OFFICIAL

Wai 49, #A6
Wai 682, #A10
Wai 1464, # A7
Wai 1546, #A7
Wai 3553, #A6

WAI 682
WAI 1464/1546

I TE RŌPU WHAKAMANA
I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

KEI RARO I TE MANA o te ture o te Tiriti o Waitangi 1975

I TE TAKE O he kēreme nā, Rewiti Paraone rātou ko Erima Henare, ko Pita Tipene ko Waihoroi Shortland mō Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Hine hei mangai mō ngā uri o Torongare me Hauhaua (Wai 682)

Ā

I TE TAKE O he kēreme nā Te Riwhi Whao Reti rātou ko Hau Hereora, ko Romana Tarau, ko Karen Herbert, ko Edward Cook, ko Pearl Reti hei mangai mō Te Kapotai (Wai 1464/1546)

KŌRERO TAURANGI O ARONA TIPENE

I tēnei rā, i te 18 o Whiringa-ā-rangi 2025

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Ngā roia

Dr Season-Mary Downs
Chelsea Terei-Tipene
Jessica Hita

RECEIVED
Waitangi Tribunal
19 Nov 2025
Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

Ko ahau ko, **ARONA TIPENE**, nō Moerewa, e whakaū ana:

1. I provide this kōrero as a parent and now a grandparent. I am from a whānau who have been dedicated to education. I am a teacher myself.

2. I was angry when I heard about the Government's decision to remove te Tiriti o Waitangi from the role of school boards and to make changes to the curriculum that impact Māori. I cannot understand how this is a thing. How can they do this?

3. I was just scrolling one day and saw it on Facebook. I did not reflect too much on it because I did not realise the changes would be so fast. I was thinking “Surely this cannot be a thing. Surely there has to be some kind of consultation and they cannot just fast track it.”

4. I thought about the impacts for us as teachers and for our children. I feel the burn out. I feel constantly on the back foot because of the pace of change. I even felt overwhelmed having to give this kōrero because it is a nonstop cycle.

5. These decisions undermine the foundations of partnership and protection that our community depends on. As an educator I am disheartened by the curriculum changes being pushed through. Teachers have already poured years of time, learning, planning and energy into the curriculum, navigating constant shifts in expectations and reforms, and now even more changes have been added. For what benefit?

6. Educators are already under immense pressure. We are asked to do more each year, often without the time, resourcing, or recognition needed to do our work well. Many of us are exhausted, overworked, and underpaid - yet we remain committed because we deeply care about our tamariki. Our children deserve better. They deserve teachers who feel valued, supported, and appreciated, not

stretched to breaking point trying to meet ever-changing expectations.

7. My experience in both early childhood education and primary education has shown me the real struggles that are faced by our children when they are searching for belonging, identity and connection to their culture.

8. I have seen the transformational impact of centres and schools that embrace kaupapa Māori. When tamariki Māori learn te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, waiata, whakapapa together, they flourish. These environments empower and liberate our young people, building confidence, pride and a deep sense of self.

9. As a mother of nine, six of whom I gave birth to, I have witnessed this impact every day. My biological tamariki have been raised in te ao Māori from birth, through kōhanga reo, to kura kaupapa Māori, and reo-rua pathways. They walk proudly in both worlds, grounded in their whakapapa. They are clear about who they are. One of my stepdaughters who came to live with us three years ago, is also a powerful example of the shifts that are possible. Since joining our family and attending the primary school she has blossomed. Being welcomed into the bilingual unit has given her confidence, purpose and a connection she had been missing.

10. This is why these legislative changes matter. They are not abstract or political theory, these changes impact real children, real families, real futures.

11. I am emotional speaking to this issue. I have a newborn mokopuna and what do these changes mean for him? I have my four year old daughter starting school, what does it mean for her?

12. I want an education system for my four year old daughter and my new mokopuna, where their culture is valued, where their language is nurtured and where their identity is seen as a strength. I want

teachers who are supported, not driven to burn out. Our tamariki deserve a system that lifts them up, not one that strips away the very things that enable them to thrive.

13. Here at our school our tamariki are safe. We will carry out what we think is right; on top of what we are already doing. But my concern is for other schools. We have tamariki Māori who will miss out because there is not an expectation that all schools uphold and value Māoritanga. I am not confident schools will carry out ngā mea Māori without the requirement to do so.

14. We are somewhat lucky because in our whānau we will still maintain te Tiriti and te reo within us. But for the whānau that do not have that – what do these changes mean for them? How will things like te Tiriti be normalised if they are not led by our communities and schools?

15. Even in our own whānau normalising te ao Māori and tikanga has been a journey. My Dad was a principal of Ōpua School. In his childhood he was strapped, and so while he was able to influence te ao Māori at Ōpua which is a predominantly Pākehā community, he himself had to relearn te reo me ōna tikanga to be able to do that. I have te reo, however my siblings do not. I believe that the law provides the minimum standard for that variation in whānau.

16. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is our founding document. How can they (the Government) change that and do whatever they want?

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Sworn at **on / / before me:**

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