

# Under the Radar

An important update about Board matters

**March 2010**

Welcome to *Under the Radar*, the first edition of what will be a regular update from the Whenuapai Board of Trustees to keep you, the parents and community, informed about your school.

**ActivBoards:** Just to prove that we don't sit around through all our meetings, the board this week went on a small field trip. Okay, so it wasn't far – just across to Room 4. Co-deputy principal Karney Dawson and ICT Co-ordinator Shannon Corsan demonstrated to board members and visitors the power of the Active Boards which we have begun installing throughout the school. Last year, the board bought five new boards at a total cost of \$40,000, and, thanks to an enormously generous donor we recently were able to install another one. The equipment – think of them as blackboards on steroids – enable teachers and pupils to use internet-based programmes and whiz-bang technical features to expand learning. From what we saw, they certainly seem a great addition to the classrooms (there are now seven throughout the school). But to make sure, we will this year be assessing the impact they have on learning. Depending on the outcome, the potential purchasing of more Active Boards will be one of the things we take into consideration as we consider our future ICT strategy.

**ERO Report:** Recently, as you'll be aware, personnel from the Education Review Office spent 3 days looking at the school as part of the Government's regular check that we're doing everything we should be. We have a draft report back and, frankly, it looks pretty good. Once the full report has been completed we'll make copies available in the office, and direct you to where it can be found on the internet. Principal Warren Spanhake will have more to say about this once the report is completed.

**Strategic Planning:** In a school our size, there are decisions which need to be made instantly all the time – but sometimes we need to pause to consider where we're going and what we want the future to look like. That's why the board is planning to gather for an afternoon session next month to think about what we want for the next three years. It's important to consider what we'd like for the Whenuapai School of 2011, 2012 and 2013. So now's the time. If you have any thoughts about where we should be going, feel free to speak to Warren or one of the board members.

**Property:** You might notice a few changes around the place after the holidays, particularly around Rooms 12, 13 and 14. For starters, the concrete out the front needs replacing, we're looking at a new Archgola similar to that outside Rooms 1-4, and a new cloakroom is needed behind Room 14. We're also going to install more drinking fountains around the school. These improvements are paid for out of property grants we get from the Ministry of Education. We're also talking to the Ministry about expanding the administration block – just look inside the staffroom and you'll see it's too small now, and we need new office and meeting spaces. We'll let you know once we hear more.

**Growing, growing:** The bulging staffroom is one outcome of the expanding roll we've had for the last few years. This year, the total roll will hit 500, an almost unprecedented figure. The growth has forced us to close off the roll to out-of-zoners (meaning you have to be in-zone, already enrolled, or the sibling of current pupils to come to Whenuapai School). Warren is juggling classrooms to ensure no one experiences undue pressure and, again, we're talking to the Ministry about new classroom space.

**PTA:** Don't forget the PTA AGM on April 20, 7.30pm in the staffroom.

**Gala:** In case you hadn't heard...this year, the board is organising a School Gala. It will be on November 20 between 10am and 3pm. It will officially be a school day, with a day off elsewhere in the year to compensate for the fact that all children are expected at school. The idea for the gala is not just to raise much-needed cash, but to bring the community together. Classrooms are this week finalising what stalls they'll be running so you'll start to hear more from us and the teachers about how we need your help. We hope everyone gets behind what promises to be a tremendous day.

**Fun Run:** During the holidays, on Sunday, April 11, we're holding a mini fun-day with food (sandwiches, sausage sizzle, ice creams and coffee) and fun (Bouncy Castles) to complement the Half Marathon and Fun Runs organised by the Massey Athletic Club. To find out more details about the runs, look on the [www.coolrunning.co.nz](http://www.coolrunning.co.nz) website. Or just come along, have fun and a coffee and get inspired to get moving!

**Elections:** You should all have by now the nomination forms for the Board Elections. Four positions are up for grabs, so if you're interested in joining, get someone to sign your nomination form and get your hat in the ring.

That's all for now – we'll be back with another update after the next board meeting at **7pm on May 10**.

Your board is: Peter Lamberton (chairman), Warren Spanhake (principal), Shannon Corsan (staff rep), Gregg Carrington-Hogg, Ceilidh Martin, Tracy Collins, Les Stockley and Eugene Bingham.