

KERIKERI HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NEWSLETTER

Greetings All

What a start to the second half of the year! It isn't just the poor farmers who are being given a rough ride by the weather. No one can recall the Kerikeri High School Ball ever having been postponed before, and no doubt there were a lot of disappointed students on Saturday night. No band, potentially no power, and warnings to stay off the road left little room to manoeuvre! While the Ball is not a Board matter the Board nevertheless wishes to acknowledge and thank those who have worked hard to arrange an alternative date, and particularly to thank those businesses who have not charged students for things like the re-hiring of suits, flowers and the like. It is great being part of such a supportive community.

Having just sent out a letter to parents advising of the two teacher-only days later this term it was not an easy decision to close the school on Wednesday. It was, however, unprecedented for us to get warnings about the impending storm from so many agencies (including the Ministry of Education and Northland Regional Council) and we simply couldn't take the risk. While the decision was no doubt popular with many students we do appreciate that it causes inconvenience to a lot of parents. 9am on Wednesday morning was about the only time we would have liked to have seen a downpour....

With regard to the teacher only days, and by way of further explanation, one of the days is a national one (though schools will be taking it at different times) given by the Ministry of Education to assist with implementation of the new curriculum. The second day is actually really deferring a school day to the end of the year. That day enables us to have a block session with the teachers with the facilitation of a Culture of Care programme, designed to continue improving the teacher/student interface. It is an exciting project with specialist facilitators.

The first Board Meeting for the second half of the year was held last night. When this Board was elected one of the major issues many of the Parent Trustees wished to address was the place of sport within Kerikeri High School. There is a saying "Be careful what you wish for". There seems to have been a resurgence of sport at the school, from increasing numbers of students entering internal competitions such as cross-country, the increasing success and profile of our major teams, to a greater diversity of sports being available and pursued through the school.

One of the ramifications of this is that we are getting an increasing number of requests for teams to go away to tournaments. While it would be wonderful to simply say yes to every request, it is a requirement that teachers accompany teams, and that the teams also need to fund-raise to travel. This places a financial burden on the school and also the community and the Board is now grappling with the issue of finding the right balance of participation versus cost. It is great to have this enthusiasm bubbling round the school and a pity that the budgetary bucket of cold water keeps having to be thrown over all of us.

While the sports procedures are still being finalised the main thrust at the moment is that all the first teams in the major sports are able to attend national tournaments and other applications are considered on a case by case basis.

We have authorised expenditure on the next step of our project to seek to improve academic achievement of boys at the school. As has been said previously there are no easy answers but any incremental steps we can take to improve this will be a success! The next stage involves the collation of information direct from our boys.

The Board is currently spending a lot of time on the preparation of surveys. Either late this term or early next term all parents, all staff and a random sample of students, will be surveyed in an effort to obtain as much feedback as possible from all the school community about how the school is doing, what areas can be further improved, and what perceptions there are out there. The surveys will all be undertaken over a one week period which will be designated Survey Week.

All parent surveys will be able to be completed either online for those who have internet access and are happy to complete the survey that way, or on paper. If you are able to complete the survey online that is of assistance to us as it means that the answers don't need to be inputted. If you can do this PLEASE send us an email to enquiries@kerikerihigh.ac.nz. When the surveys are ready this will be emailed out to you. For those who would rather complete the paper survey those will be sent out at the same time. We hope that, whether in electronic form or paper form, as many people as possible complete the survey. The surveys will be confidential either way.

Good luck to all for Term 3.

Naku noa
The Board