

# **2023 Pukekawa School Annual Report**

Prepared by Josie Redmond - Principal

In 2023, Pukekawa School confronted several obstacles in terms of academic performance. To address these challenges, the Board of Trustees (BOT) and staff developed a comprehensive strategy to improve student progress and achievement in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. A portion of the budget, totaling \$5,000, was allocated to purchasing a specialised resource, Numicon, aimed at strengthening students' understanding of numbers, especially in the junior school. The school also secured regional funding from the Ministry of Education for Professional Development, enabling intensive staff training in the effective use of Numicon. Facilitated by a contracted expert, this initiative contributed to notable improvements in Mathematics. Reading and Writing also improved, with the percentage of students achieving at or above the expected level increasing in each subject.

To further enhance student outcomes, Pukekawa School implemented various support measures. For instance, ability grouping was introduced in the Hub to extend students in Mathematics, while small group teaching was utilised in both Mathematics and Reading. Additionally, teacher aides, funded by the Board, provided targeted support to students requiring extra assistance. These efforts reflect a holistic approach to improving academic performance, demonstrating the school's commitment to addressing students' individual learning needs.

Moreover, the teaching team at Pukekawa School made significant strides in fostering a collaborative environment. By promoting independence and problem-solving skills, the team aimed to create a safe and engaging learning environment where students felt empowered to take ownership of their learning journey. This approach not only positively impacted academic outcomes but also instilled valuable life skills in students, setting a strong foundation for their future success.

The school also received substantial financial support from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the Calf Club Committee, facilitating various important purchases and initiatives. Notably, funds were allocated for a swimming pool vacuum, classroom consumables, engaging educational programs, the Year 6 end-of-year trip, visual art supplies, and Physical Education equipment. This financial backing, along with the formation of a new board dedicated to effective governance, underscored the community's commitment to supporting the school's initiatives and fostering a positive learning environment.

However, the school faced a significant loss with the departure of Whaea Ihia Rueben, the kapa haka and te reo kaiako. Whaea Ihia had a profound impact on the school community, and her contributions were evident in successful student performances at various events. Her departure posed a challenge in finding a suitable replacement for 2024, highlighting the need for continued support in preserving and promoting Māori culture and language within the school.

Despite these challenges, Pukekawa School made considerable efforts to increase community engagement through a diverse range of events. These included a Pool Party, Sporting events, Dance demonstrations, Calf Club, Enviro projects, and school trips. By offering opportunities for families to attend these events, the school fostered a sense of belonging and involvement within the community, ultimately contributing to a positive school culture.

In conclusion, Pukekawa School navigated several challenges in 2023 with strategic planning and collaborative efforts. By focusing on teaching strategies, fostering a supportive learning environment, securing financial support, addressing the loss of key staff, and enhancing community engagement, the school showcased its commitment to student success and well-being. These efforts not only led to academic improvements but also contributed to a positive school culture where students feel supported, engaged, and empowered to reach their full potential.