

# Notes from the bored - Board

Especially in the early years, children soak up knowledge like a sponge. The importance of great schooling and nurturing parents cannot be stressed enough, if we are to avoid mistakes like that found in the title of this piece.

Far from bored, the newly elected Board of Greenhithe School is delighted to be serving the school, it's parents and it's teachers but most importantly of all, serving it's kids, who lie at the very heart of all our decision-making.

The Board welcomes 3 new recruits, to work alongside Scott Rees, Kathy Frame, Jason Willis, Suzanne Cresswell and Stephen Grady. Samantha Ebel-Brown, Bevan McDonald and Angela Smith are currently undergoing a baptism of fire as they discover a sector that loves acronyms like no other and a political agenda that may see the future of Boards become extinct.

## **Sometimes it's a numbers game**

As teachers watch over the progress of each and every child under their care, the Board takes a wider view in looking at the data for the whole school, drilling down by year and by gender. As a Board, we work with the leadership team to set goals each year and agree measures for those goals. We have just seen the report for Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) and are delighted to report incredible progress. Across the whole school we see improvements in reading, writing and maths, not only from those perhaps that find school life tougher, but also improvements amongst those that sit in the middle, those we like to call average but who often are far from it. The Board would like to recognise the outstanding work of the leadership team and all the teachers in delivering such progress.

## **The Community of Learning**

Greenhithe School is part of a Community of Learning (COL), a grouping of local schools joined together for the greater good. Within the COL, schools share their learnings, provide support, agree goals and share data. Members of our Board also attend COL meetings to ensure we have a voice within this powerful group and that it continues to focus its attention on our kids.

There can be no doubt that over the next few years we will see the role of these COLs becoming ever more powerful and therefore why the Board has embraced it and recognised the opportunities that the COL gives our teaching staff.

## **A 'free' education**

Over the next few months you are likely to hear a lot about the availability of a free education to all New Zealand children. As a Decile Ten school we get no additional government funding and therefore we must ask for a small contribution from parents, in order to provide the quality education we currently offer your child.

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For the first time ever we have reached our budgeted contribution target, but sadly this only means that 48% of parents have made a financial contribution to support their school.

The Government has said that it will remove donations for Decline 1-7 schools and agree a contribution rate that they will make, so parents don't need to. Sadly, this will not be offered to Decile Ten schools, **so your donation is as important as ever.**

Your school donation enables the school to employ more teachers than are paid for by the Government, reducing class sizes and enabling more focus on extra-curricular activities such as sport, the arts and drama - all important aspects of a well-rounded education. There are some who wrongly believe that the contribution goes to GATE and special educational needs programmes and only benefits children at each end of the spectrum. Although some money does get allocated to these things, this benefits all children as with the additional support for these kids from the class, means each teacher can spend more time with the remaining children. Looking at the numbers, we can see the system is working.

## **Want to know more?**

If you would like to understand more about the school's achievements, how we implement our programmes of te reo Maori, please join us at our forthcoming Cultural Hui. This is an awesome opportunity to ask questions, understand the strategy for the school and hear how the Board and School are progressing against our charter.

Thank you for your continued support of our school,  
The Greenhithe Board of Trustees