



# Logan Park High School

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*Te Kura Tuarua o Kapua o te Raki*

24 November 2009

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
TE TAHUHU O TE MATAURANGA

25 NOV 2009

Kathryn Palmer  
Manager Regional Education  
Private Bag 1971  
DUNEDIN 9054

Dear Kathryn

Thank you for your letter of 23 November 2009 regarding a curriculum matter at Logan Park High School.

I am confident that you, the Ministry, and the Minister all understand that the curriculum at Logan Park is a matter for the Board of Trustees, within the context of the national curriculum, national education goals and national administration guidelines.

Within that framework our Board is strongly supportive of second language learning. We have in recent years offered Te Reo Maori, French, Latin, Japanese, and German. Sadly our ability to maintain curriculum width is affected by roll numbers and staffing levels. For example, due to low demand and lack of staffing availability we cut Japanese from the curriculum two years ago.

This year we are again faced with a reduction in teacher staffing entitlement as a result of a Ministry predicted roll decline for 2010. In such a situation we have to review curriculum as part of the teacher redeployment process set out in the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement.

That process was under way when we received an offer from the Goethe Institute to join a partner school programme. The letter from the Institute, and our reply, is enclosed. At that time proper consideration was being given to our ability to sustain several smaller subjects, including German. We could not in good conscience agree to join a programme when it was not clear we would be in a position to offer German next year.

For your information the Board appointed a sub-committee to deal with the redeployment issues. That group met on the evening of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. They reviewed the status of smaller subjects, including Geography, Latin, French, Te Reo Maori, German, and Fabrics. Due consideration was given to each of those subjects. After almost three hours of discussion it was resolved to cut German.

For your information, and to help allay any concerns you may have, I will summarise the analysis undertaken by the Board. In doing so I am obviously not seeking your agreement or assent to the decision, simply your acknowledgement that the process followed was rigorous and proper.

The Board (sub-committee) had before it a CAPNA document prepared on the basis of student indications of subject choices for next year, comparing these with current allocations. This document had been made available to teachers for comment and correction over a two week period. The Board also consulted with a nominee of the National Executive of the NZPPTA as required by the process. The teacher of German made submissions which were considered by the Board, and minor changes were made to predicted student numbers in senior German as a result. It was not possible to meet the required staffing reduction without some narrowing of the curriculum. Other subjects are also affected here, including History of Art, and planned expansion of Classical Studies and Sports education.

The Board then considered smaller subjects. The Board noted that demand for Geography had fallen recently, but concluded that cutting Geography would leave an unbalanced Social Science department. The remaining three teachers would all be Historians. There would be a risk of skewed junior programmes developing. Senior numbers in geography were also slightly higher than for German. The Board noted that German is a small subject, and without it the Languages department would still have three options available, being French, Latin, and Maori. Further some senior German can be offered through Correspondence and video classes. Maori should not be cut given Board policy on the Treaty of Waitangi and our objective of improving results for Maori students. Latin could be cut, but the subject is of high importance for some very academic students, offers a point of difference for our curriculum, and can be popular with International students. Of note also the Latin teacher is not full time so disestablishment here would not meet the required level of staffing reduction. French is the most popular language, and it would not be possible to justify cutting it ahead of German. Consideration was also given to cutting Fabrics. Here however demand is growing. We are a coeducation school, and the subject is most popular with girls. Again the teacher is not full time so a cut here would not provide the necessary staffing reduction.

After proper consideration of all issues the Board concluded that German should be cut from our curriculum for 2010. This confirmed our inability to accept the offer from the Goethe Institute. There has plainly been no victimisation of a subject or the students.

Yours sincerely



Jane Johnson  
Principal.