

# ST IGNATIUS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## BOARDTALK December 2021

### Introduction

Kia ora St Ignatius Families

I am delighted that our children have now had the opportunity to return to school full time and reconnect with their friends and teachers. For many of you this may be a welcome relief but equally I know many of you have been anxious at the thought of school reopening. We only have a short time left until the end of term but I hope this will provide some respite to our parents and caregivers before the summer break!

I have personally enjoyed seeing familiar (masked) faces at pick up time and appreciate the messages of support received. Whilst I feel the whole school community has played a significant role in getting us through the past few months the Board does wish to single out Mrs Penney and her staff for their outstanding efforts. There has been no guidebook during this time and they have shown an amazing level of flexibility, enthusiasm and proactiveness for all things COVID-related thrown at them, whilst also having the education and wellbeing of our students at the forefront of their actions.

In addition we had some fantastic news from the PTA regarding the online auction during lockdown so thank you to all involved in the raising of an impressive \$14,000, in particular Tonia Mortell and Amy Graham.

In 2021, we fondly farewell a number of our St Ignatius families: the Baker, Brickell, Brownlee, Davis, Durbin, Eksteen, Fogarty, Fon Sing, Kent, Matthews, Nawisielski, O'Brien, Osbourne, Peck, Redmore, Robert and Simpson families. We thank them for their generosity to our School, as many of them served on our PTA, School Board and as volunteers at our many school events over their years at St Ignatius. We also farewell some staff members: Georgia Andrews, Jennifer Biermann, Catherine Marusich and Lauren Prill. We thank them for their time at St Ignatius and wish them all the best in their next endeavours.

At this time, the Board is busy reviewing our budget and planning for the next year, which you can read more about in our financial update below, together with other updates to round out the year.

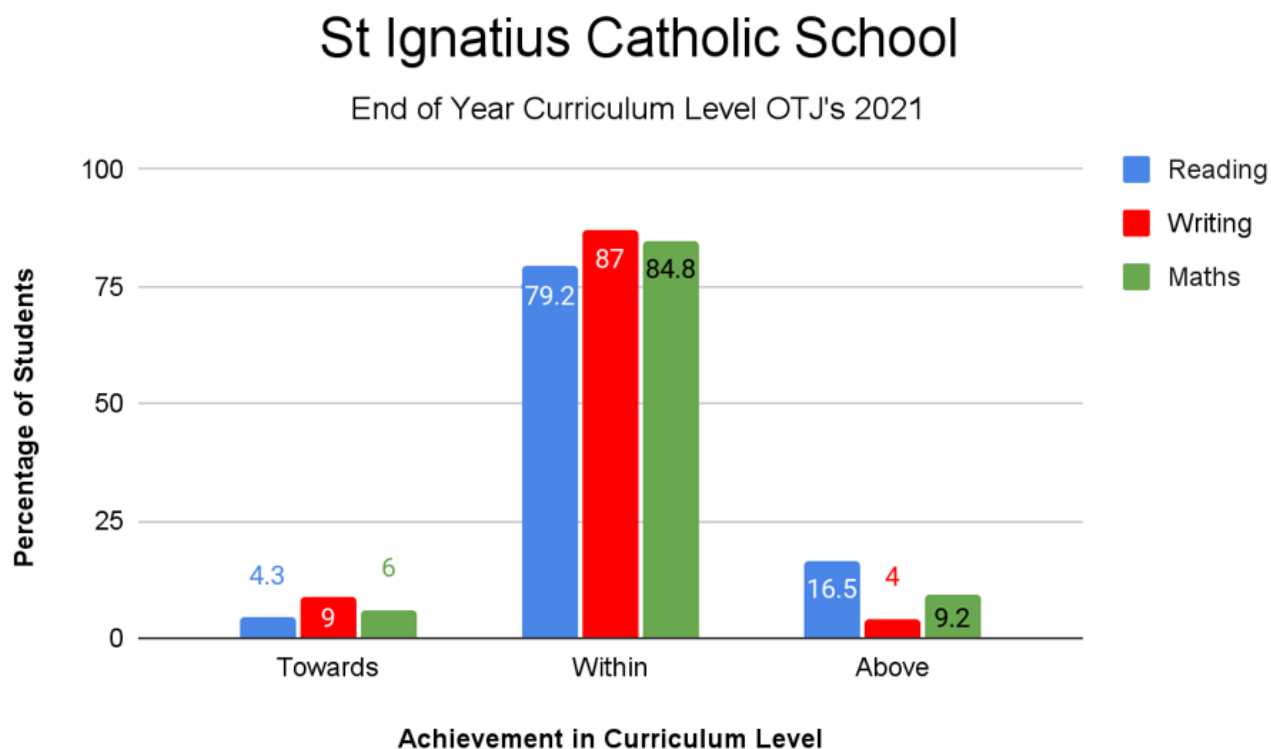
We wish you a peaceful Christmas, a very happy New Year and we are looking forward to welcoming you back in 2022.

Nga Mihi,

Rhian Thompson, Board Presiding Member.

## Student Achievement

End of year assessments for all year levels show that the majority of our students are tracking within or above the expected curriculum level. The school offers multiple initiatives including professional learning and development in maths for teachers, STEPS literacy programs, reading programs, accelerated programs in maths and targeted support for year levels where it is most needed.



Percentage of learners achieving at or above expected curriculum level:

	Mid-Year results	End of Year
Maths	90%	94%
Writing	87.3%	89%
Reading	94.1%	95%

The School will also continue to provide extension learning opportunities for all students, especially those who have been identified as having particular strengths in different learning areas.

The Board would like to congratulate the principal, teachers, support staff, students and our whanau on these achievements in this difficult year.

