



**KERIKERI HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
NEWSLETTER – MAY 2008**

Greetings All.

Welcome back to the start of Term 2. We hope that people are refreshed after the two week break. If you didn't get a break we hope that at least you are refreshed by these beautiful autumn days!

The Board met on the last Thursday of Term 1. It felt that it had been a long term!

One of the key issues that the Board is interested in at present is addressing the apparent imbalance between the achievement of boys and girls, and in particular achievement at the upper end of the academic scale. At this level there is a notable disparity between the sexes. This certainly does not apply to all boys and in recent years we have had, and continue to have, some excellent boy scholars at the school. They are really, however, the exception rather than the rule.

The problem is by no means unique to Kerikeri High School, and indeed is exercising minds not just in New Zealand but in many countries around the world at the moment. The issue is a very complex one but that does not mean that this Board is not determined to seek to do what it can. The Senior Leadership Team provided a detailed preliminary report on the Board with greater statistical information upon which to move forward. The nature and scope of the problem is clear, it is the solutions that are more problematic.

As part of the next step in the process the Board and Senior Leadership Team will be setting up a survey for a range of boys across the School to seek to get their direct input into the issue and what the students themselves perceive are some of the reasons for the issue. Members of the Senior Leadership Team are also collating external research that has been or is being done in New Zealand and elsewhere.

While it is early days there is trend evidence that suggests that the Te Kotahitanga programme, as well as having such dramatic positive results with the academic achievement of the Maori students within the School, may also be having a beneficial academic effect for boys. There is certainly no quick fix for the problem but the prospect of improving the position is an exciting one.

One of the hardest roles for the parent trustees on the Board is to sit on the Discipline Committee. A panel, normally comprising three parent trustees, hears any disciplinary case where a student has been suspended by the High School. The options available to the Board are to terminate the suspension, to extend the suspension and to impose terms on the student returning to Kerikeri High School, or to expel the student. These situations are often difficult, and sometimes traumatic for all involved, and often necessitate weighing up the interests of the individual student, which is extremely important, with the interests of the other students at the High School and the interests of staff, which are also important.

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Teenagers make mistakes. The School operates a process of restorative justice, which essentially means that wherever possible students are given a chance to learn from their mistakes and continue at the High School. There are occasions, however, where the offences are of such a nature that there would be concerns for the safety of other students or staff in a student returning to the School. Students need to be aware that the safety of the teachers and other students are of paramount concern to the Board and that if that safety is threatened the Board cannot afford to take risks with a student who is creating that threat.

The review of sport at the High School is nearing completion. Part of that involved the review of the Sports Policy. The new policy document is available on the School's website ([www.kerikerihigh.ac.nz](http://www.kerikerihigh.ac.nz)) or paper copies are available at Reception. Thanks to all involved but in particular Nici Curtis who chaired the review, and Tim Rea and Mike Clent who led the process from the School's perspective.

The struggle to balance the books continues and Lane Ayr and Elizabeth Forgie continue to work very hard in leading the Finance Committee. At some point in the next two terms the Board intends holding an evening for parents to explain the way funding operates at the High School. It is not an easy area to come to grips with!

The next Board meeting is Thursday 22 May at 6pm. Please remember that if there are matters you wish to raise with the Board you can write to it c/- the School.

We wish the students and staff all the best for Term 2 2008. The signs are already there that it is going to be a great year for the High School.

Naku noa  
The Board