



National Certificate of Educational Achievement
TAUMATA MĀTAURANGA Ā-MOTU KUA TAEA

Exemplar for Internal Achievement Standard

Social Studies Level 3

This exemplar supports assessment against:

Achievement Standard 91600

Examine a campaign of social action(s) to influence policy change(s)

An annotated exemplar is a sample of student evidence, with a commentary, to explain key aspects of the standard. It assists teachers to make assessment judgements at the grade.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

To support internal assessment

Grade: Achieved

For Achieved, the student needs to examine a campaign of social action to influence policy change.

This involves explaining the aims of the selected campaign and the desired policy change, the differing reasons for individuals' and/or groups' involvement, and the reasons for selecting the social action methods and how these methods were intended to support the desired policy change. A policy can include a rule, law, strategy, procedure, or plan.

The student has selected the #TautokoThePanthers campaign and clearly explained its policy aims, discussing how it sought to influence the government's application of cabinet criteria for issuing an apology for the Dawn Raids, while also calling for a strategic plan to promote reconciliation through culturally responsive wellbeing initiatives and a financial legacy to support education.

The student explains the differing reasons for Josiah Tualamali'i and Benji Timu's involvement by showing how Josiah was motivated by his family's experiences and a desire for educational and financial outcomes for Pasifika, while Benji's involvement stemmed from personal experiences of racism and his commitment to amplifying Pasifika voices through media. The use of direct quotations from these individuals reflects the specificity of evidence expected at curriculum level 8.

The student also explains the reasons for selecting social action methods, showing how the campaign used social media and petitions to support the desired policy change. Social media was chosen to amplify voices, mobilise support, and spread awareness quickly, while the petition provided a formal mechanism to demonstrate public backing and apply pressure on the government. These explanations link the methods to the campaign's goal of securing an official apology and a legacy fund, and the inclusion of examples such as hashtags, quotations, and petition details reflects the types of evidence expected by the standard.

The student has begun to demonstrate some evidence towards the Merit criteria by discussing the real consequences of the campaign. To achieve Merit overall, the student needed to also discuss the potential consequences of the campaign.

This could have involved considering how the campaign might lead to broader systemic changes, such as influencing future government approaches to historical injustices, strengthening Pasifika representation in policy-making, or inspiring similar social justice movements. The student could also have explored potential long-term impacts like improved cultural understanding in schools, greater public awareness of racism, and ongoing funding for reconciliation initiatives beyond the initial apology.

The campaign to influence policy change: #TautokothePanthers

During the Dawn Raids, an activist group, known as the Polynesian Panthers were formed. Based in Ponsonby in Auckland, the Panthers united to be the leading voice in Pacific advocacy. Even 50 years after the initial attacks, they continued to promote an apology from the New Zealand government or to simply acknowledge the injustices of the Dawn Raids. Despite the efforts of the Polynesian Panthers, there was little social traction gained towards getting an apology.

#TautokothePanthers was a campaign that illustrates the next generation of Pasifika activism adding further weight to the cause.

In August 2021, the campaign was created, #TautokothePanthers, which was led by Josiah Tualamali'i and Benji Timu with an aim to change this policy for the better of their people.

They had a number of goals to influence the government on. The most important to them and the community they were standing for was a formal apology for the Dawn Raids. Backed up by the experiences of member of the panthers, Tigalau Ness, who states that, in relation to an apology, "It's time. Fifty years is a long time to wait, we've had enough". Through the campaign, #tautokothePanthers they aimed to influence official government strategy and procedure for addressing historical injustices, as there are strict criteria that cabinet needs to apply when making these decisions. By asking for an apology, #TautokothePanthers was focused on influencing government procedure by making a clear case that the Dawn Raids meet the criteria. Alongside this, they also called for parliament to "crucially to have a special debate. This is because it was important to have a record of the apology. Parliament has a record of every word spoken within it since day dot. Without a debate in Parliament there would be no written record of the apology. We wanted it recorded and a debate would be the vehicle."

Another of #TautokothePanthers aims was for government to "acknowledge and reflect on what happened during the dawn raids and promise that there will be no uncertainty from everyone in parliament that this will never happen again". Part of this was also the goal of ensuring the government would set up and promote "culturally responsive trauma informed wellbeing spaces". They also wanted "a financial legacy in trust, similar to the Chinese poll tax apology enabling some pūtea to be stewarded by the community to support more national education about this significant part of our history, and also to work to address some of the trauma and complications of what has happened". This, alongside the earlier point calls for the government to build a full reconciliation strategy and make a strategic commitment to addressing the hurt that occurred, including making appropriate budget allocations.

Involvement of individuals**Josiah Tualamali'i:**

"What I'm fighting for is the right for all New Zealanders to have their voices heard", Josiah Tualamali'i is a social justice advocate and a leading voice for his Samoan culture. Influenced by his immediate family, Josiah published an article on Newsroom in 2021, explaining how when his father moved to Aotearoa to support family financially back home, he learned "You had to be extremely careful around authorities who could not be trusted to treat you fairly." This was a decade after the Dawn Raids, and it was clear racism still roamed our country. This ultimately influenced Josiah, making him feel the need to make things right for the Pasifika community. Josiah wasn't part of the Panthers but saw them as the "spark for this action," leading him to contribute through encouraging tweets and starting the letter-writing campaign to Parliament.

