

## **Aparima College – Scoping Report II**

**25 October 2017**

### **Basis of Report Findings**

In addition to the responses received to the various surveys that have been conducted this year - including the staff and student wellbeing surveys, a survey of parents and caregivers, a survey of parents whose children had been withdrawn from the school and a survey of parents from contributing schools - in response to my invitation to the wider school community to contribute to this report, I was contacted by over 40 staff, parents and community members whose comments on the issues they consider are affecting Aparima College, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.

### **Issues**

#### **1. Leadership**

The successful recruitment and induction of a new principal who will be able to manage and meet community expectations and form durable, professional working relationships with staff and future boards of trustees is the most significant issue facing the school.

Members of the school community have been consistent in their efforts to support Aparima College's place as a vibrant, essential and integral part of the wider Riverton community and once a new principal is established, the school should be in a strong position to return to full self-governance.

#### **2. Student Wellbeing**

While staff have embarked on training to become a PB4L school and the Rock and Water programme was introduced in the junior school through the Health and Physical Education department, the results of the student wellbeing survey showed an increase in students concerns about bullying and a decrease in overall satisfaction from 2016. Parent surveys indicate that there is a lack of information provided about programmes and services available to support their children and some parents also expressed concern about the quality of the support that was provided by the school.

Several parents have raised issues that suggest that there are lapses in identifying students with learning difficulties and conditions that affect their ability to thrive at school and accessing timely and meaningful support for them.

#### **3. Staff Wellbeing**

The community has generally acknowledged the good work of staff and is proud of the successes of students in both academic and co-curricular endeavours, but there is a concern that these successes may reduce should the student population decline or key personnel leave.

A number of staff are mindful of who they can trust amongst other staff which causes stress and anxiety, affects their enjoyment at work, prevents the development of a collegial workplace and negatively affects overall staff morale.

Arrangements for staff to be able to access confidential workplace support have been made following the gathering of information for this report.

#### **4. Student Achievement**

Senior students predominantly leave school to go into employment or tertiary education however the recent student leaver data analysis indicates a downward trend in terms of leaver qualifications, particularly for Maori students. Some members of the Maori community are frustrated by the barriers they consider stymie the development and enhancement of learning opportunities in te reo and tikanga Maori.

The size of the senior school does mean that individual tracking of senior student achievement occurs and staff go to great lengths to assist students to gain qualifications, however staff recognise that the current approach would be improved by more cohesion and consistency in planning and curriculum delivery across the school. Staff turnover in some departments has been high and this has impacted on the workload of staff.

There are student achievement targets in place but staff need these broken down and made meaningful and measurable for them. A number of staff have reported that they do what they think is right in order to get the job done in their area but that they would relish receiving strong direction, clearer communication and being able to enjoy more collegiality to support them in their work.

Concern has been expressed about the achievement of students in the junior school, which has been borne out in the student achievement reports and the two curriculum area reviews conducted to date. Progress in terms of lifting student achievement is being made, however the planning and delivery of programmes designed to accelerate progress need to be led in a coherent manner by the principal. Teachers are doing their best but need both clear direction and the fostering of a strong, supportive collegial culture be able to improve outcomes for students.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The culture and tone of the school is set by the principal who is a major role model for staff and students. The risk to student wellbeing, staff wellbeing and ultimately student achievement is directly impacted upon by the leadership of the principal.

Should the new principal be unable to manage and meet community expectations, the risk to the optimal functioning of the school will be high.

The risk to the outcomes for students being negatively affected by not having the three elements of effective leadership, student wellbeing and staff wellbeing addressed urgently is moderate to high.

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