



## *DEC's B.O.T. Flyer*

### **Combined Board of Trustees Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres**

Update for parents of children enrolled at or receiving services from Kelston & van Asch Deaf Education Centres

#### ***Message from our new Chairperson***

Welcome to our monthly parents' update from the Combined Board of Trustees for Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres.

Each month we will be keeping you up to date with important information discussed at our monthly meetings as well as sharing news with you about the latest projects and developments in deaf education.

You have helped us elect an excellent new Board of Trustees with the skills and experience we need to oversee the delivery of our new Strategy for improving our services across New Zealand. We are excited about the challenge.

In time we hope to send this Flyer to each and every parent who wishes to receive it via email. Until then it will be available through the websites of each DEC as well as the NZFDC website.

I look forward to working with you and my colleagues on the Board to boost the achievement and support the wellbeing of all our deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

***Rachel Douglas***

Board Chair

Combined Board of Trustees, Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres

In this update:-

- Our new Board of Trustees
- Priorities for the new Board
- Key points of information from June 2016 Board Meeting

(Issue 1. September 2016)

## **Our new Board of Trustees:-**

Providing Deaf Education Services in New Zealand is the responsibility of two Centres serving the whole of the country. These are Kelston Deaf Education Centre (KDEC) and van Asch Deaf Education Centre (van Asch). Between them, they support close to 2,000 Deaf and Hard of Hearing children nationwide. In 2012, the Ministry of Education (MoE) combined the Trustee Boards of each Centre into a national Board providing unified governance and uniting the strengths of both. Having a combined Board increases opportunities for sharing skills, knowledge and resources and provides a national perspective for delivering services. Staff from both Centres now meet regularly to work on shared priorities.

Every 3 years, a new Board of Trustees is elected, made up of six parent representatives, a staff trustee, 2 student trustees and the Principals of both Deaf Education Centres.

During May 2016, approximately 2,300 voting papers were sent out and 115 were returned. We are delighted to welcome our new Board of Trustees for Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres.

### ***The full Board is listed below:***

*Krista Clifford – Staff rep.*

*Meghan Coppage – Student rep.*

*Rachel Coppage – Parent rep.*

*Rachel Douglas - Board Chairperson & parent rep.*

*David Foster - KDEC Principal*

*Merran Gwyndell – Parent rep.*

*Cha'nel Kaa-Luke – Student rep.*

*Jill Le Prou - Board Secretary*

*David McKee - Parent rep.*

*Bernie Mulcahy-Bouwman - van Asch DEC Principal*

*Ratu Ratu – Parent rep.*

*Crystal Skinley – Parent rep*

## Priorities for the new Board:-

The previous Board made a commitment to developing a national picture which describes the deaf learners enrolled at, or receiving services from the two DEC's. This has been a major piece of work and the information is constantly being updated and shared. Now that we know who these learners are and where they live, we can work together to support their learning, achievements and needs.

Our new Charter is based on four strategic priorities which will guide the work of our Board. These priorities will ensure that our services best meet the needs of our students, not only academically but also socially and emotionally.



