

Maungaraki pupils talk sustainability

Ohariu-based Labour list MP Charles Chauvel visited Maungaraki School and heard from pupils about its Enviroschools programme last week.

The July 22 visit was Mr Chauvel's first to the school since he became Labour's spokesperson for the environment.

Opposition leader Phil Goff joined him on the visit.

Enviroschools Kura Taiao is about creating a sustainable world.

The programme began with the seed of an idea about young people creating healthy peaceful, sustainable schools, and has developed into a diverse and rich network of learning and action in communities nationwide, which is now even reaching other countries.

At the heart of the development of this programme are the strong connections between people; the trusting relationships, the commitment to long-term change and a culture of creativity and sharing.

Schools that are working towards sustainability play a significant role in creating sustainable communities by:

- * being role models of sustainable practices,
- * enabling students to be teachers among their families and peers, and
- * creating future leaders who understand how to make informed decisions and take action.

The Enviroschools process is different in each school but there are some main elements that schools undertake – such as creating a whole



Maungaraki School students perform a haka for their visitors. Opposition leader Phil Goff is seated on the left, next to Ohariu-based Charles Chauvel.

school vision, forming an envirogroup, working with the community and implementing action projects.

This was one of a series of four visits Mr Chauvel and Mr Goff made during the day.

The first was to Paparangi Kindergarten, where they talked to staff about the proposed budget cuts to Early Childhood Education providers announced by the National-ACT-Maori-Peter Dunne Government earlier this year.

Labour's Early Childhood Education Spokesperson, Sue Moroney, was also present.

Mr Chauvel and Mr Goff then visited Maungaraki School. After hearing from the students in the school's Enviroteam, which forms part of the Enviroschools programme, they toured the school.

The tour also included a visit to Khandallah School, to meet with the Principal and a representative of the Board of Trustees to discuss how implementation of the Government's National Standards is affecting their school.