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WEEK 6 KAWERONGO - NEWSLETTER

20 August 2025

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you to our school community for your support during our two day school closure, for all staff to be engaged in new literacy curriculum training. Our government is pushing through many changes in the education sector including several curriculum areas.

This year and into next year our curriculum focus will be literacy and numeracy. Frankly, to change and embed two significant curriculum areas, in the time frame the government has directed the education sector to do, is a major challenge. Next term we have another staff only day on Friday 24 October for numeracy curriculum training.

While these days provide the initial outline of why these curriculum areas are being changed, and what they will look like, many more hours of learning, practice and adjustment are needed initially spanning two to three years. This impact is not genuinely acknowledged and supported by those in government responsible for these changes.

Ngā mihi
Barrie Wickens
Tumuaki Principal

Board of Trustees Update

A big thank you to everyone who took the time to give us feedback on what you felt was important, when choosing our new school Tumuaki/Principal. We really valued hearing from you. To keep you updated on the process, the role has been advertised and applications close on Monday 25 August. The shortlisting and interview process will then begin. We look forward to making an announcement in Term 4.

Board Elections; hopefully you have all received a voting pack in the mail. Voting closes 4pm Wednesday 10th September 2025, and all instructions are in the pack. If you haven't received a pack, please email elections@taurangaspecialschool.nz Please remember to vote, it's really important to use this opportunity to have your voice heard, as to who is involved in guiding the future of our kura.

Nga mihi
Sandra
on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Important dates:

31 Aug-5 Sept	AIMS Games
12 Sept	Ra Whakangahau Kapa Haka
19 Sept	Last day of Term 3
24 Oct	Staff Only Day (no school this day)

Welcome Bay - Cheyenne's Class

Our sensory story this term is called The Magic Computer. It's about two sisters named Luna and Hazel who discover their computer has magic powers. A bright blue light beams out of the computer screen and they decide to jump through it. What they find is each time they jump, they end up in a new magical universe. Throughout the story they travel to a magical forest, a tropical island, another planet, a big noisy city and the snow.



At each destination there are a range of sensory items for the students to explore. They can see, feel, smell, taste, and hear different things with these items that make them feel like they are in that universe.

Welcome Bay - Kirsty's Class

Kea Class have been having lots of fun by exploring and making our own technology this term! We have been learning about cause and effect, how different technology helps us and expressing our likes and dislikes. We read a story called, 'The Couch Potato,' and explored a range of useful devices!



Room 2



Room 2 has been having a lot of fun pressing switches and buttons to make things work and get reactions.



Speech-language Therapy

Tips for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)!

From your SLTs :)

Speech and Language Therapy
The SLT team works to develop communication and eating, drinking, and swallowing skills.



Billie Hampton Edwards
Kaiarataki mātanga - Team Leader
Kaiwhakatika Reo Kōrero
Speech Language Therapist

Alysa Duda
Kaiwhakatika Reo Kōrero
Speech Language Therapist

Rebecca Scott
Kaiwhakatika Reo Kōrero
Speech Language Therapist

Kathleen Jones
Kaiwhakatika Reo Kōrero
Speech Language Therapist

The most important AAC tip is to **model** - using the AAC system for everyday communications with your child.

Just as children learn to speak by hearing language, modelling by pointing to words on the device while speaking, or using the device alongside your own speech will help them learn to use the AAC system and often increases the amount of spoken language they understand and use it too!

When you use the AAC system you are showing your child how it works.

Here are some ideas to help:-

★ **Model the AAC system during daily routines:**

Integrate the AAC system into your child's everyday activities like mealtimes, playtime, and storytime. This helps them see the AAC system as a natural part of their environment.

★ **Ensure access to the system:**

Make sure the AAC device is readily available and charged, just like their voice.

★ **Encourage, but don't force:**

While it's important to encourage AAC use, avoid putting pressure on your child. Let them explore and learn at their own pace.

★ **Provide ample wait time:**

When asking a question or prompting communication, allow sufficient time for your child to find and select the appropriate words on their device.

★ **Celebrate attempts:**

Acknowledge and praise any attempts your child makes to use the AAC system, even if they are not perfect.

★ **Work with the AAC team:**

Collaborate with therapists and educators to ensure consistent and effective use of the AAC system.

★ **Personalize the system:**

Make sure the system includes vocabulary relevant to your child's interests and daily experiences.

★ **Accept all forms of communication:**

Encourage and respond to all forms of communication, including gestures, spoken words, sounds and facial expressions.

★ **Create a supportive environment:**

Encourage family members, teachers, and siblings to use and respect AAC.



Hey Te Whānau - please also note!!!!

The last week of this term is Speech-Language Therapy Awareness Week!!!!

