

13 May 2010

Dear Parents

Last Friday I was invited back to my old school to participate in the farewell celebration for their long serving Board of Trustees chair. I was really excited about going back to catch up with everyone. It was a great event and once again reminded me that a school is not the buildings, uniforms, logo - it is the people who make up the community.

Relationships are the glue that bind together a school. Research tells us that the relationship between a student and their teacher is the thing that makes the biggest difference in a classroom. At times maintaining this relationship can be quite challenging and I am very proud of the way the teachers at Tawa Intermediate patiently and respectfully work through issues with children. As a school we do many activities throughout the year to build on relationships. One of these is the annual fun run which was held yesterday. Whilst a little worrying to see the staffroom full of alien life forms, nerds, pyjama wearers, and soldiers, to name but a few, what a great relationship building exercise to see most of the children dressed up and enthusiastically participating in running laps around the top field. I was also impressed by the number of staff who ran alongside the children although how Iain Westphall could keep running lap after lap in a wetsuit confounded me!

The relationship between school and home is also pivotal to student success. The best scenario for children is when the aspirations of their family and school align. We do encourage families to keep in touch with teachers both at the scheduled times of the year and also as need arises.

As a school we are required to give a written report of student progress at least twice a year. The first report was the interim one which was used to underpin the first learning conference. We chose to give parents this report in term 1 so that there is a shared understanding of student progress and achievement from the beginning of the year. However our reporting to parents does not stop at two written reports a year.

Later on this term we will be sending home the learning portfolios so that students can share with their parents the progress that they have made with their learning so far. We will be asking families to set aside a small amount of time during one weekend to participate in a 'home-based' learning conference which their child will lead. We will run school-based learning conferences in term 3 which once again will be underpinned by the learning portfolios. Final written reports go home at the end of the year and are the last entry in a student's learning portfolio for the year.

In the background we are trying to align our assessment practices with the demands of the national standards. This is proving to be quite difficult as the standards are broad and vague and there is little agreement within the Ministry of Education around definitions such as what is meant by the Year 8 standard in reading and writing which says students will be working 'at level 4'. Some Ministry of Education people have interpreted this to mean that children have mastered level 4 whilst others are saying that it means children are working within level 4. If our curriculum experts cannot agree on what the standards are then it leaves schools in a very tricky place!

At Tawa Intermediate our first priority is and always will be ensuring that our students get the best education possible in a caring and supportive environment. Thank you for your help and support in this.

Kind regards

Carolyn Stuart  
Principal

## ROOM 16



After being in the Science room for ages we finally got to go back to Room 16. We got our school bags and went to the door waiting for Miss Clarke. She said oldest first and let the year eights through. The year eights ran to the hooks.

Everything looked new and bright: yellow cupboards, sink and tap and a really loud bell that gives everyone a fright when it goes off. But my favourite thing is the new indoor window.

Faith



Finally after the renovations were finished, we have moved back into Rm 16.

It is so flash! We have soft blue walls and a lot more space. We are currently putting stuff back up on our walls. We have brand new hooks and a huge bubble window and killer new yellow cupboards.

Everything looks awesome  
Megan

Awarua is the Porirua taniwha.

A long time ago there lived a taniwha called Awarua. He was an astonishing and gentle taniwha who lived in the harbour at Porirua. He was friends to all the birds and the animals of his home. Awarua wished to fly like his friends the birds and asked them if he could go with them to their nesting place, but the birds recognised a problem with this request said, "No."



The birds flew off on their migration but Awarua did not give up hope. While the birds were gone Awarua tried to fly, starting at one end and running up the harbour. He tried to jump into the sky and stay airborne but failed again and again. Then one day when he jumped into the sky, he prepared himself for the fall but he suddenly realised that he hadn't fallen into the water. He opened his eyes ..... He was airborne!

The next day, delighted with his success, Awarua prepared to travel to where the birds had flown. Swish!!! Swoosh!!!! He was on his way. A little unsteadily to start with, Awarua bumped into Mana Island, giving it the flat appearance, before flying north following the coast line. He came to a gap in the coast and headed inland. Finally he arrived at a lake where he stopped to rest.

The people there did not like Awarua stopping in their lake so they attacked him with their spears. A taniwha's skin is tough and can withstand an attack but he started to get bruises. The chief of the tribe came and asked Awarua to leave and being a gentle taniwha, Awarua left and slowly began his journey home.

As Awarua neared his home, his friends the birds flew out to help him to safety. From then on, it is said that Awarua lies at the entrance to the Porirua Harbour and can be seen as the reef. As retold by Amali

## SCHOOL NOTICES

### SCHOOL PHOTOS

School Photos will take place on Tuesday 18 May. Information envelopes have been sent home with your child this week. Money and forms need to be returned to school by Friday 14 May.

### SAMOAN LANGUAGE SPEECH COMPETITION

Students are being encouraged to enter the Samoan language speech competition. The regional finals will be held at Akapuanga Cook Island hall, Cannons Creek Shopping Centre on 4 June. Any interested students should see Miss Brockie.

### READING MILEAGE

The reading programme has started well but some students have not returned their first books. If you have not returned your reading books, please do so by next Wednesday.

## COMING EVENTS

School Photos	18 May
Cross Country	26 May
Gardasil vaccination-Year 8 girls	2 June
Pasifika Evening	23 June
Last day of term	2 July

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Tawa Community Awards

Do you know someone who invests time and effort on a voluntary basis in the Tawa community? If you do, this is your last chance to nominate them for the TAWA COMMUNITY CIVIC AWARDS.

The awards recognise and show appreciation to groups or individuals who enhance our community and make it a better place to live. Nomination forms are available from the Library, or call #027 232 2320. Nominations close on Friday, 21 May.

Pacific Wellwoman Workshop –  
14 May 2010 6.00 – 8.00pm at Tawa Community Centre

Topics Covered:

HPV

Contraception/Sexually Transmitted Infection

Breast Screening

Please RSVP to Susana Kilioni

Telephone: 5709625

Text: 0277 255 755

After hours: 232 2520

Email: [Susana.kilioni@huttvalleydhb.org.nz](mailto:Susana.kilioni@huttvalleydhb.org.nz)

NEW! After-School Computer Programme at Samuel Marsden Collegiate

Bubble Dome is launching an exciting new afterschool programme in 3D Animation, Games Design and Inventions at Samuel Marsden Collegiate this term on Wednesday afternoons for 8 weeks starting May 12th. This is an 8 week programme, open for all students aged 6- 11 years interested in Computers, Art, Design, and Inventions. Students will be given a software list so they can continue using the software for their own school and personal projects providing hours of learning and creative opportunities! Spaces strictly limited. For questions Tel: 0800 GET BUBBLE (438 282) or Email: [info@bubbledome.co.nz](mailto:info@bubbledome.co.nz) or Visit: [www.bubbledome.co.nz](http://www.bubbledome.co.nz).