



Wadestown School

Board of Trustees

Sally Barrett
Sarah Feltham
Julie Gerrard
Amy Maddock
Anna O'Meeghan
Neil Paviour-Smith
Guy Pottinger

News from the Board – December 2017

Further to the Board of Trustees newsletter last week addressing the new classrooms project and other Ministry of Education property works, the Board wishes to update the school community on a range of other matters as the school year draws to a close.

Highlights

We acknowledge once again the strong and effective leadership of the school from our Principal Sally Barrett and her deputies Robyn Grover and Nick Julian. This has been made extra challenging this year with the burden of the Ministry of Education's classroom development project on the school grounds.

The Board also wishes to thank all our teachers and staff for another excellent year at Wadestown School. Overall student achievement results are very pleasing. The school has a strong and growing school roll with an out-of-zone waiting list.

We also acknowledge the achievement of our children beyond academic areas. Performances, participation and results in cultural and sporting areas are all noteworthy, ranging from the school production, to the science fair results, visual arts and music / dance performances, recognition of the kapa haka group, and various sports achievements.

The Board acknowledges the wonderful contribution of those parents who volunteer in the school in many areas. Our children simply would not be able to enjoy the range of opportunities they have available without the continuing support from parent volunteers. Thank you all.

In summary, we are pleased that the high quality teaching and learning environment in the school continues to support excellent progress in student achievement as they progress through the school. In addition the range of opportunities availed and encouraged to students delivers a great overall experience at our school.

The Board seeks validation of this in observing other schools and, in every respect, we are satisfied that across all facets of the school our children are participating and achieving well above what is observed elsewhere. Feedback from colleges regarding the readiness of students who progress from our school is second to none.

Last year, the Education Review Office (ERO) stated in their post review feedback that Wadestown School represented a "best practice model" across various areas of their review, and noted there were no areas for improvement or other recommendations when placing us amongst one of the very few schools in New Zealand on a 5 year call-back (the maximum).

The Board has remained very focused on ensuring complacency does not set in and are pleased that the high standards have continued this year despite the operational challenges.

National Standards Reporting

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

vs National Standards	Maths 2017	Reading 2017	Writing 2017
<u>All Students</u>			
Above	102	151	56
At	221	174	244
Below/Well Below	22	20	45
At/Above	93%	94%	87%
Below/Well Below	7%	6%	13%
<u>Maori Students</u>			
At/Above	89%	94%	77%
Below/Well Below	11%	6%	23%

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 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 accordance with government objectives. Whilst the overall Maori student cohort is just 18 students, the overall achievement outcomes are broadly in line with the wider student cohort.

Trustees will consider next year how changing government policy with regard to national standards will affect assessment within the school and how we can maintain transparency and accountability to parents.

School Budget & Donations 2017

Ministry of Education funding is principally on a per student basis. Therefore a strong school roll is essential to maximise operational grant funding.

This helps the school manage ongoing cost increases and not be forced into cutting discretionary spending. We are fortunate that in the time Sally Barrett has been Principal, our roll has grown from a low point of some 245 students up to approximately 380 students now.

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 remain efficient. Rather than request ever-increasing levels of voluntary donation 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.

Some examples of what is Board funded and enabled through receipt of voluntary donations (in other words, the school receives no discrete annual funding from the Ministry for these items) include teacher professional development, kapa haka and adviser, library and librarian role, performing arts, aspects of reading recovery and targeted intervention programs, etc.

Reading Recovery Program

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 (and which compliments the various literacy initiatives and programs in the school).

236 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.

Library

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 continues to be a very high quality of delivery that supports teaching and learning. The libraries are well-utilised and popular amongst children (evident in numbers of books borrowed etc). We note the dedication of our librarian Derek Piper to a high quality library service.

Thank you to the many parent volunteers who help with the libraries.

Information Technology

Trustees considered capital spending when reviewing the draft budget at our recent Board meeting. Careful investment over time, generous donations and support from the PTA, and ensuring we are allocating funds for future replacement, means the Board was able to agree in principle to a range of Information Technology investments for the school for next year.

In particular this includes the purchase of approximately 70 new laptops and tablets for use in the school at the start of next year, as well as network upgrades and teacher professional development.

Wadestown School PTA

We thank the PTA, especially its Committee members and its recently departed Co-Chairs Katy Pearce and Kirsty Bennett, for their hard work and fundraising in 2017 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.

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

School Organisation

Organisation of the school in 2018 and the placement of your children is being confirmed in the school newsletter going out with this BoT newsletter today.

The Board is very pleased to have recruited some very able teachers to the school for next year replacing those departing. It is a very tight market for teachers and our Principal and her deputies have had to put in a huge effort to get to the point we are at today with just one place in the school pending appointment.

In particular we note the addition of a fourth year 7/8 class next year to cope with very large numbers of students and manage class sizes. The senior students will be located in the lower level of the school (where the two new classrooms are being built) to ensure they are all located in one block.

School Staff

As we welcome new staff, we farewell with our best wishes and thanks Karen Wood, Melissa Julian, Anna Campbell and Sarah Ash from our teaching staff.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and performance of all the school's staff this year and for your patience and extra work in dealing with the Ministry of Education's property works.

We are fortunate to have well-performing teachers who all contribute to the strong reputation of our school, very ably supported by our non-teaching staff. Our teachers work very hard to respond to the Board's and Principal's aspirations around professional development, building consistency of practice across the school and to deliver the best they can for our children.

Board of Trustees

I would like to thank trustees for their efforts and support in 2017.

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 Angela Craig who is finishing in this role and has put in many hours helping the Board as secretary (as well as being part of the team who delivered a stunning year 8 leavers book).

Principal

Once again 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 to manage the school around the classroom development project which has been extremely challenging as noted in Board News last week.

Season's Greetings

Thanks and best wishes to those children and parents who now leave Wadestown School for the last time.

All the best to everyone for the holiday season, I hope you all have a peaceful and restful summer break. We look forward to seeing your children again in 2018.

Kind regards



Neil Paviour-Smith
Board Chair