



'A community striving to succeed and acting with integrity'

Oratia District School Board of Trustees Newsletter

Issue 3: 15 December 2011

Hello again from your Board of Trustees. As it is the end of the school year this will be a brief newsletter to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and update you on our December meeting and other Term 4 events.

Main Points from our December Meeting

School Structure for 2012

The Principal advised the Board of the school structure for 2012, which is comprised of single-level classes across the school with the exception of a composite Year 1/2 class in Room 5. We welcome a new teacher, Carys Taylor, to the school next year. She will be teaching a Year 6 class in Room 18 while Lee Bartlett takes maternity leave to look after her new baby Elise. We also welcome Kathryn Macfarlane to the permanent staff following her two terms working in the junior school in a fixed-term position. And congratulations to Patsy Pickup, Naomi Laycock and Pamela Lonie, who joined us as Beginning Teachers, but celebrated their graduation this term.

Ministry of Education Funding

The school has received approval from the Ministry for our five-year and 10-year property plans. This clears the way for us to progress our vision for a new learning centre – you'll be hearing a lot more about this next year!

ERO Feedback

Last week we hosted two reviewers from the Education Review Office (ERO). They spent Monday to Thursday looking around our school and talking with our principal, senior management team, teachers, students, parents and the Board of Trustees. Their visit began with a very moving powhiri from our kapa haka group. As a Board we felt proud to be represented by such a fine group of students, as well as Thomas Bigge, who performed the whaikorero on our behalf. Thanks also to parents Teresa Roetman, Cathy Owers, Melanie Maitland, Tracey Murray, Norbert Schaffoener, Helen Vlasich, Dawn Brown and Paulette Tinsel, who met with our ERO visitors on Tuesday afternoon to discuss their impressions of the school.

On Monday of this week the ERO reviewers returned to the school to present their preliminary findings to the Board. Their report was very positive about the direction the school is taking, with high praise for our governance, leadership and management, our strategic vision and planning, our values-based curriculum, our high-quality teaching and, in particular, our capable, confident children who clearly demonstrate a love of learning. The Board was encouraged by this feedback, which suggests we are on the right track for the future. We look forward to sharing the ERO's final report with you when it is released in February 2012.

Term 4 Activities

It has been a short but busy term, with Year 5 and 6 camps providing the highlight for many students, staff and caregivers. For the junior school a Kiwiana Sports day provided plenty of fun, while our elite athletes from the senior school came home from the Zonal Athletics Day with a big haul of wins. Yesterday it was the Board's great pleasure to attend the Senior Prizegiving to celebrate the achievements of our Year 5 and 6 students. It is always a source of pride to see our Year 6 students heading off into the world bubbling with potential and excitement, and we wish them all the best for the future. Before the prizegiving we also attended the school's annual Helpers' Lunch. Our thanks to everyone who chipped in during 2011 to make our school the special place that it is, especially our dedicated management, teaching and administration teams. We wish you all a happy and restful holiday break. See you next year!

Warmest regards from your Board of Trustees

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