

Board Update November 2025

Tēnā Koe

As we head into the Christmas and summer break, the Board would like to reflect on the year and acknowledge the outstanding efforts of our staff, whose dedication and care have created a nurturing, enriching environment for our tamariki. We also extend our sincere thanks to our parent volunteers - especially the Parent and School Group - and to the many whānau who have generously offered their time and skills at events and in classrooms throughout the year.

We would also like to take a moment to acknowledge Christina, our Board Secretary, for her outstanding contribution over the years. Christina has been instrumental in ensuring our meetings run smoothly, preparing agendas, and recording accurate minutes. Her attention to detail and commitment behind the scenes have been invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for the time and effort she continues to dedicate to this important role.

New Legislation

The Board recently reviewed the new Education and Training Amendment Bill (No. 2). This legislation confirms that our key focus areas are exactly where they should be: student achievement and attendance.

The educational achievement of every student is the Board's highest priority. We will continue to focus on:

- Ensuring High Achievement: Making sure every child is supported to reach their potential.
- Encouraging Attendance: Actively monitoring attendance to ensure students are at school and engaged.

While the legislation has new requirements, we want to assure you that our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi remains absolutely unchanged, as detailed in our Strategic Plan. We will continue to:

- Value te reo and tikanga Māori.
- Strengthen belonging for all ākonga (students) and whānau.
- Build upon our valued relationship with mana whenua Te Āti Awa, ensuring Northland School remains a place where all tamariki thrive.

The Board is confident that our school is well-placed to meet these legislative requirements while continuing to deliver well planned education for your child.

SENCO Update

Our SENCO team continues to play a vital role in supporting students with diverse learning and behavioural needs across the school. Judith, the Deputy Principal, overseeing SENCO has refined systems this year, with support from Grant concentrating on key aspects related to behaviour and transition in the year 5-8 area. We've refined systems to make processes clearer for teachers and families.

Support aligns with our school values, focusing on helping all students engage with learning in ways that suit them, building strong relationships between teachers, families and specialists, and promoting wellbeing for every child. Students are identified for extra help through teacher observations, parent input and collaboration with early childhood centres and external agencies, and support is provided at three levels: classroom strategies and targeted teaching, small group work and additional programmes, and individualised support with specialists.

Currently, around 19% of students receive Tier 1 support, 17% Tier 2 and 3.5% Tier 3. Specialist programmes include Literacy Support, which is strengthening reading and writing skills, ESOL support for students learning English, and enrichment opportunities through the LEAP programme for gifted learners and those who think differently.

We continue to advocate for more funding and resources to meet growing needs, and despite challenges, our dedicated teachers, aides and specialists work tirelessly to ensure every child feels valued and supported. Thank you to our community for your ongoing partnership in this important mahi.

End of year Achievement Update

English

This year we've continued to strengthen English learning through Structured Literacy and focused writing strategies. The Code spelling programme and Ten Minute Write assessments show strong progress across all year levels.

These results reflect the impact of teaching strategies such as "say, think, write, check" and systematic spelling through The Code, which we have now been teaching for four years. Younger students, who have had Structured Literacy since starting school, are showing particularly strong gains, while older students continue to refine their writing skills with a focus on quality over quantity.

ERO recently confirmed the high quality and consistency of literacy teaching across the school, which is a testament to the hard work of our teachers and support staff.

Looking ahead, we will embed changes from the refreshed English Curriculum, trial new assessment tools such as PAT Writing and continue to focus on vocabulary, oral language, and fast feedback to support every learner. Our goal remains clear: to ensure all students develop confidence and competence in reading and writing, setting them up for success in the years ahead.

Math

Our students have continued to make excellent progress in mathematics this year. PAT Mathematics results for Years 3–8 show achievement well above national expectations, with strong gains across all strands.

Basic facts knowledge has improved significantly, thanks to targeted teaching, smaller class sizes, and new resources such as Oxford and Numicon. Teachers have also been using Snapshot assessments to align learning with the refreshed mathematics curriculum.

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on building strong foundations in number knowledge, explicit teaching of times tables and division facts, and professional development to embed the new curriculum. Our goal remains to ensure every child has the confidence and skills to succeed in mathematics.

Playspace update

This year the Board has been working on a proposal for further improvements to the school playspaces, and we're excited to share that, following a few delays beyond our control, work will be getting underway very soon.

The goal is to create areas beyond the existing playgrounds where students can play, relax and enjoy being outside. The upgraded spaces will include seating, shade, planting, and areas for exploration. The plans were developed within the constraints of the high-wind zone, existing structures, and underground utilities.

We're pleased to have Nice Pozi, an award-winning landscaping company with extensive experience in school playspaces, leading the project. You can view examples of their work here <https://nicepozi.co.nz/>

In the new year, we'll be seeking community help to plant the new areas and will organise a working bee to get this underway. Thank you for your patience with this project.

Community Survey results

Thank you to everyone who completed the recent Northland School parent survey. Your feedback helps us celebrate what's working well and identify areas for improvement. Overall, the results show a very high level of satisfaction, with 91% of

respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they are happy with their child's experience at Northland School. Parents particularly value the quality and care of our teaching staff, strong communication, and the welcoming, inclusive environment we strive to create.

In Ako / Learning, 87% of parents agreed the curriculum is broad and engaging, and the same percentage felt confident about daily focus on reading, writing, and maths. Comments included: *"Instils a love of learning and confidence in my children"* and *"Northland School provides a broad and engaging curriculum and supports my child to achieve their best."*

In Whanaungatanga / Relationships, 89% of parents agreed there are regular opportunities to connect, and 85% rated school communications as clear and consistent. One parent shared: *"The spirit of manaakitanga is the most striking aspect of the school and the major reason we chose to send our daughter here."* Feedback suggests we can strengthen communication around behaviour and bullying processes.

For Oranga / Wellbeing, 85% of parents agreed healthy peer relationships are encouraged, and 87% felt children are supported in physical and cultural activities. Positive comments included: *"Developing kind, resilient and thoughtful young citizens and learners"* and *"The CHAMP values that are instilled in our tamariki, great community spirit."* The main area for improvement is greater transparency and communication regarding the policies for managing bullying.

We are delighted by comments such as *"Everything, great school, so happy we moved here"*. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership as we continue to focus on learning, wellbeing, and belonging.

Wishing you a peaceful holiday season and summer

The Board will be communicating further about donations and fees in the New Year, and we truly appreciate all donations received - they make a real difference to the opportunities we can provide for our students. At our board meeting we have agreed to increase the School Donation to \$390 for 2026, this will remain stable for the next two years.

Thank you for your ongoing support throughout 2025. This is a moment to celebrate what we've achieved together and to look ahead to the new year with a continued focus on learning, wellbeing, and belonging. Wishing everyone a safe, restful holiday with loved ones; we look forward to seeing you in 2026.

Ngā mihi nui

Katie and Andrea on behalf of the Board

