

## Kimi News, Week 10, Term 4, 2016

Thank you so much for all your support over the year! The staff at Kimi Ora School are 100% committed to providing a rich curriculum and individualised learning programmes to enable students to reach their potential. This wouldn't be possible without the overwhelming support from whanau and the wider community.

Wishing you all a happy and safe festive season and we look forward to seeing everyone again in the new year.

Over the passed couple of weeks we have hosted a Sports Day, Battle of the Bands and a Christmas Party. These were all occasions that included people from a range of schools and services in our community.

### Term Dates

Term 4 -  
10 Oct - 16 Dec

Term 1, 2017  
Wed 1 February -  
13 April

Term 2, 2017  
1 May - 7 July

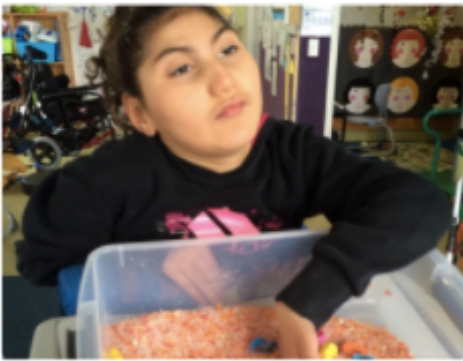
Term 3, 2017  
24 July - 29  
September

Term 4, 2017  
16 October - 15  
December



# Congratulations

to our most recent cup winners!



Ava for using different forms of communication to effectively convey her ideas.



Mily for amazing communication during Intensive Interaction.



Vinny for settling into school so well and following his schedule.

And this weeks winner...

Kotuku Class used a range of recycled objects to make this amazing Christmas Tree. It was collected by statt and Lower Hutt City Council for a competition.







## Board Talk

We held a board meeting on 29 November in the staffroom at Naenae. Ministry of Education (MoE) Officials, David Wales, head of special education and the regional services manager, Deborah Hughes, attended.

### Issues raised

We had written to the Acting Secretary of Education outlining concerns with the Cabinet Paper presented by the Minister of Education in July. In the letter we covered: the review of the ORS system, the apparent intention to cease funding through ORS of pupils between the ages of 18 and 21, and the government's view of the future role of Special Schools in the pre-school, primary and secondary education systems.

We also had indicated we wanted to discuss roll growth, satellites, declining of section 9s and the Education (Update) Amendment Bill.

### Review of ORS

David Wales informed us that the review of ORS is one of four or five pieces of work that are in the Special Education Update. That the question that is being asked is 'are we doing the right thing at the right time for students receiving that support?' That there are 12,000 students between the ages of 18-21 and the MoE wants to find out more about them and for whom the support is working well for.

While it had appeared there was to be a general review of ORS David said that it was in fact only focused on the 18-21 year olds though he reserves the right to look at some of the processes surrounding applying for ORS as he has heard horrendous examples.

As of yet there are no terms of reference but the MoE is currently looking at approaches that are and are not working. David indicated that if there is a formula for success somewhere the MoE is keen to spread this around, or if there are better ways of working with agencies.

Kimi Ora talked about how as a school we liaise and build links/relationships with a range of adult providers and seek out experiences for this age group in the community as well as engage in an active transition process with families/whanau. However, there are not enough supports available after leaving school.

While the Special Education Update had graphed resources moving from 18-21 year olds into early intervention, David Wales assured us this is not the case. He mentioned it is imperative that the government agencies dealing with young people work together and that ability will be developed to do so.

Kimi Ora pointed to liaison efforts between agencies working well at the local level but being stymied when proposals went to the higher level of various ministries.



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15 December 2016

## Role of special schools

David Wales indicated the problem when talking about special schools is there is not a national plan of how they fit together and network and more importantly how they will fit in to the Communities of Learning (school clusters) that are being developed. "How do we know how many special schools there need to be and what is the number for the best result?"

Deborah Hughes said special needs units are established by Boards of Trustees and how one school in the Wellington region is disestablishing theirs as they move towards 'inclusion'.

The Special Education Client Satisfaction Survey shows a decline in satisfaction of schools (parents and teachers) using the MoE special education services. David Wales this score is important but "the lowest scores are for wait time for services. Once service is provided scores are very good. Back again to processes of picking up a referral and decreasing wait time."

Kimi Ora insisted that some predictions must be able to be made. That we are able to record student's progress and have more data per child than is probably available for similar children who in the mainstream schools. There is data available on roll growth of special needs schools which is an indication of parents taking that option.

