

LEVIN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

www.levinintermediate.school.nz

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ 9 September - Supersport Soccer
- ◆ 14-18 September - Activities Week
- ◆ 23 September - School Cross Country
- ◆ 25 September - End of term 3
- ◆ 10 October - Start of term 4

Events updated daily
on our website
calendar

Dear Parents/Caregivers

First off a brief heads up about our email, which has been down all week due to a virus somewhere in the system. We are working on clearing it but right now we are unable to send emails to many people.

1 – 1 Learning feedback

Recently I ran a survey for some parents of Y6 & 7 students about starting a computer class in the future. So far I have had 60 returns with the following results:

Would you support an opportunity for your child to participate in a class using computers in a '1-to-1' programme?

Yes – 82%, Unsure – 11%, No – 7%.

Would you attend school community meetings to discuss the pros and cons of starting a class using computers in a '1-to-1' programme?

Yes – 56% , Unsure – 31%, No – 13%.

Would you pay a weekly amount (e.g. \$15 per week over two years) for your child to participate in a class using computers in a '1-to-1' programme?

Yes – 49%, Undecided – 30%, No – 21%.

There seems to be enough interest to pursue this further so I will be gathering more details about how this might work and distribute that to everyone as soon as I have it.



Council Recognises Community Service

I was delighted to take two students from Room 9, Jacob Hamilton and Jamie Pinfeld, to receive awards from Councillor Tony Rush, Chair of 'Keep Levin Beautiful, in recognition of the voluntary work they have done cleaning rubbish from a local stream over a number of weeks. While they were there they also met the Mayor and he introduced us to His Excellency, the Governor General and his wife who happened to be visiting at the council building.

The two students took this community action as a result of their class Inquiry. I was very excited to see their study leading to such direct action and that tells me that what they were studying was meaningful and had an impact. Well done to them and their class. Watch out for more community action from our students!

National Standards Debate

The issue of National Standards is back in the public arena as the Government has announced plans to release these in October. I have included in this newsletter a discussion sheet, put out by the primary teachers' union, the NZEI, for parents to read.

Naku noa

Trevor Jeffries, Principal

A DISCUSSION SHEET FOR PARENTS

The Government is introducing national standards for reading, writing and maths for children in years 1-8 in 2010. The aim is to standardise the way teachers assess student progress and achievement, and to introduce a format for reporting to parents that is easy to understand.

NZEI, the union representing primary teachers and principals, believes the test of any new system is whether it puts children's learning first. Does it help motivate students to learn? Does it improve their learning?

What works for quality teaching and learning?	What undermines quality teaching and learning?
Standards that reflect "rich" assessment – assessment which allows a teacher to use their professional judgement and knowledge of your child as well as standardised tools such as PAT tests.	"High stakes" national testing, where all children sit the same test at the same time and a child's success or failure is based on a pass/fail mark.
Assessment which helps teachers, parents and your child identify his or her next learning steps and goals.	Tests that result in children as young as 5 being labelled as "failures".
Reporting to parents and children in clear English so that you understand how your child is doing in relation to expectations of their year level.	Reducing the complex way and rate at which individual children learn to "bean counting". The focus then becomes on ranking, rather than the child's individual learning progress.
Being accountable to the local community by keeping parents, Boards of Trustees and others in the community up to date with what's going well and where improvement is needed.	The publication of school "league tables" that could result if data from each school is collated centrally in Wellington. "League tables" create an incorrect and unfair perception about "good" and "bad" schools. They can reinforce prejudice about the performance of low decile schools – when in fact the school may be as effective, or even more effective, as a "good" school, at lifting the achievement of its students.

What can you do?

- Think about what your school does in terms of assessment and reporting now. What difference might national standards make?
- Talk to your school and to other parents about the issues national standards raise.
- Check the Ministry of Education's website for more information about standards - see www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/Consultation/NationalStandards.aspx
- Write to Prime Minister John Key asking for an assurance that the Government will not allow centralised data collation and the production of league tables of schools because of the harm they would do to children's learning.

NZEI Te Riu Roa - Putting learning first