Josiah dedicated his work to aiming for financial and educational gains from the apology. From his personal experience growing up in Aotearoa, he "did not hear about the Dawn Raids at school," and it wasn't until university that the conversation came up among his peers, showing the stigma around the Dawn Raids. Josiah recognised former Prime Minister Helen Clark setting up the Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust, which totalled \$5 million in 2002 as a "gesture of reconciliation in support of the formal apology." Considering the Pasifika community wanted a formal apology, Josiah insisted the

petition include a request for a legacy fund, seeing as it would “significantly help to address the community-wide impact.” His decision to join the #TautokoThePanthers campaign came from cultural influences around him, identifying the trauma on those impacted within his community and noticing what they deserve as an outcome of the formal apology.

Benji Timu:

Benji Timu is a digital content creator and filmmaker who states, “Being a filmmaker enables me to tell our stories better both online and on the screen.” Through this profession, he is motivated to share his experiences and the stories of others with the media, which explains why he was inspired to help create the #TautokoThePanthers campaign. His experience as a Samoan/Niuean living in New Zealand demonstrates his willingness to help change policy. One example he shared in his NZ Herald article was when a cop pulled him over and searched his belongings at the age of 18 after studying at the library. “Racism doesn’t just exist in spaces like the KKK or alt-right groups, it exists in everyday behaviour and attitudes.” Withholding the social justice perspective and prioritising the rights of Pasifika, Benji contributed significantly to the policy-change campaign alongside Josiah. His experiences with racism today demonstrate his drive to be an activist involved with this campaign, wanting to continue challenging the government to benefit the lives of minority groups in our country. He recognises the injustice of ‘hiding’ Parliament’s actions towards the Pasifika community and sees the benefit in discussing real-life experiences of Pasifika communities that faced harm. Experiencing the negative impacts of racism as part of a minority group, his perspective comes from hurtful experiences, believing that having no apology from Parliament is them “taking the easy way out.”

Actions in the campaign:

The first action for the #TautokoThePanthers campaign was promoting the hashtag through social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Social media is a strong way to promote a campaign because it can easily reach a wider, more diverse audience. We’ve seen how successful social media campaigns have been, such as the social justice campaign #BlackLivesMatter following the death of George Floyd by police brutality in May 2020 and the #MeToo campaign in 2006 that effectively highlighted sexual harassment and assault. By creating viral campaigns through social media, it can amplify voices and facilitate real-time engagement, foster community support, and enable the sharing of information and resources across communities. The #TautokoThePanthers hashtag was first used on Twitter by Josiah Tualamali’i on March 14th, 2021, where he said, “The Polynesian Panthers have issued the call for an apology for the racist Dawn Raids. Please whanau and friends, let’s lift our voices to #TautokoThePanthers call.” The word ‘Tautoko’ means to support and endorse in Te Reo Māori. In this case, Josiah was advocating solidarity amongst the Panthers, the Pasifika community, and the people of New Zealand. Social media can have negative perspectives on concepts such as social justice. In Facebook comments under news articles about the Dawn Raids or social justice for Pasifika communities, there are many racist and ignorant comments. Facebook user Quinn Olsen said under a 1News post about the government’s apology in 2021 that “If you broke the law, there were consequences. The police were doing the job they were told to do,” disregarding the fact that there was police brutality involved. Another user called Ray Treadaway said, “They knowingly broke the Law of The Land....and back in the day...50 years ago the Police were doing the right thing. Today, customs and norms have changed...cannot apply today’s values against yesterday’s events...it just does not stack up.” They claim that the police were enforcing immigration laws as they existed at the time, downplaying the fact that law enforcement was discriminating against Pasifika people, and they are saying that the apology is unnecessary because the police and government were acting according to the laws and social norms of that era. Using social media connects to the idea of social justice because it can be used to spread awareness, mobilise action, challenge power, and build solidarity.

The most important and influential social action the #TautokoThePanthers campaign took was the use of online petitions to Parliament. Josiah Tualamali’i and Benji Timu created a petition calling for an official government apology, saying that the government should “apologise for the Dawn Raids,

and state that they should never happen again, and set up a legacy fund to allow education about them to continue." The petition was created on May 17, 2021, only one month after the first tweet was posted by Josiah on March 14th, and the government announced their apology a week after the petition closed with 7,366 signatures on June 14th, 2021. On June 23rd, 2021, the petition was presented to and accepted by Te Pāti Māori co-leaders Debbie Ngarewa-Packer and Rawiri Waititi outside the Beehive in Wellington. The reason Josiah and Benji chose to present their petition to Te Pāti Māori was due to their connection and representation of the Māori/Pacific Islander community, as well as their solidarity with the Polynesian Panthers. Debbie Ngarewa-Packer said that "It's an absolute honour to be here in the shadow of our Polynesian Panthers, in the shadow of all of our whānau, our tangata moana whānau - who we stand in solidarity with." A petition was an effective way to take social action because it gave thousands of people the chance to show their support in a formal and organised way. It also put pressure on the government by showing that this issue mattered to a large number of New Zealanders, making it harder for them to ignore the call for an apology. Combining the hashtag with the petition was even more effective because social media helped spread awareness quickly and encouraged people to sign.

