

# EKETĀHUNA SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Preparing today's child for tomorrow's world - Whakakaha ngā tamariki mo apopo

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## COMING UP:

**Friday 9 May:** Celebration Assembly @ 2:15pm - Rongomai hosts

**Wednesday 14 May:** Board of Trustees Meeting @ 6:30pm

**Friday 16 May:** School Wheels Day

**Friday 16 May:** Celebration Assembly @ 2:15pm - Pūtara (Note change)

**Tuesday 20 May:** Yr 8 to National Young Leaders Day in Palmerston Nth

**Wednesday 21 May:** Technology for Year 7 & 8 @ Pahiatua

**Friday 23 May:** Celebration Assembly @ 2:15pm - Hukanui

**Thursday 29 May:** School Cross Country @ Eketahuna Golf Club

Tēnā koutou e te whanau o te kura Ekētahuna,

It's been a busy and rewarding week, with students and staff fully engaged across a huge range of activities. From cross country training and kapa haka to science kit experiments, information report writing, and guided daily reading, there's been plenty of action in every classroom. Our tamariki are well supported, challenged, and thriving!

## MIHI WHAKATAU - A SPECIAL WELCOME

We ended last week on a real high with a beautiful mihi whakatau to welcome our new students and their whānau to Eketāhuna School. It was fantastic to see such strong family support, with parents and caregivers joining us to mark this special occasion. We were privileged to be joined by Whaea Peta and Matua Warren, who led the formal part of the ceremony. Our students performed waiata with pride and confidence, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere. The mihi whakatau was followed by a shared kai, with our new students and their whānau enjoying a relaxed morning tea alongside staff. A big thank you to everyone who helped make the event so special. These moments of welcome are an important part of who we are as a school, and it was heartening to see our values manaakitanga & whanaungatanga in action!



## TRACKING AND TRAPPING UPDATE

This morning we were lucky to welcome Rhys Watkins from Pūkaha Mount Bruce, who spent time with our school tracking and trapping team. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to review their mahi so far and pick up some new tips and tricks from an expert in the field. Our student team has been hard at work monitoring the school grounds, maintaining traps, and recording their findings. Rhys was impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment they've shown, and it was brilliant to have Pūkaha's expertise on hand to help guide us forward. A big thanks also to Mr. Pallister who came in for the meetup, and who continues to support and mentor our team. It's awesome to see our students so actively involved in conservation and making a real difference for our school environment.



## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Did you know our school is supported by a fantastic Board of Trustees? Our current Board is chaired by Skye White, with trustees Hemi Braddick, Matt Davis, and Ngaio Hanson. These dedicated volunteers play a vital role in the governance of our school, ensuring that everything from property projects and health & safety to future planning and student wellbeing is carefully overseen. As part of our school's Strategic Plan—specifically Goal 4: *Stewardship and Plan for Growth*—the Board works hard to uphold strong governance, future-proof our school infrastructure, and nurture leadership succession. Their commitment ensures that Eketāhuna School continues to thrive as a safe, inclusive, and forward-thinking learning environment. Over the next few weeks, we'll introduce each of our trustees through the newsletter, so you can learn a bit more about the people behind the scenes who help keep our school running smoothly. Being a trustee is a rewarding and impactful role

that requires time, commitment, and a real passion for supporting our students, staff, and community. This week, we start by profiling our Chair, Skye White—check out the article included with the newsletter to learn more about her role and dedication!



# CLASS UPDATES

**HUKANUI NEWS:** Kia ora whanau, We have had heaps of fun learning about all the bones in our body in Hukanui. We have looked at the important jobs that our bones have. On Friday we buddied with Hamua and had a lot of fun making skeletons using pipe cleaners and straws. The children were so excited and loved doing this activity with their buddies. The science box has been a great success and the children have totally enjoyed the activities. Thanks to Wairarapa REAP! In Maths we have been learning about more and less. We have been working hard on our holiday recounts, and enjoying all the Reading activities. Remember, any questions please do not hesitate to contact me [mwhiteley@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:mwhiteley@eketahuna.school.nz) Thanks, Marilyn.



