

# Te Awamutu Primary School

*Together Achieving Personal Success*

Warm greetings to our community!

It is my belief that this newsletter will bring some welcome news to our community. It feels good to be the bearer of some positive news as opposed to protocols and restrictions.

As a result of the Government announcement earlier this week, as of **Monday 28th of March** we will be throwing open the gates and welcoming our parents onto the school site. Weather permitting, we invite you to attend a welcome mihi whakatau for the new staff who started with us at the start of the year and to present our Year 6 elected school leaders with their leadership badges. This whole school assembly is our first for a significant period of time and will be held outdoors on the blue courts, starting at 2.15pm and of course will be weather permitting. We ask that all attending parents safely distance themselves from others and wear a mask when seated on the chairs provided.

After the assembly on Monday, at the conclusion of school (going back to our **original finish times of 2.55pm for all students**), we invite any and all parents, caregivers or grandparents into the school to visit your child's or children's classrooms and to say hello to the teachers. **Classrooms will be open until 4.30pm on this day.** The purpose of these visits is a totally informal opportunity to see the physical environment and to make yourself familiar to the teachers. Unfortunately, COVID still exists and therefore you still must wear your masks indoors however signing in is no longer a requirement of entry.

We have scheduled a formal opportunity for learning conversations or parent interviews on **Monday 11th April 2022**. This will be a **Teacher Only Day**. Whilst we understand that many children and parents have had time off sick or in isolation, we ask families to please arrange alternative care for your children on this one day. We suggest you arrange playdates with others, ask friends or family to care for your child, or alternatively, our Out of School Care will run a care programme between 7am and 6pm for those who need it. More information will follow on that later. A newsletter will be coming home after the weekend with the instructions of how to book your parent/teacher interview via a site called "School Interviews". We are predominantly offering online meetings or phone calls - so you can have the interview from the comfort of your own home or during your lunchtime, if you so fancy.

John Parsons

On Wednesday 13th of April we will be hosting student, staff and parent sessions with John Parsons regarding internet safety for your children. I heard John speak a few years ago, and he's also featured on TV, sharing specialist advice on the safe and ethical use of digital tools for your children. He is an engaging speaker and a realist - he understands that kids have devices and access to social media, but he gives you tips and tricks for keeping your child safe from falling prey to online predators. I highly recommend that every parent tune in to watch! You need not be a TAPS parent or family member. We offer this to our community, free of charge, because it might save one of our children from a very bad experience.

Engineering - can you help?

We are looking for a suitable engineering company who may be interested in quoting the fabrication of new, stylish, metal rubbish bins for the school. Please contact me if you know of someone.

Additionally, we are wondering if there are any talented and engineering minded parents who would be available once or twice a week to mentor a small group of our Year 5 or 6 students who are also engineering minded?

We have amazing resources - packs with pulleys, cogs, wheels, bars, fixtures, strings and two brand new (and very expensive) electronic sets too! But, our EPRO8 teams need coaching on how to construct things through hands-on practice and challenges. The website has challenges - they just need the coaching to learn how to be successful and how to work together as a team.

#### Board Succession

Later this year, we will be having the triennial Board elections in September. Our greatest desire is to have a positive and diverse board, made up of community members who have skills that they can contribute to ensuring our school continues to achieve success.

It's an outdated misconception that Board members have authority to manage the school by directing the Principal. In fact, Board members meet to reflect and offer feedback on school progress in relation to learning, finances, employment, culturally responsiveness, health and safety matters etc. It's not necessary, but it often helps to have an interest or professional background in any of these areas. In a normal school year, Board members meet once per month (Feb - Dec) for 2 hours to hear and discuss reports about school operation. Members also receive a small stipend for each meeting they attend which I believe is around \$55. Please consider whether you would like to put yourself forward for the elections this September.

#### Administration Upgrade.

We are back in our original office space. It has been upgraded from the steps to the beams in the ceiling and we love it! We look forward to any future visits, just remember your mask.

School times from Monday 28th March (for all students):

8.55am - Start

10.30am - 10.50am - First Break

12.45pm - 1.00pm - Lunch Eating

1.00pm - 1.40pm - Lunch Break

2.50pm - Bus 8 released.