Consequences

The biggest consequence of the #TautokoThePanthers campaign was the official apology for the Dawn Raids by the New Zealand government in 2021 at Auckland Town Hall. It was held in Auckland rather than Wellington, the capital city, because that's where the majority of the raids occurred and where the highest population of the Pasifika community lives. More than 1,000 people attended the three-and-a-half-hour ceremony, including original members of the Polynesian Panthers such as Dr Melani Anae, Pauline Vaeluaga Smith, Reverend Alex Toleafoa, and Tigilau Ness, government officials including Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who delivered the speech, Her Royal Highness Princess Mele Siu'ilikutapu Kalaniuvalu Fotofili of Tonga, and students, educators, and members of the Pasifika community directly or generationally affected by the Dawn Raids. Jacinda Ardern wore a leaf and flower lei around her neck, set against a traditional tapa background. This brought her closer to the Pasifika community by representing their culture, not just her own. Following the first part of her speech, spoken in many Pacific languages (including Samoan, Tongan, and Te Reo Māori), she went on to say, "The government expresses its sorrow, remorse, and regret that the Dawn Raids and random police checks occurred and that these actions were ever considered appropriate."

After the apology, the New Zealand government gave the Pasifika community \$2.5 million worth of tertiary scholarships, \$1 million worth of training scholarships, and provided resources for schools and kura that wished to teach the history of the Dawn Raids, including histories of those directly affected. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry for Pacific Peoples also committed to supporting Pacific artists and historians to work with communities to develop a comprehensive historical record of the Dawn Raids period as an additional goodwill gesture of reconciliation.

Evaluation and Modification

The campaign was a large success, gaining a formal apology on behalf of the New Zealand Crown, but we can recognise its potential to be more effective in creating long-term, concrete change beyond acknowledgment of past historical injustices. While Ardern announced financial scholarships to offer further opportunities for Pasifika youth, a change that could have made the campaign stronger was ensuring the Dawn Raids were embedded within the school curriculum. In her speech, Ardern stated there would be resources given to schools "for schools who choose to use it," when it should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.

The student used footnoting throughout and provided a full reference list. These were removed for brevity.

Grade: Merit

For Merit, the student needs to examine, in depth, a campaign of social action(s) to influence policy change(s). In addition to the Achieved criteria, this involves exploration of the real and potential consequences of the campaign.

The student has clearly met the Achieved criteria by explaining the aims of the Free Fares campaign and its desired policy change, as well as the differing reasons for Young Labour and the Public Service Association's involvement.

They also explain why the campaign chose petitions, social media, and lobbying – showing that petitions demonstrated public support, social media raised awareness and encouraged engagement, and lobbying applied direct pressure on MPs to influence policy. The use of specific evidence across the Achieved criteria reflects expectations at curriculum level 8.

For Merit, the student has examined the Free Fares NZ campaign in depth by exploring both the real and potential consequences of its actions. They clearly explain the real consequences, such as the successful retention of half-price fares for Community Services Card holders and Total Mobility users through the Community Connect programme, and support this with evidence of government action and polling data showing strong public backing.

The student also explores potential consequences, including the likelihood of further fare reductions if a future government adopts the campaign's aims, and the broader impacts on climate targets, economic productivity, and public health. They reference research from Free Fares and official reports to show how these changes could reduce emissions, improve air quality, and lower road congestion. The discussion also considers limitations, such as the risk of uneven implementation or infrastructure challenges, which strengthens the quality of the explanation.

The detailed discussion and integration of specific evidence demonstrates the level required to meet the Merit descriptor for an in-depth examination.

For Excellence, the student could have moved beyond outlining the campaign's goals and consequences by critically evaluating its overall effectiveness and proposing realistic strategies to strengthen its influence on policy. While the student begins to show some evaluative thinking by noting that more advertising and awareness could help, these ideas need to be developed further and supported with detail. For example, where the student identifies that they could have used social media more to spread their petition, an Excellence-level response might specify which platforms or audiences would have been most effective, explain why the campaign lacked a clear and targeted media strategy, and suggest how this gap limited its ability to amplify its message to key groups.

Aims of the campaign and desired policy change

The Free Fares campaign has been active since at least 2021, when it formed in Pōneke, Wellington, and is still ongoing today. This campaign advocates for greater equity and reduced fares and become more prominent as they successfully lobbied for the continuation and expansion of half-price and free public transport discounts, including those for young people and Community Service Card holders. The campaign was initiated by the Pōneke Collective and later grew into the broader coalition called the Aotearoa Collective for Public Transport Equity to advocate for free public transport for specific groups.

The aim of this campaign is to provide free public transport for Community Service Card holders, tertiary students, under-25s, and Total Mobility Card holders and their support people. To achieve this aim, they are asking for a policy change from the National-led coalition government to ensure that free public transport for these groups is funded nationally. Granting free public transport to these groups would help them out, as these groups represent a large portion of public transport users who rely on the service the most, but are also the most likely to not be able to afford it. Granting free public transport to these groups would also help encourage more people to use public transport instead of private transport. Doing this would significantly lower New Zealand's carbon emissions, as the more people that rely on public transport instead of private transport means fewer vehicles being used per kilometre, and therefore less carbon emitted per kilometre. Making public transport free for these groups would also help communities as a whole, as it would offer more opportunities for these groups to get places and therefore be more connected to their communities. It may also provide opportunities for students to spend money at places they may not usually access because of public transport costs, for example business districts where students could spend money at places like coffee shops.

