

Annual Report 2021

The North East Secondary Education Committee Inc. (NESE) advocates for secondary education in North East Christchurch. NESE has been actively informing, persuading and lobbying politicians and the Ministry of Education since 2009. Secondary education remains a high priority for families in our community. Committee members would like to thank all our supporters who share information with us and support us in other ways. We are grateful for your ideas and encouragement.

A Challenging Year

Covid-19 significantly impacted the education sector in 2020. NESE's original plans for the year were soon set aside. The priorities for the education sector quickly refocused to delivering education to students at home and reaching families who had poor access to online opportunities. It was amazing to see how innovative and hardworking people can be when challenged.

Consultation and Building Networks in the Community

At least we can say that 2020 began well. Amanda & Elissa made a presentation to the Coastal-Burwood Community Board in February. We were well received by the Board which consists of mostly new elected members, unfamiliar with NESE's work. We discussed NESE's role in the community and our goals. We gave each Board member a copy of NESE's booklet; NESE's activating change in your Community article; and maps showing the zones for our four local secondary schools.

NESE committee members continually network and meet people in the community to share ideas and gather feedback on education related issues. NESE Committee members maintain good working relationships with elected officials and community leaders. There were limited opportunities to network in 2020, but members made the most of those available. We continue to benefit greatly from their advice and encouragement.

NESE Guide – Investigating Secondary Schools Booklet

We are still proud of NESE's parent guide to secondary schools we wrote in 2019. We had planned to distribute the booklet more widely in 2020. The Lockdown and subsequent incremental opening of schools to enrolled pupils only resulted in cancelled secondary school open days, meaning students had to enrol for secondary schools with little information and without the usual school tours.

The booklet is available from NESE's website www.nese.org.nz. There is also a link to it pinned to the top of NESE's Facebook page. We hope to share the booklet more widely in 2021 if we can get funding or sponsorship.

Local Secondary School Zone Maps

One of NESE's small projects was to create a zone map showing the four closest secondary schools and their updated enrolment zones. This was posted on NESE's Facebook page and local noticeboards.

Casebrook Intermediate Enrolment Scheme

NESE Committee members wrote an extensive submission to Casebrook Intermediate's Zone Consultation. We made several strong recommendations. Our key recommendation was that Casebrook's school zone boundary should stop at the new Christchurch Northern Corridor which creates an obvious boundary, rather than cross it with a small in zone area as they proposed. Our reasons were there are limited safe routes for students to cross the motorway and that there are very few homes in this area. Homes in this area are closer to Marshland Primary School and are inside Marshland's zone.

Communication with Families

Facebook is a good way to communicate with our followers and to reach other local families when our posts are shared. Normally, we only post a couple of posts a month. In 2020 we published numerous posts. Many of our posts were shared extensively, well beyond our followers.

During the weeks of Lockdown alone, NESE's Facebook page had 28 posts as we strived to regularly provide educational information and links to interesting learning resources for families. We gained more followers during lockdown with families finding our content useful and relevant. When life gradually returned to normal many of them drifted away again. During Lockdown the posts with the strongest community wide engagement were those about:

- Making a weekly action plan
- Education on TV
- NCEA exam date changes
- NESE's Sweet Pea Seed Fundraiser
- The family lock down boogie
- Crafts
- Scavenger hunts

NESE's Facebook page currently has 205 followers. There was significant interest in our student focused articles. Across the rest of the year popular posts were:-

- How much does it cost to send a student to Secondary School?
- What are the benefits of attending your local secondary school?
- Thousands of Christchurch students don't attend their local school.

Fundraising

NESE runs on a shoestring with members donating their own resources and consumables, limiting the need to fundraise. One expense that requires payment is NESE's annual website hosting and domain name invoice. The Covid-19 Lockdown provided an opportunity to fundraise by selling Sweet Pea seeds which were sent by post. This fundraiser was popular at a time when many people were at home doing their garden. We raised \$180.50 selling seeds.

NESE's Management Committee 2020

Despite the extraordinary year, there were still achievements Committee Members can be proud of. NESE's Management Committee members are all volunteers from our local community. I would like to thank NESE's Management Committee members for their continuing commitment towards achieving our community's goals. They are a dedicated group of volunteers who in turn are supported by their partners and families. NESE's Management Committee 2020 was Amanda Williams (Chairperson), Greg Morehouse (Vice Chair), Elissa Smith (Secretary) Kerri Rowlands (Treasurer) and Committee Member Rae Mills.

Amanda Williams
Chairperson