



Trustee News

June 2020

Kia ora te whānau

Kia pai tou tatou Matariki!

This is the first update from your Board of Trustees for a while – and gosh how the world has changed in these past few months. As we celebrate Matariki, the Māori New Year, it is a great time for us to be with our families and friends to reflect on the past few months, celebrate the present and plan ahead for the coming year.

The Board would like to acknowledge how great it has been to be able to come together as a school community after the lockdown. It is certainly a way that we can feel that the world is getting back to some sort of 'normal'. We are so proud of how our teachers responded so quickly to provide learning opportunities and support in such a different way during lockdown, and then also how they worked with the tamariki on school's return, to settle in, and check in, on each student's wellbeing before getting back into the classroom programmes.

We recognise too, the juggle of overseeing children's home learning all the while managing your own working requirements and the additional stress that Covid-19 brought. For me, it revealed the incredible skill that our teachers have in making learning fun and relevant for a range of different personalities simultaneously. I see it as a kind of magic, and it made me appreciate our teaching staff even more.

Many thank also to Tony and his management team, who gave us clear communication at key times, enabled us to keep the home learning going, and who put in place new procedures to ensure that we were able to return to a clean and safe school environment.

The school management and Board also received very clear updates from the Ministry of Education, so I must also acknowledge their work. They anticipated questions and responded regularly which removed a lot of guesswork in such an uncertain time.

Board focus and school curriculum planning

As you can imagine, recent Board meetings have focussed mainly on the school's Covid-19 response. We were delighted to meet in person again last week to finally start discussing plans for the future. We heard about how the focus on professional learning and development in science has been revised now that we are back at school, and also about the school's Matariki celebrations during this final week of term and how plans for the production in term 3 are coming along.

Planning for upcoming property upgrades

You may recall that I wrote last November that we were completing documentation for our 10-year property plan.

I'm pleased to report that we now have approval to focus on an upgrade to the Matairangi Hub's senior classrooms (rooms 8, 9 and 10) to improve the spaces as modern learning environments (including better connection, break out rooms, and improvements in temperature control, air flow and insulation). This project will be managed by the Board, along with a Ministry accredited QS/project manager. We have formed a property sub-committee made up of myself, Tony, and Board members John Denton and Davin Hall. Planning has begun and we have incorporated feedback from parents and whānau in the 2018 school survey and a workshop with teachers in March this year. Initial concepts are now being costed which will give an idea of the scope that we can afford.

Separate to the usual property funding, we have also been discussing options with the Ministry of Education about replacement the prefab classrooms in the Whataitai hub (rooms 5, 6 and 7). A business case to replace them has been approved at the Ministry, and this project would be managed entirely by Ministry personnel. We are awaiting advice on how and when this project will proceed.

We will continue to share details of on both projects as they progress.

We're always happy to talk

As we are parent representatives, please get in touch with any of us if you want to find out more about what we do. The following people are on the board:

Chris Montgomerie
Robin Fepuleai
Andy Davies
John Denton

Davin Hall
Heidi Cannell
Peter Dobson (staff rep)
Tony Austin (principal)

Ngā mihi maioha

Chris Montgomerie
Chair, Board of Trustees