



## SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 2018

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6 September 2018

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Last night was the first of two performances for our annual Year 6 Production, "Confident Me". The production is always one of our year's highlights as we involve all 125 students in the production and presentation of a school and student written and choreographed event. Unlike 10+ years ago, when a production involved purchasing a copyrighted song and dance show, the creative work of someone else, these days we see the product of the children's creativity.



Tonight will be my final production after witnessing and/or being part of 26 in total - as a parent, as a teacher and as Principal.

By now you will be aware that I will be retiring at the end of this year. Being Principal of Meadowbank School is a job I love and it has been 20 years of many, many highs. Over the past two decades I have seen hundreds of children pass on through, dozens of teachers come and go - each using their talents to elicit the magic spark in each student. I am proud of the enormous achievements that we (staff, Board, parents, children) have made and to be the person encouraging and leading these.

However, nothing is forever and I need to consider my future. So in 15 weeks the Board will have appointed a new Principal who will take up the reins for the start of the 2019 school year. Part of the timing of my retirement was to ensure that there was a straight transition to the new appointee (no gap in leadership) and that the very experienced current Board, that has good awareness of the Principal's role, could make the appointment.

## 2019 PLANS

The Senior Management Team have already begun plans for 2019. These include the year level placement of teachers taking into account known personal plans of teachers for next year - having babies, university study, travel overseas and relocation within New Zealand.

A second area relates to Ministry of Education building plans. Definite start dates for these is still up in the air but it is likely:-

- the Admin block demolition won't happen until Term 4, and
- the upgrade to the Theo Lynds Block (Room 17 -19) including the relocation of the Senior Campus heating boiler and electricity distribution board prior to the Admin demolition.

Inevitably if these projects proceed it will mean that the Year 3 classes which would naturally be housed in Room 17-19 would need to be moved into classes on our Kelvin Road Junior Campus.

As we get further down the road with the Ministry we will be able to provide parents with more detail and to remove doubt.

# LANGUAGES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The NZ Curriculum has 8 learning areas. One of these is Learning Languages. Despite research evidence showing that the younger you are, the easier it is to learn a language, the Ministry/Government does not fund / resource the teaching of languages in primary schools. They wait until the children are older and inevitably have a lower rate of success.

I take you on the Meadowbank journey which sees us as a leading light in the teaching of languages at primary school level.

## Part 1 - Chinese

- ♦ In 2006 in a Principal's Survey I asked two questions:-
  - Do you wish your child to learn a second language? Yes / No
  - Which language is most important to your child's future and your country's future?

The overwhelming majority said Yes and listed their desires in the following order - French, Japanese, German, Italian, Te Reo, Chinese, Spanish. Unfortunately we were not in a position to progress.

- ♦ In 2009 we redid the survey.
  - 95% of parents said Yes.
  - 70% of parents favoured Mandarin / Chinese.
  - The others in order were Te Reo, Spanish, Japanese, French.

What had happened to make such a huge difference in just 3 years? NZ became the first country to sign a free trade agreement with China - it was a new economic paradigm for NZ. And there was the Beijing Olympics.

- ♦ The same year I attended an Asia NZ Foundation Seminar with a presentation by Economist, Rod Orum. He was speaking about the growing prosperity in Asia and what it meant to be middle class (having a disposable income). He argued that a 1% growth in the middle class in China was actually millions of people who could potentially buy our butter, milk powder, wine or a holiday in NZ. It would earn more than by doubling the size of our biggest company, Fonterra. And there was good reason we should be teaching our children Chinese - future jobs / business.
- ♦ I was subsequently invited to represent NZ on the Principals' Delegation to China. We saw aspects of old and new China, went to Beijing, Shanghai and Kunming, met with Han Ban (the Chinese equivalent of our Ministry of Education), and discussed the political/economic perspectives at the NZ Embassy.
- ♦ Under the free trade agreement the Chinese Government was offering to provide some financial and resourcing support for schools teaching Chinese, and provided a graduate learning assistant to help with instruction.
- ♦ The wave was building. We grabbed the surfboard and started the ride. A strategic plan for languages was prepared and accepted by the Board.
- ♦ In 2011 Amy Ko began teaching just Years 2 and 3. Subsequently we grew this year by year so that by 2014 all 600 Year 2 to 6 students were having 2 x 30 minute lessons per week.
- ♦ Since then Meadowbank School has:-
  - Established a Chinese Dance Programme.
  - Offered beginner instruction to parents.
  - Led 7 other local schools in the Asian Languages in Schools programme.
  - Hosted exchanges with schools from Ningbo.
  - Sent teachers to Ningbo.
  - Introduced speech contests for both native and non-native speakers.
  - Had all Year 5 & 6 students participate (some with exceptional results) in the international Young Chinese Tests.
  - We have a designated Chinese "Confucius Classroom".

In short, we have the best Chinese Language Programme for mainstream students of any primary school in New Zealand. Next Newsletter - Part 2 - Te Reo.