**HĀMUA NEWS:** Kia ora whanau,

In writing this week the children have been learning about adjectives. They have been describing a very important person in their lives and sharing what they look like, are good at, and what they like to do. It has been surprising to learn that so many of these people like to cook, clean, do the groceries and vacuum. Some of the adjectives used to describe them have been strong, kind, very clever, and beautiful. It has been very clear from these pieces of writing how loved these people are and how much love they give. I really hope you enjoy reading about these wonderful people this Sunday. 😊 Nga mihi, Whaea Amanda [afowldshartley@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:afowldshartley@eketahuna.school.nz)

**RONGOMAI NEWS:**

Kia ora whanau, We are currently writing information reports about our lungs. How do they work? Why do we need them? There have been some really interesting finds through our studies. In maths, we are learning new strategies and methods for subtraction. The students are progressing well with X-Country practice. It can be noted that even Miss Mac joins in from time to time. She is faster than Lightning McQueen! This week, we are taking the school assembly. It would be great to see you there if you can make it. As always, please do not hesitate in contacting me with any questions and/or information you may want to discuss about your child. My email is [lpatrik@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:lpatrik@eketahuna.school.nz) or message via Class Dojo. Nga mihi, Miss Mac 😊



## New Parent Portal: Supporting Your Child's Learning

The Ministry of Education has launched a *Parent Portal* — a free online tool designed to help parents support their child's learning. Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education, says: "This is about giving parents clarity, confidence, and practical tools to support their child's learning journey." The portal provides:

- Easy-to-understand guides on what children are learning in English and maths (with more subjects to come).
- Home learning activities and resources.
- Videos and info on starting school, including Phonics Checks at 20 and 40 weeks.
- Guidance on structured literacy and reading at home.
- Tips for parent-teacher interviews.
- Online maths practice tools (coming soon).

It's a simple way to stay informed, get involved, and help your child succeed.

👉 Check it out here: <https://www.education.govt.nz/your-childs-learning>



## WELCOME TO THE WAIRARAPA DENTAL BUS

### A note from the team:

The Wairarapa Dental Mobile bus has now started at Eketāhuna School. All children will get seen but it will take us a week or so to see them, as we are also seeing Alfredton School and preschoolers. Children will be examined and an xray will be taken (if possible, depending on each individual student). A note will come home when we have the xray results back and any additional forms can be dropped into the school office. If you have any queries call in to the bus or phone on 0272644319. Thanks, Michelle, Jan, Lisa & Brydie.





**NIREAHA NEWS:**

Kia Ora whanau! How are we already at the end of week 2! The term is flying by already! The Year 7's had their first week at tech for the term and had a fabulous time whilst the Year 6's continued to step into the role of leaders within the school which they are thriving on. Within the classroom, we are learning multiple ways to complete subtraction problems and are enjoying exploring the new vocabulary it brings with words like algorithm, compensation method etc. For writing, the students are creating information reports about their chosen body part paper mache (which are turning out awesome) to inform the audience what it does within our body. It has been great to learn so many fun facts and has led to some wonderful learning conversations. It has been great to see students participating and improving their stamina as we train for the school cross country. Ngā mihi, Miss T 😊 ([kthomas@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:kthomas@eketahuna.school.nz))

**PUTARA NEWS:** Welcome to the second week of term two. This week, we have started back at Technology and are ready to make all sorts of amazing creations! Yesterday in Woodwork, students made unique Wooden Robot's, and in cooking they made delicious spaghetti and meatballs with homemade sauce. On Tuesday, our year 7 and 8 netballers had their first games. The first game was a bit iffy with the team losing 3 to 9, but in their second game they knocked it out of the park with a whopping 12 to 2! Well done to our extraordinary team. The dental bus has finally arrived and they are making sure our students' teeth are healthy. With all this new activity in the school, we have continued on with our cross country training, as well as our kapa haka practices with Nireaha and Rongomai. The improvement is definitely showing through with our singing. We hope to see everyone's faces next week Savannah & Faith :D

**NOTIFYING THE OFFICE WHEN UNWELL**

A REMINDER THAT IF YOUR CHILD IS TOO UNWELL TO ATTEND SCHOOL YOU NEED TO NOTIFY THE OFFICE EACH DAY THEY ARE AT HOME TO AVOID THEM BEING RECORDED AS TRUANT. FURTHER, AFTER 3 DAYS AWAY FROM SCHOOL DUE TO POOR HEALTH WE WILL REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FOR OUR SCHOOL ENROL SYSTEM. THANKS.

**SPARE CLOTHES TO SCHOOL PLEASE**

HEADING INTO WINTER & WET WEATHER IT IS REALLY GOOD TO HAVE SPARE CLOTHES, SUCH AS TRACK PANTS & TOPS ETC, HERE AT SCHOOL IF CHILDREN GET WET OR MUDDY. IF YOU HAVE CLOTHES CHILDREN HAVE OUTGROWN PLEASE SEND THEM ALONG TO SCHOOL TO BE USED AS NEEDED. LEONA IN THE OFFICE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE THEM! THANKS VERY MUCH.

**STUDENTS 'OFF' BUSES**

I REMINDER FOR NEXT TERM FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS OF ANY BUS STUDENTS WHO ARE BEING TAKEN OFF THE AFTERNOON BUSES TO PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW BEFORE 2:30PM. LATE 'RING INS' ARE HARD TO MONITOR AND WE WANT TO AVOID ANY MIX UPS AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY. THANKS



## EKETĀHUNA SCHOOL WHEEL DAY

### Friday 16th May

Children are invited to bring their scooter, bike, skateboard, roller skates or roller blades along to school. A wheel day is used to ensure children use their 'wheels' in specified areas around the school. Please make sure that they bring along all appropriate safety gear.

