



Matipo Primary School
63b Matipo Road Te Atatu Auckland

Principal's Report

for the
Board of Trustees
General Business Meeting

18th December 2018

Dear Trustees;

The end of the school year is usually a good time to look back and evaluate. Many of the changes we have initiated are yet to reach fulfilment. It is all still very much a 'work in progress'. However we are increasingly able to focus on preparing the school for the future, and on building our teams and structures for 2018.

In the last few weeks we have carried out a significant reorganization of the school staff structure, recruitment and team building, reorganization of the syndicate and classroom layout, class allocations for the coming year, a revised entry-to-school structure, and the construction of the foundation for school performance analysis, based on the collection of meaningful assessment data and collaborative analysis in reading and maths. I acknowledge the hard work and professionalism of the wider leadership team through a very challenging period.

We are about to remodel the school IT server and infrastructure, and we are establishing Enrichment and EOTC programmes. We have won support for ongoing Professional Learning and Development and we are planning a rich PLD programme for 2018 and 2019. Sian and Deb have designed a programme for 2018 based on increasing the capacity of our distributed leaders to use data to improve teacher practice. We will be working with Jenny Thompson.

As a result, I hope to table reports on school performance in literacy and maths and on the initial development of an enrichment programme at our meeting, as well as reporting progress on historical matters such as health and safety, staffing, IT, audit and personnel issues.

At our meeting in February, I will propose a restructured budget model, along with further work on the strategic planning, as a basis for a detailed budget for 2018.

School Activity

There has been a great deal of activity at school over the last few weeks. As yet it has been difficult to observe the quality of teaching across the school, or to link this to systematic assessment and planning for learning.

Enrichment

We have been working to build an enrichment programme for 2018. This will be designed to introduce challenge, student autonomy and variety into the learning programmes. The biggest challenge is probably to establish a shared understanding for teachers, and to refocus school activity on the learning needs of students.

Cohort Entry

We have been working to make it possible for students to enroll as a cohort at the beginning of the term in which they turn five, but we will have to review this work in the light of this statement from the Ministry of Education:

The Minister of Education has said that, in 2018, he will amend the Education (Update) Amendment Act 2017, to limit cohort entry to children over 5 years of age.

However the Ministry goes on to state:

For the avoidance of doubt, schools that have, or agree to, a policy allowing 4 year olds to enter under cohort entry, can implement such a change at any time from Term 1 2018, until the Act is amended.

Therefore we will continue to enrol students at the start of the term in which they celebrate their fifth birthday, until the Act is amended. At that point we will revert to enrolling students on their fifth birthday. We will still organise to retain students in the same class and with the same teacher for the first two years of their schooling so they remain together as a 'cohort'.

National Standards

We have collected and reported on student progress in reading and maths, and already have data about progress in writing. However the Ministry website also states:

“We’re working with the Government on its policy to replace National Standards and Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori with a new system that better acknowledges a child’s progress, and focuses more on developing key competencies for all learners. Boards of Trustees, principals, teachers, and parents will be kept informed on this change.... In the interim, boards should continue to use the range of current tools they now have for reporting on student progress and achievement.”

Whetu Cormack, the President of the New Zealand Principals’ Federation, has also addressed this issue:

*In the last two **Principal Matters** newsletters, I have been urging you to be patient whilst we await announcements from the Minister about future national standards reporting. We know that national standards are to go, and understandably many of you have been asking for a time-frame for their demise.*

Yesterday I met with Minister Hipkins and asked him that question directly. I wish that I could report a time-frame for you but unfortunately that is not possible. There is a process to follow and a paper has to go to Cabinet first to be signed off. The Minister is moving this forward as quickly as he possibly can. He is hoping to make an announcement shortly. He is as anxious as you are to get past national standards so that schools can re-establish a focus that embraces the whole curriculum and teachers and principals can have the time to reflect on and evaluate the learning going on for their young people, freed from obsessions with data collection and reporting.

At this point we have not yet made assessments against the National Standards, though we have collected meaningful data which would form the basis for OTJ if it should be required before 1st April 2018.

CoLs

I have now attended planning sessions with the CoL Principals. However this is another area under review. Again Whetu Cormack’s advice is probably the most helpful at this time:

The Minister has made it clear that the Communities of Learning (CoLs) will be rebranded. You (Principals) are keen to collaborate with other principals but find the model of CoL unhelpful. The leadership structures are not flexible and neither are the achievement challenges.

You want the ability to share leadership and you prefer a model where everyone in the CoL has equal status rather than one person getting paid to direct everyone else.

Many of you feel the money going to the leadership roles would be better spent on children, and on training more educational psychologists and other specialists to make these experts more accessible for your schools.

You are also very wary of the real intentions for CoL and have low trust that they were intended just for collaboration.

*Most of you feel that far too much is expected of CoL.
this week I also attended a technical reference group meeting for the IES (Investing in Education Success). The groups attending include Ministry staff, NZCER, PPTA, NZEI and NZPF representatives. All of these groups, like us, have been conducting their own research on CoL and all have very similar results to ours.*

NAG 2: Review

We await the outcomes of John Wylie's work for us. Dianne Squire (NZSTA) has audited our personnel files. I am working through the contracts for all staff to bring them up to an acceptable standard. All new appointments have been based on NZSTA templates and models. Advice from Wayne Parkinson (NZSTA) has been consistently sought and followed. I have arranged for an external agency to conduct a full school asset register reconciliation in the last week of January, the earliest it has been possible to arrange for this to happen.

