

BOARD ON TOP

Newsletter of the Tapanui School Board of Trustees

10 November 2017

Dear Parents/Caregivers

The Board of Trustees met earlier this week for our first meeting of Term Four. Our agenda included discussion around Curriculum - Te Reo Maori, staffing for 2018 and the upcoming Board Election. We also discussed what implications a change of Government may have on teaching and learning at Tapanui School.

- **Curriculum Report - Te Reo Maori** - Learning Languages is the key strand of Communication in the New Zealand Curriculum. There are also two supporting strands - Language Knowledge and Cultural Knowledge. Where possible Te Reo Māori (language) is integrated into everyday classroom use, while Tikanga (customs [including historical], procedures, culture etc) are integrated within a conceptual approach to curriculum.

In consultation with whānau, Tapanui School is committed to the following programme:

- A Marae visit (every 3rd year) for the whole school ... 2015, 2018, 2021 ...
- Participation in the Gore and Districts' Cultural Festival ... 2016, 2018, 2020 ...
- A Hangi every third year ... 2017, 2020, 2023 ...

A consultation process is run every year with the whānau / hapu of akonga who identify as Māori on the roll.

The teaching staff at Tapanui School report that students enjoy learning Te Reo Maori and various other aspects of the Maori Culture. In the Matai Hub it is interweaved into the classroom in purposeful and useful ways such as through waiata (song), storytelling, discussions about Matariki and Waitangi Day and learning poi, rakau and flax weaving. The Rimu Hub have a weekly oral language session where Te Reo Maori is taught. Waiata, students learning their Mihi's and the sharing of history stories also happen frequently.

- **Play Based Learning Report** - Play Based Learning was introduced to the Matai Hub in mid-2016. The Matai Hub team provided the Board with an update at our meeting. PBL has continued to evolve since its introduction last year and is part of the daily routine most afternoons. Teachers have observed that students love engaging with learning during this time. Aspects of Science, Technology, Music, Visual Art, Drama, Dance, Social Sciences have all been encompassed within this time. Students are much more able to deal with conflicts and demonstrate the school's key values and key competencies such as relating to other and managing themselves. Play Based Learning is giving the children more opportunities than they would in a more traditional, teacher led structured format, to practice all the essential soft skills needed in life and give a strong oral language base. The growth of the Play Pod has given children the opportunity to be creative, inventive and social.

- **Community of Learning Update** - A strategic plan which included achievement challenges has been sent away to the Ministry of Education. There may be some delay in endorsing these challenges due to a change in Government. We will continue to keep you updated.
- **Confirmed Staffing for 2018** - As mentioned in the September Board on Top, the board has had confirmation that we will begin 2018 with six teachers. Staffing for 2018 will be as follows:
 - Rimu Hub - Mrs Jill Crow, Mrs Leanna McKenzie and Miss Kaitlyn Roughan. Mrs Penny O'Meara will be taking leave for 12 months. We look forward to seeing her back in 2019.
 - Matai Hub - Mrs Jane Stuart, Miss Abbie Gibson and Mrs Judy Clayton.
- **Board of Trustees Election** - By now you should have received a nomination form for parent trustees in the mail. Nominations close at 12 noon on November 17 2017. Parent trustees are an integral part of the Board. The role is interesting and rewarding and I encourage you to get involved. Please contact a current member of the Board if you would like any further information.
- **General** - As the end of year fast approaches, the Board will be busy drafting the budget for 2018, revisiting the goals laid out in the 2017 Charter and beginning to plan ahead for 2018. A Transition to Rimu Parents Evening is planned for November 23rd. This will give parents and caregivers of students in Year 3, in particular, an opportunity to find out about how learning happens in the Rimu Hub, gain information about BYOD and ask any questions you may have. Our final Board meeting for the year will be held on December 12th at 5.30 pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Finally, this will be my last Board on Top as I am stepping down from the Board in order to take on new challenges in 2018. It is a big ask to expect parents, with little knowledge of education, to volunteer to oversee the governance of a school. However it is a great learning experience and can be extremely rewarding. I would like to thank my fellow board members for the time and effort they have invested into Tapanui School. My role as Board Chair has been a very positive experience. I have a great deal of admiration for Antony, the teachers and the support staff. I have seen how hard they all work, the challenges they face and the successes they celebrate. The students at Tapanui School are lucky to have a great team supporting them through their early years of learning.

Kind regards
Alena Stuart
Chairperson