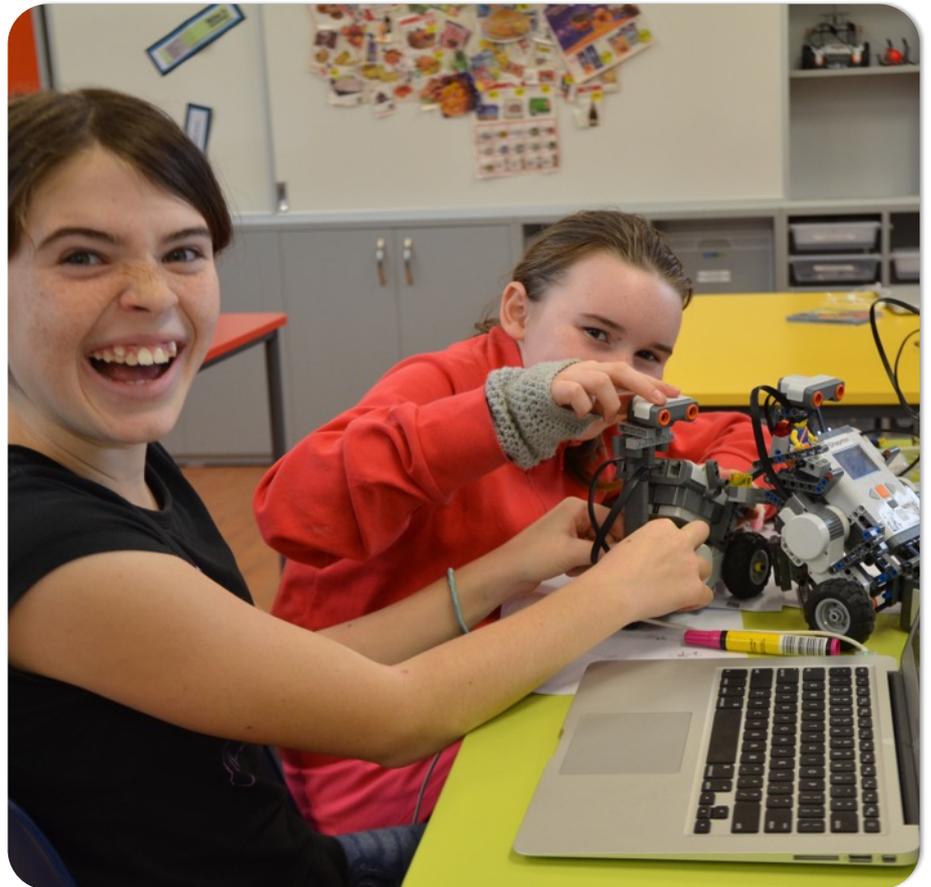


Ahuroa School

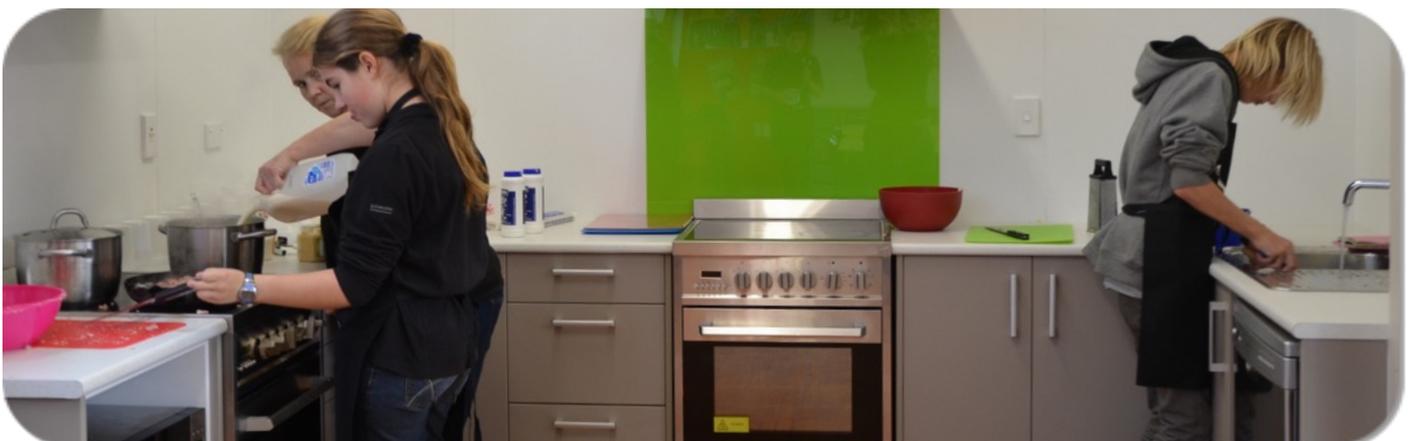
2015
TERM THREE
NEWSLETTER



Together we grow as confident, connected, actively involved, enthusiastic, lifelong learners

I have to say, I've changed my thinking. When I was initially confronted with the task of writing our community newsletter I was somewhat hesitant, to say the least. Now, a term on, and I get it. Since my appointment at Ahuroa School 20 short weeks ago, we have spent a great deal of time asking questions "what are we doing; why are we doing that; how can we do that better?" As I write this newsletter, I am forced to stop asking questions and provide some answers. I can reflect on whether, despite the ups and downs, we are winning – are we are giving our kids the best educational deal we can? The short answer is - yes we are!

It is with great pride that I feel able to stand and celebrate what we have achieved in a very short space of time - and I am very grateful for this opportunity to be able to share and celebrate those achievements with you all. Let's begin with some number crunching. Two weeks ago, I welcomed our 74th, 75th and 76th student to Ahuroa School. 76 may, in itself, not be a significant number, however in terms of educational deals for our kids, it is very significant. It means we will continue to receive Ministry funding to employ our four amazing teachers next year. Now, consider this number; 10,500. It represents a great deal of hard work that you



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most likely had a share in. It is the generous donation our PTFA made towards our new technology room. Yes; your support of our annual Fair, Feast and Fireworks night, greatly impacts our students. During the term 2 holidays, Room 3 under went a complete refit. Equipped with a full kitchen, two large stainless steel work tops, a radio station, science apparatus, as well as resources for art, wood, metal and fabric tech, our technology room has been especially designed to cater for the learning needs of our year 7 and 8 intermediate students, although all students