

PRINCIPAL'S PĀNUI

17 June 2026

CONSULTATION IN ACTION

One of the strengths of the New Zealand education systems is how it enables and promotes the collaborative partnership between whānau and schools to help shape their direction. Consultation is not simply a requirement for us – it is an important way that we listen, learn and continue refining what we do.

Last Tuesday, we held a Special Character Parent Information Session and were grateful for the thoughtful feedback shared by those who attended. The discussion highlighted many of the strengths already present within our special character programme, while also identifying opportunities for refinement and practical ways we can continue to ensure our faith is not only taught, but genuinely lived out in the day-to-day experiences of our students. Thank you to everyone who contributed their perspectives and insights – keep a careful eye out during next term for an opportunity to contribute your thinking, if you weren't able to make the meeting.

Another valuable part of our consultation process is something we call a **Cottage Meeting**. These are informal gatherings hosted by a parent in their home, bringing together whānau connected through a class, team, year level, or other shared connection. The relaxed setting creates space for open conversation, allowing us to hear directly from families about what is working well, what helps them feel a sense of belonging, and where we can continue to improve.

Many initiatives that are now part of school life have been influenced by ideas and feedback gathered through these conversations – including parent information evenings, team newsletters, our Term Ahead communications, inclusion of a school app, and even aspects of our Food Festival fundraiser.

These gatherings continue to be one of the most valuable ways for us to stay connected to the experiences and perspectives of our community. **If you would be interested in hosting a Cottage Meeting, I would love to hear from you.** Please feel free to get in touch, and we can discuss what this might look like. Together, we can continue ensuring our kura grows in ways that reflect the needs, hopes, and aspirations of our whānau.

ELIM COUNSELLING HUB – A REMINDER

Throughout this year, we have been in conversation with the Elim Counselling Hub, exploring what a partnership with them could look like for both our ākonga and whānau. Led by the wonderful Lynley McCabe, the team offers a caring and professional service for individuals who may need a little extra support, guidance, or simply someone to walk alongside them during challenging seasons.

We know that life can sometimes feel a bit heavy, and having access to trusted support can make all the difference. Through this developing partnership, we hope to create another pathway of care for our community – one that is accessible, supportive, and centred on wellbeing.

At this stage, whānau who are interested in accessing support are encouraged to first connect with a member of our SLT team, who can then make a referral to the Counselling Hub. Families are not required to share full details of their situation; however, if information is shared, it will be treated with the utmost care and confidentiality. Our team can also help communicate next steps and provide further information about the available services.

Any enquiries can be directed to slt@elimhenderson.school.nz

MID-YEAR PROGRESS REPORTS

Later this term, families will receive their child's Mid-Year Progress Report. As we continue to refine the way we report student learning, we wanted to give parents and whānau an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the accompanying "[Understanding the Report](#)" guide before reports are released. The guide explains the different progress descriptors, effort and participation grades, and how the ARISE Learner Profile connects with the New Zealand Curriculum.

For added context around our obligations and methods for reporting progress to whānau, we want to assure you that all reports include personalised teacher comments that provide insights into each student's involvement and approach to school life, alongside their progress and achievement in English and Mathematics. These reports align with the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum and the Ministry of Education's guidance for this year, with further alignment due in future years. In light of this, families will notice some new elements within this year's report. We are approaching these changes thoughtfully and progressively.

Reports will be supported by Whānau Conferences in Week 2 of next term, providing an opportunity for students, parents, caregivers, and teachers to discuss learning, celebrate progress, clarify next steps, and develop a shared understanding of each learner's journey. In the meantime, we encourage families to read the attached *Understanding the Report guide* so that they're familiar with terminology when reports are released later this term. The guide uses a sample student name throughout to make the examples easier to follow. **Please read this as though it were your own child's name.**