

4 April 2016

Dear Parents

As promised in Toby's recent email, here is a full update from the Board of Trustees on progress with the Hall Strengthening Project.

#### A little background

First, just a little background for those families who are new to the school: the community-funded hall that sits on school land was closed by the Board of Trustees in August 2014 following an engineering assessment which concluded that the building met only 13% of the New Build Standard. Preliminary engineering concepts for remedial strengthening work were then commissioned. These showed that the work required would be straightforward, but expensive. The Ministry of Education does not own the hall, and never has done; the Ministry therefore has no role to play in funding the remedial work. The entire responsibility to fund the work lies with the Board of Trustees, as we are the sole owner and guardian of the hall on behalf of the community.

#### Project finance to date

The current estimate for the remedial work is \$455,630 (including GST). Over the last few months we have made tremendous progress with fund raising and we now have almost \$410,000 in hand for the project. This funding has been achieved through a combination of grants, donations and Board reserves.

It is very important to understand, however, that the project costing is *only an estimate*. Although prepared by qualified quantity surveyors, it is based on preliminary engineering concepts and the bottom line figure may well change once final engineering design work is completed. Until now, the Board had delayed commissioning the final engineering work until we were confident that the project was financially viable. That time has now arrived.

After months of waiting, we now have the results of all three of the major funding applications that we hoped would provide the foundation finance for this project. As you know, two of those applications have been successful. Our third application (to an off-shore fund which had been a contributor to the original building of the hall) has been declined. But we have received generous donations from our school PTA, the Wellington Japanese Businesspeople's Association and Mitsubishi Motors Ltd, to go alongside the grants and the Board reserve funding already committed to this project.



## Next steps

Although more funding is still required, the Board is now confident of the financial feasibility of strengthening the hall. This week we have instructed engineers to begin the final stage of the design work. This design work is expected to take around 6-7 weeks. It will produce the detailed drawings that will enable us to get a firm costing on the project and then go to tender. Once we have those final designs, we will also be in a position to confirm the extent of the funding shortfall and finalise the strategy that will be needed to meet it.

The Hall Grants Team, in conjunction with the Board, is already working on developing a strategy to raise further funds. Amongst other things, this phase of the fund raising is likely to include an appeal to the families (both past and present) of Crofton Downs Primary School and the Japanese Supplementary School, as well as the wider Crofton Downs community and residents of the surrounding districts. More details of this will follow at a later date.

It is very exciting for us to see this project now on the move, and we hope you share that excitement. The Board is extremely hopeful (barring unforeseen circumstances!) that we will see construction work underway by the middle of this year. The hall is a beautiful and versatile space and everyone misses having it available. We look forward to seeing both our school community and our wider local community back in the hall, and enjoying the opportunities that it offers.

If you have any questions about the hall, or an idea that you would like to discuss, please contact me on 027-715-9414 or by email: [mcinnes.robyn@gmail.com](mailto:mcinnes.robyn@gmail.com), or come and talk to me in the school playground.

Yours sincerely



Robyn McInnes  
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

