



St Mark's Catholic School

The school will provide the best possible education
in a Catholic environment

Friday 29 July 2022

St Mark's Board of Trustees newsletter



Welcome to the first St Mark's BOT Newsletter!

The Board at St Mark's thought it timely to update the community on the many developments going on at our wonderful school. I'm Marty Ryan, the board chairperson, and father to former student Leo, current student Bridie and future student Kane.

I succeeded Jose Gutierrez as chair in February this year, and want to thank Jose for his fantastic service to the school. Jose was instrumental in many works such as the canopy installation over the central courtyard, and the huge success in securing Tracey Kopua as our Principal.

Before updating you on what the Board has been working on I want to again pass on our thanks and congratulate Tracey and the outstanding teachers and support staff at St Mark's for the huge amount of work they have done navigating our children through the challenges Covid has brought. We pray lockdowns are a thing of the past, but I know how lucky we were to have such a well-managed framework at St Mark's, with excellent communication to parents, and a lot of care and compassion shown to our children to navigate such a surreal experience. It's worth remembering that our faculty had their own families to navigate through Covid too, so we can feel especially thankful for how much they had to extend themselves to be there for ours.

JUNIOR PLAYGROUND

Hopefully you will have seen, and your children will have enjoyed by now, the new junior playground installed earlier this year. Post-lockdown it felt extra special to see the children have something to give them so much entertainment. I know it's been immensely popular.

We need to thank the PTFA, you as parents, and former parents, whose fundraising efforts in prior years enabled us to build this beautiful addition to our school. Funding was also secured from the Lion Foundation, Pub Charities and Trillian Trust for which we also extend our gratitude.



EPMP GRANT

Thanks to the tireless work of the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools and other institutions, state-integrated schools like ours were given a belated funding boost by being able to access the one-off EPMP grant for school improvements that state schools had already been given access to.

Over the course of last year and this year we as a Board have been working with the Diocese to prioritise which developments in our school require the most urgent attention. Under EPMP, the criteria from the Ministry of Education expects that Health & Safety works should be given the greatest priority. We as a Board support this, and after extensive planning and effort on the part of our property sub-committee (Tracey, James Townsend, Gavin Coad and myself), have determined that all of our funding will be utilised under the Health & Safety EPMP category. Below are some key features:

Alarms, Fire and Bell

During the autumn school holidays, an extensive upgrade to our school alarms, including the fire warning, smoke detectors, alarm sensors and bell systems, was undertaken and completed. The project works totalling \$60,000, was funded through EPMP, and was a vital investment to ensure our alarms and fire security were compliant and modernised.

Carpark works

The tragic incident at Pigeon Mountain Primary School last year brought our children's safety front of mind. We had been conscious for some time that our own carpark warrants better attention, and the incident at Pigeon Mountain was a reminder that we need to prioritise these works. Board member James Townsend and Tracey have been leading through a range of impactful wins that you will see roll out over the remainder of 2022.

Lighting

Parents that had late afternoon and evening slots for parent-teacher interviews a month or so back will have noticed the darkness in our school perimeter. It's been a security and safety concern flagged by teachers, support staff and cleaners in the past.

EPMP funding has enabled us to draft a lighting plan, involving such enhancements as LED lighting upgrades and wiring and lighting for the external toilet block near to the basketball courts, that will better illuminate our school.

BOT ELECTIONS

The above is a small sample of what we have been involved in as a board. We hope to give you more updates in future newsletters as it's not all about property.

Winidu Kannangara is our Finance Chair, supporting Tracey with financial diligence and working on future revenue generation opportunities for our school.

Nazley Ernstzen, Ingrid Mannickum and Tracey have initiated a new Community sub-committee, designed to ensure we hear the parent's voice on the board, communicate well to our community, always maintain strong links between school and parish, and advertise our school well to wider East Auckland community.

We want you to get used to our names and faces on the Board. And we want you to know you have options when you need to talk to someone about opportunities for St Mark's to continue to be a great school for our children to grow.

So if any of the above sounds like something you want to be a part of I encourage you to please put your name forward for our Board elections. We are seeking nominations for 5 parent representatives for the next 3 year term. You have until this **Wednesday 3 August midday** to submit a nomination. I encourage you to do so.

God Bless

Marty Ryan