A Fond Farewell:

It is with sadness yet with fond memories that I say farewell to the wonderful students, staff, families and friends of the Wairoa School community. We have achieved a great deal together over the last few years; from the completion of the new buildings to the introduction of our new School Plan and community driven strategic directions, as well as all the many, many moments that go together to make up a day in the life of our special school. I have watched students grow and develop, I have said goodbye to three graduating classes of Year 12s and welcomed our new kindergarten students and families.

Wairoa School to me is a dynamic, growing and excelling school community; a community which supports individual needs and celebrates individual achievements. Over the past years I have been proud to have held the position of Principal of Wairoa School and I hope you all share that pride and passion and continue to work together to achieve the best for our students.

I leave at the end of this year to take up my new position as Principal of Minerva School in the Sutherland Shire and I look forward to working with another vibrant, future focussed special school community. Attached to this newsletter is a letter from Director Public Schools, Mr Rod Megahey, introducing your new acting Principal for Term 1 2016 – Ms Carmel Seeto. Ms Seeto is an experienced SSP Principal and I know that you will all welcome her and support her in her new role next term.

Look after each other and keep smiling 😊😊😊

NDIS info:

For everyone’s information I have included the link below to new and accessible resources about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) that can be accessed through the NDIS site. This information is available to all through the NDIS website and is a good source of information about the NDIS for students, parents and carers, families and schools.

Wairoa Christmas Fun Day:

On Tuesday we celebrated the end of another fabulous year with our annual Christmas Fun Day. A day of fun and games for all was guaranteed, with Santa photos, balloon bending, face painting, cupcake decorating, water play and sensory fun and it was all topped off with a sausage sizzle!

We again say a huge thank you to: Westfield Eastgardens who organised our VIP Santa and balloon bender; AMEX who supplied an energetic and enthusiastic troupe of volunteers, cooked a wonderful BBQ and had a great deal of fun; Hamish who was the best Man Friday ever; our parents and siblings who enjoyed the day and helped out; my amazing staff for their boundless energy, creativity and flexibility and most of all, our students who joined in with everything, shrieked with laughter and smiled beautifully for Santa!
We were able to get some lovely Santa photos of just about everyone, so in the next few days we will send home a copy in your child's communication book. 😊

**The Friendship Circle:**

Once again this year we received a fabulous donation of toys and gifts for all the students of Wairoa from the Friendship Circle. NSW Friendship Circle is a registered charity, which was established in Australia eight years ago. They describe their aim as: to engage the community in the lives of people with special needs to increase awareness and understanding of their and their family's daily challenges. The lovely ladies who collected and delivered the gifts to Wairoa have said:

We are excited to have received such a great response to the toy drive so we are very pleased to be able to share these gifts with the children at our local school. Wairoa School is an oasis of care and compassion in local community that everyone should support.

**Sydney Community College:**

Attached to this newsletter is a booklet produced by Sydney Community College in Rozelle. They are running some short courses to provide opportunities for students with disabilities, as part of the Inclusive Community Education Program. Courses run late afternoon/early evening. Students must be over 18, live with a parent or carer and live in Sydney’s Inner West or Eastern Suburbs. For further information about these courses, contact 9752 7571 or icep@scc.nsw.edu.au
Wairoa Christmas Cards:

Our Christmas Card orders have been a little light on this year 😞 Hurry!! Not long to go! Attached to this newsletter is an order form. A pack of 8 for just $10. Our Christmas cards will also be available for sale from Westfield Eastgardens from 5/12 at the gift wrap station!

Sydney Opera House 2015 Oddysea:

A great video about the Oddysea project which we did with Sydney Opera House and Sensorium Theatre is now on Facebook. Please take a look at https://www.facebook.com/Wairoaschoolssp/?fref=ts you may just be a star in the show!

Superstar Siblings!!

Today I was delighted and surprised to have a visit from the big brother of one of our students, Gus in P1. Gus’ brother, Max, is in Yr 5 and over the last 6 months he has been a veritable entrepreneur!! He has been busy raising money for his little brother’s school. Max presented me with a bag of coins totaling $189.15. He has used his own pocket money to establish a little business which he has been able to run before and after school and he has generously donated all profits to help his little brother at Wairoa.

Being the sibling of a child with a disability comes with its own rewards and its own special challenges. Max’s love for his little brother is beautiful but what is even more wonderful is the fact that Max is happy to talk with people about his brother’s special needs and in doing so raise awareness of people with additional support needs in our community who are, after all, someone’s brother/father/uncle or son.

You’re a star, Max!!

Dates for the Diary:

Monday December 14th
Yr 12 Graduation – 12pm

Wednesday December 16th
Christmas Assembly – 12:10pm
Last day of school for students

Wednesday January 27th
Staff return – professional learning day

Thursday January 28th
Students return – first day back for 2016!

Sara Swift 😊
Wairoa Christmas Cards for sale!

Wairoa students are offering some very stylish Christmas Cards for sale this year. As part of our recent Art Day students designed and created some beautiful cards, which have been scanned and printed onto photographic quality card. We have collected a variety of the designs into packs of eight cards and are now offering them to you for the very reasonable price of just $10 per set. As you can see from the samples below, anybody would be happy to give these cards to friends or family members and the money raised will go straight back into the school for the purchase of resources for our students – so much more meaningful than purchasing commercial Christmas cards. If you would like to order your Christmas cards, please complete the order slip below and return to school with your money in an envelope.

I would like to order _______ sets of Christmas cards at $10 per box
Name __________________________
Amount enclosed__________________
Date ordered ____________________