

PRINCIPAL UPDATE: June 2016

Tena koutou katoa

The temperature is falling and we must make sure we take care of ourselves and each other as winter begins to take hold. The school has a range of uniform items to ensure students are able to stay warm during the cooler months of the year. There are school beanies (not to be worn in class), jackets, jerseys, and polar fleeces available at DD Gold in Kerikeri. A good pair of black leather shoes with socks will also keep the feet warm and dry. It is always pleasing when our students wear their uniform with pride. Your support with this is appreciated.

The Education Review Office (ERO) visited our school last term and although they identified areas for improvement, they said “ERO appreciates the boards and school leaders' willingness to work constructively to improve student outcomes”. One of these areas for improvement is the school curriculum. Therefore, we are reviewing the curriculum and your input would be appreciated. There are several ways you can feedback to this process. You can attend the community consultation sessions held by the Board of Trustees, complete and return the surveys that will arrive home with your child, complete the online survey, or contact the school. In addition, “Students reported to ERO that they value the positive relationships they have with their teachers. They appreciated where they have opportunities to make decisions and choices about their learning.”

Over the past four years we have continued to strengthen tikanga Maori in our school and re-ignite Maori culture for those students who pursue this path. ERO noted “The school is improving the way it affirms and supports Māori students' culture, language and identity to promote educational success for Māori students. Students recognise and appreciate this change”. The full report can be viewed on the ERO website.

It is important that you also enable all communication modes the school has on offer such as Facebook, the school website, newsletters and our school APP to keep up-to-date. The school app is a powerful communication tool and all parents and students are recommended to have this facility. The parent portal is now live at school and you can access this service by approaching the front office with photographic ID to receive your user name and password. This is another powerful tool that enables parents to keep updated on their child's attendance and progress in school.

As usual you are always welcome at school and to participate in the range of activities we offer. It is always great to see so many of you coming in to support your children.

PRINCIPAL UPDATE: April 2016

Tena koutou katoa

Another exciting term has passed us by and our students now prepare for the academic and educational challenges ahead in term two. We have received a lot of whanau support from those who have attended numerous activities on offer this term. It is always great to catch up with you all on the sidelines and capture your feedback on how the school is going and on any areas that may need strengthening. A big thank you to those members of our whanau who have volunteered their time to come in and work with our sporting teams; this really is appreciated and we trust you are also benefitting from your involvement.

Thank you to all the whanau who attended the first hui on our bi-lingual unit where we had an exciting discussion on how we could pursue this initiative. The discussion revealed a lot of interest which is very encouraging for the school. We are holding a further bi-lingual unit hui on the 11th May at 5pm in the school staffroom. I have managed to pull a few ideas together and look forward to sharing these with you all. Everyone is welcome to attend and contribute to the positive direction of this kaupapa. During the first term with had a team from the Education Review Office come in and evaluate the school. The ERO team will prepare a draft copy of their findings and discuss these with the Board of Trustees in the near future. Following these discussions, ERO will then prepare a final report which will become a public document and accessible to all via the school website and the ERO website. As with any holiday breaks, I do hope you all spend quality time with friends and whanau and find some time for relaxation.

PRINCIPAL UPDATE: February 2016

Kia ora koutou katoa

I trust the year has started well and you are looking forward to a prosperous and exciting time ahead. This year we welcome many new students who have come from all over the country. We know their educational experiences will be rewarding and successful while studying at Whangaroa College. I thank those whanau for making Whangaroa College your school of choice and we welcome you to our learning community. We also welcome new teachers who arrive with a genuine passion to work in our community and support the learning aspirations of our students. I look forward to working with our new staff as they settle in to our school community.

It has been an exciting start with all teachers and students anxious to reinforce their skills and knowledge to ensure they attain the pinnacle of their chosen field. We began the year with two teacher only days. The first day staff travelled to significant locations within Whangaroa and we thank whaea Mereana and Hone Tua for their korero at these locations. The second day was consumed with administrative duties as the teachers prepared for the arrival of our students.

Our senior students are currently away on their leadership course which will lead to academic credits but will also both identify and prepare our senior leaders for 2016. This is a big responsibility and I want to congratulate and thank all those who will fulfil these student leadership roles throughout the year.

Toward the end of 2015 I began a discussion with whanau around the concept of creating a bi-lingual unit at Whangaroa College. There was a lot of interest and I want to continue that discussion this year. I will be arranging another hui in the very near future. You are all welcome and encouraged to come along and contribute to a further discussion. Please keep an eye out for upcoming newsletters that will have the date of this hui. This is a timely reminder for whanau to download our school app from the App Store so you can be kept up to date with the many events that occur within the school. If you have any questions on this kaupapa please contact the school and ask to speak with me.

I look forward to catching up with you all throughout the year.