

PRINCIPAL PRIZE GIVING AND POROPOROAKI SPEECH 2017

Tihei mauri ora, nau mai, haere mai, tena koutou katoa.

E nga whanau, e nga kaiako, e nga tamariki...tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.

Good evening and welcome to our formal prize giving and poroporoaki for 2018.

Formalities first:

In the event of an emergency please make your way to the nearest exit and allow teachers to manage the students. Our meeting area is the carpark at the rear of the building.

You can access the Annual Report for 2018 via our school website by the end of this week - if data and percentages rock your boat.

And now my last formal speech for the year...for some reason teachers are seen as people who enjoy public speaking. We often get approached to do readings or speak at weddings, birthdays, funerals and other formal occasions. It is such a myth - teachers don't mind talking in classrooms, to children! But here I am, once again!

Last year I read a picture book called Wonder - all about the importance of kindness. This year I am going to tell a personal story about my own journey in relation to building resilience in our children.

My daughter, Stevie, is 26 years old. Today she had an operation and I wasn't there, because I am here. I am glad to be here, but I am sad not to be there with her at the same time.

When Stevie was 4 her 3 uncles offered her money to throw away her blankie, when she finally did she sobbed herself to sleep for hours. It was so tempting to just get the blankie back out of the trash, wash it and give it back to her, but I didn't.

When she was 7 she was disrespectful to her grandparents. I didn't let her go to her best friends birthday party as a consequence. On the day of the party, we both sat in our own bedrooms and cried, for very different reasons.

When she was 11 she was one of over 120 netballers invited to trial for the Manawatu Reps. She made it down to the last 25, but she didn't make it into the final team. When they didn't name her she ran to the car in tears. I gave her a tissue and told her to wipe her face and go back and thank her coach and the referees. She did it, but she didn't thank me!

When she was 14 she had her mobile phone taken off her at high school. She rang me beside herself. Between the tears and drama I heard, words like, it wasn't my fault, a friend had it at the time and a few other bits of useless information. When she stopped talking I asked her if she was allowed her phone at school. She said no and I said, well then.

When she was 18 and had a part time job at McDonalds and stayed out too late with friends partying, she asked if I would phone in sick for her. I said no but I did offer to give her a ride to work so she would have a few extra minutes to get ready and look presentable.

Today, she had an operation, nothing too serious, but I wasn't there and she understands why. She is fine, she has kept me informed throughout the day. Her partner, Josh is with her, she will bounce back. She is resilient, she knows you don't always win, she knows some days are harder than others, she knows she is the centre of my world but not the centre of the universe. She is resilient and I am grateful for that, today of all days.

Throughout this little journey called life she didn't always think too highly of me, she mumbled about other kids cool mums, she tried to slam doors (our house is old and a bit wonky, the doors don't slam very well), she cried, she blocked me and there were times she made me feel as if I was getting it all wrong. I wasn't at all sure if I was doing many things right and I'm still not. I often used the phrases, I love you but I don't like your behaviour or I'm your mother, not your friend. After 26 years we are good friends, very good friends but I am still the mum, I am still the boss and one day when she is a mum I will happily pass the baton and encourage her to build resilience in her own child while I get the privilege of spoiling them terribly and inexcusably.

And that is the story I share with you this evening. Take from it what you will.

I wish you all the safest and merriest holiday season. Be with family, spend more time with them than money on them.

Thank you all for another fabulous year for which I am very grateful. Thank you staff - you give me wings to fly and help me to be brave. Thank you to the Board of Trustees - your excellent governance allows me to get on with my job of managing. Thank you students, you give me the best work stories and thank you community, some of you I know very well and speak with often, others I wave to on road patrol and speak to rarely - but I know you are there.

My final whakatauki relates to nurturing our tamariki:

Poipoia te kakano,
Kia puawai.
Nurture the seed and it will blossom.