NAG 3: Staffing

Teaching appointments:

The quality of external and internal applicants has been excellent. We have confirmed the appointments of Delwyn, Kahu, Tori, Holly, Kelly, Doug and Rowena, and appointed Jade, Rahel, Catherine, Deidre and Jill B. We are advertising for one more teacher at this point, to replace Jill Jessop. However Deb Shaw will cover her class if necessary so we have a full starting line-up for 2018 at this point. We have also appointed Teresa Marshall and Kelly Rarere as administrators.

Resignations

We have received resignations from Jill Jessop, Michael Ohms, Anna Choi, Ray Chen, Leanne Siaki and Persia Iwan. We are sad to lose them and wish everyone well for the next steps in their career.

We have almost completed our staffing adjustments and the new Senior leadership team is working hard to prepare the school for 2018:

Team 1 Years 0 -2	Team 2 Years 3 & 4	Team 3 Years 5 & 6
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Rms 1-10 8 classes of 22 max	Rms 20 – 27 7 classes of 26 max	Rms 13 – 20 7 classes of 28 max
Sian (DP)	Natalie (AP)	Deb (DP)
Kathryn (Co-lead)	Grace (Co-lead)	Marion (Co-lead)
Catherine	Phill	Rahel
Tony	Lise	Ngaire
Cheryl	Sara-Lee	Caitlin
Delwyn	Karen	Maggie
Caroline	Jade	Kahu
Lindsay	Mitchell	TBA
Jill B.		
Deidre		
Roll growth		
Ilona, Sarah (currently on Maternity Leave)		
Release teachers		
Beth 1.0, Kelly 0.4, Doug 0.4, Holly 0.6, Tori 0.6, Rowena 0.6		
Senior Leadership Team		
Sian, Natalie, Deb (by invitation: Kathryn, Grace, Marion)		
Sian - Team 1, Early Years, Literacy	Natalie - Team 2, IT, Environment	Deb - Team 3, SENCO
Kathryn Co-lead Team 1, Maths	Grace Co-lead Team 2, Enrichment PRT Coordinator	Marion Co-lead Team 3, International students, Performing Arts
Responsibilities and teams (still in draft)		
Literacy Sian, Paul, Phil, Cheryl Catherine	IT Natalie, Caitlin, Karen	Maths Kathryn, Marion, Sarah-Lee, Maggie, Caroline
Information Commons/Digital Literacy – Phill, Beth	Pasifika Sara-Lee	Maori Ngaire, Kahu
Health Lindsay	Enrichment Grace, Marion	EOTC Caitlin

Nag 4 Finance

Staffing overuse

We have released some key personnel from their class teaching responsibilities in order to manage the changes we have been working through as a school. This will have an impact on our staff entitlement balance. Whilst this will show as a deficit some of this will be recouped through an adjustment for extraordinary roll growth, and some will rebalance over the summer period when we will not use relievers or other extra staffing needs. At this stage it is not possible to anticipate the final balance. However this situation has already been advised to the board as a likely outcome of the change management process and the consequential need to restructure staffing. I have approached Grant Malins to explore the possibility of emergency staffing assistance.

We will also incur extra costs for the forensic auditor, the external asset register reconciliation, TTS audit and subsequent advice and support, and for the extra work required to bring the school safety and security systems to an acceptable level.

However we will make savings through much reduced staffing costs for admin, site manager and IT manager. Apart from the staffing use described above, I have implemented the tightest possible cost-control regime so as not to compromise our strategic decisions for 2018.

Anticipated end of year position

In spite of all this I still anticipate a surplus on the existing annual budget... It will still be difficult to evaluate impact, as 2017 budget was not linked to specific strategic outcomes

NAG 4: Property

We have not attracted high quality of applicants for the caretaking role. However Carl and Chris have been excellent, and I hope to retain 2 or three days per week for term 1 at least. The condition of the school state is improving and a number of issues are being fixed or otherwise addressed systematically.

I am now working on putting some security and monitoring in place for the summer period but don't yet know what this will look like.

Nag 5: Health and Safety

Please find attached an interim Restraint policy / procedure which I have put in place as a matter of urgency. Teachers have had some limited initial training about when to use restraint. This is enough to meet legal expectations at this time.

Nag 6: Compliance

Wormald have advised some matters which need attention in order for the school to be compliant with Fire Safety requirements. These are being addressed in timely fashion.

Finally.... "May you live in interesting times...." is a chinese curse. The last nine weeks have been some of the most interesting I have ever known! But we have sailed into calmer waters and can look forward to some really good things happening for the school and everyone in it in the future. I am very grateful for the support of the Board and the Board Chair through this time. Our senior staff have been a tower of strength, integrity and courage.

I look forward to our meeting next week.

Nga mihi nui

Paul

Principal

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