

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NEWSLETTER

Excellence | Inclusiveness | Integrity | Perseverance | Innovation

THE END IS IN SIGHT

It is certainly worth celebrating the end of this year! We are so lucky to be able to celebrate together.

THANKS

Thank you all for stepping up and supporting our children, staff and each other this year. We are very thankful to our RPS staff for all that they have done for us. Some of our teachers have children of their own and, like many of us, were juggling work and family during lockdown.

We have all truly lived our values at Remuera Primary School over the past few months. Teachers and families have been innovative. We have pulled together as a community and taken care of each other. Our children have persevered and been resilient, and we have all aimed to be the best we can be (which, at times, hasn't been easy).

Our thanks too for all the work of the PTA, DT, parent helpers, sports managers and everyone that put their time and effort into the school and our children.



COMING EVENTS

End of Year Celebration: **Dec 8**

Year 6 Graduation: **Dec 9**

Meeting 2021 Teachers: **Dec 9**

Year 6 Breakfast: **Dec 11**

School Assembly: **Dec 11**

Reports Go Home: **Dec 14**

Awards Assembly: **Dec 15**

RPS Has Talent Final: **Dec 15**

Term Four ends: **Dec 15**



2021 TERM DATES

Term 1: 04 Feb to 16 Apr

Term 2: 03 May to 09 Jul

Term 3: 26 Jul to 01 Oct

Term 4: 18 Oct to 17 Dec

FAREWELL BOARD MEMBER CAMPBELL IZZARD

Unfortunately, Campbell Izzard has resigned from the board. He, Nicola, and their boys are moving out of Auckland. Campbell has been on the board for the past four years, acting as deputy chair and also as a member of the Development Trust. We are very grateful to Campbell for his time and thoughtful input to the board discussions.



WELCOME BOARD MEMBER NATHAN PALMER

Fortunately, Nathan Palmer has been appointed to the board to replace Campbell until the next election in 2022. Nathan and Kate have two children at school. Nathan brings to the board his financial acumen, enthusiasm for the role and skills that will complement those of the rest of the board. We thank Nathan for taking up the role.



SCHOOL GROUNDS

There has been a lot of work around the school. There have been some Ministry of Education funded projects, including the sensory path and tiger turf on the field and padder tennis courts funded under the School Improvement Programme, and the fencing (which the MOE decided to put in for safety and security).

The board, PTA and Development Trust together funded the new Year 3 playground and the board funded new CCTV cameras to provide necessary security. We are currently working alongside the Ministry of Education on plans to redevelop the Year 4 block. This project will be fully funded by the MoE. Unfortunately, we have had to defer plans for the community centre for now due to the impact of COVID-19, but hope to move that forward in the future.



SCHOOL FINANCE

The school is funded primarily by grants from the Ministry of Education. As a decile 10 school (based on our socio-economic community), we receive the lowest amount per child that is available. We top this up by the donations we ask for each year, sponsorship, and fees from a small number of international students. In 2020, the board funded 6.5 FTE additional teachers and teacher aides using these extra funds. That means smaller class sizes and better student achievement. The payment of donations over recent years has trended downwards (as it has in other schools). In addition, COVID-19 has impacted our finances. For example, we have lost approximately \$100,000 in fees from international students. At this stage, it looks like we will run a \$67,000 deficit for 2020. The board is very focused on our finances. We will be tightening our belts but will do our utmost to ensure that has minimal impact on student achievement. We do encourage you to pay the donation (which will remain at the same level of \$495 for 2021). If you are in a position to pay it, the earlier you can, the better able we are to plan our finances for the year. We ask those in financial hardship to pay only what they can when they can.

CAMPS IN 2021

The board has made the difficult decision not to hold the Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 school camps in 2021. This is partly due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 world when we had to commit by paying deposits, and partly for financial reasons. As some of you will know from the public meeting we had a couple of years ago, we aim to break even on camps. The law says that parents are not required to pay for camps, but schools are entitled to request contributions to the costs. At RPS while many families pay, some cannot and others choose not to pay. This means the board needs to find the funds to cover the shortfall. In some years this amount can exceed \$20,000. Of course, we are always very happy to do this where this is hardship. Thankfully, this is rare.

We have made tentative bookings for camps for 2022. We will let you know in term 3 next year what the costs are and ask for payment in term 4. We can then determine - based on funds received, whether or not it is viable to proceed with each camp.

This is not a problem which is unique to RPS. Other schools face it too. We have tried to find other solutions but that is challenging when we do not have excess funds to meet the shortfall. We appreciate your understanding.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2021

The board recently held its annual strategy day. Key themes for the next 12 months include student achievement (always our primary focus but particularly important given the disruption this year), continued development of our online learning, student and staff wellbeing, minimising financial risk, and sustainability.

RPS TURNS 150 YEARS OLD

Our school will celebrate 150 years in 2023. If you are interested in being involved in planning the celebrations, please let us know.

CONTACT US

If there is anything that you would like to find out more about or if you would like to give us some feedback, please in the first instance contact Nicole Hardie, our Board Chair at boardchair@rps.school.nz.

WISHING YOU WELL

Merry Christmas! Meri Kirihimete!

Wishing you all happy and safe holidays. We look forward to seeing you at the end of year celebration on 8 Dec.

Nicole, Steve, Nelson, Kate, Grant, Prue, Mingui and Nathan
Remuera Primary School Board