**OUR SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

SchoolDocs has developed a comprehensive core set of policies and procedures applicable to all New Zealand/Aotearoa primary schools, that are customised for each school.

SchoolDocs updates, modifies, or creates policies in response to changes in legislation or Ministry guidelines, significant events, reviews/requests from schools, and regular reviewing from the SchoolDocs team. By having online access, our school community can access, review and give feedback on all policies before they are implemented. We will advise you when policies are up for review and how you can take part. To access the Eketahuna School Docs site please go to: <https://www.schooldocs.co.nz/>

**SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY**

In preparation for our school cross country, students are training daily at school to improve their physical conditioning and build up stamina for the upcoming event. School cross country will be at the Eketāhuna Golf Course on Thursday 29th May, with the postponement date Wednesday 4th June. More information to come out in the following weeks Eketāhuna School is hosting the 2025 Inter school Cross Country on Thursday 5th June at the Eketāhuna Golf Club. We will need parent helpers on these days - if you are available please contact the school office and speak with Leona (or Lee on Fridays) or email our Sports Coordinator Lisa Patrick via [lpattick@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:lpattick@eketahuna.school.nz).



## JUNIOR TOUGH GUY & GAL CHALLENGE



This extreme 'off road' running event is in Palmerston North on Monday 26th, and Tuesday 27th, May.

It's for Year 3 to Year 8 students.

Parents are invited to go online and register their children at:

<https://eventpromotions.co.nz/junior-tough-guy-and-gal-challenge/#pi>

## SCHOOL CLOSURE THIS TERM

PLEASE NOTE THE DATES

This term we will be closing the school for instruction on:

**\*\*Friday 30th May for the Tararua Staff Only Day**

**\*\*Monday 2nd June for King's Birthday**

**\*\*Friday 20th June for Matariki Celebration**

**SCHOOL CLOSED**

## GO BUS REMINDERS FOR CAREGIVERS

- It is their responsibility to get their children to pick-up locations and to collect them from drop-off locations.
- Recommended you arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the time advised by the bus provider.
- Please stay with their children while they are waiting for their school transport in the morning
- Please be at the bus drop off meet their children in the afternoon as they get off the bus.



## PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN WATER BOTTLE DAILY

At school we have a filtered water bottle filler for students to access for fresh drinking water. Due to colds, bugs and germs we no longer have any shared drinking fountains operating so it is vital that all students come with their own water bottle. Please check that your child has their bottle, with their name on it, packed in their bag each day. Thank you for your support with this.



## HOME & SCHOOL PIE FUNDRAISER

Coming home today!



Order forms & money to be in by

**Monday 26th May**

Pies will be delivered to school on Friday 13th June after 11am.



We would love any donations of strong paper bags. If you have any spare, please drop into the school office.

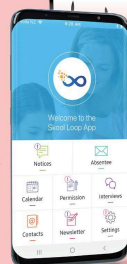
Thanks for your support!

Hey there!

Just popping in to check you have downloaded our school app?

Stay in the loop with Skool Loop.

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- ✓ Instant school messages
- ✓ Book interviews
- ✓ Absentee
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Permission Slips



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Simple free download: In Google play & App Store search 'Skool Loop' & choose our school once installed.

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## Board Of Trustees Meeting

The next Eketāhuna School Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th May at 6.30pm in the Eketahuna School staff room. Everyone is welcome to attend and if you have any items for the agenda please let me know by 5pm on Friday 9th May.

I am contactable on [botchair@eketahuna.school.nz](mailto:botchair@eketahuna.school.nz) or 3758059.

Warmest Regards - Skye White (Chairperson Board of Trustees)





# Eketāhuna Home & School Committee Needs You!!!!

The Home and School committee are a dedicated bunch of parents, along with our principal Melinda, who are responsible for fundraising and running school events. We do this to help support our teachers, our tamariki and our community to make Eketahuna school a fun, educational and welcoming place to learn, grow and to give opportunities to our tamariki.

