

Ka mihi nui ki a koutou katoa - Greetings to you all.

The end of the year provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the highlights of the year, of which there were many, and I wanted to share some of those with you. The 2022 school year started with our staff being able to welcome all our students and their whānau into their classrooms so the students could set up their equipment for the year and meet their teachers in person. What a treat this was after the past two years of uncertainty and disruption. This continued throughout the year with open days, learning conferences, whānau lunches, school events and Puanga ki te kura o Oakura. We have thoroughly enjoyed having everyone back onsite and having a less interrupted school year.



We were also able to finish the year in the same way, welcoming our school community in to enjoy watching the students perform 'Miss-Adventure'. Our students' creativity was at the forefront of this performance, along with all the other curriculum areas. They wrote the script, chose the music, designed and created the props, costumes, make-up, choreography and advertising. Our older students reflected the tuakana teina approach of working with our younger students, supporting each other to create a united show of visual art, dance, drama and music. This term of learning through the arts, allowed the development and promotion of those critical 21st century skills of



creativity, critical-thinking, communication and collaboration. Thank you to our staff who put so much extra time and energy in to support and guide our students in this mahi.



Our involvement in the Te Ara Taiao initiative remains a highlight of our school curriculum. This collaborative environmental initiative provides the opportunity for our kaimahi (staff) and ākonga (students) to work alongside

representatives from our local hapū Ngā Mahanga a Tairi, the iwi Te Kāhui o Taranaki and staff from Sustainable Taranaki who generously share their knowledge and mahi with us. Our students continue to support the re-establishment of kiwi in the Kaitake Ranges, planting purapura/kumara seed, monitoring and restoration of the Matekai Stream and further developing and nurturing our Enviro Centre and local environment. Through the Te Ara Taiao initiative our students have learnt about and contributed to the environmental strategies in the Kaitake rohe, while also learning about the cultural narratives and perspectives of our local iwi and hapū. These learning opportunities are significant in supporting our implementation of Aotearoa NZ Histories Curriculum and developing an understanding of the importance of future kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of our precious whenua for future generations.



This year our board has worked with Damon Ritai, the Māori Achievement Collaborative Facilitator, to develop and implement Hautū, which is a cultural responsiveness tool for school boards. The developments that have come from this plan, and in consultation with our school whānau, have included a range of initiatives that have been implemented and/or trialled this year: inclusion of cultural representation in the new building, co-option of a board member who will oversee the te ao Māori portfolio, te reo Māori immersion lessons for all students, Pareti Pareti and a Reorua bilingual class. We feel privileged to have been able to work in collaboration with Ata Rawea to provide the te reo Māori lessons using the Te Ataarangi method (full immersion using rākau).





OAKURA SCHOOL



Our students have been able to participate in more interschool sporting events this year. We also had experts from a range of different sports provide skill development sessions for our students within our school physical education programme. These included: Central Football, Taranaki Cricket; Swimsafe Instruction; Taranaki Athletics and Let's Go Scooter skills. We are also very fortunate to have the Oakura Junior Sports Club (OJSC) operating in our community. Through the dedication of this group of volunteer parents, our students get a wide range of quality sporting experiences. The high level of enjoyment and sporting achievement shown by our students reflects the commitment of these parents and the students themselves.



Our major roll-growth property project is nearing completion. There have been hurdles to overcome with this build, including delays in accessing materials, cost increases, illness etc. But, despite these challenges and the adjustments we have had to make along the way, we are incredibly proud of the learning spaces that are near completion and will be up and running for the 2023 school year. We appreciate and thank the staff and students who have worked in and around this development, moving classrooms when needed and showing resiliency and flexibility. The landscaping and the completion of the Sports Facility (changing rooms and equipment storage) will continue over the school holidays. We are still waiting to hear outcomes of grant applications we have made to provide the extra funding needed to cover the costs of the sunshades, landscaping of the outdoor learning area and the fit-out of the sports facility.



Earlier this year we held the triennial Board of Trustees elections. I want to thank the previous and new board members for their service to the school and community. We are incredibly fortunate to have the commitment, skill and dedication of these parents in governing our school and effectively and thoughtfully planning for the future.

Thank you to our Friends of Oakura School Committee (FOOS) for their commitment and energy in supporting our students, teachers and school whānau. This year FOOS have raised an impressive \$50,000 to go towards resources that complement our school programmes and environment. If you are not a member of this group, please consider joining in 2023 as many hands make light work - he rau ringa e oti ai. 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: supporting your child's learning, 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 the partnership we have with you.

Once again I want to acknowledge and thank our wonderful staff and students for all that you do to make Oakura School a special place to be. I wish you all a very well-deserved summer holiday with your whānau and friends.

Ngā mihi nui

Lynne Hepworth
PRINCIPAL