

Campbells Bay School

Board of Trustees

Term 3 Newsletter – September 2013

Dear Parents and Community Members

We are pleased to bring you this regular end-of-term update from your elected Board. These regular updates are to inform our community on matters of school governance to ensure you are briefed on the key focus areas for the Board.

Near the end of term three this newsletter focusses on class sizes.

Board News

As advised in our July newsletter, the Board has divided the functional governance areas into portfolios – allocated as follows:

Human Resources	Vicki Caisley
Finance	David Campbell
NZ School Trustees Assn. / Strategic Planning	Anthony Ford
Health and safety	Janice Brown
Property	Jen Hanton (along with J McGowan + R Jarrold)
Chair/MoE Administration	Roger Jarrold
PTA (Friends of CBS)	Anthony Ford and Jen Hanton
Communications	Vicki Caisley
Board secretary – by protocol	John McGowan
Board charter	Jen Hanton

As the Board is the governing body of the school, the portfolio holders, as above, have responsibility at the governance level and are not responsible for the day-to-day management of the school; this being the responsibility of the principal and the leadership team.

Class Sizes

Class size has vexed the education sector for decades. The issue dominated the news early in 2012 when the government proposed that class sizes should increase to allow for increased funding of teachers' professional development. The public outcry was such that the proposal was withdrawn. However, the issue of class size has not gone away and it is something that we take very seriously.

The Ministry Formula

One of the most important tasks for the Board each year is to allocate resources where they are going to be most effective. It is a challenging task as the Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for the

provision of the staffing allocation to schools. To explain the process a bit better we set out below the teacher to student ratio model in state schools as set by the MOE. We then explain how this is used within Campbells Bay School, as our year levels are described slightly differently:

MOE Year levels	MOE Teacher : Student ratio	CBS Year levels	CBS Teacher : Student ratio
0+1	1 : 15	New entrant Year 1	1 : 15
2+3	1 : 23	Years 2 + 3	1 : 23
4-7	1 : 29	Years 4, 5 & 6	1 : 29

The Formula: Behind the Scenes

While the formula appears quite straight forward, the reality of utilising the resource effectively is not. The resourcing ratio of teachers to students is used to determine the numbers of students in each year level. However it also needs to be used for the provision of support services to students and some provision of leadership roles within the school.

We need to ensure these resources are available to the class teacher, following decisions made by the leadership team, in areas such as:

- a) For junior classes: Reading Recovery, Rainbow Reading and the six year net assessment programme. Six year olds are assessed for their knowledge in various aspects of literacy and decisions are made regarding what, if any, additional resources should be made available to support individual students.
- b) Information communication technology (ICT), where a teacher works for three days a week supporting students and classroom teachers with the integrated use of ICT in their class programmes.

The numbers for the programmes do vary, depending on need. At present there are nine students receiving the Reading Recovery¹ programme.

Students are enrolled in Rainbow Reading² with the learning leaders using student achievement analysis information in conjunction with their teachers. At present 47 students are involved in this programme.

As mentioned, as well as providing the support services to teachers set out above, the resourcing from the Ministry also needs to be utilised for some of the leadership capacity of the school in the form of the school's Learning and Inquiry leaders.

¹ Reading Recovery is a one-on-one teaching session for students who are aged six with a trained Reading Recovery teacher who spends 30 minutes four times a week with each student in the programme. Students are on the programme for between 12 – 20 weeks. A New Zealander, Dame Marie Clay, created this programme and it is being used in many countries.

² Rainbow Reading is an audio assisted programme, again developed by a New Zealander, for students who are reading below their chronological age.

The school has six such positions with four of the positions being held by classroom teachers and two by our deputy principals. It is very useful to have classroom teachers leading classroom teachers in curriculum, planning and assessment, given that they have current and successful experience and have credibility with their colleagues.

Our two deputy principals have recently been in classrooms, so the same thing can be said about them. However in terms of resourcing, most of the resources for the roles of the deputy principals come from a separate resourcing fund from the MOE (resources for management) but some of the resourcing does come from the previously mentioned MOE year level resources.

