

**16/03/09**

Your generosity makes a difference – thank you!

In times of economic uncertainty the school, like any organisation, needs to manage its finances with particular care. Fortunately Elmwood Normal School is financially well placed to maintain the level of high standards expected by its community. Parents will be noticing the current property developments happening, and there is still more to come! Future planning includes new fencing along Leinster Road, two new classrooms to be placed on site, as well as significant upgrades of the junior classes, administration and resource areas. While the Ministry of Education (MOE) provides the bulk of funding for these property projects the school board needs to dip into its reserves to add those extras through the variations that tend to emerge when building. For example, the MOE funding for the recently constructed new classroom only covered the cost of a basic plan and the board therefore needed to add its own funds to increase the floor plan, add toilets, a heat pump and the decking that is soon to be erected alongside.

Having the financial reserves to be able to add these extras is a result of the great responses we get from our community through the school's annual donation and fundraising activities. So this is a very good time for me to say a big thank you to the parents who assist the school through their financial support. Parents at Elmwood contribute 8% of the school's total funding requirements. The annual parent donation enables the school to meet the community's expectations and to maintain the level of education the children enjoy. The school requires approximately \$2.5million to fund teacher and support staff salaries, learning resources, property needs and administration costs. The MOE provides the bulk of this funding and is also responsible for the funding of major property developments through an allocation of funds over a ten-year property cycle. A government announcement last week to put more money into selected schools for property development included an additional \$180,000 for Elmwood. This is to support the improvements the school is planning, to increase administration and resource spaces – a very welcome and appreciated contribution!!

Schools are funded on rates per student numbers. Limited funding is also provided for property maintenance, vandalism, heating, lighting, water and a variety of additional funding for special needs education. The level of additional funding for special needs education depends on a "decile rating system". Decile ratings are indicators of the school's socio-economic base and are recorded on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high). This school's decile is (10) and accordingly receives a lesser amount to support the many extras that all schools want to provide.

Annual activity fees and donations along with a strong PTA fundraising programme allow the school to provide a range of "extras" that would not be possible otherwise. These "extras" can be seen in the impressive stock of library books, excellent curriculum resources, advancements in technology and also in the additional staffing provided for drama, music, special needs teaching, gifted and talented advisory support. Your efforts to support the school are very much needed and valued particularly in these times where many will be feeling a degree of uncertainty during the current economic times. Thank you!

Kevin Gooch  
Principal