



West Melton SCHOOL

Te Kura o Papatahora

Driving a Passion for Learning

Board of Trustees Newsletter

Issue 4
December 2019

Kia ora koutou Whānau, kua tae ki te wā Kirihimete!

Another busy year is coming to a close but we want to take a moment to celebrate the many amazing successes by our students, teachers and community.

Our teachers have done a fantastic job this year and continue to challenge themselves to expand their knowledge and bring new best practices to the school. Further in this newsletter we have highlighted some of the amazing achievements of our staff.

A big piece of work the Board undertook this year was the community consultation where we met with parents at a consultation evening and also ran a digital survey. We are coming together again as a board in January 2020 to draw on our findings and working on the strategy for our school for the coming years.

As the year closes we farewell those staff leaving the school. Each teacher leaves their mark on our community and we thank each one for their passion, energy and efforts.

Welcome our new teachers, students, celebrate our new ambassadors and student executive. Wish all of our community a safe and happy Christmas and we look forward to see all our learners back in 2020.

Ngā mihi,

Sara Paris (BoT Chair)

2019 BY THE NUMBERS:

Student achievement data successes as of December:

Reading: **90%**, Goal: 85%
Writing: **80%**, Goal: 83%
Maths: **89%**, Goal: 85%.

After rapid growth through the early part of the decade our roll has remained steady over the last few years and we finish the year with **464** amazing students.

This year our students and teachers participated in a **31** sports events either at school or in the Canterbury area.

95 - the number of kit notices sent out through the year.

79 - the number of parents who consulted on the school review either in person or online survey.

41 - the number of amazing staff who make our school successful!

Well done to all the staff, teachers and students for working so hard, thank you!

Community Consultation Results

As part of our regular consultation process a robust self-review process was carried out with West Melton School's community in the second half of 2019.

At the previous review, in 2017, Parents commented on a number of things they'd like to see happen and because of that feedback School has seen the Kea Crossing installed and also the School App, Etap for Newsletters and Kit Notices all become a part of the weekly communications. These outcomes are incredibly positive for our Community and we appreciate Parent's ideas and feedback making our school a better place.

From the 2019 review we have processed all of the data and note the following key observations;

- That parents expect their children to learn wider life skills while at school, besides the usual reading, writing and maths.
- That children's mental, spiritual, social and emotional health are major concerns and must be guarded as such.
- That basic skills including reading, writing & maths are as important as ever and must not suffer attention deficit to technology.
- That parents want to grow confident children, who have had wide opportunity to find their passion and discover their abilities while at West Melton School
- Most of all parents fear their children 'falling through the cracks' with learning, and are overly cautious about classroom sizes and their part in this.
- Parents fear their children not developing the social skills to manage difficult situations and to stand their ground.
- Parents want more rich, more timely communication regarding their children's progress. They do not want to wait should their consultation be required.
- Parents want the student-led conference process adjusted, so parents have the opportunity for open and frank discussion regarding their child.
- Play Based Learning in the junior school is becoming widely accepted and crossing into children's home lives nicely.

You can read the full report [here](#).

As a Board we must balance our obligations under the Education Act, the curriculum requirements and community expectations. Our next steps as a board is to ensure the School Charter, Strategic Goals and Policies address as many concerns from the community as possible while achieving our education goals.

Some key elements we are already and will continue to consider are:

- Ensuring the student achievement data continues to reach desired goals;
- Encouraging the concepts of Haoura (mental & emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of health) across the school;
- How we address the ongoing concern regarding Modern Learning Environments, particularly the number of students per class and fears that a child would become lost in a 'boisterous' environment.
- The challenge to strike a balance with basic skills and digital technology, where technology doesn't dominate any component of the curriculum.
- School communication and how we streamline easier communication - particularly teacher to parent communications, early comms if issues arise and clear reporting on achievement data.

Thank you to all of those parents who participated. School is a partnership and your part in that is valued. We look forward to reporting further improvements and outcomes as they arise in 2020.

Leadership Success

- This year our school was selected to be a part of a global moderation panel around New Pedagogies for Deeper Learning (NPDL) - one of only four schools worldwide to achieve this. NPDL is an important part of our school curriculum and we are so proud of our staff.
- Christina Sands has been appointed an Across School Teacher working in the Community of Learning | Kāhui Ako
- Jo Buckenham and Natasha O'Connor prepared and presented a seminar on Play Based Learning to over 60 teachers across Christchurch reflecting on our journey and the benefits of learning through play.
- Teachers across the whole school have participated in numerous Professional Development opportunities sharing those learnings with the staff and implemented a number of improvements that directly relate to student achievement in the classroom.
- Sue Jackson has been awarded an incredible opportunity - winning a sabbatical for term three to complete a research project around leadership in education.

We are proud of all the staff at West Melton School and the excellence and energy they bring to our kids. Well done team!

Property Corner

The Board is excited with the announcement by the current government of a one off capital property investment for all schools in NZ. This is a sizable amount of money and will allow the Board to complete the upgrade of the Ti Kouka space which will include finishing the acoustics on the ceiling, upgrading the toilets on the western end of the building and some other minor cosmetic upgrades which will allow our learners to have a space that ensures that they can be the best that they can be. We are also looking at our other older buildings and will be tweaking some of these layouts, along with upgrading things like heat pumps and coverings to also ensure these spaces are also great places to learn.

Holiday Happenings

There are only a few minor jobs happening over the break these include upgrading the acoustics in our rahui space and the admin area along with some new glass doors in the Ti Kouka breakout room which will allow this space to be better connected with the main teaching area.

Farewell to Tim Schurr

Sadly we said farewell to Tim Schurr at our last Board Meeting. Tim has been on the board for five years and has played a huge part during his time looking after the policy & communications functions, more recently the finance function and also overseeing the community consultation amongst other things over the years.


Tim brought an interesting perspective to our work with his background in global innovation and digital technologies. He has now been offered an amazing & well deserved promotion which will see him travelling more and we wish him all the very best as he embarks on this new journey.

Thank you Tim for all your time and efforts for our great school!





School Communications



A number of new communication initiatives have successfully launched this year and we wanted to remind you of all the ways you can communicate with the school or us as a board.

 The website is a major source of information from teacher teams and the school calendar right through to uniform information, curriculum information and detail around our policies and procedures. Check out:

<https://www.westmelton.school.nz/> or https://www.westmelton.school.nz/policy_procedure.html

 Our new school wide app is also amazing and makes logging absences, paying school accounts, reading newsletters and finding contacts super easy. If you haven't downloaded it yet please contact the school office for your user name and password details.

 Student progress is reported twice a year through reports and these are now combined with individual learning goals and information about the curriculum levels and how students are measured. The Student Led Conferences are held twice a year but if Parents want a one on one meeting with the teacher they can arrange that at any stage.

  A regular schedule for newsletters is outlines on the school calendar. General newsletters are every three weeks. Kit notices for specific communities every 2 weeks and other notices as required. If you aren't reading these you are missing out! These hold valuable info for the week ahead for your kids so grab a coffee and 5mins over the weekends and have a good read.