2.55pm - School Ends for all.

#### My final word

For so long now, we've been juggling the COVID hot potato simultaneously with providing excellent quality learning programmes for our students - every day and often online too. We are proud of the way our COVID positive numbers have been kept far lower than many other schools in the region, and our feedback from you has been you are pleased with our communication and efforts to support our learners if they have had to isolate or stay home.

Across the country, it is a common fact that managing both facets has had a huge impact on the wellness of staff, particularly our teachers. The TAPS teachers are no different and many are exhausted, especially those who have 'recovered' from COVID but are still feeling its effects. With this in mind, we have put in place some measures to maintain the wellbeing of our people which I will discuss below. We must look after our greatest asset, before they burn out and we are unable to continue to open.

If you are isolating, remember that you have your home packs that you may use at any given time. Until the end of term, Teams are opening up their classroom lessons via online Google Meets so that children at home can participate in the first, introductory part of a lesson in each of the core subject areas, three times per day, for 10-15 minutes each time. This requires a huge amount of trust and vulnerability on the behalf of the teachers as every classroom has a different dynamic with variable needs. Some days, things may not go well, or the teachers may forget to log in. Please respect our teachers during this time, they are doing their very best for everyone and it's a lot of balls to juggle.

Normally parent interviews would be over two late nights after school. However this year we are using a Teacher Only Day instead. It may not suit a lot of parents to have their children at home, or to attend the parent interview during the day and we apologise for that. We have tried to arrange times so that there are interview slots before and after school starts for our working parents and we are trialling this as an option. On the other hand, it means less late nights for our teachers who have their own children and family commitments.

We are endeavouring to cut down or cut out school meetings. Many teachers have meetings at least three out of five weekdays.

Teachers have been encouraged to go home as early as 3.30pm on days they do not have meetings. They are dedicated professionals and often plan, mark and assess during their weekends anyway, so allowing them to do their afternoon prep from home is a small way of showing them we care.

We have hired a resource administrator to support teachers with photocopying and resource making, as well as a Sports Coordinator to take over the organisation of sports teams. Both of these roles reduce the workload of teachers who have always held these responsibilities in the past.

You can help by communicating with teachers only when necessary, in a positive way and during normal working hours. I have directed all staff that they should turn off email notifications on their phones as it does them no good to be answering emails at 8pm or 9pm at night. Often, just knowing that people are doing their best for you and your child is enough and is implied through your choice of language or tone. So many of you are already aware of this and I thank you for the respect you afford our staff. As they say, 'respect breeds respect' and it is highly likely that it builds a strong community too!

This year, our 2022 cohort of children are, without a doubt, the most well mannered, respectful, kind and caring group of students. They are an absolute credit to you as parents and caregivers and, also, I believe it is a result of strong and positive relationships with their teachers and learning support staff. It makes our school a wonderful place to learn and work.

Wowee! What a book. Thanks for sticking with me until the end.  
Until next time.

Sharon



Tēnā Koutou Katoa

Ko Heidi Osborn-Dunn tōku ingoa.

I am the Learning Support Coordinator at Te Awamutu Primary School and I am also a primary trained teacher who has been in teaching for over 25 years, both in N.Z. and the U.K.

My role is to work with class teachers and whanau to identify students who need and/or meet the criteria for extra support or require a referral onto outside agencies for further assessments. I also oversee the Teacher Aides in our school and a number of support programmes (e.g. Brick Club, STEPS, GATE Writing, Boy's Writing, EPRO8, Counselling).

I will be available on April 11th for parent interviews if you would like to schedule in a slot to discuss your child and their needs.





# Timatanga

What a wonderful start to Term 1 Timatanga has had. Our learning inquiry this term has seen an exploration of 'Belonging/Whanaungatanga "Who am I and where do I belong?"'. We are all enjoying getting to know each other, our cultural identity and the things that are special to each of us.

Did you know?

Despite the current restrictions with covid and omicron outbreaks, we are working hard to ensure learning is at the forefront. All of the Timatanga teachers have been preparing HERO learning posts and every child's 'next steps' for learning, moving into Term 2. These posts will go live for families to view over the next few weeks, so keep an eye out for them.