The Free Fares campaign has taken a range of actions to promote equitable and affordable public transport across the country. Their actions have included organising petitions, lobbying central and local government, and submitting written proposals calling for transport equity and climate-friendly mobility policies. The campaign has also launched media outreach and public awareness initiatives, gaining widespread attention during debates about half-price and free fare policies in 2022 and 2023. By uniting unions, youth groups, and environmental organisations, the Free Fares campaign has successfully influenced transport policy decisions, helping to achieve and sustain half-price fare schemes for low-income groups and young people.

Different reasons for individual's and groups' involvement

Fares Free NZ is a coalition that involves a range of members and individuals. The PSA and Young Labour are two organisations that are part of this coalition.

The Public Service Association (PSA) supported the Free Fares campaign because it PSA acknowledges that a large number of its members, who work in social services, health, education, and other vital fields, also use public transportation, and that high fares may make it more difficult for them to get to work at a reasonable cost, particularly in urban areas where parking is expensive and limited. Therefore, supporting the Free Fares campaign is an act of solidarity for the welfare of workers, a reduction in the pressures of the cost of living, and an improvement in equity for members with lower incomes. The PSA sees public transportation as a social good that makes it possible for people to have better access to public services. If transportation is too expensive, people might put off or avoid going to the doctor, miss social services appointments, or find it difficult to get to school, which would ultimately put more pressure on the public services that PSA members provide. Climate responsibility is also a key factor in the union's commitment. Free or highly reduced fares would encourage more people to avoid private vehicles, lowering emissions and pollution in keeping with New Zealand's climate responsibilities. The PSA has continuously maintained that the government and public institutions have a duty to take the lead on the environment. This is consistent with the PSA's main goal of a fairer and environmentally friendly society where public services, such as transportation, are

created for people's needs rather than for financial gain. The organisation's support for Free Fares is therefore diverse, involving meeting the everyday needs of its members, ensuring fair access to necessary services, and promoting long-term systemic change for the benefit of the climate and the welfare of the community.

Though its motivations are different from those of other partner groups, Young Labour's participation in the Free Fares campaign reflects its emphasis on social justice, youth empowerment, and climate responsibility. Since young people, students, and those just starting their careers frequently earn the lowest salaries but depend most on reliable transportation to get to school, work, and community life, Young Labour views free or reduced public transportation as primarily an equity problem. They have stated, "The high costs of public transport is a barrier for many. With the costs of living rising, a regular \$3 bus ticket is out of reach for many Community Service Card holders, tertiary students and under-25s." Supporting Free Fares is seen by Young Labour as a means of reducing the burden of transportation costs and ensuring that young people are not left behind, as rising living expenses can make them a barrier to participation. However, the organisation also has a major political interest in creating long-term, systemic changes that support public transportation as an essential service rather than a privilege, in line with Labour's larger goal of social justice. Young Labour members frequently highlight that their generation will be particularly impacted by the growing climate crisis and that switching from a car to sustainable, fare-free public transport is one of the most obvious ways to reduce emissions while changing daily behaviour. They have said, "Free fares will help people to switch to public transport. Public transport produces fewer emissions per kilometre than private cars. As the Government shapes its Emissions Reduction Plan they need bold ideas. Free fares will create the mode shift needed to reduce our carbon emissions. With urgent and widespread implementation, this is one equitable and courageous action on the scale our climate needs." Young Labour's reasoning is centred more on social justice and the need to create a future where cost is not a barrier to opportunity and where young people inherit a planet that is habitable, in contrast to labour groups, which often frame their involvement around worker wellbeing, or organisations like the PSA, which emphasise access to public services. They believe that Free Fares is a policy that combines social justice and climate aims, and that supporting it shows their dedication to protecting youth today while influencing the society they will lead in the coming decades.

Reasons for selecting the actions taken within the campaign

Free Fares NZ utilised several actions to fight for their cause. One of the main social action methods taken have been petitions. They have done three petitions in recent years "Now is the Moment for Free Fares" Petition in 2022, which had 13,000 signatures, the ActionStation petition, which was a direct response to National's plan to cancel the discounts for young people and community services care holders, which gained over 7000 petitions. In 2025, they are doing the petition against fare hikes, which had around 6000 signatures before delivery. Through doing a petition, they have been able to demonstrate the scale of support for their aim with the hope that this will help to directly influence and strengthen the case for the government to adopt their policy suggestions.

To help spread the word about these petitions and to increase public awareness around the goals of the campaign and build understanding and support for why Fare Free is beneficial for New Zealanders, they also operate a very active social media campaign. They frequently post on Instagram, Facebook and X which helps to keep people engaged in what is going on, and this has been one of the main ways in which they have shared their petitions, which have included things like 'count down dates' and encouragement to 'sign and share'. They have also used social media to encourage people to "share their story" about public transport matters, which helps to build engagement with the cause. "They used hashtags like #FreeFaresNZ and #KeepItAffordable to get everyone talking and make the campaign go viral during the big moments.

Finally, they have engaged in more direct means of lobbying. Free Fares NZ has met with MPs "all over the motu" to push for their goals. They have had discussions with MPs like Duncan Webb, Sarah

Pallett, and Poto Williams. They have also had direct contact with MPs by organising petition handovers at Parliament. In December 2023 event where they presented 6,650+ signatures to MPs Julie Anne Genter and Ayesha Verrall, urging the Government to keep discounts and expand free fares. Although these are not National MPs, but engaging with the opposition, this helps to keep pressure on the government within parliament and to challenge them on their thinking. It hopefully also helps to build a base of support, so that if and when Labour get back in, they will be in support of Fare Free's aims. Additionally, Free Fares NZ submitted written evidence to the Petitions Committee and government consultations, opposing fare hikes linked to "private share funding targets." Their submissions argued that these targets would force councils to raise fares by up to 70%, worsening cost-of-living pressures and undermining climate goals. Because these committees are made up of MP's this is another way of having direct influence on the policy makers.

