



Wadestown School

Board of Trustees

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News from the Board – December 2016

The Board of Trustees wishes to update the school community on a range of matters as the school year draws to a close.

Highlights

The Board acknowledges the excellent leadership of the school from our Principal Sally Barrett and her deputies Robyn Grover and Nick Julian.

This was reflected in the outcome of the review undertaken earlier this year by the Education Review Office (ERO). It is worth re-stating ERO's summary, that Wadestown School represented a "best practice model" across various areas of their review. There were no areas noted for improvement or other recommendations. They requested a variety of school materials to be used by ERO for use in demonstrating our school as an exemplar to other schools.

Our school is one of the very few schools in New Zealand on a 5 year call-back (the maximum), in other words the time before ERO will next visit – most schools are 3 years or less.

ERO also complimented the teaching staff and school management for the continuing improvement in student achievement at all levels of the school.

The Board wishes to also thank all our teachers and staff for an outstanding year at Wadestown School. Overall student achievement results continue to improve, we have a strong and growing school roll with an out-of-zone waiting list and external recognition and feedback about the school is very positive, noted especially by comments received from the Headmasters of Wellington College and Wellington Girls' College.

Once again, the achievements across the school's children have been beyond those in academic areas. Performances, participation and achievements in cultural and sporting areas are all noteworthy, ranging from the school production, to the science fair results, recognition of the kapa haka group, and various sports achievements.

The Board is pleased that the high quality teaching and learning environment in the school continues to support delivery of excellent learning outcomes and progress, and a great school experience for all our children.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan for the school determines the direction of the school. Our existing plan has helped underpin the progress that has been made.

Thanks you to those parents and teachers that participated in the recent consultation exercise which is part of the process for developing a new strategic plan. Your feedback is now being considered by trustees as we consider the priorities for the coming three years or so.

National Standards Reporting

The Board reviewed school-wide student achievement data at the BoT meeting earlier this week and is pleased to report to parents the results. These demonstrate very good levels of achievement in the school on an overall basis:

vs National Standards	Maths 2016	Reading 2016	Writing 2016
Above	111	158	62
At	209	172	250
Below/Well Below	20	10	28
At/Above	94%	97%	91%
Below/Well Below	6%	3%	9%

The reading recovery program, library resourcing and professional development for our teachers are examples of how trustees are endeavouring to support and improve achievement in these core curriculum areas. The school also has target programs aimed at helping to lift achievement for students whose results are below national standard.

The Board also considers national standards achievement for Maori students. In each of these three core curriculum areas, overall Maori student achievement is either at or better than the overall achievement levels for the wider school cohort.

School Budget & Donations 2017

A strong school roll is essential as it determines the level of Ministry of Education operational grant funding the school receives. However costs continue to increase. The Board thinks hard about what spending can be justified, as well as continuing to address over recent years the historic under-spend on school maintenance.

Having reviewed the school's draft budget for next year, the Board has resolved to maintain requested voluntary donations at the same level for 2017. The requested voluntary donation will be \$310 per student.

Requested voluntary donation levels have been unchanged from the current \$310 level since 2006.

It is imperative we are efficient. The Board and Principal are accountable to parents for spending in the school and how this links to requested donation levels. Rather than request ever-increasing levels each year, we have focused on spending smarter and ensuring the school has a full roll.

We respectfully request that all parents respond generously to the request for voluntary donations in the New Year. Parent donations represent approximately 20% of total school income (excluding funding for staff salaries and property works). Without your ongoing generous support there would be significant cuts to what the school can commit to for the benefit of our teachers and children, and ultimately the achievement results able to be delivered.

Reading Recovery Program

One example of how funding supports learning initiatives and teacher professional development in the school is the reading recovery program. The Board reviews the effectiveness of the reading recovery program annually to ensure the investment is effective.

During term four, all children who have completed the reading recovery program in the past three years are monitored. All these children are now reading at or above their chronological age, which

confirms the ongoing effectiveness of the school's reading recovery program (which compliments the various literacy initiatives and programs in the school).

231 children have been through the program at Wadestown School over the time it has been in place and the results have been consistently good in helping children progress with their reading.

The board thanks our long-standing reading recovery teacher Angela Clark who is leaving to undertake some professional study. She has been a highly valued member of staff and a strong advocate for children's learning.