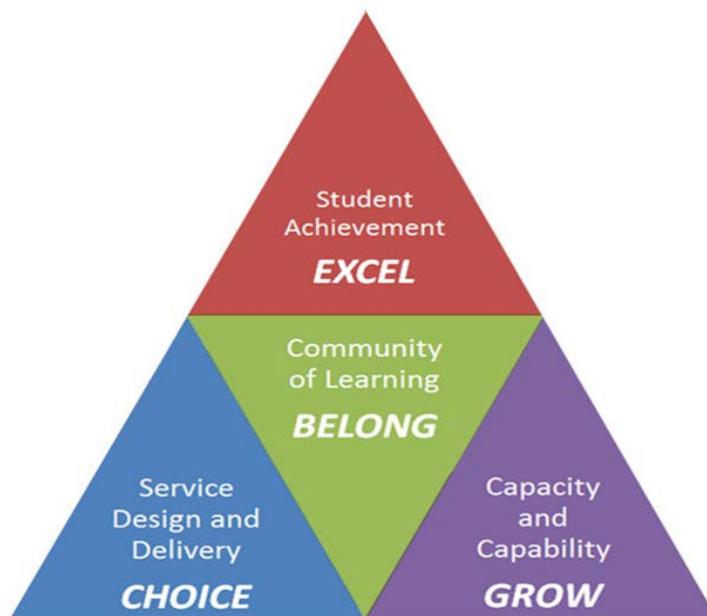
These priorities are:-

### **EXCEL - Demonstrating Student Achievement**

Developing goals specific to the educational, social and emotional needs of each learner and plans for accelerating their progress.

### **BELONG - Building a Community of Learning for each student**

Ensuring that our learners know they are a valued member of their Community of Learning and Deaf children are able to develop a positive sense of Deaf identity and belonging.



### **CHOICE - Service Design and Delivery that provides clear pathways**

All deaf learners have different learning needs and different learning styles. We believe that Deaf and hearing cultures should be equally valued and respected. We will offer a range of services as diverse and individual as the abilities of our deaf learners. We will share clear and accurate information with families to help them make informed choices that are best for their children.

### **GROW - Ensuring workforce Capacity and Capability to sustain improvement**

Providing ongoing opportunities to strengthen staff resources in areas of need through recruitment, training and mentoring. Working with the Ministry to deliver excellence in the *Teacher of the Deaf* training programme.

## **Immediate Priority Matters:-**

### **Future Property Strategy - van Asch Deaf Education Centre**

Work has concluded on a long-term strategy document on the future use of the van Asch site at Sumner, Christchurch. On 22<sup>nd</sup> July the new Board met to discuss the draft Ministry Education Brief document which detailed programmes and services currently offered by van Asch, both on-site and regionally, as well as providing a vision for future van Asch services. The document, based on a template issued by the Ministry, is the result of nine month's work by van Asch staff and involved a number of consultation meetings with stakeholder groups. Several amendments were suggested by Board members at July's meeting and the Brief was approved subject to these changes being made. It was submitted to the Ministry on August 1<sup>st</sup> as requested.

### **Capital Works Programme**

A Capital works Programme is in place to renew and re-model bases for Resource Teachers of the Deaf. This work will be ongoing over the next three years.

The creation of a sensory resource centre in Hamilton (a shared space with Hamilton North Special School and the Blind and Low Vision Education Network N.Z (BLENNZ) has created a place for our community to meet in Hamilton and enabled us to engage in remote mapping of cochlear implants using our high speed internet connection. This capacity to undertake remote mapping will save parents of C.I. children hours of travel. (Previously they had to travel to Auckland for this procedure).

The next Sensory Resource Centre is due to open in Tauranga in mid-September. Located at the corner of Bethlehem and Carmichael Roads, the \$1.02 million facility has been funded by the Ministry of Education as part of a national programme of capital works.

The facility will provide shared space for 17 specialist teachers and staff from Kelston Deaf Education Centre and Resource Teachers of Blind and Low Vision (BLENNZ staff) who currently work out of a range of bases throughout the city.

### **New Zealand Sign Language At School (NZSL@School)**

The NZSL@School programme increases daily opportunities for those children who learn using NZSL. This has been an ongoing priority for the Board over the past three years and therefore it contributes funding towards the project activities as outlined in the NZSL@School Report.

## **The Board will be leading work on:-**

- Bilingual Pedagogy - (Teaching using New Zealand Sign Language and English language, spoken and/or written).
- Primary School NZSL Assessment – We have secured funding from the NZSL Board to initiate a project to create the assessments.
- Flexible delivery options, e.g. hub exploration and at-distance learning.
- The role and responsibilities of Educational Interpreters.