Real consequences of the Free Fares Campaign

The Free Fares coalition successfully campaigned for half-price public transport fares for Community Services Card holders and for Total Mobility users under the previous government. These discounts were retained despite proposals to remove them after the 2023 election, thanks to the work from Free Fares Coalition. The Ministry of Transport's Community Connect programme formalised these discounts and from July 2023 onward, Community Services Card holders and Total Mobility users became eligible for half-price fares nationwide. This had a direct impact on the people who use these cards.

Through the campaign, they were able to rally and draw attention to their cause. While a definitive number isn't available to show exactly how much people supported the campaign, polls indicate significant support for its goals. Seventy-one percent of New Zealand adults supported keeping the existing half-price public transport discounts in a November 2023 poll, and around 80% of adults wanted half-price fares made permanent in December 2022 polls. The Free Fares coalition itself represents about 100 organisations, including unions like the PSA, youth groups like Young Labour, and climate organisations such as Parents for Climate Aotearoa. Working together gave the campaign more power and showed how different groups can unite for a shared goal.

Potential consequences of the Free Fares campaign

One potential consequence that could come as a direct result of the Free Fares campaign is that fares for under-25s, tertiary students, Community Services Card holders, and Total Mobility Card holders and their support people are granted. By building up overwhelming public support and meeting with opposition MPs in Labour and the Greens, it means that if there is a change of government in the 2026 election, it is highly likely this could be adopted as a policy by a left-leaning coalition.

If this were to happen, and their aims are adopted into policy, this would help New Zealand meet its climate targets and promote a sustainable mobility culture. This is because it would encourage more people to switch to public transport. Fare Free states on their website that "21% of New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions come from transport. 70% of these from cars, SUVs, utes, vans and light trucks. Transport is our fastest growing source of carbon emissions, having doubled since 1990. Free fares, with urgent and widespread implementation, is one equitable and courageous action on the scale our climate needs."

There is also an argument that having Free Fares and increasing use of public transport will have wider benefits for the New Zealand economy. In their research, Free Fares states, "Greater PT use brings three main 'traditional' economic benefits: reduced road traffic congestion, higher productivity, and land value uplift. These benefits strengthen the economic case for public transport fare discounts and support our call for free fares for our target groups and half-price fares for all."

Finally, there is a health benefit that could be gained if Free Fares were successful in their policy goals, in that it would improve air quality through less pollution and also lead to fewer road accidents.

Petrol or diesel private vehicles, the dominant form of road transport in NZ, release air pollution by burning fuel. The Health and Air Pollution in New Zealand (HAPINZ 3.0) report found that, in 2016, exposure to pollution in NZ air led to over 3,000 premature adult deaths, over 13,000 hospital admissions for respiratory and cardiac illnesses, and over 13,000 cases of childhood asthma.

However, when considering these potential consequences, they all hinge on the fact that the Free Fares policy suggestions are adopted if a change of government happens, which is not guaranteed. While some groups are highly committed to the campaign, it is not necessarily on the radar of everyone as it is not frequently in the media. Therefore, it may not be adopted nationally as it is not enough of a priority, particularly if there is a budget shortfall as New Zealand is currently experiencing. There is also a potential consequence that if it were only adopted regionally, as opposed to nationally, there would be uneven implementation. Also, there would need to be some thought as to how well set up public transport infrastructure is in New Zealand. If demand for public transport increased but there was no investment in making it more reliable (which is a common critique of public transport in many of the main cities), it could ruin support for the campaign, and the policy may not be sustained as people may not want to use public transport if it becomes more hassle than taking their own vehicle.

Comprehensively examine and critically evaluate the campaign

The goal of the Free Fares campaign is to advocate for more affordable and equitable public transport by making it free for students, under-25s, and Community Service Card holders, and for reduced fares for everyone, to address rising living costs, decrease carbon emissions, improve public health, and boost economic productivity. The campaign also seeks investment in improving public transport frequency and quality, especially in underserved areas. The Free Fares campaign has had partial successes, despite their setback when the National-led government removed discounts for children and young people, the campaign continues to advocate for greater public transport equity. In November 2023, Free Fares NZ launched a new petition, asking for the current public transport to be kept. The petition was called Keep Public Transport Affordable. In December 2023 Free Fares NZ submitted this petition with more than 6,650 signatures gathered in less than a month.

Some of their achievements include securing half-price public transport for Total Mobility Services Card holders, half-price fares for Community Services Card holders, and increased public awareness and support. The campaign also planned to use their campaign to try to help with people's needs regarding the cost of living, benefit the environment, produce more equity and access to transportation, increase economic productivity, and help improve health of the public. However, the campaign did not achieve all of their goals. They didn't achieve securing free transport for young people. And they also did not achieve their ultimate goal of free public transport for everyone in New Zealand. They are currently still advocating for restoration of discounts previously abolished for young people, and they are still currently working towards their other goals that they could not yet achieve. I believe that they have done a good job of advocating for their cause, but it still hasn't worked. It seems that there is not a lot more that they could have done. I believe they have advocated for free fares to the best of their ability so far. The only thing more they could have done that I can think of is to better advocate and advertise for their cause. The rest of the steps they took were the right way to go about working towards achieving their goal, but they maybe could have spread awareness, and also try to gain even more support with better attention-grabbing advocating techniques. For example, maybe they could have advertised their petitions more on social media. Or, they could have even put up large posters in crowded public areas to better advocate for support for their cause. Maybe they could have focused more of their resources, such as their supporters and supporting groups, on advertising for their campaign and spreading more awareness, as well as promoting and encouraging more support on their campaign, like signing their petitions.

