

# Board Newsletter

Napier Kindergarten Association

April 2019

The joy of teaching, the love of learning

## From The President

'The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.'

*Martin Luther King Jnr*



Kia ora tatou te whānau

A big thank you to the 23 parent members from 3 kindergartens and our Life Member, Sylvia Low, who attended our Association AGM on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April. It was great to be able to share the successes and challenges of 2018 with you, and to acknowledge the work of our employees to provide a kindergarten service we can all be proud of. A full copy of the reports given at the AGM will be available to kindergartens early in Term 2.

I'm delighted to announce that Ingrid, Rob and I were re elected for another 2 year term on the Board. Cameron Ormsby withdrew his nomination prior to the AGM meeting. By electing us you are giving us the mandate to act on your behalf; to govern and oversee the direction and operations of the Association. As parents and former parents of kindergarten children we are deeply passionate about what happens for all children and our employees in the kindergarten setting. We take this responsibility on with all the seriousness and respect it deserves.

One of the important commitments of our Board members is that we learn about governance, our Constitution, policy formation, finances and certain aspects of the early childhood and kindergarten world so that we can make decisions, understand the consequences of decisions made, and undertake due diligence on our members' behalf so that members don't have to. This includes taking professional advice as needed, such as the advice we received from one of the most widely respected Constitutional lawyers in NZ, Mark Von Dadelszen.

At our AGM we presented a motion to rescind our current Constitution and replace it with a new Constitution with effect from the 30 June 2019. Although 66% of voting members voted in favour of the motion, we were 3 votes short of meeting the 75% threshold for the motion to be passed.

This leaves us in the awkward position of having a Constitution that remains illegal with regards the subscribing of members into our Association, as well as a number of enhancements. These enhancements would, for example, have enabled the 13 kindergartens who were not represented at the AGM to have had a vote, and for employees attending Board meetings by invitation to have automatic speaking rights at those meetings (which they currently do not).

We have a legal obligation to put our Constitution right. Taking on board feedback from our AGM we plan to hold additional meetings with parents in Term 2 and offer a training session to interested parents on understanding constitutions. Towards the end of Term 2 we'll call a Special meeting and put the proposed new constitution to the vote again.

Mā te wā

Jessica Uri,  
President



## Our Board Members Are:



Jessica Uri



Ingrid Squire



Rachel Murray



Alison Donovan



Rob Barzey



Sarah Nash

## What Our Board Does:

Board members are volunteers elected by our members to govern the Association and our primary responsibilities are:

- \* Development of the Association's Strategic Plan (our visions & long term plans for the Association)
- \* Employment & monitoring of the General Manager
- \* Monitoring of strategic outcomes
- \* Management of risk
- \* Monitoring of legal compliance
- \* Setting and reviewing of policies

Our Board can have up to 9 members in total, one of whom is elected by employees. The employee elected Board member is Rachel Murray and she has the same rights as other Board members.

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## How Is Employee Voice Exercised In Our Association?

Our employees have multiple opportunities to express their opinions. They can:

- Stand for an employee elected position on the Board
- Vote for an employee to be an elected member of the Board
- Elect employees to be on Standing Committees
- Question the reports presented at AGM's
- Participate in forums or surveys
- Provide operational feedback, raise concerns or engage in problem solving consultation directly with the General Manager
- Provide governance feedback, raise concerns or engage in problem solving consultation directly with the Board
- Have input into consultation regarding changes to their kindergarten
- Attend Board meetings (speaking rights however must be granted by the Board)
- Participate in Board/community meetings
- Head Teachers are able to meet monthly with the General Manager
- Participate in development of new policies, or policy reviews
- Provide feedback at termly teacher meetings
- Raise concerns and complaints through our internal processes

## Bette Christie Kindergarten Extended Hours, Extended Year Kindergarten Service

We're delighted to announce that in response to their community's needs, starting on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, Bette Christie Kindergarten will be offering a 7½ hour session for half of their children, as well as the option of children attending for more days in each year.

Their daily session hours will be:

8.30 to 2.30 pm for 20 children and  
8.30 to 4.00 pm for 20 children

The extended year service means that the kindergarten will be closed for:

- Statutory holidays
- Weekends
- 2 weeks over Christmas
- Any nominated 'teacher only' days

It will not be compulsory for parents to have their children attend during term breaks or over Christmas and if they don't take this option up, they don't pay for it either.

We believe the cost for the 7½ hour sessions is exceptionally affordable too. A 2 year old can attend 37.5 hours per week for \$ 82.50 and 3 to 5 year olds for \$ 37.50 (provided their full 20 hours is attested to kindergarten).

The consultation process has taken almost 5 months, with a lot of attention focused on potential issues around the well being of children and employees. Independent union support was provided throughout the consultation and well as Education Managers' input.

Teachers at the kindergarten have not lost their annual or professional leave entitlements – they will however gain the flexibility to take these at different times throughout the year.

## Who Are Members Of Our Association?



Our Association Members are:

- Parents and caregivers with children enrolled in our services or on our waiting lists
- Board Members
- Life Members

Members have voting rights at all General Meetings.

Our staff are employees of the Association and have no voting rights at these meetings.

## Constitutional Issue Regarding Membership

Our Constitution states who our members are, how they get to be members, what rights they have, and how memberships are terminated.

It is a binding legal agreement between the Association and the member.

One issue we have with our Constitution at present is that it fails to allow our members any say about whether or not they want to be members and it fails to spell out the obligations of membership.

By 'deeming' parents to automatically be members when they enroll or go on a waiting list we deny them the opportunity to exercise informed consent.