## Playgrounds

As you will have no doubt noticed, the Junior Playground is starting to look very tired! The Board has made a decision that we should start to investigate our options for the replacement of this playground within the next 12-18 months and the potential means of funding this project. It is very important to the Board that our families and students have input into this process. We therefore attach a short survey to help us start creating a picture of what you might like that playground to look like. Please take a few moments to complete this.

### Junior Playground & Board Survey

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P3u1K8a40vqWv30T2-qsjEsfh8ladNI9UY64JefIT28/edit>

In addition you will note that we still have an empty space behind the nature playground. Our intention is to utilise this space for a shed and some additional decking. This shed can be used to facilitate additional learning activities such as art, technology, woodwork etc. We are still working through the design of the shed building and surrounding area. Despite the delays caused by lockdown we are still hopeful that this project can be delivered in 2022. We are grateful for the funding we have received for this project from the PTA, the Board and a generous legacy we received from a past pupil. Many thanks also to Vanessa Waldron, Cameron Driver and James Sorenson for their ongoing work in making this a reality.

## Update on School Finances and Contributions for 2022

This is the time of the year where the Board reviews the school finances for 2021 and then sets a draft budget for 2022.

We look at what income we need to ensure we continue to provide the education our students require and our parents expect. We receive funding from the Ministry of Education to cover teacher's salaries up to a certain teacher to student ratio and to cover property and administration costs.

Financially, the school has weathered 2021 well. A big thank you for your generosity as parents in continuing to make your contributions.

Understandably, the PTA has not been able to run anywhere near a normal fundraising programme. The cancellation of Auction Night did have an impact on the funding normally provided to the school by the PTA, despite the success of the online auction. As a result the donation received from the PTA this year is less than we had budgeted in order to ensure there is funding available from the PTA to support 2022.

The final financial outcome for the school is still to be determined but the expectation is that we will finish the year with a large surplus. The two main reasons for this abnormal financial position are the postponement of our swimming activities to Term 1 2022 (for which activity fees have already been

collected) and the delay in completing the shed building and surrounding area (for which allocation of monies was made in our 2021 budget).

As part of the end of year financial review, the Board also considers the level of parent contribution we need. This is a voluntary donation and is tax deductible. It is, however, vital if we are to provide the quality of education that is expected for our children. Along with the support we receive from the PTA, this funding enables the Board to:

- employ staff in addition to the Ministry of Education allocation;
- provide learning assistants who directly contribute to higher quality learning;
- provide staff with continuing professional learning and development to ensure they are kept up to date with the latest changes in teaching methodology and technology; and
- provide educational resources and opportunities required for learning today e.g. digital technology.

In addition to these voluntary parent donations there are also compulsory attendance dues, charged by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland. The 2022 attendance dues are being increased by \$4 to \$117 per child per term.

In setting the level of parent contribution required for 2022, the Board has noted the continued financial challenges that many may be facing as a result of Covid-19. We have therefore decided the only increase will be in relation to the uplift in compulsory attendance dues charged by the Diocese mentioned above. The various other charges and donation levels will remain unchanged so that the total amount requested for 2022 will be \$511 per child per term.

## School Planning

One of the key priorities of the Board is to set the goals and priorities for the School. We do this through our Charter/Strategic Plan which is created every 3 years and through an Implementation Plan which is revised annually. These are available on the School website.

When formulating these Plans our Board must ensure they align with:

- our board primary objectives;
- the National Education Learning Priorities (NELPs);
- the aspirations, vision and values of our community; and
- our special character and other visions and values.

At the end of the above survey regarding the Junior Playground, we have attached some extra questions regarding your views on our progress against some of the above criteria. It would be incredibly beneficial to us in preparing our 2022 Annual Plan if you could spend a few moments completing these additional questions.

## Other updates

### Property funding

We have identified the following projects as those which we are likely to be eligible for receipt of government funding under the Essential Property Maintenance Programme:

- Boundary fencing and replacement gates
- Replacement of high fencing alongside the astroturf
- Upgrade of pathway alongside the astroturf and other repairs to concrete surfacing
- Replacement handbasins, taps and other sanitary ware in the junior toilets.

The types of projects eligible for funding are limited to essential maintenance of existing items with a focus on health and safety and infrastructure. We intend to make our initial applications for approval of funding before Christmas and provided these are accepted, hope to start work and apply for release of funds in early 2022 once the scope of the projects and costings have been finalised.

### Triennial Board Elections

The School Board triennial elections due to take place in March next year have now been postponed until September 2022 to reduce pressure in the first quarter of the year and also to enable an electronic voting option to be implemented. We will still be looking for nominations for our Board parent representatives and would ask that you start considering whether you would like to put yourself forward for this role as not all existing representatives will be re-standing. We will provide more information on the process in the new year.

### ERO

Onboarding of the new ERO review process which was due to start in Term 4 has now been postponed until the new year.

### AT Road Safety

Lastly, in relation to the AT Road Safety Initiative, AT have recently contacted us to inform us that they wish to move ahead with the raised table proposal on Speight Road. We consider there has been inadequate consultation with the School on this proposal and have reiterated to AT that at present it does not have the support of the Board as none of our concerns appear to have been addressed. We have requested that AT take no further steps until the Board and AT are able to meet to discuss the proposal. In particular the Board wishes to understand why AT considers this is the best option for our School and what other options might be available to us.

For further details on the above update items please see our August BoardTalk:

<https://www.stignatius.school.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/HEADS-UP-T3-Wk-4-2021-1-1.pdf>

**“Do all you can with the means at your disposal and calmly leave the rest to God”**

*Saint Mary MacKillop (1891)*