

AN OPEN LETTER TO WHANAU/ AIGA

4th February 2019

Greetings, Kia Ora, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Malo e lelei, Talofa lava, Aloha, Kia Orana, Ni Hao, Buenos Dias, Chao, Malo ni, Habari Dobor Dan, Namaste, Salaam....

I am writing on the first day of the new 2019 school year to welcome you and your family to another year of involvement with Manurewa Intermediate School, or if this is your first involvement with us, to especially welcome you to our community! I would also like to use this opportunity to inform you all of a number of things and to let you know right from the outset that we want AND actively encourage your support, ideas and skills to help make Manurewa Intermediate School the very best it can be as we continue the focus we have had the last ten years of increasing student engagement, increasing student presence, increasing student involvement and ultimately increasing student achievement. *'Manurewa Intermediate really is motoring and moving on up'* with our vision to develop our students into *'adventurous risk takers; with persistent focussed achievement'*, but to do this it is important that you are involved!

I am excited and really looking forward to the start of my eleventh full year at Manurewa and I trust it won't be too long before I get to meet you all – and to remember names! I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those parents/caregivers and whanau who have supported the school so strongly over the years and I strongly encourage this continued involvement and support. We have a staff who want to be here and who want to work with your child and even the Education Review Office found this when they last reviewed our school in 2017, resulting in a back to back four-five-year review, when they said: *'Staff model optimism and authentic relationships that set learners up for success, wellbeing, citizenship and enhanced life experiences'*.

In case you weren't aware in 2017 we had great success winning the 2017 Prime Minister's Supreme School Award, as well as winning the Excellence in Engagement award, and that coupled with our back to back 4-5year ERO review has spurred us on to continue the great work we try to do for your child/ren every single day. We know, based on years of experience, and trial and error, that the systems and structures in place really do work. As that latest ERO report said: *"The school's processes and actions very effectively help to achieve excellence and equity for learners... attributable to highly effective school leadership; a deep commitment to strong engagement between the school and its community; a responsive curriculum, effective teaching and opportunities to learn; the building of professional capability and collective capacity that increases teachers' knowledge, skills and adaptive expertise; and the use of internal evaluation, inquiry and knowledge building for improvement and innovation"*. As you can see all staff were affirmed in this and we want and need this to continue, with our community's help!

I encourage your feedback on what we do and we are open to your opinions or ideas. Over the course of the next few weeks it is my intention that you will become familiar with all that we do through face to face events, newsletters, the MI Night Market, and perhaps our very best public relations people – your children!

Our staff work hard for your kids, but, to do the very best we can do we need all of your support and involvement so that ultimately our children will be the recipients of a relevant, well balanced and productive education which will ensure they feel happy, secure and successful! I also believe that the learning process has to be exciting, fun and motivating for all children! This will be a real focus in our school, coupled with academic excellence – happy, interested and motivated children are successful children, and this means they are learning!

The education of your child IS a two-way process and by working together we can make a difference! The staff for their part will be working very hard to meet the needs of your child and your assistance and interest is encouraged and needed. Positive relationships with teachers and other students are critical – this is an area that we are continually looking at as we know when your child likes their teachers, likes their class and have good friendships then they are ready to be the learner they need to, and can be. It is all of our responsibility, including yours, to constantly work hard at addressing the needs of our kids in all ways. Therefore, I invite you to dig into the huge mixture of things on offer for your child and whanau and to get involved throughout the year and I encourage you to drag every gram of enjoyment from these experiences and events. Your involvement makes a big difference to your child's attitude towards school, and ultimately their achievement!

Thank you for taking the time to read what I know is a rather lengthy letter, but a dialogue that I believe is vital in ensuring our school is seen in a positive light. This dialogue between home and school will continue at all times to be frequent, extensive and, I hope, interesting. Look out for the first full school newsletter coming home after camp, on Wednesday 27th February, "*Manurewa's Monthly*", and which will continue to come home, roundabout the last Wednesday every month. In each newsletter there will be information about the next month, general information and notices, affirmations, class reports or samples of work and community notices. This next full newsletter on the 27th February will have all details about class teachers and rooms, and the various programmes operating.

Over the next day or so there is likely to be a fair bit of information coming home so I urge you to check with your child each afternoon! For now, I enclose a copy of the **Years Calendar**, which I suggest you stick to your fridge immediately! Whilst it is not a definitive list of all that is happening over the year it does include all things as known today (and note there is NO school on Wednesday, being Waitangi Day!). New events will be advised well in advance via the monthly newsletter. Also attached is the stationery list, the uniform standards reminder and a flyer inviting you to our "***MI Night Market***", which is on THIS Friday (8th February) 5.00 – 8pm. This is also an opportunity to meet your child's teacher and even have a conversation about our renown School Survival Camp in week 3 (Monday 18th – Friday 22nd February) that all students attend (there is no charge for this but we need lots of adult helpers!!). This is the start of what we hope will be a fruitful relationship between the home and school, and continuing this term with Student Involved Conferences in week 10. See you there!

No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa

Iain Taylor
Principal