In addition, the Board is supporting work on developing a defined service pathway. This is an identified need, highlighted by parents and other professionals who have asked for clear information about the choices and supports available to their children as they progress into and through the education system. The MoE is leading this work and it is expected that a Pathway Resource will be completed by the end of the year.

## **The Board will also contribute to the development of:-**

- Adult proficiency standards in NZSL – The MoE is leading this project over the next 2 years. NCEA qualifications for sign language will be available in Levels 1, 2 & 3 by the end of 2016. Levels 1 and 2 have already been approved and level 3 will be approved by the end of 2016.
  - NCEA Qualifications in NZSL
  - NZSL Curriculum Revision. – The DEC's have contributed to this project which will be completed by the end of 2016.
  - Resources to support learning in NZSL (work with MoE, DANZ, DEC's)

## **First Ever digital book for deaf Maori learners**

Students from the DEC's also narrated the first-ever digital book for deaf Māori students. "The Story of Rūaumoko" was launched by Minister Parata last month. It tells the story of Rūaumoko, the god of earthquakes and volcanoes, and it is narrated by students in te reo Māori, New Zealand Sign Language and English.

## **Flexible Delivery Options**

One of the flexible options for delivering services which is being explored under the NZSL@School initiative is the idea of hubs. Providing these venues locally, allows opportunities for deaf children living outside Auckland and Christchurch to learn full-

time in an environment where NZSL is used among deaf peers. Formal discussion has already started with Tirau Primary School Board, MoE and the staff of both Centres.

Research is also beginning with the Hawkes Bay and Otago MoE district offices and with *First Signs* to gauge the level of interest and need for hubs in these areas. It is proposed that investigations into a hub provision for Wellington, take place later in 2016.



### **ASSIST** (Assessment and Involvement of Specialist Teachers) Programme

The ASSIST programme, rolled out in 2013 now operates throughout all New Zealand. Over the past three years, the Board has progressively taken over responsibility for services to all deaf students over the age of 8 years old. In return, Advisors focus on early family involvement with deaf children in their early years, i.e. birth to aged 8 years old. The funding for this work is currently delivered via a renewable contract. The Board has recommended that this contract be re-negotiated with an expectation that funding is increased in line with the high numbers of children identified for support under the scheme.

## **Education Review Office Visit (ERO)**

The Education Review Office inspects all schools in New Zealand on a regular cycle (usually every three years). Currently both KDEC and van Asch are having their reviews. This is the first time both reviews have taken place at the same time and this will allow a national perspective on feedback about future service delivery.

## **Key points of information from June 2016 Board Meeting**

### **Teacher of the Deaf Training**

The Board believes that all the teachers it employs should be either trained teachers of the deaf or training to become such. This will ensure the highest quality of service. The Board has a constant need to recruit, train and re-train adequate numbers of teachers of the deaf. Negotiations are ongoing between the Principals and the MoE to secure the maximum number of Deaf Study Awards from next year onwards.

### **Otago Parents' Meeting**

Following on from her recent presentation and attendance at the NZ Federation of Deaf Children Conference in Christchurch, van Asch DEC Principal, Bernie Mulcahy-Bouwman has arranged to meet with the Dunedin Parent Group. The meeting, involving MoE officials had to be postponed due to weather conditions and will now take place in September.

### **Joint Senior Management Team meetings**

In term two, a Joint Senior Management Team meeting took place between van Asch and Kelston Managers. It was the second joint meeting to be held this year and is part of an ongoing initiative to share skills and expertise, improve communication and deliver certain projects across both Deaf Education Centres. The joint team reviewed the Board briefing and Charter and identified projects that could be delivered together to meet Charter objectives.

Six areas were identified with the potential to become joint projects.

- **Bilingual Pedagogy**
- **Student Assessment**
- **Hub Exploration**
- **Development Opportunities for Deaf Leadership**
- **Workforce development**
- **Service pathways clarity**

**For further information about items listed in this flyer please contact:-**

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