each leadership role
Across-community teachers	\$750 for each teacher
Within-school teachers	\$400 for each teacher
Travel grant	Between 85% and 140% of travel grant relevant to leadership or across school teacher role
Kāhui Ako maintenance allowance	\$1000 for each member school

Employees

Across-community (ACT) and within-school (WST) teachers have salary protection for 12 months from the time of disestablishment of the Kāhui Ako or until the end of a fixed-term agreement if that is earlier.

- PTCA – in clause 3.34.11(f) for ACT and clause 3.35.14 for WST
- ASTCA – in clause 3.32.9(e) for ACT and clause 3.33.14(a) for WST
- STCA – in clause 4.23.12 for ACT and clause 4.24.14 for WST

Role		Allowances that will not be funded	Reduction in FTTE allocated for Kāhui Ako
Leadership role	Primary school	\$25,000	0.4 FTTE
	Secondary and Area school	\$30,000 or \$25,000	

Holder of Recognition of Leadership expertise allowance (where the leadership role allowance is \$25,000 – up to 2 may be awarded)	\$2,500	
Across-community teachers	\$16,000	0.4 FTTE
Within-school teachers	\$8,000	0.08 FTTE
Up to four Kāhui Ako responsibility* roles	\$2,000 for each role	0.04 FTTE for two or 0.02 for four

**As from January 2024 within-school roles could be released to create two Kāhui Ako Responsibility roles. A teacher who is selected to hold a Kāhui Ako Responsibility allowance(s) can be allocated either a salary allowance(s) or a time allowance(s) or a combination of both.*

Each school will know whether they have used this option and what they have awarded each recipient. (STCA clause 4.24.(c), (PTCA clause 3.35.5) and (ATCA 3.33.5).

What employing boards need to know

Note: Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa New Zealand School Boards Association (NZSBA) is available to support schools managing these changes. They can be contacted on 0800 782 435 for Governance and Employment matters or emailed on: eradvice@tewhakaroputanga.org.nz or govadvice@tewhakaroputanga.org.nz

Salary Protection

Payroll will continue to pay those with salary protection through to the end of their fixed-term appointment or 12 months after disestablishment, whichever is earlier.

If the teacher was to terminate that job and move to a different job before then, the usual process is that salary and all accompanying allowances would also cease from the termination date.

If roles end earlier than 27 January 2027, the school will need to advise payroll that the role has ended.

In the case of a Kāhui Ako teacher who is appointed to a position of equal or higher remuneration than they received when they held the Community of Learning Kāhui Ako role, the salary protection will no longer apply. The school would make the appointment to the new position as they normally would through EdPay.

Employment Agreements

Employing boards must consult affected staff on the impact of the disestablishment of Kāhui Ako and give notice to affected staff who hold Kāhui Ako roles and responsibilities.

Notice should be given under the relevant clause of the principal's or teacher's employment agreement where the notice is ending due to the disestablishment of the Kāhui Ako.

- PTCA
 - clause 3.34.11 (f) for ACT
 - clauses 3.35.13 (f) for WST
 - clause 3.35.14 for responsibility allowances
 - note - no specific reference to a notice period
- ASTCA
 - clause 3.32.9 (c) for ACT;
 - clause 3.33.13 (f) for WST
 - clause 3.33.14 for responsibility allowances
 - no specific reference to a notice period
- STCA
 - clause 4.23.10 (e) for ACT
 - clause 3.9.3.(h) for WST
- PPCA (NZEI) and PPCA (PPCBU)
 - clause 4.6.9 (d) leadership role
 - clause 4.7.5(d) leadership expertise
- APCA
 - clause 3.9.11 (d) for the leadership role and leadership responsibilities if applicable
- SPCA
 - clause 3.7.11.(d) for the leadership role and leadership responsibilities if applicable

Staffing

Schools will no longer receive release time for teachers and principals appointed to Kāhui Ako roles. This will take effect from 28 January 2026. You will see this in the school's provisional staffing for 2026 is published in Pourato in Term 4 2025.

Schools will need to work through the impact of the changes for Kāhui Ako teachers and leaders as they return to their usual roles and for school-wide arrangements and timetables. This will be different in every school depending on the arrangements that the Board has put in place for people working in Kāhui Ako roles.

Currently vacant roles in the Kāhui Ako could still be filled. However, Kāhui Ako should consider carefully before filling any vacant roles given the decision to reinvest funding to learning support. Any vacant positions that are appointed will be resourced with release time until 27 January 2026. Contracts that go beyond this date will need to be self-funded by school boards utilising existing operational funding or staffing entitlement.

In some cases, the changes in staffing entitlement for 2026 may result in the school being overstaffed. Normal processes would apply should this occur. Schools can get advice from the NZSBA about how to go about this.

Further information

We have published Q&As and additional information for kaimahi on our website [here](#).

Contact us

If you have questions or require more information, we are here to help.

Contact Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa | New Zealand School Boards Association (NZSBA)

Principals and school boards can contact NZSBA for employment and governance matters who can support Boards as employers through this change.

Email: eradvice@tewhakaroputanga.org.nz

Freephone (NZ only): 0800 782 435 (option 2)

Contact the Ministry

Contact the Ohumahi Support team if you have any questions about the changes. Note we cannot provide employment advice.

Email: ohumahi.support@education.govt.nz

Appendix A - Timeline of key decisions and actions

May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	January 2027
22 May Budget Announced		1 July School Board completes roll return		12 Sept 2026 provisional rolls, entitlement staffing and indicative funding published in Pourato				Teachers and principals stop working in Kāhui Ako roles	Protection of Kahui Ako salaries ends
22 May Moratorium on moving or joining Kāhui Ako				Schools can apply for a review of their 2026 provisional roll (upto 15 Nov)					
22 May Kāhui Ako programme disestablished				School boards advised of a reduction in entitlement staffing should consider whether they need to disestablish teaching positions					
TBC Individual Kāhui Ako advised of disestablishment				Schools manage transition for affected teachers and principals in accordance with employer obligations and collective agreements (incl updated terms)					
Bargaining continues on collective agreements									
From 22 May Schools identify affected teachers and principals									
Decisions related to RT Lit, RT Maori, and Kāhui Ako roles		Ministry implementation action		Action for School Board		Implementation of school Board decisions			