



Engagement Management Plan

Context

Regular school attendance is important for students to achieve their educational potential. The government target is that 80% of students will be regularly attending school by 2030.

Distance schools are not required to keep attendance records, but are required to have an Engagement Management Plan (EMP) in place from Term 3 2026.

In a distance context, 'engagement' is sometimes used as a loose proxy for 'attendance' but it is important to understand they are not the same thing, especially when talking about engagement in learning. In a face-to-face school ākonga (learners) can be attending without being engaged, so to simply substitute 'engagement' as the proxy for 'attendance' in a distance context creates a much higher bar for a distance school, and is not comparing like with like.

Te Kura's position is that our requirement for ākonga to regularly return work (at least every two weeks), the non-returners process, our funding mechanism, and the active monitoring of ākonga engagement levels reflect the overall intent of Attendance Management Plans in face-to-face schools, and provide a clearer and higher focus on engagement than is monitored and reported in other settings.

Contents

02

Understanding Engagement

03

Te Kura Strategic Priorities

03

Board Responsibilities

03

Chief Executive Responsibilities

04

Progress Indicators

04

Monitoring

04

Legislative Compliance/Legislation

04

Review

04

Engagement Management
Procedures and Responsibilities

Copyright © 2026 Board of Trustees of Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu, Private Bag 39992, Wellington Mail Centre, Lower Hutt 5045, New Zealand.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu.

Adapted STAR resources provided by the Ministry of Education: www.education.govt.nz

Understanding Engagement

At Te Kura, ākonga engagement is a requirement for Ministry of Education Equivalent Full-time Student (EFTS) funding eligibility. Te Kura's Ministry of Education Resourcing Notice lays out the criteria for funding, including the engagement criteria:

'Engagement is a proxy for the process by which other schools record full-time student attendance for the purposes of tuition to substantiate their funding roll. The engagement test [...] is student-initiated contact by returning work by any medium for interim or final assessment.'

The Ministry of Education Resourcing Notice also lists what is understood to qualify as student-initiated contact, and the various media for returning work. The Engagement Criteria under Section 1.9 are outlined below:

'The engagement test for each funding segment, other than segment one and that in which the student registered, is student-initiated contact by returning work by any medium for interim or final assessment.'

Student-initiated contact includes but is not limited to:

- › Participation in learning at advisories both virtual and face-to-face (e.g. Huinga Ako)
- › Participation in job shadowing
- › Participation in learning through internships
- › Informational interviews (e.g. learning conversations and goal setting with a mentor in the community)
- › Return of work in My Te Kura
- › Progress in learning in Te Kura-licensed online systems
- › Uploading of learning evidence to Portfolio
- › Student-led discussion of work with kaiako in virtual meetings and phone calls
- › Presentation of an exhibition of learning.

Any medium can include, but is not limited to:

- › Written work
- › Oral discussion
- › Video recording
- › Audio recording
- › Visual display
- › Live performance/presentation.

Te Kura's EFTS funding is divided into three segments per annum. 40% is triggered on enrolment and does not require evidence of ākonga engagement. Up to 60% can then be triggered in the second and third segments on the submission of at least one piece of assessable work per segment. It is important to stress that this is the trigger for funding only and does not reflect an acceptable level of engagement for learning.

Ākonga who do not engage, i.e. do not submit work or show no additional engagement after their first four months of enrolment (i.e. Segment 1) are ineligible for funding.

Engagement funding rules set a minimum bar for funding eligibility, and it is our view that they serve as an adequate proxy for attendance in a face-to-face school, where attendance does not necessarily indicate any meaningful engagement in learning.

However, for the purpose of providing clarity and assurance that Te Kura is meeting the spirit and intent of the relevant attendance requirements and regulations, our much higher expectations for engagement for learning and a stepped response to non-engagement is outlined in the Stepped Engagement Response framework below.

Te Kura Strategic Priorities

Strategic whenū: Tāuteute | Engage ākonga through authentic personalised learning

Strategic Priorities	Activities
Strengthen the connection between ākonga and their learning at Te Kura	Development of aligned learning guidelines for ākonga and whānau which are supported by: › Matching kaiako (teacher) and kaimanaaki (learning advisor) expectations › Shared engagement practices › Clear routines for communication, feedback, and online participation › Authentic data is used to track progress for engagement and achievement.
Strengthen the connection between ākonga and their learning at Te Kura	Continue to strengthen onboarding processes for ākonga and whānau that facilitate early engagement in learning, including working with external stakeholders: › Deliver Onboarding Tool training to Ministry regional teams to ensure timely and detailed information is gathered at enrolment.
Enhance ākonga wellbeing, pastoral care, and engagement	Design and implement a monitoring system and reporting framework to ensure ākonga are supported through their wellbeing and engagement services and effective risk and escalation processes can be actioned in a timely manner.

