



**Manawatu Literacy Association (MLA)
Annual General Meeting (AGM)
'The Fat Farmer'
20 March 2020**



President's Report for the 2019 Year

Kia ora e hoa ma,

2019 was another busy year for MLA. I had the pleasure of once again being the President, and working alongside an amazing team of motivated educators; keen to make a difference in our schools through Literacy.

Our **AGM** was a free after-school event held at Ross intermediate School in the Bilingual Unit. We had the privilege of spending time in Paiana Whaanga's classroom, learning much about the bilingual programme and the way Maori culture is valued and shared. It was truly an inspiring space to spend time in, and Paiana was clearly passionate about the tamariki in her care. Following on from Paiana, Jacqui Frost shared her presentation, 'How Growth Mindset and Mindfulness Impact on Literacy'. Jacqui had a very impactful message, and it was wonderful to hear a range of student voice and see the positive impact that Jacqui's work is having on the students at her school. My huge thanks to both Paiana and Jacqui for sharing your passion with us!

We hosted the annual **Kids' Lit Quiz** at Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School. The event is open to all students from Years 6 to 8. We had such a large number of teams from schools from Manawatu, Whanganui, Southern Hawke's Bay, Horowhenua, Wairarapa and the Central Plateau that we had to turn people away. Nga mihi to Jan Watts for organising this event so well each year. 2020 will be the last year that Jan will coordinate this event, and we thank her for the many years of tireless service she has given to this event. We thank those who have already expressed interest in coming on board to fill Jan's shoes!

In June we held two **Writing Workshops for Kids** with professional storyteller, Zeebong, at Central Normal School. These were popular sessions for Year 4-8 students, and catered for reluctant boy writers as well as Gifted and Talented Writers. We saw a real need to continue to provide such events for children in the future. The feedback from the children was very positive, and many teachers said they came back to school 'buzzing'.

September 8th was **World Literacy Day** and we sent a flyer to all schools with a whole host of ideas for how they could celebrate in their school or centre. Our Facebook page was also a great place to share new books, quotes, articles and news around Literacy.

In November we held a **Literacy Through Play** event at Winchester School, in their newly-renovated flexible three-classroom block. This was a well-received seminar with participants pleased to be offered the opportunity to hear from two schools about their practice with this relatively new teaching approach, and to spend time in three wonderful learning spaces. We were very grateful to Maree and her team for so willingly sharing their journey with us.

Unfortunately due to a number of factors outside of our control, we had to postpone our planned **Mystery Literacy Rally**, however we will be offering this in 2020, so keep an eye out! We can't reveal too many details (that's why it's called a *Mystery Rally*...), but I can say it will be fun and you'll get to see another school or two along the way!

The year was finished off nicely with **Books For Babies**; an annual project where we give away a new book to every baby born in Palmerston North (Birthing Unit) during the month of September. In 2019, Feilding Plunket Rooms also benefited with free books, and were treated to Margot sharing the importance of reading to babies and toddlers. This is such a lovely gift we can give these babies and their families, and a wonderful commitment that MLA continue to make annually. This year Rita Palmer purchased extra books in Te Reo to add to the titles MLA purchased which enabled even more babies to be given a new book, and added a bilingual flavour to our offerings.

We encourage you to think about **joining our committee**. It is a great way to make connections, grow professionally, and have input into supporting literacy in the Manawatu. We are a relaxed, fun group of educators, passionate about Literacy.

Contact us at manawatuliteracy@nzla.org.nz or visit our Facebook page. It could be one of the best professional moves you make.

Thank you again to our amazing MLA committee. I love working with you. Your passion and dedication keep literacy alive in the Manawatu and beyond.

We look forward to seeing you at our 2020 events. Kids' Lit Quiz is coming up (fingers crossed), we are planning an oral language event, and we hope to run another 'play-based' seminar too. Don't forget to join up as a member to get the 'member discount' on our events!

Smiles, Sonia Mudgway 😊

President