



Hi everyone

In this first edition of Board News for 2017:

- **Principal changes**
All good things must come to an end, and sadly this newsletter informs you of the resignation of our Principal, Liz Millar. Liz will finish up with the school on 1 September.
- **Who are we?**
We provide a brief explanation of the Board for those new to the school.
- **Upcoming Board changes**
Christian Hawkesby will be stepping into the Chair position from April 5, and Mike Letts stepping into the Treasurer role. Robert Stewart will be vacating the Board in September and the Board plans to select Mark Palmer as a new Trustee later this year if this is supported by parents.
- **Our Charter for 2017-2020**
We have finalised our strategic plan for the school for 2017-2020 and submitted to the Ministry of Education our annual 2016 National Standards results which show very high student achievement levels.
- **Property news**
Things are finally happening, and we provide an update on the property situation.

Liz Millar has resigned

As noted in yesterday's school newsletter, unfortunately Liz Millar has resigned and will be leaving the school on 1 September. What can we say other than a huge thank you. The Board is extremely grateful to Liz for her years of leadership at Ngaio School. Not only has she stuck with the school through 9 years of difficult building projects, but she has remained a positive and strong leader who has helped the school to grow and develop in a thoughtful and sustained manner despite the property woes.

The Board sees first-hand Liz's professionalism, pastoral care of all of our students, her unwavering belief in the potential of all children, and her huge work ethic. In the past couple of years, the Board has seen two previous Ngaio School teachers appointed as Principals at other schools. This is a testament to Liz's ability to develop great teachers, in addition to developing our students.

Liz is leaving the school to explore opportunities other than being a Principal. Her plans include doing art study which has been a side-passion of hers for many years.

It has been the Board's privilege to work with Liz. She is hugely experienced and professional in all her dealings. Even in her exit, she is being hugely professional and has carefully thought of the best timing for the school. She has given the Board plenty of notice of her departure, so there is appropriate time for a thorough recruitment process. Plus, she has timed her exit to give the incoming Principal the opportunity to shape classroom organisation and teacher appointments for 2018. She has also timed it so that she will see out the current substantial building project.

We're sure the entire parent community will join the Board in thanking Liz for her massive contribution to Ngaio School later in the year.

In terms of the appointment of the new Principal, in about mid-April the Board will start advertising this position in the Education Gazette. We expect to interview shortlisted candidates in mid-June, and hope to announce the new Principal in July. The parent elected Board representatives will be involved in the recruitment process, and we'll also involve an expert with specialist knowledge of the education sector.

The role of the Board

For those of you who are new to the school, the Ngaio School Board of Trustees governs Ngaio School. The Board consists of five parent representatives, one staff representative (Amanda Frater, Associate Principal) and the Principal. Also, Helen Shields from the office does a fabulous job as the Board Secretary.

The current parent trustees on the Board were appointed by the parent community following an election in mid-2016 for a three-year term. The current Trustees are as follows:

- Lucy Elwood, Mum of Robbie Elwood year 6 and Tasmin Elwood year 4
- Christian Hawkesby, Dad of Daniel Hawkesby year 5, Edward Hawkesby year 3 and Sylvia Hawkesby who will be starting school in term 3
- Jo Hughson, Mum of Cate Hughson year 6 and Tom Hughson year 3
- Mike Letts, Dad of Amy Letts year 6 and Freddie Letts year 3
- Robert Stewart, Dad of three children who have previously attended Ngaio School, the youngest of whom finished Ngaio at the end of last year
- Amanda Frater, Associate Principal, attends as staff representative
- Liz Millar, Principal

Board changes

At our meeting last night, the Board discussed two main changes:

- ***Change in Board Chair – from 5 April the new Chair will be Christian Hawkesby***
Lucy Elwood has chaired the Board for almost four years, but earlier this year started a new job which has impacted on her availability. Also, Lucy will not be standing for re-election when the next full Board elections are held in just over two years' time as her children will have left Ngaio School.

While we cannot predict the outcome of the next election, we think the Board should take steps to try to ensure some continuity at the Board level. We discussed last night that prior to the next elections it would be ideal if someone who was planning on standing for re-election stepped into the Chair role.

With Liz's departure, the Board has decided that it is sensible to transition the Chair role to a new Trustee now, to give the new Chair an opportunity to 'learn the ropes' prior to a new Principal being appointed.

We are pleased to announce that Christian Hawkesby will be Chair from 5 April, with Lucy Elwood available to support Christian as he takes on the extra responsibilities associated with that role. Christian has the full support of all of the Board as he picks up this role, and will do a fabulous job.

Mike Letts will be filling the Treasurer position, that Christian has been doing to date. Thanks Mike!

- ***Replacement trustee for Robert Stewart in term 3***
Many parents will remember that Robert Stewart has been a Trustee for almost 10 years and has tackled our complicated property portfolio throughout that time. We bet Robert didn't know what he was signing himself up for. Robert has made an incredible

contribution to our community through his involvement on the Board. He has supported 2 Principals and an acting Principal to navigate complex issues.

