



Trustee News

March 2017

31 March 2017

Tēnā koutou katoa

It is my pleasure to be writing the first Trustee News for 2017. Under the leadership of our new Principal Tony Austin, we have seen some changes in school classrooms, hub names and class times, but as a board we have been impressed at the smooth transition which has resulted in happy and settled students and staff. Obviously this has been helped immensely by Tony's previous role as deputy principal and as the staff representative on the board.

This Trustee News will:

- provide a little more detail about the Board meeting schedule for the year and the planning we have done so far this year;
- report on some trends identified in the school survey which was completed in term 4 last year;
- outline how the survey feedback has been integrated into the annual plan;
- provide an update on property issues, particularly the school pool and an upcoming working bee on **Sunday 14 May**.

Board meetings and planning

The board began the year with a planning meeting in January to discuss the school charter and strategic plan for the 2017-2019 period. We also reviewed the results of the school survey and this was fed into our annual planning process and Tony's planning meetings with staff.

We have met twice since the term began. In the first meeting we appointed Peter Dobson as the staff representative on the Board of Trustees, replacing Tony who previously held that position.

Over the term we've reviewed plans for and approved school camp, and then heard of its success. A big thank you to all of the staff and parents who helped to make it so. We've also reviewed policies and our own board procedures, and we have done a lot more work on the school strategic and annual plans. Our first meeting discussed how our three-year objectives would be translated into the year's annual plan and we looked at a draft budget for the year. At our second meeting we ratified that budget.

Many of you will have received a letter earlier this month about the school donation. As outlined in the letter, the donations that we receive from school families provide a crucial income stream for the school. It ensures that we can deliver a broad curriculum with adequate amounts of support for our children. Having the majority of families contributing in this way complements the work of Parentlink, which raises money for the school through community events.

School Survey

Last year's survey covered three main areas: Strategic priorities for the school; the role of information technology at school and at home; and education outside the classroom (EOTC) opportunities. Below is a summary of the section and results.

- Strategic priorities

Last year the school developed some strategic priorities, which were more closely linked to the school vision and the graduate profile. They are:

- 1 Progress and achievement for all students, in both the 'core subjects' of reading, writing and maths, as well as all other areas of the curriculum.
- In the survey you told us that we were doing well in reading, particularly for those who struggle, but in some classes more could be done to extend able students. There was also a call for a more coordinated approach to maths teaching, and more consistency was also favoured for other curriculum areas, such as PE.
- 2 All students will be actively engaged in learning, which will be achieved through providing innovative learning environments, the opportunity for personalised learning, and appropriate use of technology.
- In the survey you told us that you are supportive of the work that the school had done on innovative learning environments, and we received particularly good feedback from parents who had had children in the room 9/10 hub last year. Again, opportunities for improvement were around all students having a learning programme that is appropriate for them, with technology used to assist this learning. Some parents thought that they were unable to comment on this question, which raised the need for the school (or hubs) to communicate more regularly about the programmes being delivered in the classroom.

- ICT – digital citizenship

This section looked at digital citizenship, time spent on devices and the use of online educational programmes both through school and at home.

- The majority of our families thought that teaching digital citizenship and cyber safety was a shared responsibility of both school and parents/caregivers. However there were many respondents who asked the school to provide more information about what the school is doing in this area.*
- More than half the respondents thought that the amount of time spent on devices at school as about right, but there was also a large number who were not sure how much time was spent on devices, again indicating that regular communication with parents was important.*

- Education outside the classroom

This section looked at regular local off-site activities, camp, and other one-off opportunities to reinforce learning.

- There was overwhelming support for EOTC being an important part of the curriculum and opportunities and variety provided by Kilbirnie School was considered pretty good.*

- *When asked specifically about off-site activities the cost, opportunity for parental involvement and use of local facilities all rated highly. The specific regular opportunities close to the school such as the library, ASB centre and Kilbirnie pool were all rated highly. Camp also received many positive comments, with no major changes suggested.*
- *Several other EOTC opportunities were listed in the survey, and have been passed on to teachers for consideration.*

Links to the annual plan

It is not the Board's role to be actively involved in preparing the annual plan, but we do manage the annual community survey and make sure that any issues raised are considered in future planning.

Last year's survey results were shared with staff as an input into annual planning. In some cases they reinforced views and intentions of staff, and in other cases they have helped to shape the planned initiative.

The annual plan focuses on three areas:

- 1 Progress and Achievement for all students
- 2 All students will be actively engaged in learning
- 3 Personalisation for student needs and interests

An action plan for 2017 has been developed for each, and the following items that relate to the points raised in last year's survey are covered.

- There will be continued staff professional development on maths and writing.
- A whole-school inquiry learning study focussing on the science curriculum area "planet earth and beyond" will be undertaken in term 2 (linking to Matariki and other EOTC), and financial literacy in term 3.
- Classroom operation has been reorganised to operate more as integrated hubs, which should enable children to work at their own pace and ability.
- Hubs will enable classes to be held with and across the home rooms, providing opportunities for children to work with other students and teachers.
- The genius hour approach will be developed across the school.
- Further professional development for staff on innovative learning techniques
- Increased opportunities for links between home and school via newsletters, regular teacher email, informational evenings and blogs.
- Specifically, a parent information evening with Netsafe.

The full Charter and Strategic Plan for 2017-2019 and the Annual Management Plan for 2017 is available as a PDF file on our website from next week.

Property issues - School Pool and working bee Sunday 14 May

The school pool closes this weekend as our 'summer' draws to an end. As many of you may be aware, the pool liner is getting to the end of its life span. We have had to install various patches over the summer, and earlier this month the liner began to billow at one end. It has been cautiously open since then and inspected regularly, but once closed, we plan to drain the pool and carry out a full inspection and then assess repair options. We do have some money in reserves for a replacement liner, but will be seeking a longer-term solution, and may possibly need to seek further funds. If anyone would like to help with this project, please get in touch with either Tony or I.

This year we plan to hold two Working Bees – in autumn and spring, to keep our gardens and grounds tidy. The autumn one will be held on **Sunday 14 May**. Please note it in your diaries – more information will be provided early next term.

We represent you

Below is a list of the members of the Board of Trustees. We have been elected by the school community to oversee the governance of the school, so please get in touch with any of us if you have any questions.

Ngā mihi

Chris Montgomerie
Chair

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