will make full use it. Students love the open, creative space; the kitchen has been well and truly tested, with school lunches being cooked by students every Friday; our Robotics Club is particularly happy with their new cabinets - their precious equipment can now be securely stored and easily found. Parents and community members have shown their support by trading Fly Buys points for power tools. We'd like to take this opportunity thank our community, our hard working PTFA and our parents who have generously given their time and energy to make our dream a reality.

Let's now focus on the number 8. This is number of Ahuroa students who successfully finished garments to enter in this years' School's Trash To Fashion awards. Our girls truly shone on stage as they showcased their creativity and confidence during the semi finals held at Northcross Intermediate. While we are incredibly proud of them all, our special congratulations goes to Tilly, who has been selected to participate in the final showcase events, being held at the Corban Estate in Henderson in September. All the very best Tilly! On behalf of our girls, I'd like to say a massive thank you to Angela Gibson for generously giving her time to help our students reach the finish line.

What is special about the number 4? Our seniors have discovered this is the number of compartments in a cow's stomach, after a vey "hands-on" experience with the internal organs of a cow, thanks to secondary trained science teacher Cath Heald. Over the year, Cath has generously volunteered her time to support our seniors in Berger whānau in grasping more advanced Science concepts. This term, Cath has been extending their knowledge of photosynthesis and forces.

Our next number, 18, is the total number of minerals and vitamins contained in Silverbeet. With thanks to the expertise, skills and generosity of Sean Hilditch and his team at Growing Gardens, we now have raised vegetable gardens full with nutritiously lush green leafy vegetables. Our Environ Club's green fingers have been put to the test, and they are passing with flying colours (in many shades of green)!

