

**PRESS RELEASE: New premises for West Auckland school honours late Kiwi legend.**

It is with great delight that the Villa Education Trust announces its new location for Middle School West Auckland – named after the late Kiwi legend Jack Ralston.

From Term 3, 2016, students currently studying at the school’s Glendene campus will relocate to larger, purpose built accommodation, off Lincoln Road, Henderson, named Jack Ralston House.

The building takes its name from the legendary New Zealand sports coach and businessman who passed away in 2012 following a battle with leukaemia, and will welcome up to 180 pupils, in Years 7-10, led by Principal Alex Metzger.

Middle School West Auckland first opened in February 2015 across two sites, housing up to 60 students at Pohutukawa Villa, in Henderson, and a further 120 students at two villas in Glendene.  With a specific academic focus and an Integrated Project Based Curriculum, the school, was recognised in an ERO report published in December 2015, as providing quality education for boys and girls in Years 7-10.

Jack Ralston House will contain three new villas, each home to up to 60 students, and will run alongside Pohutukawa Villa, on Waipariera Avenue, the school’s Te Reo specific unit.

Mr Metzger said: “We are delighted with the new premises for our largest West Auckland campus and are impressed with the building’s transformation – what has been created is a truly superb learning space which will be enjoyed by all who work and study there. We were keen to find larger accommodation in an accessible area with first class facilities to accommodate our growing roll and Jack Ralston House is the perfect space for us.”

***Jack Ralston House*** boasts high quality modern classrooms, individual work areas, science facilities, an art, design and technology suit, state of the art I.T. and Whanau area.

Villa Education Trust were honoured to receive the permission and blessing of Marg Ralston and family to name the building ***Jack Ralston House*** in recognition of a family man, outstanding friend, coach and mentor to many as well as an astute businessman whose career took him around the globe. Jack packed ‘life’ into his 64 years and was not only a great inspiration to others, but his passion for excellence and development in youth aligns with the values of the Trust. Whether Jack was meeting with President Mandela, working with Michael Jordan, coaching an Olympic team or taking a 15-year-old through his first bike/run session, his egalitarian, passion and belief in the best for all those he coached, mentored and befriended shone through.

Trust Academic Advisor Alwyn Poole said: “Jack had a way of making the person he was with, or talking to, feel like they were the most important person in the world and that they could and would be a champion. That is the spirit we will emulate for the young people coming to Jack Ralston House.”

Members of the public and prospective students are invited to view the new premises and meet the teaching team at an Open Morning on Saturday, June 11th, between 10-1pm.

**Full address**:

Middle School West Auckland, Jack Ralston House, 287-289 Lincoln Road (entrance from Soljan Drive, off Paramount Drive), Henderson, West Auckland, 0610.

**Background to the Villa Education Trust:**

The Villa Education Trust established Mt Hobson Middle School, in Newmarket, in 2002, where it’s academic model has been proven.  In 2014 the charitable trust opened a second school, South Auckland Middle School, with its third, Middle School West Auckland, opening in 2015. In addition, this year, the Trust has launched the Villa NCEA Academy (VNA) at Mt Hobson Middle School, offering NCEA levels 1-3 for students in Years 11-13.  The Villa Education Trust model for Years 7-10 was created to suit students learning in the 21st Century and brings an ideal means of teaching and learning in the information age.





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