



13 March 2020

45th Anniversary of ASB Polyfest starts next Wednesday

Organisers of the 2020 ASB Polyfest are continuing to follow the advice and recommendations of the Ministry of Health & Ministry of Education, and at this stage are proceeding with the 45th Anniversary of the festival next week at the Manukau Sports Bowl.

The current advice from the government is that - New Zealand does not have community outbreak at this point, and the risk to the public and participants is very low.

ASB Polyfest are monitoring the situation on a regular basis and have been in contact with Auckland Council around their decision to cancel Pasifika this week due to concerns about the risk of the virus being transmitted to the Pacific Islands by the hundreds of international visitors who were due to attend Pasifika.

In cancelling Pasifika Mayor Phil Goff stated that “the latest Ministry of Health advice is that New Zealand does not have a community outbreak of Covid-19 and the risk of a community outbreak remains low”. He went on to say that “Auckland Council’s specific concern was about the risk of the virus being transmitted to the Pacific Islands by attendees of the Festival.”

Organisers of the ASB Polyfest have put in place a series of additional precautions at this year’s festival in conjunction with health providers on site – St Johns and the Counties Manukau District Health Board. These precautions include hand sanitiser stations, availability of sanitary wipes and additional cleaning of all public areas.

We are also advising all participants and members of the public who feel unwell, have a cold, or are coughing and sneezing to stay at home.

This year’s ASB Polyfest sees a record 286 performing groups, performing on one of the six stages at the festival. These groups come from 75 schools.

Students will compete with pride and passion, and the honour of being top school in their respective culture. The record number of performing groups this year is spread across the six stages - *AUT Cook Islands Stage* (19 entries), *Te Whare Wanaga o Awanuiarangi Maori Stage* (50 entries), *M.I.T. Niue Stage* (18 entries), *University of Auckland Samoan Stage* (40 entries), *Massey University Tongan Stage* (58 entries), and the *Unitec Diversity Stage* (101 entries) which features cultures such as Chinese, Fijian, Indian and Korean.

The ASB Polyfest recognised as an important showcase of New Zealand’s diverse cultures and a celebration of youth performance. In addition to the traditional dance and kapa haka



performances, the festival hosts speech competitions on each of the Pacific stages, plus a Tokelau speech competition for the first time in 2020.

The 45th Anniversary of the iconic festival starts next Wednesday, 18 March with a special flag-raising ceremony at 7:00am. This is followed by the festival Powhiri at 8:00am where the festival guests (manuhiri) were welcomed by the hosts (Tainui & Pacific Island leaders).

The overall theme for this year's festival is –

“Mā roto mai i te Ahurea whirikoka, ko te whakaora tinana, hinengaro, wairua me te ira tangata”

“Healing the body, mind and soul with the strength of Culture”

For More Information:

Media Liaison: Dean Wilson
Mobile: (021) 637-636
Email: wilson.dean@xtra.co.nz

Key Details:

Dates: 18-21 March 2020
Place: Manukau Sports Bowl, Te Irirangi Drive, Manukau
Entry: \$7.50 at gate
\$5 earlybird special - book online now at www.iticket.co.nz
Preschool children are free
Website: www.asbpolyfest.co.nz