## What we do:

### Meet a total of six times a year in the evenings to discuss and plan our fundraisers

Allocate the money earned for different school projects and resources

Apply for Grants

Run set fundraisers

Eketahuna Golf Tournament

Spring Show

BBQ at Inter School events such as Cultural Festival & road race when Eketāhuna School hosts

BBQ at Christmas parade

Sell Pies as a fundraiser

Run the calf scheme



## What Our Funds Have Provided

Chrome book leases in senior classes annually

Swimming lessons for all children annually

Heated swimming pool

All weather turf

New Swing

Bark in the playground

Plants for the school

Soon to come line markings eg four square, hop scotch

Basketball court at front of school

Heat pumps in school hall

School camps & Class trips

Buses to all sorts of events

Costumes for Cultural Festival, school productions & Xmas Parade

Fun Days Out and the end of year school treats

Leader conferences

Sports equipment

Sports uniform

Speakers/experiences to come into school

Numeracy & Literacy resources

## The Home and School Committee needs new members!

The current committee has children who will be leaving in a couple of years. Without new members and a future proof plan, we are concerned that the knowledge & support our committee can provide is lost. It is vital that new members join to ensure the younger children of Eketāhuna School can continue to enjoy the support, opportunities and experiences.

Our next meeting is on the 24th September at 7pm in the staff room, we will be planning for the Spring Show. We are all busy parents, we all work, and are suggesting if everyone contributes a little bit the load is spread. We ask you to come along, listen in, see how it works. You won't be put on the spot or given a task, but you can contribute in a really positive way to your child's school experience by being present and being a part of planning for the children's future.



We're excited to share that our student House Team Leaders have taken the lead in producing these Board profiles, as part of their exploration of different types of leadership within our school. They developed interview questions for each board member, and the pieces you'll see in the newsletter over the coming weeks are the result of their fantastic mahi.

## INTRODUCING OUR BOARD CHAIRPERSON - SKYE WHITE

### Can you tell us a little bit about yourself (e.g. your job, family, hobbies)?

I live with my husband Bevan, and our two children Lucy (Year 8) and Toby (Year 6) on our dairy farm in Nireaha. Bevan and I both grew up in Eketahuna, I went to Eketahuna School and Bevan went to Nireaha School, we both went to Tararua College. Bevan and I moved to Palmerston North when we left College and lived there for 10 years. Bevan was a mechanic and I had a gap year and worked at Ernest Adams bakery before going to Massey University and completing a Masters Degree in Social Work. After University I worked in Whanganui as a social worker in child protection for 5 years. After living in PN Bevan and I moved to the UK and lived there for just over two years working and travelling. When we moved home from the UK Bevan's parents were ready to start slowing down on the farm and so we moved back to Eketahuna and started sharemilking and eventually bought the farm. Initially I was part time on the farm just milking and doing calves while I also worked in Masterton. I was working again in child protection, forensic interviewing with the police and as an advisor at the Hospital in regards to care and protection. After we had Lucy I finished working in Masterton and started to work full time on the farm, where I currently work. I used to play a lot of sport both outdoor and indoor netball, touch rugby, horse riding, surf canoeing, swimming and tennis. Now my kids play a lot of sport and I love to watch! I love reading and belong to a book club which has been going for 8 years, I love socialising with my friends most who I have known for a long time growing up and living in the same area, I love a party & dancing, and I love spending time with my family and doing things together.

### What were you like at school? Was learning easy or hard for you?

At primary school for the most part I liked it. I was studious, a bit reserved, but gained a lot of confidence from doing speeches and toast masters, in year 7 and 8. My first day at Tararua College was the first time I had ever been there. I liked it, did well in my exams and passed with moderate success. I have always found school work easy enough but never really enjoyed studying so was easily distracted and keen to do something else if offered. I loved University! I went to Massey in Palmerston North, and started a Bachelor of Social Work, which is a vocational degree, meaning that the degree I was doing was directly related to the job I wanted. For this reason learning and studying seemed to have so much more to it. Also you went to your classes and lectures but it wasn't all day every day, some days I only had one class or no classes and then some days were full.

### What is your role on the Board of Trustees, and what does it involve?

My role on the Board of Trustees is chairperson, and a parent representative. This means that my job is to lead the Board, facilitate meetings, represent the Board at other meetings and with stakeholders or groups. The main role of the Board is to provide strategic direction to the school and to set the Policies. The chairperson of the Board should ensure that all members can express their views on the direction and policies, and to guide the group to come to a decision together. Part of my role is to set the agenda for the Board meetings and lead them through all the items listed, we discuss them and if needed vote on decisions. Outside of the Board meetings I meet with our Principal Melinda Cowe frequently to work through issues and opportunities as they arise, for example recently Melinda and I have been meeting with the Ministry of Education, Police, Community Board and Alliance/Downer to address the parking for parents and buses at School.

### Is being on the Board a paid role or voluntary?

Being on the Board is essentially voluntary however you do get paid \$50 per meeting, with the idea that this is to contribute towards petrol costs or babysitters.

### Why did you decide to join the Board of Trustees?

I was co-opted to the Board in 2018 when Lucy started school, I joined because I was asked as they needed more trustees. I agreed to join because I wanted to be helpful.

### What do you enjoy most about being on the Board?

I enjoy being part of and contributing to my community in a positive way, I enjoy being part of my children's education journey and doing what I can to make it the best it can be.





