

KERIKERI HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES NEWSLETTER

Greetings All

It is hard to put into words suitable for this newsletter the feelings engendered by the arson at the School over the weekend. When the Board wants to focus on the main target of raising student achievement, to have to deal with this sort of mindless crime is incredibly frustrating. Looking for the positive, we have once again seen that we have extraordinary School spirit amongst the staff and an incredibly supportive community which has rallied round in all sorts of ways to help the School.

There are too many people to thank individually in terms of this but our thanks to all who have helped! At the risk of mentioning a couple, special thanks to the Fire Service, both local and from further afield, who acted so quickly and professionally. Thanks also to Principal Elizabeth Forgie and her emergency team who worked so hard both during the long weekend and over the past couple of days to sort things to the point where the School could safely reopen with all students and staff completely re-timetabled (with four fewer classrooms available) by Thursday morning.

Some parents have questioned why the School needed to be closed to students for two days. The main reason was one of safety for all the students. The specialist hazardous materials unit only finished their cleanup and left the School on Wednesday evening. Quite clearly this operation could not be carried out amongst 1400 plus students. The safety issue was therefore a paramount one but there were also other logistical hurdles which needed to be overcome before the students returned. There was the possibility that a longer closure may have been required but everyone wanted to keep the period as short as possible.

On a more positive note it was great to see Kerikeri High School students performing so well at the recent Inter-School Cross Country at Barge Park in Whangarei. Particularly heart-warming was seeing the way that the Kerikeri team was easily the loudest and most supportive of their fellow students during each of their races!

The new Board has settled in and has had preliminary training in-house. As a result of that Martin Baker has joined Wendy Butler on the Property Committee and Sue Richards has joined Lane Ayr on the Finance Committee.

On the reverse of this page is the note from the Board that was sent out on the PTA email tree on the Sunday of the fire. Some of you will therefore have seen it. The PTA is a great organisation and way for parents to keep involved with the School. The PTA email tree is also an excellent way for us to be able to get in touch with parents. If any of you reading this are not members of the PTA but wish to join please contact the PTA Secretary, Kartini Martin, on skmartin@slingshot.co.nz.

Naku noa

The Board