

## Wainui School Fencing Information Evening - Question & Answer Notes

**Question:** Is the fencing due to an individual student

**Answer:** Whilst the original areas of risk were identified due to a one student it has been advised by the Ministry of Education (MOE) that all these areas are a high risk to all students at Wainui School.

**Question:** Is this a recommendation or do we have to do it?

**Answer:** Please refer to the linked presentation that was presented on the fencing information evening. The Wainui School Board has engaged the services of a lawyer to ensure that we are up to date on our responsibilities in regards to Health and Safety, however our primary duty starts with eliminating the risk. Whilst we understand that we can never remove a risk, we can manage it. The MOE, as the landowner, has the right to erect whatever they want on the property. The Board are doing its best to ensure that this is a solution that is suitable for the whole school.

**Question:** How high will the fence be? The MOE are trying to lock parents out of school with 1.8m high fences. Will the gates be locked during school hours.

**Answer:** NO, Wainui School is not looking to lock any parents out of the school. All gates will be on a pull style latch, similar to a pool gate. We are looking to implement our own height of 1.5m around the front of the school and then 1.8 around the other identified areas. All students who will be able to reach the pull latches will still be able to access all areas of the school. Parents are still able to access the school grounds at any time of day.

The front gates will be closed from 9am until 3pm, but not locked.

**Question:** Other schools have lower fences. How has Health and Safety changed in the last 12 months?

**Answer:** The MOE have identified these risks to the Board and as such we can not ignore it. The health and safety legislation is broader now and the fencing codes have changed. The Ministry of Education have provided us with a solution as a recommendation to their standards. As the owner of the land the MOE are entitled to erect whatever fences they deem suitable to keep all learners safe.

**Question:** Will the court remain fenced?

**Answer:** No this is a temporary solution. We understand that there were some initial problems with this, but it has all been rectified and the school is doing their best.

**Question:** What is the time frame for the fencing?

**Answer:** We were hoping to do our best to install the fencing prior to the beginning of Term 4, however the need to consult further with the community means that work will likely start after AG day to avoid disruption.

**Question:** What is the boundary fence?

**Answer:** This isn't the physical boundary. It will fence off all hazard areas identified. These are all areas students should not be accessing without teachers anyway. These hazard areas are all identified in the linked presentation from the fencing information evening.

**Question:** How will the Board ensure that it retains the character feel of the school and not look like a jail fence?

**Answer:** The MOE wanted to put up 1.8m high black fences around the whole school. The Board have been working with the MOE to ensure that we maintain the character of the school that we all want and to ensure that we have a usable solution for how our school runs, including bikeathon, AG day, cross country etc. We have looked to create a safer entrance to the school with retaining, pathways and fences that utilise wood and rocks. We have shared these plans here and are happy to discuss this further to anyone interested, or who may have another solution.

**Question:** Who is paying for this?

**Answer:** The MOE are paying for their portion of the 1.8m and will provide us with a rebate for the section that will be a Board funded project.

**Question:** How much will this cost?

**Answer:** We do not know yet as are still awaiting full plans. Initial quote is around \$300,000 but this does not include everything as yet as we are still completing the plans.

**Question:** Last year the FOWS/PTA and Grants raised over \$100,000. Will they provide any further funding for the school for Teacher Aides, or is all the money we raise going towards Teacher Aides, sports gear and ICT?

**Answer:** The MOE will not provide any further funding for Teacher Aides. We are required to fund these within the school.

**Question:** Who will construct the fence?

**Answer:** MOE contractors will construct the majority of the fence and the Board have requested that we are able to take control of the front section of fencing.

**Question:** Why does there feel like there has been no transparency to the school community over this?

**Answer:** Please respect the position of the Board that we have been dealing with the MOE on this almost daily. Different departments have different opinions. The Board were provided with this information on the 9<sup>th</sup> September and the school were provided with the information at the end of June. The Board held a Board meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September where this issue was discussed and a process was started with the MOE on the 11<sup>th</sup> September.

**Question:** Are we aware that the creek being a risk has come up previously with the school and the community fought this with the MOE.

**Answer:** Only a few members of the board were aware of this. As this was approximately 15 years ago the Health and Safety standards have changed.

**Question:** Are we aware that our school pool fences are not legal?

**Answer:** They were built to the code at the time.

**Question:** What happens on fundraising events?

**Answer:** Gates will be open at 6m wide to allow access by vehicles when required. Teachers/volunteers will be required to managed these gates and students entering/exiting.

**Question:** What do the teachers think about the fencing?

**Answer:** We have had feedback from the teachers that it will drop their risk level

**Question:** This is philosophical. Is this for the good of a few students, or for the good of the most?

**Answer:** If something happens to a child within the community it will affect the whole community. Yes, there have been no serious harm incidents so far with the road and the creek, but this doesn't mean there won't be.

**Question:** When does the liability transfer from a parent to the school?

**Answer:** When a parent come on to the school grounds they are legally responsible for their child.

**Question:** I have a neuro-diverse child myself and have been told by AutismNZ that for most neuro-diverse children fencing is the worst possible option and can be seen to be a negative thing.

**Answer:** Whilst we understand that all children are different, we have had near misses on the driveway from children who are no neuro-diverse. We have had some major hazards identified within the school and as a PCBU we can not ignore those hazards?

**Question:** Can we contact the Ministry of Education directly in regards to this?

**Answer:** Whilst we cannot provide you with Wainui School's direct contacts, you are more than entitled to contact the Ministry of Education department, or your local MP directly.