



Trustee News

November 2021

Kia ora te whānau

This is a well-overdue update from the School Board as we enter the end of another school year full of activity, learning, and a few challenges.

I would like to thank the Parentlink group who successfully moved the art auction [online](#) this year after the live event was delayed and then cancelled. This is disappointing as I always find those occasions a good time to talk to other parents away from the rush of pick up or sports games. As well as a great community building opportunity, these fundraising events are important for adding funds to the school to ensure that we can provide the wide range of learning opportunities that we do.

It was great that the final instalment of our art celebration, the exhibition of children's artwork, went ahead this weekend. I have been lucky to have supported my friend Jake Yocum in the Creatives in Schools programme that has been in the school in the last few terms. We have been talking about identity, whakapapa, family connections and stories, learning techniques for clay work, and Jake and I have been making molds and casting the work before the children finish it off. It has been a fantastic way to get to know the tamariki, and in the studio we have remembered the stories that we were told as the work was being produced.

I have enjoyed discovering the wide range of backgrounds and family histories that make up our school, and which our tamariki bring to their learning and to school life. It really is to be celebrated.

Now on to School Board business. Recently we have been focussing on:

- Finishing up the retrofitting of the Matairangi classrooms (years 5 and 6), and more excitingly, beginning our planning for a new building for the Whataitai hub (years 3 and 4) to replace the three old prefab buildings
- Supporting school management and staff as they manage the various Covid-19 levels with agility and professionalism
- Designing the [annual survey](#), which was sent out last week. Please do take the time to fill it out as your views feed into the setting of the annual plan and budget, which work is beginning on now.
- Reviewing policies, some of which seek parent feedback. Tony highlights these in the school newsletter, so keep an eye out, or alternatively you can find the review schedule on the [School Docs website](#), accessed through our school website. (Username is kilbirnie, and password is matairangi)
- Succession planning for the board, with elections scheduled for September 2022.

Board succession planning

The School Board is elected for a three-year term, and is made up of 5 elected representatives, a staff representative and the principal. Elected representatives are usually parents or whānau of children at the school. We are community representatives with a governance role and through discussing and approving the school strategic plan and budget, we have a say in the type of school our kids attend, and the types of learning experiences that they will have.

As mentioned above, the next Board election will be in September 2022. There will be several Board members (including myself) who will be finishing up at that time or before, so we always welcome inquiries from people interested in this governance role. Previously we have invited people to attend the Board meeting, but this year the majority have been held online via Zoom. Existing Board members are listed below, so if you have any queries, please contact any one of us, or email me on chair@kilbirnie.school.nz.

Our board meetings are ably supported by a Board Secretary who takes minutes at the evening meetings (two per term). In my time on the board there have been 4 great secretaries. Most have been parents undertaking the role voluntarily and other times it has been paid. It is also a good opportunity to see how the board operates and the types of issues that we discuss if you are considering joining the board itself. Our current secretary is finishing up at the end of this year, so we will be looking for someone to take their place, beginning next year. Please email me on the address above or speak to Tony Austin if you are interested.

Policy review

As outlined above, each term several board policies are reviewed, and each policy is reviewed every three years. As well as checking that the policy matches current legislation, we check that it matches what actually happens in the school, and that it fits with our vision for the school. Last term the Behaviour Management and Concerns and Complaints policies were reviewed. This term the Māori Educational Success policy is being reviewed and is open to input from Parents. It is guided by the school's Te Tiriti o Waitangi Commitment, which is also linked to the policy on the School Docs page.

December Board meeting

Our December board meeting is a time to say thanks to everyone who has been part of our wider community through the year. We invite representatives from Parentlink and Kilbirnie After School Care to come along, as well as the senior management team.

It is also an important meeting in terms of reporting, as we discuss student achievement results, a key focus for us as a board. In this Covid environment, we have to consider how learning progresses while the learning environment it adjusts to changes in alert levels. This, of course, can only happen when a child feels safe and settled, so at board meetings this year we have spent a lot of time considering the hauora of our students, and also making sure that the workload and stress levels of our wonderful staff are managed for their own wellbeing.

By the December meeting, planning for the coming year will also be well underway, and we will be discussing the draft annual plan and budget for 2021.

We're always happy to talk

As we're 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. Please contact the school office if you would like contact details for any of us.

Chris Montgomerie
Robin Fepuleai
Andy Davies
John Denton
Davin Hall
Heidi Cannell
Peter Dobson (staff rep)
Tony Austin (principal)

Ngā mihi

Chris Montgomerie
Chair, Board of Trustees