



# Houghton Valley School

110 Houghton Bay Road, Houghton Bay, Wellington.

12th September 2017

Kia ora HVS whanau

With Term 3 more than half way through we want to update you on what the Board has been up to - particularly in relation to recruiting a new principal, and next steps after the communication survey.

Raewyn will be finishing up in a few weeks. Plans are being made for a great farewell so that we all get a chance to say goodbye and thank you. Keep an eye on newsletters for details.

### *Principal - farewell and recruitment*

The process of finding a new principal is well underway and the position is currently being advertised with applications closing early October. All going to plan we hope to have the new principal appointment finalised in November. In the meantime we really appreciate Lara and Monnie taking on the acting principal role together and that Gabrielle and Rekha have taken on extra days of work to provide cover.

Earlier in the term we spent time talking with staff, children and whanau about what sort of principal the school needs. Thank you to all those who took the time to provide comments and thoughts about the sort of person we should be looking for. Particular thanks for the pictorial efforts produced by those at the quiz (laser shark for principal!). There were a number of common themes that emerged from all the feedback and these formed the basis for the 'key attributes' that we have put in the recruitment advertising. These are:

1. A visionary, inspiring and pro-active educational leader
2. Can challenge and nurture our students' learning through further development of our school's pedagogy and curriculum
3. Have exceptional communication skills that allow you to build positive and collaborative relationships with community, staff and students
4. Will work in partnership with our BOT, staff and community.
5. Live the school's vision and key values of inclusion, respect, excellence and resilience.
6. Committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and to ensuring that Māori succeed as Māori at Houghton Valley School
7. Value our commitment to the environment and sustainability

A copy of the candidate information pack is on the website.

### *Communication survey*

Lots of people took the time to complete the communication survey - 38 responses in all. Again - thanks for the time taken to provide feedback and useful comments. If you would like to see the results of the survey they are on the website.

We have discussed the feedback at the last two meetings and had a good think what next. These are the next steps that we identified:

1. Reviewing and updating the current new starters pack to address gaps identified. Make it available on line.
2. Review the format of the newsletter - in particular to see whether it can be made easier to read on a phone
3. Investigate new channels for communication - such as a facebook page, text messaging or an app
4. Making it easier for whanau to find out what their child is doing at school and how best to support them. This is likely to involve improvements to the school website and class pages.

It was nice to receive a number of positive comments about how the Board is communicating with you at present. We have certainly been trying to improve in this area so thanks!

#### *Other stuff*

There are board elections coming up at the end of the year (1 December) for two spots as Karen and Andrew are both finishing up. Also Anna will be coming to the end of her co-opted term. More details will come out soon about nominations (you can nominate yourself!) and how to vote. Have a think about standing. We all agree that being on the Board is certainly interesting and even fun. Yes - there is some work, but it's not that bad and it is good experience. Talk to any board member if you want to find out more about what is involved. In the meantime make sure that the school/Denise has your current address so that you get voting papers.

There is of course still building work being finished up. It has taken longer than expected for a variety of reasons, not least the epic storm in July. But rooms 1 and 2 will be finished soon - just in time for work on rooms 7 and 8 to kick off. By the time we get started on a new classroom next year we will be building veterans. We know that having to use the hall as a temporary classroom is less than ideal, so thank you for helping make it work. These things have the odd upside - such as getting to have an all school disco at SWIS! See you there.....

BoT

Sarah, Raewyn, Anya, Anna, Andrew, Karen, Phil and Jos