Chairperson Report 2016

I have been attending PTA meetings for almost 3 years now and have been the Chairperson for the past year. I reluctantly stepped into the role, (which was way out of my comfort zone) as despite the great turnout at the previous AGM, no-one was willing to fill the gap, and I didn’t want to see the PTA facing possible dissolution.

The PTA has 3 main aims:

* We plan & organise fundraising to purchase equipment, materials, and improve facilities that benefit the while school & all the children
* We organise social events for the parents/caregivers of Te Totara children
* We provide a link between the children, their families & the school

When I came into the role, many of us were still in ‘recovery mode’ from the huge effort we had put into making the March 2015 Gala the success it was. Until then, the PTA focus had been predominantly on fundraising, and with so few people attending meetings and doing the hard yards, a decision was made to recover, refocus and rebuild the PTA. The way we were going to do that was to host more social events and back off on fundraising activities.

We have wanted the school community to become more engaged with the PTA. We still need more facebook engagement with our community. The more engaged they are, the more help we have when we do decide to fundraise or run large events. The kids are the ones that benefit, so every little bit of help with fundraising or running activities and/or projects counts.

A letter went home with each child at the beginning of the 2016 school year. The letter explained to parents what the PTA does, what we’d organized up until that point, dates for their calenders, explained who the committee were, and what we wanted or needed from parents/caregivers. The feedback about the letter was positive and we started to see an increase in numbers at meetings. Some nights we had struggled to get a Quorum, but typically we were averaging 8-10 people, after the letter we sent out we had 23 people plus apologies. Meetings always started with icebreakers and I have tried to make the meetings fairly informal and relaxed, and hope you feel, everyone has had the opportunity to contribute to ideas & discussions.

Since I’ve been in this role, we have had 4 evenings at the Good Neighbour arranged as social events for parents to meet each and make new friends. Turnout has been variable, some nights better than others, and there is another planned for June 22nd, so if its not already in your diary – save the date!

We also had a lovely evening at the Christmas Heirloom company in November, which was both a joint fundraising & social evening.

The Friday coffee cart outside the library was popular with both parents & teachers, but we are in a position now of needing to find an alternative provider.

Entertainment books have been a large success again this year.

The Disco has just been held (instead of the usual November date) and the review of that we will cover in general business this evening.

There is a netball tournament coming up as well and that will also be covered in general business this evening.

Andrea will cover the money side of things in her report, but the PTA were really pleased that we were able to provide rugby/soccer goal posts for the kids on the back field. And they’ve been a real hit with the kids!

Looking ahead – we have a fundraising goal in mind now. The covering of the tennis/netball courts. This will be a joint project with the Te Totara BOT, a committee has already been formed and they have begun the ground work, they will report back to the PTA on any progress at meetings.

The Bi-annual School Gala is already on the calendar for March 2017. Given that many of the people that organised the Gala are stepping down tonight I would strongly encourage the new committee to read the various reports that each area/coordinator wrote. The reports provide a great summary and tell you what went well and what could be improved/changed for next year. No point re-inventing the wheel!

The PTA has certainly grown & improved over the past year, but there is still always room for further improvement. I wish the new committee well for the next year or so.

Kind regards

Nicky Sayers

Outgoing Chairperson.