Library

Parent donations also help support the librarian position in the school (which is not a Ministry-funded position).

The Board regards the two libraries in the school as a highly valuable resource – a key part of the literacy program and a priority for spending as identified in the strategic plan.

In reviewing the effectiveness of (and ongoing commitment to) this spending, the Board reviews annually the performance of the library service. There is an ongoing very high quality of delivery that supports teaching and learning, and the libraries are well-utilised and popular amongst children (evident in numbers of books borrowed etc). This is a heartening trend given the digital world that our children can so easily access.

The Board wishes to thank the many parent volunteers who help with the libraries.

Property

In the previous Board News (available [here](#)), trustees provided a detailed update regarding the middle block in the school and the construction of two new classrooms at the bottom site of the main school.

By way of an update, we had hoped work would commence at the start of the school holidays and the construction would be complete in time for the classrooms to be utilised in the early part of term two.

Unfortunately the recent earthquake has caused the Ministry of Education to re-prioritise their work and this has caused a delay. Whilst ground works will commence in the latter stages of the school holidays, the completion of the classroom build is now likely to be at the end of term two.

House & Garden Walk

Immaculately timed to avoid the earthquake and foul weather either side of the day of the Walk, this was another great success for the school.

Over \$54,000 has been raised for the school which is an outstanding result. It was also a wonderful day for the local community as many people were able to look through the beautiful homes and gardens of many generous past and present parents of the school who deserve our biggest thanks.

Thanks must also go to all of the parents who volunteered to help on the day and the committee who helped organise the event.

Wadestown School PTA

Special thanks too go to the school's PTA. Not just for its part in organising the successful House and Garden Walk but for their efforts throughout the year across many fronts.

We thank the PTA, especially its Committee members and its Co-Chairs Katy Pearce and Kirsty Bennett, for all their work and fundraising in 2016 which is greatly appreciated.

Our children all benefit from PTA fundraising. But in addition the PTA helps to organise many vital functions for the school (e.g. road safety, emergency management, etc) that would otherwise fall on teachers and school management to attend to.

Volunteerism in our school is a huge factor in the successful operation of the school.

Please consider how you may be able to become more actively involved with the PTA, even if in a small way. Refer to the school's website for more details.

School Organisation

By now you will be aware of the organisation of the school in 2017 and the placement of your children.

The Board is very pleased to have recruited some very able teachers to the school for next year replacing those departing. We are fortunate that the reputation of the school is strong as this helps in attracting high calibre candidates in what is a very tight market for teachers.

School Staff

As we welcome new teachers, we farewell with our best wishes and sincere thanks for their contribution to our school, Jan Ashworth, Logan Mead, Rose Stevens and Donna Higgins from our teaching staff. As mentioned above, Angela Clark (reading recovery) is also departing and Helen Dammer (teacher aide). On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and performance of all the school's staff this year.

Our teachers are committed to supporting strong student achievement outcomes and continue to respond very professionally to the Board's and Principal's aspirations around professional development and building consistency of practice across the school.

We are fortunate to have well-performing teachers who have materially enhanced the growing reputation of our school, very ably supported by our non-teaching staff.

Board of Trustees

I would like to thank trustees for their efforts and support in 2016. I can assure parents that all trustees are dedicated to ensuring the school does all it can to promote excellence in teaching and learning.

Special thanks to our Board Secretary this year Bronwyn Chin who is finishing in this role. Bronwyn has put in many hours helping the Board as secretary. And she has also done a huge amount of voluntary work assisting our Principal in reviewing and organising the school's archives and historic collections (a reminder our school is now 135 years old), much of which has been well-received by the National Archives.

Principal

The progress, results and general performance and direction of the school remain firmly a reflection of the efforts, determination and contribution of our Principal Sally Barrett. Nobody is more determined that our children enjoy their time at school and achieve their best than our Principal.

Mrs Barrett has had a challenging finish to the year given her husband's major surgery and subsequent difficulties. We are delighted Mr Barrett is returning to full health.

Season's Greetings

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time and effort to assist the school during the year. It is very much appreciated. Thanks to those parents who now leave Wadestown School for the last time.

All the best for the holiday season, I hope you all have a peaceful and restful summer break. We look forward to seeing your children again in 2017.

Best wishes to those children (and parents) who now depart Wadestown School for college.

Kind regards



Neil Paviour-Smith
Board Chair