

January 29 2018

Welcome to the New Year, new staff and new children. It's a wonderful fresh start for Rakaia School and we are all excited about the changes and the direction the school has with its links to the Community of Learning and the developments we are looking forward to this year.



Room 4 and the old staff room will be renovated and changed as well as some new astro turf outside rooms 7 and 8 under the shade cloth. The old junior playground is due to be taken away and we are looking at a picnic area and shade there as well.

Our new staff are excited to be here and we have had meetings to tell them the Rakaia story and how we do things here. All the staff are looking forward to seeing the students and welcoming new pupils to school. I am sure it will be a wonderful year.

We welcome Miss Claire Bell to Whanau, Miss Alissa Anderson to Ako and Miss Kara Wilhelmus to Mahi Tahi. Mrs Young is with us for 3 weeks before going on maternity leave and she will be supporting the changes within the school. Coming back to join our Teacher Aide support is Miss Honey Anderson who has worked with us in the past and has a teaching background to support Team Ako.

### **School Cameras**

After the school burglaries at the end of 2017 the BOT has invested in new cameras in the school grounds and also in Mahitahi. These cameras are about safety and data is stored for review if required, if not it overwrites every 30 days. They have been active all holidays and have proved their worth already. If you have any questions about the cameras that are active in Mahi Tahi then please feel free to talk with senior staff or BOT. The decision to have them in Mahi tahi relates to the large amount of entry points and the fact that we believe the burglars entered from the north end of school and avoided entry points off Dunford Street.



### **Rakaia School Policies and Procedures**

Last year we made changes and joined the School Docs environment making all school policies and procedures available to you online. The online page is <http://rakaia.schooldocs.co.nz/> The user name is **Rakaia** and the password is **Dunford**

We encourage you to view this page and contribute to reviews. This term we have a review on home learning and it is available for your comment.

### **Changes to Year 7-8 timetable**

This year we have made some changes to the Year 7-8 timetable in discussion with the BOT and from parent feedback. The Year 7-8 students (intermediate) will be taught as a 7-8 group from 12 noon every day for mathematics and they will also have 3 elective sessions every week where they will work as a group as well. This does mean Year 5-6 are treated in a similar way.

The year 7-8 Technology training in Ashburton will be every Thursday in term 1 and 2. They will not have Technology in Ashburton in term 3 or 4.

### ***From the BOT – Rakaia School Board of Trustees***

Hello and welcome back to school. I hope that the break has treated all school families well and no doubt the start of the school year may bring some relief to frazzled parents.

You will be aware that the school has some new staff. Mark and the leadership team have fully briefed new teachers in the expectations and the function of the school. However, please make yourself known to your child's teaching team and they will explain their background and 'fit' within the team. This will become more evident when we have an introduction evening.

The schools property was reasonably respected over the break with just some moderate damage to some seating. The persons involved have been followed up due to some excellent footage from the security system. The school continues to be a 'destination' for people young and old and this is welcomed as they naturally deter people that have other intentions.

Going into 2018, there are some changes around National Standards and the way schools plan for the future. I wish to highlight that even though the National Standards have been removed, the National Curriculum remains. It is important to note that we are not 'adrift' and Rakaia School has one of the most robust moderation and assessment models within our community of learning. The Board have requested that they are updated with the most relevant information four times a year from each syndicate. Every child deserves to become an inspirational learner and the teaching staff work hard to identify the changing needs of their children so if you have concerns, please talk with them.

The Board will meet in early Feb and the dates will be on the school app. I meet with Mark on a weekly basis and also try to make the odd assembly. I encourage you make some time for assemblies if you can as celebrating the successes is really enjoyable.

Take care in the heat and don't forget the 4 legged family members welfare also!

Grant Lorimer

Board Chair

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