

At the beginning of this year a new modular classroom, now called the Tawa Room, was completed and officially opened as part of our pōwhiri on day one. For the first time in Oakura School history we have had fifteen classrooms operating. This is very different from just fifteen years ago when there were only nine. We now have room to accommodate the community growth over the next few years, with space available on our site for another room at the end of this new classroom building. To ensure that all our classroom spaces were maximised, the board of trustees made a decision to fund an extra teacher, over and above what the Ministry of Education allocated us. This allowed all classrooms to be operational and our year 5-8 rooms to have much lower than normal class numbers. Next year this will be repeated and we will be pleased to stretch the benefits wider to also include lower numbers in the year 3 and 4 classes.



Our school community has been through an incredibly difficult and sad time this year. The passing of our much loved student, Ruby Goodin, was a tragedy and our love and thoughts went out to, and continue to be with Ruby's family. The strength and kindness of our community really came to the fore as everyone did their best to support Ruby's family and friends during this time. Ruby will always be remembered and will hold a very special place in our hearts.



The school production provided us with the opportunity to all come together and support each other. Our whole school performed together and provided an entertaining show for our community. Our year seven and eight students played a large role in all aspects of 'Te Wheke – What's in a Name?'. The storyline for the production was about a group of students finding out the history behind the names of our school houses: Patuha, Wairau, Koru and Matekai. We were very fortunate to be able to work with representatives from Ngāti Tairi to research this history and then weave this information into the script. Our knowledge of local history is much stronger from this research and we look forward to continuing to strengthen this important part of our school curriculum.

Our new music programme with Sam Johnson has provided our students with opportunities to learn, create and perform music in a variety of ways. This area of the Arts Curriculum has definitely been strengthened and we thank Sam for the passion and skill for music that he brings to this role. We look forward to further developments in this programme next year.

Academically our students achieve well, with the 2018 achievement records showing that 94% of our students are achieving at or above expectation in reading; 88% are at or above in writing and 89% in mathematics. Many of our students have participated in, and had success in sport, debating, speech making, music, cultural events, science and technology. We would like to thank and acknowledge our staff who put an incredible amount of time and energy into ensuring students are able to participate in these opportunities and ensure that all students achieve their personal best, not only in the core areas of literacy and numeracy but also in health, physical education, languages, science, social sciences, the arts and technology.

Our staff continue to be involved in a wide range of professional development courses and are always highly motivated to remain upskilled in all areas of teaching and learning. This year they have all been part of a professional development course run by Massey University called 'Developing Mathematical Inquiry Communities' (DMIC). The research from this course has allowed us to develop and implement new strategies in our maths programmes that encourage students to be more actively engaged in their learning and are more confident in explaining their mathematical thinking. We have also been working on the development of a mindfulness programme across the school. This has led to a range of effective strategies being embedded in classroom practice that will support students in a range of situations. We look forward to continuing to develop this area of our school curriculum next year.

Every year the numbers of students participating in our kapahaka roopu is growing. To accommodate this, particularly for competition events, we had to divide the group into two teams: Oakura-Matapu and Okorotua. We thank our Friends of Oakura School Committee (FOOS) for providing us with the money to purchase new uniforms this year – very timely just prior to the Puanga Festival. We were very proud of all our students who took part in this event – it takes a large amount of discipline and personal time to practise and then perform at this high level. They were rewarded with success in several sections, in particular with a first placing in poi. Matua Clive continues to lead our whole school for weekly sessions of te reo Māori, waiata, kapa haka and tikanga. His passion and expertise has ensured a continuing development of our confidence and knowledge in te ao Māori. We also acknowledge and thank the members of our





community who attend our whānau hui and provide valuable input into our areas of review and development.

We are very fortunate to have an actively involved community who work in partnership with us in the education of their children. This is reflected in the number of parents that attend such events as: new family afternoon teas, whānau lunch days, whānau hui, learning conferences, individual education plan meetings, information evenings, discovery time, passion time, classroom learning, library sessions, sports days, the fun run and other school events. At the end of last year, we consulted with our community on our school programmes and suggestions for future developments. The ideas we received from the community were embedded in our strategic goals for the next three years.

We continue to be involved in community-wide environmental projects. We have a keen number of students who are part of our Enviro Kura. They meet weekly during their lunchtimes and plan and implement environmental projects. We have also been fortunate to be able to support the Taranaki Regional Council 'Predator Free' initiative. Our students have carried out a BioBlitz at school and are overseeing the trapping of pests in our Enviro Centre. Many of our families also have traps in their own properties, supporting the overall goal of 'Restore Oakura'. Thank you to 'Waxy Wraps' for continuing to help us reduce our plastic litter around the school. Through their generous support and the support of FOOS we have been able to gift a waxy wrap to all our new students this year.



The special character of our school is that we are a full primary. This means our school includes students from year one to year eight. Our year 7 & 8 students are wonderful role models for other students and help shape the culture of our school. They step up in their last two years with us and all take on important leadership roles across the school. The skills they learn through these leadership opportunities assist them in developing essential skills and competencies for their transition to high school. We highly value the tuakana teina relationships that exists between our youngest and oldest students. Through this relationship our students learn important life skills and we are continually impressed by the way they relate to, and care for each other.

We are very fortunate to have the Oakura Junior Sports Club (OJSC) operating in our community. Through the dedication of this generous volunteer group our students get a wide range of quality sporting experiences. The high level of sporting achievement gained by our students reflects the commitment of these parents and the students themselves. We are also fortunate to have had experts from a range of different sports provide skill development sessions for our students within our school programme. These include: swimming, football, futsal, badminton, hockey, cricket, athletics and tennis. Kiwi Sport is a government funded initiative that supports student's participation in organised sport. The funding that the school received this year has been used to provide some of this specialised sport coaching and access for students to attend interschool sports events.



Friends of Oakura School Committee (FOOS) is a group of parents who generously give their time to support our students, teachers and whānau. This year they have raised a significant amount of money so that the school can purchase resources that complement our school programmes and school environment. We thank them for their dedication and commitment to supporting our school and the children in our community. If you are not a member of this group please consider joining in 2019 as many hands make light work – and your children are the ones who truly benefit from the events they organise.

Thank you to all the people who have supported our school programmes this year in so many different ways: parental involvement in sport (interschool and OJSC), Friends of Oakura School Committee (FOOS), morning crossing duty, library help, parent help in classrooms, transport assistance and supervision during school trips and activities. Without your help we wouldn't be able to offer as many opportunities for our students as we do. We truly value your support.

Once again we want to acknowledge and thank our wonderful staff and students for all that they do to make Oakura School a special place to be. We wish you all a happy and fun-filled summer holiday with your family and friends.

Lynne Hepworth  
PRINCIPAL

Milou Barrett  
BOT CHAIRPERSON