

20 February 2019

To the community of Papatoetoe East Primary,

I am pleased to report on a very successful year for our school. Our closing roll for 2018 was 530 slightly lower than in recent years. This was due to lower than usual enrolments at only 138 students compared to 167 in 2017.

Curriculum and Student Achievement

We live in a curious time regarding the future of teaching and learning in New Zealand schools. National Standards are gone and schools are largely without a strictly articulated directive for life inside the classroom. This is a good thing because despite the view of successive governments our teachers are not fresh out of ideas. Our post-National Standards era is already providing our teachers opportunities for greater flexibility and the chance to rely on their professional expertise rather than the box ticking exercise that the Standards had become. This is exciting and our teachers are making the most of this. Meanwhile we continue meeting our self-imposed high benchmarks in reading, writing and mathematics.

One example of making the most of our new found freedom is the rise and rise of playful learning. In 2018 some of our teachers dabbled in learning through play and in 2019 we will take this to a new level. Evidence that playfulness enhances learning is well established, particularly for our younger students' transition to school. Watch this space for the creativity and fun that will be emerging from the classrooms adopting this in 2019.

I'll continue this section on curriculum by discussing what we affectionately refer to as 'Other Learning Areas' (OLA). OLAs is one of the premium aspects of our curriculum because it is uniquely designed for Our Place and our learners. Each year we plan four units of inquiry based around overarching concepts. Over the course of the year these concepts support us to plan schoolwide units ensuring we cover science, social science, arts, technology and health aspects of the curriculum.

Again in 2018 the Papatoetoe Principals' Association hosted an art exhibition at Papatoetoe North School. Firstly, it should be mentioned that Pap North did a great job of hosting this event and our school very much appreciates the efforts that they put into this event. Secondly, if I do say, the quality of the work on display from Papatoetoe East students was wonderful and a real standout. It is great to know that we have so much talent in this area and that the arts are alive and well at our school.

In 2018 students enjoyed some wonderful learning through the overarching concepts of sustainability, inquiry, creativity and hauora. These concepts provided an array of rich learning experiences that are relevant and authentic to our school community. Highlights this year from OLA were our wearable arts display in Term 3 and a well remembered trip to Mangere Mountain earlier in the year.

Another area of the curriculum enjoying some revitalisation post-National Standards is mathematics. Teachers have enjoyed some quality professional learning around contextualising mathematics in more relevant contexts. This is making learning more enjoyable for students, which is something that mathematics learning has historically struggled to achieve. I'm excited to say that this will continue in

2019 with a STEM Mathematics pilot planned. The focus of this new initiative will be to integrate computer coding as well graphics and design into mathematics learning.

Kiwisport

Another year has passed and we have again as a New Zealand state school enjoyed the support of Kiwisport funding of \$7484.52. With our extensive programme of sport and PE in the school this funding has been extremely helpful. At PEP we have invested our Kiwisport funding into several key areas. They are:

- Sport and PE equipment: \$ 952.46
- Transport for sports teams and outdoor education activities: \$1701.80

This was a light year for spending on sports equipment after investing over \$12,000 during 2017. Field days that our students have participated in are: swimming, playball, cricket, rugby, soccer, netball, touch, rugby, gymnastics, cross country and athletics.

Extra Curricular Life

I'll start by saying that our school's kapa haka group were wonderful ambassadors for our school. Their performance was inspiring and left me with the hairs on the back of my neck standing up! A very special thanks goes to Natalie Fowler who worked wonders with the group of students within a very short time frame.

The Papatoetoe schools run a series of sporting field days each year that have a real buzz about them. I can say, without bias, that our students have been easily the best behaved school at all these events. At the inter-school athletics we had a grandmother from one of the other schools approach our teachers and say that our students were immaculately behaved and inquired into our secret. The same could be said at any of the other offsite events I attended this year, such as the Tironui Trust Production, cross country, and the Papatoetoe Schools Kapa Haka Festival where sportsmanship and behaviour was top notch.

