

Summary of Charter Schools Cabinet Paper

May 2024

Recently a cabinet paper was released that sets out some of the governments decisions about how charter schools will work. The original cabinet paper can be found [here](#).

There's a lot of information we still don't know, and a lot we may never as it will be covered in individual charter school contracts. The timeframe for the legislation is extremely short, introduced in June/July, with applications starting at the same time, and passed by October. The intention is that contracts can be signed and new or converted schools 'open for business' in Term 1 of 2025.

What We Know

There is the budget for approximately 15 new schools and 35 converted schools. Schools can apply to convert or be directed to do so by the Minister. If voluntarily converting, there will need to be a consultation process with community and staff. There is no consultation process required for new schools.

Charter schools will not be required to have boards, to teach the NZ curriculum and will be able to employ non-registered teachers under a new category of LAT that doesn't require proof the skills are hard to find. There will be a requirement for a minimum number of registered teachers specified in charter school contracts, however this will be part of individual school contracts so will not be public information.

Charters will have to provide free education but can charge property maintenance fees if property is privately owned. If converting, they will be required to accept students from existing zones unless parents refuse to accept the school's special character. They will be subject to same requirements for stand downs and suspensions but not for cell phone bans or an hour a day of reading writing and math. Requirements to publish attendance data or consult on health curriculum are unclear but unlikely based on current information.

How Will We Support Members?

The PPTA constitution and the collective agreements don't cover teachers in charter schools. The cabinet paper states that current conditions for teachers will be "protected" through a conversion, all other information about this is redacted. It appears unlikely that all of the conditions of the collective can be protected, given that many of them are connected to being part of the state service. If employed at a charter school, teachers will be on individual agreements unless a collective agreement is negotiated, and the sponsor will be the employer.