David Wales responded that "We don't have a clear plan saying here is the contribution special schools make, here are the students who benefit from special schools, here are the ones from the mainstream, and here are the units in between. Is possible to make these work well together. When I hear about a proposal to build/expand school - what formula are we working on here and how do we know the demand is there and will it be there in 10 years time?... There has to be an assessment of what is the best place for students. I suspect this happens but doesn't happen all the time."

Kimi Ora asked about informed parental choice.

David Wales "What do we do collectively when our view differs from parental choice? It is very important when our view differs from parental view."

## Section 9

Two parents who had been accepted to enrol at Kimi Ora if they had section 9's have had them declined. They now have the option to appeal this.

David Wales and Deborah Hughes explained the section 9 process "Section 9 process is an agreement between the parent/ whanau and the secretary for education. It is an agreement to exempt the student from the regular school system. Saying the system can no longer meet the need. First step in legislation states that all students should be at their regular school."

Kimi Ora asked where in the legislation does it say students have to be at their local school over a day special school?

Deborah Hughes couldn't say exactly but clarified "If students can't be accommodated in the regular school system, then assessment needs to happen. As time goes on there are more and more supports available in the mainstream. It is not a choice for parents just to go to a special school. It needs to go to ministry and go through section 9 process. They can't just come to the special school."



Depending on needs a parent can approach the ministry and say based on my child's needs I want an exemption to attend a special school. The process begins with seeing if a son or daughter can be accommodated in the mainstream. The end of this process would be if no one can accommodate students a place then a provider like Kimi Ora can be offered."

A Kimi Ora parent attending the meeting said that the Youth Law document on "inclusion" gives evidence that the schooling system is struggling to cope with severely disabled students.

At present most of the section 9 processes are completed by the MoE Early Intervention teachers, lead works and pre-school providers.

### Roll Growth

It was agreed that there needs to be an agreement reached on the capacity of Naenae and Evan's bay. As a Board we had said that once we had 39 students at Naenae and 23 at Evan's Bay we would inform families that we were full. We would then continue to seek additional teaching spaces. The Ministry has committed to building three new classrooms, however their intention is that this will absorb our current roll plus three students but not significantly allow for roll growth.

As a Board we are not looking at the question of how crowded we are given the amount of other spaces available including our use of the community.

There had been an indication from the MoE Property department that we might have increased health and safety risks. We have refuted that. Both sites can evacuate in under 3 minutes. Health and safety is a high priority for us.

### Education Amendment Update Bill

David Wales mentioned it includes the word 'inclusion' for the first time which has a number of implications for learning support.

A Kimi Ora parent said that "Is inclusion to be regarded as the same as mainstreaming? We think this isn't a very sophisticated interpretation. If you take this view then no more special schools in future? More important is how are people prepared to participate in society."

.. same parent... "The issue that is most worrying is the idea that offsite campuses are pulled back to the ministry. Does that mean the review of satellites and so on will be irrelevant if that piece of legislation goes through?. There is nothing in the paper that support the legislation in saying what the problem is."

David Wales said he will have a look at it. And not to "confuse property arrangements with the function of the unit and services that are provided there. There is no plan to shut down special schools or units. Just how many do we need, what do they look like and does this make sense across the country? I'm not arguing against special schools. Work it out from a population base with regards to regular schools."

Kimi Ora noted that we have 25 percent of the very high needs students across Wellington region. This proportion has been stable for many years.

## Next Steps

It was agreed that David Wales and Deborah Hughes would meet with the Principal and Chair in February to discuss teaching space, including the classrooms at Pomare, and section 9's.

In the meantime we have received a letter from the Regional Director of Education indicating that we don't have a cap on our school for enrolments but we do have limited teaching space and that will need to be addressed going forward.

I am sorry about the length of this Board Talk. It was an intense discussion and important issues are being raised. If any parent/whanau would like to contact me to discuss these further, please feel welcome (email and phone number below).

Board meetings are public, which means all parents are welcome to attend. The Board is responsible for school governance and the Principal for school management. If you have any issues you think are governance issues, contact Shirley or myself, [pwood.nz@gmail.com](mailto:pwood.nz@gmail.com) or 021 1655329.

Wishing everyone a relaxing time as possible over the holidays and see you all back next year.

Nga Mihi,

Philippa



Evans Bay Christmas Party - a great time of celebration with our friends from Aranui Day Base and St Patrick's Primary School.