Our students, of course, loved the experience of representing the school when given the chance. A full list of our achievements would be too much to include in this document. A thank you goes to Mr Siluuga who coordinated our sport teams and coached a number of them himself.

Staff

A letter outlining the current status of our school would not be complete unless I rang the praise of our wonderful teachers. With confidence, having worked at several different schools, I can say that at PEP we are well served by a group of outstanding classroom teachers. Collectively they make a wonderful team, giving the school a friendly and warm environment. Individually they offer creativity, fun and excitement to students on a daily basis.

A special mention here should be made of our school's senior leaders - Nicola Eley (DP) and Vicki Tipama'a (AP). In the last year Nicola has said goodbye to long standing colleagues Graeme Gilbert and Sherryl Compston. This has meant, due to her holding a huge amount of institutional knowledge, she has needed to carry a heavy load this year with regard to the day-to-day running of the school. We all owe her a great deal of appreciation.

As many of you know Vicki Tipama'a has moved on to another local school, we wish her well. Toward the end of 2018 the Assistant Principal's position was merged together with that of our special educational needs co ordinator (SENCO). The outcome is that Mrs Sarah Jones joins the school's Senior Management Team. Her wealth of experience working in leadership positions will make her a wonderful asset and resource to our classroom teaching staff.

Our teachers continue to be engaged in a rigorous professional learning and appraisal system. This is continually under review to ensure that we are providing the best possible environment for our learners.

We continued our relationship with PACT (Papatoetoe Adolescent Christian Trust). We have community worker Glenn Tabor running several key programmes that are very well received by our students and their parents. Glenn is also a keen coach and has supported several of our teams.

Board of Trustees

School boards play a vital part in the functioning of New Zealand schools. For this reason I'd like to thank our current board members for all their work. Three of our BOT members, Mark Wilkie, Sekuni Amerika and Gina Bedwell, have stayed on and served long after their children left Our Place. Their dedication has been much appreciated. The balance of the governance team - Mary Budd and Kate Salim have been hugely supportive and have maintained a very supportive environment for me to enter the school.

Finance and Property

I am delighted to report that the school is in a strong financial position leading into the 2019 school year. We have a healthy amount of working capital available to deploy when needed.

We are also able to boast of a very tidy and well maintained school site. A big thank you goes to Graeme Brown (Financial Officer) and Antony Eley (Property Officer) for their ongoing work. I know very few schools as well served as ours in the property department and for this reason we have very well maintained buildings and grounds.

In the coming year we will explore options for school improvement. One project that is on the radar is a covered outdoor learning area (COLA). This is a dome shaped structure that we hope can be set up over our outdoor stage area and the ground immediately in front of this. At present we have no area that the whole school can assemble as a community with students and teachers comfortably seated. The COLA concept allows for this and is therefore on our agenda for 2019 as a real possibility.

Future Direction of the School

While the current talk in education is often doom and gloom, especially with regards to teachers' pay and conditions I remain excited and optimistic about the year ahead. Schools have the potential to be healthy and vibrant communities that encourage growth and wellbeing for all. At Papatoetoe East Primary we are very much fulfilling this potential. In the coming year we will launch new curriculum initiatives in play based learning, STEM Maths and Te Reo Maori. This will happen alongside the already vibrant and engaging thematic approach we currently have in place where we will explore the themes of Survival, Making a Difference, Change and Diversity. Our teachers will lead dozens of field trips, sports exchanges, and cultural experiences. And, if 2018 is anything to go by our students

will engage in these activities enthusiastically and for the most part with impeccable behaviour. Despite the rhetoric in the media Papatoetoe East Primary will be propelled forward by a very energetic staff who, like me, enjoy our work in education.

Whatever your interest in 'Our Place' I encourage you to join in our learning journey, and enjoy what will be a fun and fulfilling ride in 2019!

Paul Crowhurst

For the Papatoetoe Board of Trustees

February 2019