The student used footnoting throughout and provided a full reference list. These were removed for brevity.

Grade: Excellence

For Excellence, the student needs to examine, comprehensively, a campaign of social action(s) to influence policy change(s).

This involves critically evaluating the effectiveness of the campaign, including possible modifications that could have improved its influence on policy.

This student has met the criteria for Achieved by explaining the aims of the Hands Off Our Tamariki movement and its desired legislative change in relation to the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, along with other ongoing policy goals. They also explain reasons for the involvement of Sarah Taiapa and Ngā Maia.

Additionally, the student discusses why the campaign used an open letter and petition, further explaining how social media, hashtags, and nationwide rallies supported a high-profile delivery to Parliament. The use of specific, relevant evidence across the Achieved criterion reflects expectations at curriculum level 8.

At Merit, the student has explored real and potential consequences by discussing legislative and social impacts. They explain the introduction of section 7AA and show how advocacy led to a sharp reduction in newborn removals and reduced disparities for Māori in state care. They also consider negative consequences, such as reinforced distrust of government health services, and explore potential outcomes like reinstating section 7AA and implementing Māori-led solutions such as a Mokopuna Health Authority.

At Excellence, the student has critically evaluated the campaign's effectiveness by linking its actions to tangible policy outcomes, such as influencing the introduction of section 7AA in the Oranga Tamariki Act. They support this with evidence of strong mobilisation that prompted formal responses. The evaluation identifies limitations, including inconsistent messaging and the absence of a structured political strategy, and proposes realistic modifications. These include developing a unified communication plan to clarify policy objectives and forming a dedicated political or legal group to strengthen engagement with decision makers. The suggestions are specific, relevant, and demonstrate insight into how the campaign could have amplified its influence on policy. This reflects a comprehensive understanding of social action methods that can drive policy change.

Aims and Desired Policy Change

The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement aims to “directly end the systemic removal of Māori pēpi from their whānau into Oranga Tamariki.” In return, this movement prioritises Māori-led solutions, proposing approaches such as whānau-centred decision-making, which seeks to let whānau, hapū, and iwi have a voice in the removal process. Further solutions include establishing a Mokopuna Māori Authority to oversee policies and decisions, voicing their perspective on a child’s circumstances and placement, and funding Kaupapa Māori organisations that focus their services on a Māori worldview rather than the government’s view on child placement.

With these solutions, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement directly opposes the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, which still gives overall authority to Oranga Tamariki in decision-making. This campaign’s goal was to repeal parts of this legislation, which, in response to a march in 2019 along with a petition, led to Section 7AA being introduced. This section acknowledges Māori values such as whakapapa and tino rangatiratanga. Despite this success, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement still recognises flaws within the legislation. Their ongoing goal is specifically eliminating non-consensual “uplifts” of tamariki Māori and mandating iwi-led decision-making processes with the solutions stated above.

In 2019, the movement organised a nationwide protest march and delivered a petition to Parliament, calling for an end to non-consensual uplifts of Māori children and for greater recognition of whakapapa and tino rangatiratanga in child welfare decisions.. Beyond public demonstrations, the movement has continued its advocacy through community hui, public awareness campaigns, and media engagement, promoting whānau-centred decision-making and calling for the establishment of a Mokopuna Māori Authority to oversee policies affecting tamariki Māori. The group also pushes for increased funding for Kaupapa Māori organisations, ensuring that child protection decisions reflect Māori worldviews rather than government-imposed models. These combined actions reflect an ongoing commitment to restoring Māori authority over the care and wellbeing of their tamariki and ensuring iwi-led, culturally grounded solutions in child welfare policy.

Reasons for individuals’ and/or groups’ involvement**#1 Sarah Taiapa:**

Sarah Taiapa is a well-established Māori activist and advocate for wahine Māori, who has consistently criticised Oranga Tamariki and their methods. Emerging as a powerful voice within the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement, Sarah is strongly against the removal of Māori pēpi by Oranga Tamariki. Most notably, she attended protests as early as 2019, where she passionately declared her dismay regarding the removal of Māori children by the state, exclaiming, “I cannot believe that children are still being taken by the state in 2019.” She went on to stress that “To preserve the Māori culture, tamariki must be kept with their whānau,” while further stating, “This here is raising the awareness and physically getting people together to face the problem face to face just to show that we are here, we care, this is a problem, as something does need to be done about it.”

These statements show Sarah’s strong stance on this issue and her reason for involvement, as her view comes from those affected directly by Oranga Tamariki and their controversial child removal methods. A significant example of this was recorded in early 2019, when Oranga Tamariki came under fire regarding the attempted removal of a newborn from its mother at Hawke’s Bay Hospital. The midwife in the care of this pēpi expressed her perspective, saying, “Oranga Tamariki’s policies are racist against Māori, and continue to hurt iwi, hapū, and whānau through the generations,” while further stating, “When we look at the statistics of children in state care today, they are third, fourth and fifth generation. They are children of state care, their parents were, and their grandparents were.”