Hence, the resource entitlement from the Ministry for the employment of teachers must go further than simply supplying a teacher to every x number of students as this resource needs to be used to support much more than that. The number of students per class is just one aspect of the equation. A most important aspect, without doubt, but one that does not tell the whole story.

Class Numbers at CBS

The Board has 'preferred maximum number of students' for each year level based on the already discussed resourcing from the Ministry as well as the support that is available, on a needs basis, to all students.

At present the preferred classroom maximum numbers are as follows:

CBS Year levels	CBS Maximum classroom
New entrant Year 1	1 : 22
Year 2	1 : 27
Year 3	1 : 29
Years 4, 5 & 6	1 : 32

At present three out of the six Year 1 classes are one student over the preferred maximum while one Year 5 class is one over. All other classes in the school are either at or below their preferred maximums. For example the Year 6 classes are 27, 28, 29 & 29. Enrolment trends suggest that for Years 1 – 6, students leaving approximately equals students arriving for the second half of the year.

Funding from Other Sources

The school could not provide the educational environment it does without funding from a variety of sources for support programmes. In essence, the rule of thumb used when it comes to providing additional support is to ask the question: Can the classroom teacher reasonably be asked to provide such support for the student without assistance? When the answer is negative, the support is made available on an 'as needs' basis.

While the Board is receiving \$25,111 in 2013 from the MOE (special education grant) the Board also expects to devote a further \$113,000³ of non-Ministry money to support students as follows:

³ As a school we are fortunate to have a community that acknowledges that the Ministry does not provide all the funding the school needs to provide an education our school community expects. Hence, the Board receives welcome income each year from: parent donations, CBS Friends of the School and the income generated by the international student programme.

- the Year 1 & 2 phonological aware programme (50 students);
- years 5 & 6 steps to literacy programme (5 students);
- years 3 & 4 maths programme (16 students)
- years 5 & 6 maths programme (16 students).

Further, at any one time, four teacher aides are working with individual students, or very small groups of students on particular needs that have been identified.

English as second language programmes are either funded separately on a student by student basis by the Ministry or, for international students⁴, from the fees that are paid to the school by their parents for them to attend.

Classroom Numbers: A Final Word

All of this means that the number of students allocated to a teacher in a classroom is just one part of the story. A class with 30 students allocated to the class teacher will undoubtedly have teacher/teacher aide to student ratios that vary considerably during the course of the day – in accordance with assessed student need. For example, the number of students in the classroom reduces when some students are involved in any of the aforementioned programmes.

As can be seen by the range of programmes, this is a common occurrence. Of course, the ratios can go the other way. Every Friday afternoon during team singing for 30 minutes, two teachers are responsible for up to 250 students without any problems whatsoever.

During the day the teacher (and teacher aide) ratio flexes dependent on the recognised needs of students.

The Board aims to have class numbers that are as small as financially possible, recognising that starting from a smaller rather than a larger number of students in a class is desirable. However, there are constraints to achieving further reductions in class numbers. As an aside, in 1995 the class maximums were 35 across the school.

While the Board will always seek to have classes that are as small as practicable, the Board is also mindful that individual identified student needs are also met through small group and individual instruction which the assessment evidence indicates is proving very successful.

We hope that this update has been useful to you.

Best wishes and have a safe and enjoyable term break during October.

Roger Jarrold

Chairperson on behalf of Campbells Bay School Board of Trustees

⁴ International students: (a) Are included in the 'preferred class maximums', (b) Are 'user pays' when it comes to any support services they require, while the fees paid by international students make a very substantial contribution to the amount of money the Board has at its disposal to assist with individual and group programmes for non-international students. (Fees are \$13,000 inclusive GST per year.) (c) Make up less than 3% of the school's student numbers. International students are enrolled at CBS from: Korea, China, Japan, Germany and Russia.