



West Park School

Te Kura O Papa Hauāuru

Every student matters, every moment counts.

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12 February 2020

Kia ora West Park School Community,

Welcome back to school! I hope you and your children are as happy as we are to be back into another year at West Park. For those of you that are new to the school, my name is Natalie (Nat) and I am the Chair of the school Board. I have two boys at the school in years 4 and 5, and a daughter who has just completed her 6 years at West Park and moved on to Intermediate.

There are lots of exciting things happening in and around the school this term, so I'll give you an update on what the Board is/has been focusing on.

School Activity Fees

Last year the Board covered the cost of a specified number of school activities for the year. There was mixed feedback from both staff and parents around whether this was a good use of school funds. The cost is not insignificant to the school, but the Board have managed the finances well enough to enable us to meet this cost for families, while still managing to fund all other resources that are needed within the classrooms.

One of the key priorities for the Board is 'Inclusive Education', so when looking at whether the Board would fund some activities again this year, we considered the right for all children to be provided with equal opportunity to attend these activities, without children being excluded due to the cost of the activities.

Therefore, after reviewing the budget, the Board has resolved that the school will again meet the cost of core activities in 2020. These core activities are swimming, an ASB Sports Centre visit in each term, a Life Education visit, two performances at school, and two class/team trips. You will still be required to give permission for your child to attend these activities at the time they occur. Please note that there may be activities in addition to those mentioned above that will not be covered by the school. Notification of these will occur at the time along with a request for payment.

Property News

You will have seen in the school newsletter that went out last week that there is still a lot going on in the property space, and not all of it is good news!

On a positive note, rooms 7 and 8 were completed over the holidays and is a fabulous space that the two classes are already enjoying. Also, the work on rooms 3 to 6 is about to start and is planned to be finished early in term 2. It was touch and go there for a while as to whether we could get this work completed within our required timeframe. We really appreciate all the effort that Luis and Paul Appleton (our Board appointed property consultant) have put into negotiating this great outcome with the contractors who are undertaking this work.

The library continues to be a 'work in progress' and we are all disappointed that we could not get the Council approvals required in time to get the project completed before the start of term 1. However, we continue to remain optimistic that this project will be completed this term, so that the children can have a 'proper library' and the staff can get their staffroom back!

Voluntary Donation

The voluntary donation this year is the same as last year, at \$220 per child. We appreciate for some families the voluntary donation is a big ask, and so for those families we stress that the donation is voluntary. For those families

that are able to pay, the donation is a significant component of our budget and enables us to employ the many teacher aides we have that are funded by the Board.

We also welcome early payment of the voluntary donations, as it assists us with our budgeting processes and enables us to make informed decisions about where and how we may commit funds for the next period. Your contribution to the school through the voluntary donation is valued and appreciated.

School Charter

Towards the end of last year the Board held a strategy day, where we began drafting our strategic plan, otherwise known as the school Charter. The Charter outlines the school's three year strategic plan, as well as the school's Annual Plan.

The strategic priorities in our Charter, which are based on feedback from the community and staff, are Curriculum (developing confident, capable and empowered learners), Inclusive Education (ensuring equitable outcomes for all students) and Student and Staff Wellbeing.

The Board will be hosting an evening later in term 1 to provide the community with an overview of the school's Charter and Annual Plan. Further information about this meeting will be sent out later in the term.

Kāhui Ako

Another thing that happened at the end of last year was that the Board, along with all the other school Boards within our cluster (Churton Park, Johnsonville, St Brigids, Raroa Intermediate, Onslow College, Crofton Downs, Ngaio, Khandallah, Cashmere Avenue and Amesbury), agreed to enter into a Kāhui Ako (Community of Learning). A Kāhui Ako is a group of education and training providers working together to help students achieve their full potential.

The purpose of becoming a Kāhui Ako is so that our schools can be better together for our students, our communities, our teachers, the wider education community and the wider community in general. We believe that working together as a Kāhui Ako will open up worlds of opportunities; in particular, it will enable expertise to be shared, learnings to be shared so we don't all have to make the same mistakes, and for courage to be lent as we go on this potentially challenging journey together.

The Kāhui Ako is in the early stages of establishment, so it will take a bit of time to fully understand how the Kāhui Ako will work and what it will mean to staff and students at West Park. The Board will regularly review our school's participation within the Kāhui Ako and we will continue to update you all the progress of this initiative.

Home and School

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to ask for volunteers to be on our Home and School Committee this year. The Home and School Committee meets once a term and they have the important role of organising our school events, which help to create a great sense of community within the school. The Committee is made up of parent, teacher and student representatives.

We will be holding our first Home and School meeting in the next couple of weeks, so keep an eye out for information on when/where the meeting will take place. Attending the meeting and being involved in the Home and School Committee is a great way to contribute to the school, and to meet some other awesome parents with our community!

That's all from me for now. Please feel free to contact any of the Board members if you have any questions by emailing board@westpark.school.nz. Our first Board meeting of this year will be held on Monday 24 February in Rooms 14 and 15 at 6pm. You are welcome, as always, to attend and observe this meeting.

Ngā mihi nui

Nat (Natalie Henry)

On behalf of the Board of Trustees