When Robert stood as a candidate in the 2016 parent elections, he said that he would see the latest property project out but intended to step down from the Board after its completion. Given the property plans are now more certain, Robert has advised that he plans to leave the Board in September which is when the building project is due to be completed. However, he will be available to assist the Board beyond that date in a separate capacity if required.

The Board has now discussed what process we should follow to fill the vacancy when Robert leaves. Under the Education Act, there are two options. The Board could hold an election or could fill the vacancy by selection. The Board has decided to fill the vacancy by selection, as this allows us to actively consider the skills around the table and select a Trustee that complements those skills. It also allows us to avoid the cost of an election (which would be over \$2.5k).

Mark Palmer has attended a few Board meetings since last year's election, and in that election he was the candidate with the next highest number of votes. Mark owns a painting and interior decorating business and is very interested in the governance of the school (with a child at the school and a wife that teaches at the school). The Board feels Mark would make a great contribution, and would be very well placed to pick up the property portfolio after Robert's departure. But the Board also wants to ensure that the school community supports this selection. Accordingly, we plan to make this appointment when Robert's vacancy arises unless more than 10% of parents eligible to vote ask us to hold an election. Please email info@ngaio.school.nz to express either your support for the proposed selection or to ask us to hold an election.

Our Charter and annual return

The Charter sets our strategy for the next few years. At the start of the year, we reviewed the Charter. Thanks to all parents who responded to the Board's survey. We really appreciated the feedback received. Liz has already summarised the feedback, so we haven't gone into details here. However, the overall direction of the school is broadly supported and there were some helpful suggestions of areas for improvement.

Our new Charter (for 2017-2020 school years) is available on the school website. www.ngaio.school.nz

Our new Charter sets out our vision and our school values. The document:

- explains how teaching and learning at Ngaio School is supported by a school wide teaching model.
- clarifies that the Board expects our teachers to provide a variety of learning experiences (e.g. whole class, guided groups, peer and independent learning).
- explains that teaching as inquiry is important at Ngaio, as well as other deliberate and strategic teaching strategies.
- describes that our school is expected to have high expectations and show genuine care for all students, as this is fundamental for both learning and development.
- requires our school to develop the following key competencies in students: thinking, relating to others, managing self, participating and contributing, language/symbols/text.
- describes the school's expectations in terms of behaviour management.
- encourages partnerships that contribute to and support students learning.

Also, at the start of March the Board submitted to the Ministry of Education our roll return for 2017.

Our 2016 financial audit showed that the year was an operationally difficult year for the school. There were unexpected expenses such that the school ended up returning a financial deficit.

This was manageable, as the school had sufficient cash reserves for exactly this sort of 'rainy day'.

On a more positive note, our performance didn't suggest the school had faced a very difficult year. Rather our performance results showed that the school delivered a rich curriculum, with a huge number of varied experiences for our children. The final achievement data for the year against National Standards was very high. Liz is providing in her newsletters more information about achievement data and how this is measured and used to improve our teaching practices.

Property update

Work is finally underway on the new lower classroom block. We are hugely excited about these spaces becoming available later in 2017. Thanks to everyone that is working on this project for the school. Liz is available to answer any questions about the new spaces, and how they have been future-proofed for Ngaio's learning needs. If you'd like to see the plans:

- 3D sketch plans are available [here](#).
- 2D plans with more detail are available [here](#).

At this point, we are hopeful that construction will be complete by the start of term 3. It will be the first time in over 9 years that we have enough teaching spaces to accommodate all students, which will free up multi-purpose spaces across the school to be used for other curriculum areas.

In other property news:

- The school pool environment is getting an upgrade later this year, particularly the pool sheds. A huge thanks to everyone that helped with the Gala in order to secure funding for this.
- Plans for McLeod are momentarily on hold as we look to improve connectivity between McLeod and the rest of the school. The school is hoping to secure use of a small parcel of land, which would better enable us to connect the new block and McLeod.
- The school is funding a large shade sail to be built by the new classrooms, and we have managed to get this work managed by the current building project manager.
- Later in the year, once the new block is completed the school will be in a position to remove the toilets by the top gate, plus improve signage across the school. Also, the school and the Ministry will agree a suitable time for removing the temporary classrooms by the stage.

Closing

On a personal note, this will be the last Board News that I write as Chair. So, I just wanted to take this opportunity to say it has been my privilege to Chair the school for the past few years. I'm staying on the Board though, and I'm happy keep doing the Board News. I look forward to working with Christian and the rest of the team for the next couple of years.



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on behalf of all of your Ngaio school Trustees – Amanda Frater, Christian Hawkesby, Jo Hughson, Liz Millar, Lucy Elwood, Mike Letts and Robert Stewart.