That brings to mind another significant number 0; while appearing to have no value - in a school environment - it's a number that can have a massive impact. As a school, we rely heavily on the generosity of others. At Ahuroa, we are incredibly fortunate to have the ongoing support of a dedicated team of staff, parents and community members who are willing to give of their time and skills to make a difference. I cannot emphasise enough how grateful I am for these angels! Although they give freely of their time – the resulting impact is invaluable. This term, our students have also benefited from the generosity of our wider community – gaining a great deal of good quality classroom furniture – for free! Our thanks to Westmere and Grey Lynn School.



Ahuroa Radio @ 88.3 FM

If you live within a 5km radius of our school you can tune into our very own radio station. We now also run a Radio Club, supported by Nik Massey, lead by our radio enthusiast students. Our plans to get our radio station up and running on the internet are still in the pipelines. Keep watching (or listening to) this space!



The next number represents our giving back to our community. 1000. Whew! This is the total number of trees our students, staff and parents planted during a community planting day at Puhoi, and at Streamland's Swamp as part of the Trees For Survival program.

What about 5? In our books, it's a number very close to 1! An awesome effort was made by all our students competing at the inter school cross country - but a special congratulations to Niall who placed 5th in the year 4 boys race.

A very proud 166. The total amount our students raised in support of this year's Red Nose Day for Cure Kids NZ. Our largest amount yet!

While the number 21 might bring back some memories, we are focusing on the present; our 21st century learners. Over the holidays, we spent some time considering MLE - the creation of Modern Learning Environments - spaces for independent work, group work and withdrawal groups. As a result, all our classrooms have had a refresh to provide a variety of new spaces to match the learning styles and needs of our modern learners.

Finally; last, but *certainly* not least - the number 2. This term, Nik and Shayne have been team teaching in Turnwald whānau, our year 2-5 learners. The co-teaching approach allows teachers to constantly notice and assess each others practice, ultimately causing a deeper learning experience for students and more of an opportunity for real learning. It allows teachers to become better attuned to student's needs and, in a nut shell, become more effective teachers. What we have also observed in Turnwald whānau is the increase in positive social interactions, and the

establishment of new friendships, as mixed-aged students work alongside each other. As a testament of the learning that is being nurtured in Turnwald whānau, check out Rachel's photo's on the back of our newsletter. Through the eyes of one very amazing 6 year old!

It's hard to argue with the cold hard facts of maths right? What I have come to appreciate is that a lot depends on your perspective. Taking a quick peek through the figurative windows at Ahuroa School may make some hesitate to answer. We do things differently, agreed. Students have a voice – but does that mean they tell the teacher what to do? The short answer is – no. Students can direct their own learning – does that mean they are given free range to do whatever they want? The short answer is – no. Students participate in a Clubs program that is run predominately by community volunteers – does that mean students are just being baby sat by non qualified teachers? The short answer is – no way. All students are given the opportunity to participate in a Discovery Learning program – does that mean achieving excellence in reading, writing and maths is not given priority? The short answer is – you guessed it – a definite and resounding no.

I strongly encourage you to take a more informed look at our fantastic little school, come in, find out the longer answers to any questions you might have. Yes, at Ahuroa School things might look a bit different, but we are fully confident we are offering the **best** educational deal for all our students, and will continue to do so well into the future.

My warmest regards to you all;

Michelle Nell, Ahuroa School Principal

Discovery Learning by Rachel Year 2



WELCOME!

A very warm welcome to all our new 2015 students; Charlie, Marizanne, Millah, Sandra, Sinead, Tyler, Jacob, Mila, Gabrielle, Ava, Robert, Declan, Kyran, Morgan and Finley!

2015 Dates

Hockey: 15 Sept
Disco: 18 Sept
Term 3 Ends: 25 Sept
Term 4 Starts: 12 Oct
Ag Day: 17 Oct
Labour Day: 26 Oct
Pentathlon: 6 Nov
Athletics: 10 Nov
Term 4 Ends: 15 Dec

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