The Timatanga teachers also look forward to an opportunity to speak with parents and caregivers about your children. More information about this will follow shortly.

All of the children in Timatanga should have brought home a 'Learning from home' box, in case your family/household is affected by Covid or one of its variants, this year. This is to help support or supplement your child's learning. If your child is new and not brought one home yet, the classroom teacher will organise this for you.

Thank-you for having your children ready for learning. Including having bookbags at school every day, supporting your child with home learning and structured literacy tasks AS WELL AS helping them to be prepared for school with school hats, water bottles and all stationery requirements.

We know it is an unsettling time for parents not being able to come into school, but we wanted you to know how proud we are of all of the children who walk to their classroom daily without the support of parents. Our kids are extremely resilient!! Check out our cool Timatanga display that greets the children as they come into our corridor.

# Taiohi

We have had a busy start to our year in Team 2. It has been great to see how brave and responsible children have been when coming to class in the mornings.

Our courtyard garden has been cleaned out and children have been part of digging the soil over and preparing it for planting. We can't wait to see our plants grow.

Please remember to name all children's clothing so we are able to keep track of these items.

We are looking forward to sharing your child's learning over google interview and welcoming you back into our classrooms as we return to some normality.



# Tauihi

Wow the weeks are starting to fly by and we are well into the second half of the term. Inquiry has led to interesting conversations and sharing about ourselves, whanau, history and where we come from. We have many budding young artists in Tauihi, classrooms are looking amazing with self portraits and other art relating to our learning. During writing, we have been engaging in descriptive writing about ourselves and using language experiences to develop our vocabulary and sentence structure. It's fantastic to see so much excitement in our classrooms as we learn about our tamariki and their interests.



# Topa

Wow! What a fantastic start to 2022 we have had! Topa team have been so busy learning and loving being at school again. Earlier this term, we were lucky enough to have some amazing cricket superstars from Northern Districts Cricket

Association come and work on our small ball skills. We have also

loved having our

new Dragon

Maths books

and have been

learning lots

of new Maths

strategies.

Celebrating

Maths this week for

World Maths Day was definitely a highlight for us!



## THE SAFE & HAPPY CLUB HOLIDAY PROGRAMME



The Easter holidays are almost here and once again we are offering a fun filled programme, running from Te Awamutu Primary School. We have loads planned including trips to Rotorua Agrodome, Cambridge Pools, the Events Centre, Regent Cinemas, designer donut/sundaes, a fun holiday programme challenge at TA Sports and numerous interesting onsite days Please see below for bookings

<https://enrolmy.com/the-safe--happy-club-ltd>

or email

[info@safeandhappyclub.co.nz](mailto:info@safeandhappyclub.co.nz)

PLEASE NOTE - FOR THOSE THAT QUALIFY, WE HAVE THE WINZ SUBSIDY AVAILABLE.



### School Holiday Program



**LEARN TO PLAY THE DYNAMIC WAY**  
Join us for five fun filled days of learning soccer skills. For players 6-13 years old - Boys and Girls.  
Coach Richard Hudson plus qualified coaches.

**WHEN** Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> April to Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022  
9:00am to 4:30pm daily (check in 1<sup>st</sup> day 8:30am)

**WHERE** Te Awamutu Stadium, Armstrong Ave

Bring your Ball, Boots and Shin pads, Hat, Sunscreen, Water Bottle, Goalies remember Gloves! Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon snack.

**YOU GET ALL OF THIS AND MORE**  
30 Hours professional Coaching using fun up to date Academy drills, specialist enjoyable Goalkeeper training, plus Premier League kit (shirt and shorts), gift pack for every player that registers for the five days School Holiday Program.

**WIN**

**WIN**



**WIN**

**WIN**

Match Ball used in the English Premier

League and Domino's Pizza Vouchers

Awesome Value - Book now for a week long fantastic football experience these April school holidays.  
Cost \$200 (incl GST)

Please complete the application and email to [footballdynamicsnz@gmail.com](mailto:footballdynamicsnz@gmail.com)  
For more information email or call Richard on 021 145 34 23.

## Holiday workshops