This incident perfectly highlights Sarah’s view and reason for opposing Oranga Tamariki. She passionately declares her opinion, aiming to challenge what she believes is systemic racism that exists within state care institutions such as Oranga Tamariki.

#2 Ngā Maia

Founded in 1993, Ngā Maia was created by Māori midwives with the intent to act against Māori maternity inconsistencies present around the time of their establishment. Since then, Ngā Maia has become a strong voice within maternity care, fighting for Māori equality and rights. One prominent achievement includes their creation of Turanga Kaupapa, a cultural framework for midwifery that has been adopted and endorsed by the Midwifery Council and the New Zealand College of Midwives.

With their advocacy for Māori in the maternity space, their support for the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement came as no surprise. The most significant reason for Ngā Maia's involvement in this campaign derives from the strong core values they hold as an organisation. Their most distinguished value is their acknowledgement and commitment to Mana Motuhake. Mana Motuhake is a value that seeks self-determination and autonomy over oneself. With the government's dismissal and ignorance towards Oranga Tamariki's policies and their lack of Māori worldview within the establishment as a whole, it is unsurprising the amount of dismay Ngā Maia holds towards both the government and Oranga Tamariki's rejection of mana motuhake.

The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement endorses mana motuhake as they aim to prioritise Māori-led solutions, something Ngā Maia is familiar with and a noteworthy reason for their involvement in this campaign. An additional value held by Ngā Maia is their commitment to whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, which both directly align with the kaupapa of this movement. These ideologies highlight the value of strong, supportive whānau relationships and the community's duty to care for tamariki Māori. The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement is directly targeting policies of the Oranga Tamariki Act that prohibit or fail to uphold these values - specifically Section 78 of this Act, which allows the courts to decide custody of a child without notifying all parties. This directly opposes Ngā Maia's values of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, making all of the values they uphold an integral reason for their involvement in the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement.

Social Action Methods and Reasons

One of the main social action methods taken as part of the campaign was an open letter and petition that was delivered to Parliament in 2019. The open letter outlined the "urgent need for transformative systemic change" and listed 15 key changes they wanted the government to make in relation to the issue. They supported this by citing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Articles 7, 21, and 22, and highlighted, "We have not been alone in such a position, which has been advocated by a range of organisations including the Māori Women's Welfare League, Whānau Ora collectives, the Māori Council, Te Wharepora Hou, a number of iwi and Māori organisations, groups of Māori counsellors, social workers and healers, and both the previous and current Commissioner for Children amongst others."

This open letter was shared through ActionStation and managed to gather 17,000 signatures. ActionStation helped to promote the letter through their own social media platforms, and on many occasions the hashtag #HandsOffOurTamariki was used. By creating an open letter that clearly outlined their position, positioning themselves alongside other reputable groups, and citing UN obligations, they were able to add weight to their cause and help ensure they were taken seriously by the government. Additionally, by using a platform such as ActionStation, which is widely known and able to spread messages quickly through its channels, they were able to amass a huge number of signatures, particularly as the issue was very prevalent in the media at the time due to the Hawke's Bay uplift. The 17,000 signatures were hugely important to the campaign as they clearly illustrated to the government that there was mass support behind their policy requests.

Importantly, the delivery took place on 30 July 2019, when several hundred people gathered at Parliament to submit their petition and open letter. Around 300 people attended the Wellington rally (there were also other rallies held in other urban centres, gaining further attention), and it was delivered to Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson. This action had two key parts: firstly, the number of people who attended the rally gathered media attention and further spread the message,

as the delivery was covered by RNZ, Stuff, and local news channels. Secondly, by ensuring it was handed over to Parliament, it helped to ensure that the message was clearly delivered to the policymakers they were aiming to influence. Alongside this, they published a press release where the campaigners “called for the resignation of both the CEO Grainne Moss and for the Minister Tracey Martin to step down and strongly advocate for Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern to step up and to take seriously the calls by Māori for Kaupapa Māori solutions and approaches that are led by Māori for Māori.” This added further public pressure on politicians to act more promptly and address the concerns that were raised.

Part 2 Examine in detail the real and potential consequences of the campaign.

In addition to the change to legislation through Section 7AA, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement had many social and economic impacts on Aotearoa. The most significant impact and real consequence of this campaign was the sharp reduction in child removals and disparities around state care. As a result of heavy advocacy through media, rallies, petitions, and other social actions initiated by this campaign, several child welfare systems in Aotearoa saw a substantial reduction in the number of babies removed at birth. Specifically, between the years 2019 to 2020 (the years the movement was most prominent), newborn removals declined by more than half compared to previous years. Additionally, the disparity between Māori and Pākehā child removals also lessened drastically. These decreases greatly demonstrate the weight a campaign can acquire and the impact that weight can have on society given the right resources and consistency in advocacy. The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement remained consistently mobilised during the years that saw great improvements to newborn removals. Though this was not on the scale of full policy change, they inadvertently aided in reducing these removals through consistent presence alone.