## NORTH ISLAND SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

Well done to our two teams who competed in the championship at Whakapapa last week. Each competitor competed in Grand Slalom and Dual Slalom courses. Overall out of 110 teams:-

- Arctic Foxes came 18th
- Snow Leopards came 38th

Special mention goes to Isaac Phillips (Year 6/Room 33) who came 5th out of 134 competitors. I'm sure we will be following his progress for years to come. A special thanks to the Mums and Dads for their fantastic support through all the trial and practices at Snow Planet and at Whakapapa during the week of competitions.

## YEAR 3 & 4 CROSS COUNTRY

The weather came to the party and the Year 3 & 4's managed to complete their cross country at College Rifles last week. Congratulations to:-

### Year 3 Girls

- 1st Charlie Peacock
- 2nd Anna Chernykh
- 3rd Mietta Conway

### Year 3 Boys

- 1st Oliver Blair
- 2nd Aston Allen-Langwell
- 3rd Ryan McKenzie

### Year 4 Girls

- 1st Alex McIntosh
- 2nd Samireh Kan
- 3rd Niamh Lambert

### Year 4 Boys

- 1st Daniel Taylor
- 2nd Cole Feringa
- 3rd Jack Thorburn

## YEAR 5 & 6 SPEECH CONTEST

The Auckland Schools Speech Contest is in a state of flux this year with a brand new format being introduced in 2019. We maintained the traditional format this year with the following children achieving places.

### Year 5

- |      |                    |   |                                 |
|------|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1st  | Charlotte Flanagan | - | <i>Speaking about .....</i>     |
| 2nd  | Mia Eriksen        | - | International Friendships       |
| 3rd- | Tyler Jenkins      | - | The Endangered Teaching Species |
|      | Jacques Vivian     | - | Why Mums Should Buy more Lego®  |
|      |                    | - | Sport                           |

### Year 6

- |     |                |   |                            |
|-----|----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1st | Caleb Jenkins  | - | Being the First Born Child |
| 2nd | Cara Betterton | - | Life as a Type 1 Diabetic  |
| 3rd | Olivia Kay     | - | How to be Amazing          |

Caleb Jenkins will represent the school at the RPPA and Lions competitions.

## TONGAN LANGUAGE WEEK

This week we have been celebrating the Tongan language with a host of activities during lunch time. Students have learned about Tongan Tapa, basic phrases in Tongan and the Tongan flag. Here are some phrases to learn:

- Malo-e-lelei - Hello                      Fefe Hake - How are you?  
Sai pe - I'm good.



# CHINESE SPEECH CONTESTS

Each year we run 2 Chinese Speech Contests at Year 5 & 6 one for native speakers and the other for the vast majority who are non-native speakers. Next Thursday, 13 September:-

- Matthew Zhao represents Meadowbank at the Auckland wide competition for native speakers. He will speak about "Why Teenagers Should Listen to their Parents". We wish Matthew well - Meadowbank has a proud history in this competition.
- At 9am the finals of our Non-Native Speaker competition takes place. At 11am the APPA Inter-School Mandarin Speech Finals for native speakers will held. Judges from the Confucius Institute will be judging both competitions. We invite parents to come along to the Bruce McLaren Hall for these events.

A big xie xie to our Mandarin Teacher, Amy Ko and her Learning Assistant, Han Zhao for assisting, encouraging and coaching our students.



# SPECIAL EVENTS

## VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION (18 - 20 SEPTEMBER)

We are on the home straight as classes prepare for our biennial Visual Arts Exhibition where all children will have at least one item of work on display. We hope that all parents take the opportunity to pop into the Bruce McLaren Hall during the viewing hours:-

Tuesday, 18 September	-	9am until 5pm
Wednesday, 19 September	-	8.30am until 5pm
Thursday, 20 September	-	8.30am until 12.30pm

## KOREAN FESTIVAL (24 SEPTEMBER)

We have special visitors coming in to work with Year 5 & 6 classes on Traditional Korean Games and Tae Kwon Do respectively.

## CHINESE LANGUAGE WEEK (24-28 SEPTEMBER)

This will include the Moon Festival, a mid-Autumn harvest festival starting Monday, 24 September. There will be special events involving all classes and a performance from a Chinese Dance Troupe.

We invite Chinese and Korean parents to work with our teachers during these events to help our children and staff better understand Korean and Chinese culture. Please contact Amy Ko if you are able to help - ✉ [ako@meadowbank.school.nz](mailto:ako@meadowbank.school.nz)



## SEPTEMBER

10 & 13	Year 2 visit Auckland Art Gallery
12	FOMS Meeting - 7.30pm - Senior Staffroom
13	Mandarin Speeches / Gymnastic Competition
14	Matariki Assembly (covered court)
18	Zone Cross Country (Year 5 & 6)
18-20	Year 5 Red Cross Programme Visual Art Exhibition
21	Room 6, 7, 8 Assembly Presentation - 2.15pm
25	Year 3 Scooter Safety Programme