



MP for Epsom

Deputy Prime Minister (from 31 May 2025)

Minister for Regulation

Associate Minister of Education (Partnership Schools)

Associate Minister of Finance

Associate Minister of Health (Pharmac)

Associate Minister of Justice (Treaty Principles Bill)

09 APR 2025

Daran Ponter
Greater Wellington Regional Council
daran.ponter@gw.govt.nz

Dear Daran

As Associate Minister of Education with responsibility for school attendance, I am writing to share with you some recent work the Government has been doing to improve attendance. I am eager that community leaders, such as yourself, are aware of this work and ask you to consider what you can do to support the young people in your communities to be present at school so that they are setting themselves up for a bright future.

Student attendance in New Zealand has been declining for over ten years, and this remains a significant challenge. Research and evidence show that regular school attendance leads to better educational, employment and social outcomes. That's why the Government has set a target of improving student attendance.

It's going to take collective and collaborative action to turn around this declining trend. The schools and kura in your region and communities need your support to encourage students to attend school, where they can participate, engage and learn. By working together, we can help students build brighter futures.

The Government is working with schools on a range of initiatives to improve attendance. Here are some of the things we're doing:

- The Ministry of Education is now **publishing school attendance data daily** – this is available to the public via an interactive dashboard, which can be filtered by regional council. You can check out the dashboard and how your region is tracking at [Daily attendance dashboard | Education Counts](#). Schools' attendance data is automatically sent daily to the Ministry by 6pm and published on the dashboard the next day. Daily reporting improves our understanding of attendance trends to help inform our decisions.
- We're working hard to **understand the barriers to attendance and how we can address these** through the provision of the right supports and services. This often involves working with our wider communities and across multiple government agencies.
- We're **growing public awareness and shifting attitudes and behaviours** around student attendance.

Here are four things you can do to help:

- 1) **Check out the dashboard** and how your region compares with other parts of New Zealand. Encourage others in your community to engage with this dashboard.
- 2) **Lead a conversation** with your community around how they can support schools to improve attendance. Even small steps like encouraging local businesses to be aware that school-aged children should be at school during school hours is helpful.

- 3) **Amplify the message** that school is helping our young people achieve better outcomes.
- 4) **Let us know what's working** – or not working – in your community, to get our young people in school.

I truly appreciate your support with this important challenge – thank you. If you need any further information about the daily attendance dashboard, please contact the Ministry of Education via Requests.DataandInsights@education.govt.nz

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Seymour', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon David Seymour
Associate Minister of Education