

## **Kristin Family & Friends CHAIR REPORT 2015**

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Chair report AGM Kristin Family and Friends 2015

Following Priscilla's retirement from the Chair position from Kristin School, I have covered the leadership of Kristin Family and Friends as Deputy Chair.

This term has been a dynamic one.

We have focussed on welcoming our new Executive Principal, Tim Oughton and his wife, Heather. Both Heather and Tim have worked tirelessly to get to know as many members of the staff, student and parent community as humanly possible since their arrival. Many parents have had the opportunity to attend a "Breakfast with Tim Oughton". This has given parents the chance to talk together, to learn about his vision for the future and to hear about the Friends of the Foundation campaign.

Early on, Tim began to inform us of his intent to have the happiest school in New Zealand.

Given we operate in a world governed by technological advancements so extreme that we recently witnessed robotic mastery so precise and so powerful that we have successfully landed a scientific space probe on the back of a comet travelling at 55,000 km per hour, one could be forgiven for supposing that the happiness and wellbeing of a community is an assumed right of our children in their fast paced, ever changing world.

Educationalists, guided by research that informs their paradigm of knowledge, have increasingly observed the gaps in students' knowledge of the need to care for themselves and their ability to actually do so throughout their lifetime as a student. Teachers have long recognised the need to ensure the academic potential of each student is supported by their ability to be resilient and creative in a rapidly evolving world. Mindfulness and self awareness programmes, such as the Well Within programme now operating in the Middle School, work hard to foster students' ability to meet their hierarchy of needs.

Kristin Family and Friends can play an integral part in the Future Readiness of all Kristin students. KFF continues to strive to strengthen the building blocks of the platform that our dynamic community stands tall upon. By concentrating on weaving the threads of the fabric of our community, the parent body can put a spotlight on the growth of our community spirit and foster the ensuing benefits of community happiness generated from an increased ability to interact positively. One could successfully argue that by gaining enhanced cohesiveness and more sophisticated methods of supporting one another, we produce a protective effect to buffer community members from any tendency toward isolation or sense of loneliness. There is no doubt that KFF has a vested interest in successive happiness. If families are feeling strong, then we are more likely to be able to promote student happiness.

In response to the enhanced focus on developing the strength of the community, KFF has undergone some planned changes.

We have increased the size of the KFF Executive to fourteen. Each member has a defined role within the Executive with a principal focus on connecting our community with all three Schools and Kindergarten. Every Executive member is especially committed to fostering relationships across the whole School. New families at Kristin are a top priority for both the Executive and Class Coordinators.

Building on previous years work, new initiatives have taken place at the beginning of this year to ensure new parents coming into any of the Schools or Kindergarten are well supported with their

orientation. Every effort has been made to help parents settle into the Kristin environment as swiftly and easily as possible.

KFF is working hard to promote School wide links to affirm relationships between parents at any year level and match the willingness of parents offering support with any aspect of school life that requires parental input. KFF has ensured it has a continued presence at Meet the Teacher Evenings, Junior School Tours, both the New Parent Dinners and the Chinese Parents Committee meetings.

In addition to these commitments, KFF has actively supported Brendan Kelly and the Senior School to meet and support new Senior School families at Orientation Day.

KFF has directly helped and guided a number of new Senior School families that attended the above events. We remain in contact with these families and know that the help they received was useful to them to enable them to establish themselves and their young people in school life as quickly as possible.

In recognition of the needs of any community to know one another on a level that transcends the boundaries of school and home life, KFF has also embarked upon promoting togetherness and welcoming of all families by running a series of morning teas within parents' homes. The chance to invite a wide range of parents from all 3 Schools and Kindergarten to come together in a parent's home to talk and to get to know each other produced a highly positive response. So much so, that KFF has committed to arrange for these get togethers once a term. We are privileged to have had several parents offer the use of their homes throughout this year. We will continue to work to draw parents together from all aspects of School life.

Furthermore, as a response to requests from either School or the parent body, KFF has organised a number of Parent Education sessions. These take place within KFF meetings. In Term One, over sixty parents visited the newly commissioned Hub. Another group of parents participated in a tour of the Noises Off stage set including a special behind the scenes tour of the Performing Arts Department. The Kristin community also attended a Fallen Poppies Speaker Series lecture given by Richard Darrow, Specialist History Teacher at Kristin.

Class Coordinators continue to be the inner strength of our community, working hard to foster relationships and link parents to other families within their year group. The move this year to amalgamate KFF and the Class Coordinators from both the Junior and Middle Schools has been a wise one. It has simultaneously strengthened KFF and helped to make the job of being a Class Coordinator more efficient.

This year has witnessed the formal development of a KFF working group. This group numbers one hundred and thirty currently and is growing. Any parent wishing to contribute to any aspect of school life is encouraged to join the group. KFF will contact you directly with information about events that parents can be a part of and contribute to if they wish.

Building on KFF's previous work that focussed on developing and strengthening relationships between Kristin's cultural groups, KFF welcomes three Executive members who, in addition to working for the School as a whole, also represent the Chinese community. These members work hard to facilitate greater understanding and cohesion between KFF and the Chinese community.

The appointment of an Office Holder within the Executive primarily responsible for the development of the use of technology to promote KFF and to assist KFF to better inform and connect with Kristin parents through this medium has been purposeful. We aim to work hard in the coming year to rejuvenate and promote KFF through this method of communication. Please support this development by becoming a friend of KFF.

Lastly, to date this year, KFF has had over 125 parents help at least once at a School event. The sheer number of invaluable hours gifted by parents so willing to help speaks volumes about the health of this school. This skilled and knowledgeable resource is prized by KFF.

The yet to be fully tapped resources that the parent body can offer the partnership between School, students and home can be used both more fully and more effectively to strengthen the platform by which Kristin empowers students to obtain the future that they are capable of. Every parent has a place at school. Please know that you are welcome. We celebrate your unique abilities. We need your willingness to be involved more than ever in order to support the development of happiness and wellbeing of our community.

In summary, Kristin Family and Friends have worked together to continue the maintenance of strong traditions set up for the community by previous committees. We believe that these foundations, underpinned by connectedness and a willingness to cultivate community spirit, reinforce the School's commitment to equip all students with the personal hardware they require to live full, happy and highly successful lives. We will continue to strive to respond to this community's ever changing needs. KFF will work together with Management, Class Coordinators, Cultural groups, the Prayer Group and all parents to ready ourselves as a community to be the best we can be to enable our young people to flourish.

Nicky Shave  
Chairperson, Kristin Family and Friends.