A secondary and somewhat negative real consequence of the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement is the avoidance and reinforced distrust in government-owned public health services. Due to this movement's exposure of systemic racism and historical trauma present in Oranga Tamariki, whānau Māori have voiced concerns and avoided seeking help from these services. These services are not limited to state care. Some Māori whānau have been documented avoiding essential healthcare such as seeing a doctor in fear that Oranga Tamariki will uplift their child. Despite the risks and flaws that arise from this exposure, this avoidance and stigmatised distrust of not only Oranga Tamariki but essential healthcare further highlights the systemic racism and generational trauma that stem from state care services like Oranga Tamariki. This could likely result in possible intervention from government entities to act on this issue. The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement was able to bring dire systemic issues to the attention of not only the general public but possibly even governing ministers, while also exposing the deep-rooted fears some Māori experience when dealing with state care institutions like Oranga Tamariki.

Potential Consequences

A prominent potential consequence of the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement is the reinstatement of Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act. As explained earlier, in 2019, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement played a vital role in exposing Oranga Tamariki and their lack of consistent adherence to Section 7AA of the Act, a section that ensures the use of Māori values during their procedures. Through this exposure, they were able to raise public awareness and hold Oranga Tamariki accountable for rejecting this section, reinforcing its importance. In 2024, under the current coalition government, the New Zealand Act Party repealed this section, claiming it prioritises culture over individual needs. From this repeal, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement could possibly see a future resurgence, doubling down on the importance of this section. Considering their accomplishment in 2019 and their past displays of consistent mobilisation, action from this movement surrounding this issue is extremely probable and could lead to the reinstatement of Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Deriving from this possible reinstatement, an additional potential consequence of this campaign is further advocacy for Māori-led solutions. One of the most significant objectives this campaign voiced

was the implementation of Māori-led solutions. One solution that could potentially be revived is the establishment of a Mokopuna Health Authority. In 2023, Te Pāti Māori brought this idea forward to limit disparities and solve the ongoing issue of systemic mistreatment of Māori pēpi. This solution would create an independent Māori youth service designed for Māori by Māori. It would also solve further problems as it would see the immediate end to both at-birth uplifts and uplifts without the consent of hapū, iwi, and whānau. This solution as a whole addresses many of the issues Māori face with Oranga Tamariki and greatly accomplishes the goals the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement aims to achieve. Implementing manaakitanga and kotahitanga, along with Māori leadership at the helm of this solution, highlights the likelihood of this movement's advocacy for this approach.

Examine the effectiveness of the campaign in influencing policy change

The Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement was significantly influential to policy change and showed several examples of its effectiveness throughout the course of its mobilisation. One example I have referenced throughout my analysis was their substantial influence in the 2019 march and their eventual impact on Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act. They were able to not only gain massive traction publicly through petitioning and rallies but also remain consistent over the course of their advocacy, something else I have repeatedly emphasised in my examination of their campaign. Their petition alone was extremely strong, holding over 17,000 signatures and garnering a formal response. Later that year, Oranga Tamariki released a statement acknowledging their wrongdoings regarding at-birth child removals. This movement held a rally carrying this petition and marched to the steps of Parliament, demanding the immediate abolishment of at-birth uplift procedures along with stressing the targeted and systemic racism that stems from this procedure. Through the culmination of this campaign's efforts, the Hands Off Our Tamariki Movement was able to influence Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act. This section of the Act newly obligated Oranga Tamariki to recognise and consider whanaungatanga and whakapapa Māori. From this feat, the effectiveness of the campaign is displayed perfectly. From their consistency to their intricate and well-thought-out social actions, this campaign undoubtedly made a significant impact on society through brilliantly effective campaigning methods and as a result made an impact on policy change.

While this movement was rooted in many strengths that eventually led to policy change, a further modification I believe was missing during their mobilisation derives from their lack of structured political strategy. Despite my praise of their political impacts through consistency, I believe they lacked an organised and set-in-stone political strategy, which led to many of their goals being overlooked, particularly their desire for Mokopuna Māori AUTHoirty to be established. Assets such as a political wing, a group made up of political experts that would work through the intricacies of policy change, could have strengthened their approach. This group could consist of or be aided by legal experts and MPs driving down the message with a powerful political argument to aid in further policy change. Additional assets could include Māori academics such as members of the Waitangi Tribunal to have a more integral and first-person role in this campaign. Though this movement had the backing of well-respected groups such as ActionStation and Ngā Maia, alongside the political backing of groups such as Te Pāti Māori, I believe creating a designated cohort of people like the one proposed who specifically target the political aspect of this campaign would greatly enhance the overall results from policy change.

Upon further consideration, a method I believe this campaign was missing is a thoroughly crafted way of getting their concerns across. During my research, I found there was a lack of consistent and secure messaging throughout the campaign's runtime. Many of the statements I encountered represented different aspects of what the campaign was striving for, which made it harder for the public and policymakers to clearly understand their core objectives. The public outrage was present and powerful, but this passion was diminished by the absence of a unified message that tied all actions together.

The hashtag "#HandsOffOurTamariki" was the most well-crafted and memorable element of their messaging, and while it successfully captured attention and created visibility, it did not fully

communicate the specific solutions the movement was advocating for. This gap meant that while people understood the problem, they were less aware of the detailed policy changes being requested, such as the establishment of a Mokopuna Māori Authority or mandatory iwi-led decision-making. A strong, structured communication strategy could have amplified these solutions and ensured they were front and centre in public discourse.

The student used footnoting throughout and provided a full reference list. These were removed for brevity.