

Board Communication

30 October 2019

Board News Update – Term 3-4 2019

Kia Ora Parents and Guardians

We hope you all had a relaxing and family orientated Labour Weekend.

The purpose of this update is to highlight some of the governance developments at South Featherston School over the last 5 months. The newly elected Board has met three times so it is timely to update you on developments. Going forward we will communicate with you more regularly.

But first we would also like to extend a very warm welcome to those parents and caregivers who are new to South Featherston School - **We're a SMALL school doing BIG things.**

Board members

The newly elected Board of Trustees officially met in August and the new team have confirmed a 3 year cycle of review called the Triennial Review Plan. The following Board members have identified governance areas that they would like to be involved with:

Josh Drake as Board Chair will be involved in Personnel and Finance;

Clem Hodgson will liaise with community consultation;

Liz Millar will support Board communication and Board organisation and management.

David Greaves will support school property.

Sadly Adam Williams has tendered his resignation from the Board as his work commitments mean he is unable to regularly attend meetings which is a legal requirement. We all recognise Adam's well-meaning intention to be on the Board and it is with regret that we did not get to harness his skill set.

The Board elected at our September Board meeting to appoint a new Board member by selection to replace Adam. We will keep you updated on this by selection process.

Policy

In September the Board approved a budget line to subscribe to an online policy framework. Many local schools subscribe to SchoolDocs. The intention is that community members can have access to policies and procedures.

Staffing and School Budget for 2020

The Board has started planning for 2020. The Ministry of Education advice to schools of staffing and operational funding for 2020 is much the same as the 2019 budget and 2019 staffing ratio. The staffing organisation and 2020 school Budget should be finalised by November/December.

Donations Scheme

At the recent October Board meeting consideration was given to opting in to the Government Donations scheme for Decile 1-7 schools. Around 1,700 schools are eligible to join the scheme with South Featherston being one such school. The intention of the Donations Scheme is to relieve pressure on Decile 1-7 schools. The scheme recognises that these schools find it difficult to raise funds from their community. Board members felt that an initiative that eased the pressure off parents for donations was a positive initiative and there was agreement around the table. The scheme would see our school receive additional funding in January 2020 with funding based on our July 1st school roll. Funding to our school would be \$150 per student. Further information can be found on

<http://education.govt.nz/school/funding-and-financials/fees-charges-and-donations/>

Whilst the Board is keen to progress this decision we would also invite you to share your views by Tuesday 12th November. We will do our best to answer any questions or concerns you might have. Your feedback is valued. You can contact any Board member with your views.

Contact details

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The date for opting into this scheme is 14 November. Detail to support this initiative is still being clarified hence our delay in advising parents.

Education Review Office

As new Board members settle in we are also preparing for an Education Review Office visit to South Featherston School (November 18-20). The ERO team had planned to visit in Term 3 but it was felt that with a new Board and changes in staffing it would be better to reschedule a date later in the year.

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the New Zealand government department that evaluates and reports on the education and care of students in schools and early childhood services. The ERO team will work onsite for about two to three days. In essence an ERO team will independently feedback the strengths of a school and may identify areas for improvement. ERO last visited South Featherston School in 2016. The 2016 ERO report is on the school website.

Curriculum

Curriculum -We are pleased to advise you that South Featherston School is well placed to implement the Digital Technologies Curriculum. Shona Kelleher, an accredited Ministry of Education Facilitator, from Learning Architects writes "... A consistent and forward thinking approach to building confidence and knowledge in digital tools and programmes have provided opportunities for staff and students (at South Featherston School) to build capability in digital fluency within the school. This has placed the school in a strong position to introduce the two new strands in 2020 in the following way.

- One to one devices' for every student with mini pads in the junior class.
- Chrome books in the middle and senior classes with Google classroom being used as a learning management tool in the upper school. The school administers G Suite which provides opportunities for students to think critically and create through the google apps available.
- Teachers are aware of the 2 new strands Computational Thinking and Designing and Developing Digital Outcomes and are currently exploring relevant ways to implement across the curriculum.
- Technology both plugged and unplugged have been introduced to the students through a range of programmes such as Scratch coding, Stop Motion and Epro8 competitions.

The link will enable you to read up on the curriculum.

<http://elearning.tki.org.nz/Teaching/Curriculum-areas/Digital-Technologies-in-the-curriculum>

Friends of South Featherston School

On behalf of the Board we would like to acknowledge the support and contribution from the Friends of South Featherston School. In 2019 the "Friends" donated \$12,000 towards learning support in our classrooms and \$1000 towards transport to EOTC and other events. This is a stunning help to our students and staff.

The Friends of SFS committee are an active group and have planned a number of fundraising events across this year, including the Coral Burrows memorial seat, a disco, Onesie Day and our annual Agricultural Fair. Still to come on the 10th November is the Fonterra Open Gate Day. The support of the fundraising group is valued.

Bullying

The Children's Commissioner Andrew Becroft recently called for anti -bullying programmes in schools to be compulsory. His recommendation follows a report by the Chief Ombudsman, Peter

Boshier, which condemned an Auckland School's poor response to a series of poor bullying complaints. South Featherston School belongs to a Kahui Ako that has a focus on student well-being and achievement. A student well-being survey was completed in Term 1 of this year and will again be completed by the Year 4-8 students in Term 4. Tana will be sharing these findings with the Board.

Community Consultation

The Board will meet in January 2020 to review the current South Featherston School Charter. Feedback from community consultation is critical to the design of a Charter so please complete the 2019 South Featherston School Whānau and Community Survey document by Friday 1st November. If you would prefer to complete a paper copy that can be arranged.

In closing

We hope that gives everyone an update on what is happening at board level. A reminder that if you have any queries please feel free to contact Board members or Liz, the Limited Statutory Manager.

In terms of concerns and complaints please follow the process in our Concerns and Complaints Policy which you can access via the school website or from the school office.

Thanking you

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