Board Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that Te Kura ākonga are meaningfully engaged in a learning programme.

The Board will comply with the spirit and intent of the provisions in the legislation in relation to attendance in our distance learning context by:

- › having a commitment to support ākonga to engage in learning
- › having processes and procedures in place to support ākonga engagement in learning
- › having an effective method in place for identifying and monitoring non-engagement, including identifying patterns and barriers to ākonga engagement
- › publishing this engagement management plan on our Te Kura website.

Chief Executive Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- › developing and implementing a stepped response aligned with thresholds to support ākonga engagement
- › ensuring that ākonga non-engagement is investigated, responded to and actions are taken aligned with the thresholds
- › ensuring ākonga, whānau and Te Kura kaimahi understand the processes and procedures that support ākonga engagement
- › reporting to the Board on any trends, barriers to engagement, and interventions being used to support ākonga engagement.

Progress Indicators

Engagement in a learning programme in My Te Kura

In 2025, an average of 76.9% of Full-Time ākonga in Years 1–13 and Young Adult ākonga in Years 11–13 logged into My Te Kura monthly. An average of 54.2% of Full-Time ākonga in Years 1–13 and Young Adult ākonga in Years 11–13 submitted work each month or had an Engage item completed by their kaiako. In 2026, we are working towards an increase in the percentage of online presence and work submission of ākonga in My Te Kura.

The Board will receive regular reporting on engagement. Included in this reporting will be any emerging trends, barriers to engagement, and areas of concern for the Board's consideration.

Legislative Compliance/Legislation

- › Education and Training Act 2020
- › Education Attendance rules
- › Education Attendance Management Plan regulations

Monitoring

- › The **Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team** will monitor regular reporting of engagement levels at a school-wide level.
- › **Regional Managers** will monitor engagement levels and report regularly at a regional level.
- › **Team Leaders** will monitor engagement levels and report regularly at team level.
- › **Kaimanaaki** will regularly monitor engagement levels at an individual ākonga level.

Review

EMP first developed: July 2026

To be reviewed by: Deputy Chief Executive, Learning Delivery

Next review: January 2027

Normal review cycle: Three years as part of Te Kura Policy Review Framework Cycle

Engagement Management Procedures and Responsibilities

Figure 1: Stepped Engagement Response with escalating actions

The government's target is for **80% of students to attend regularly**, that is to attend more than 90% of the time.

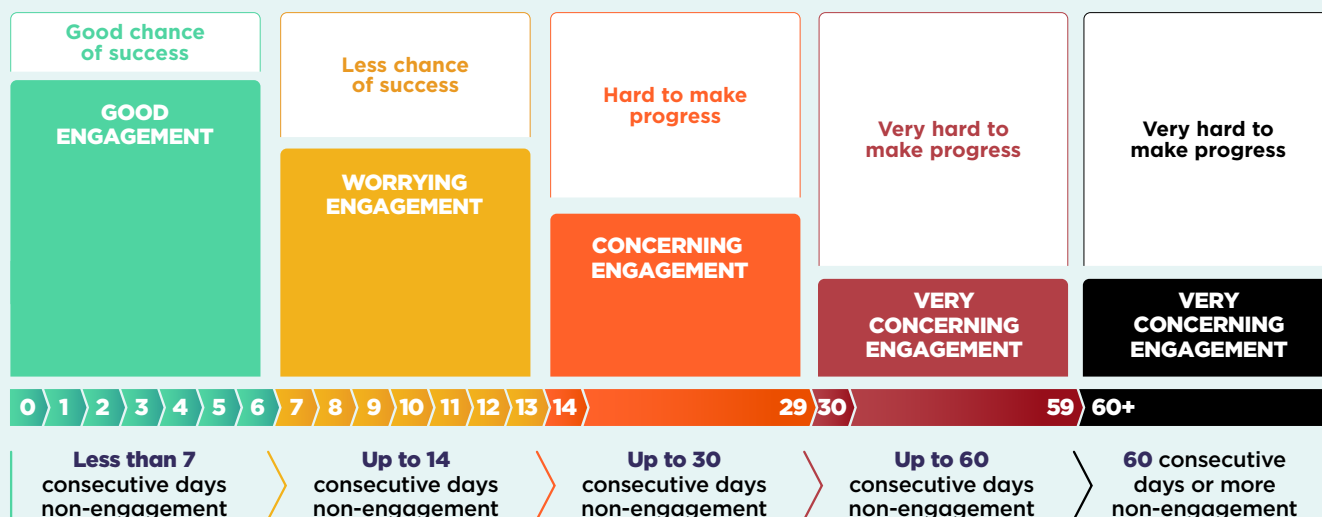


Figure 2: Stepped Engagement Response Framework

