



CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 - 2025

## Purpose

To develop our learning community to best prepare students for life beyond school.

## Vision

We provide an inspiring, holistic learning experience so students leave school with choices, confidence and a sense of purpose.

## Values

<b>R</b>	<b>Realise your Potential</b> <i>Me moohio ki too pito mata</i>
<b>E</b>	<b>Engage with Purpose</b> <i>Kia uu ki te kaupapa</i>
<b>A</b>	<b>Act with Integrity</b> <i>Mahia ki te tika me te pono</i>
<b>C</b>	<b>Care for People and Places</b> <i>Manaakitia ngaa taangata me ngaa waahi</i>
<b>H</b>	<b>Have Courage to Succeed</b> <i>E riwha ai me niwha</i>

We actively reinforce the school's values to build a safe, inclusive and caring environment that encourages and supports students and staff to develop their key competencies, abilities and talents.

## Strategic Priorities

- Excellence in Learning
- Our Culture Including Sports, Arts & Wellbeing
- Leadership and Development
- Partnerships
- Operations

### Strategic Importance

CHS remains committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to ensuring its principles guide our practice.

## **1. EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING**

**CHS will provide a high-quality learning environment for all students to experience their own learning success.**

### **Actions**

- 1.1 *Cross-curricular literacy and numeracy programmes strengthened and embedded in Year 9 and Year 10 classes.*
- 1.2 *CHS will provide a high-quality NCEA programme in all learning areas for all aakonga at CHS.*
- 1.3 *Student agency in learning further enhanced by use of student goalsetting, learner/aakonga tracker, and academic mentoring.*
- 1.4 *CHS curriculum will be re-designed to ensure that learning remains relevant for our community with learners at the centre, providing appropriate academic challenge, provision of courses and development of student competencies.*
- 1.5 *Effective review and target setting informed by NCEA achievement data with a focus on ongoing performance.*

### **Measures / Outcomes**

- 1.1 *Improvement in Literacy levels in Year 9 and 10 students consistent with the ERO plan for implementation and review. This report will include targets and ongoing self-review established in conjunction with ERO and progress will be shared with the Board early in term 2 and 4. The measures of success will be defined in terms of academic performance (co-requisite exams, UE literacy) and staff-wide competency, using student feedback and data to inform teaching practice. NELP 1 & 3.*  
*School-wide literacy success was evidenced primarily in the co-requisite exams and levels of UE literacy see further detail below). Staff competency has increased with all staff sharing ownership of literacy while newly created leadership roles support faculty development and school-wide preparation for student success in assessment.*
- 1.2 *Level 1 curriculum defined for subject specific and schoolwide programmes and information shared by end of Term 1.*  
*Ongoing delivery of high-quality NCEA assessment supported by clear internal policies and processes, and clear and informative communication with the whole CHS community.*  
*The nature of the learning and assessment in level 1 meant that much of the student achievement was invisible across the year. This resulted in frequent conversations with the Heads of Faculty and Senior Leadership Team throughout the year. This was a combination of estimation of grades, tracking student achievement, getting close to the unit design and looking at the overall Level 1 programme and the credits on offer for our students. The Principal's Nominee did an outstanding job of keeping the Heads of Faculty fully informed of NZQA practice and latest developments.*  
*Maaori student retention and achievement data will be discussed with senior*

*leadership and targets set per faculty. This will be included in reporting to the Board. NELP 1 & 3.*

Heads of Faculty analysed Maaori student participation rates and achievement data. They presented this to the Board, along with a narrative of the changes they have implemented and the learnings they have made since reviewing their courses for ongoing involvement by Maaori students. This served well as a reflection tool for Heads of Faculty as well as providing insight to the Board. The Board have re-focused the question for 2025 to also include, engaging with the junior curriculum change work, boys' learning.

*Engagement with NCEA change package through leaders maintaining active connections with subject groups and regional/national associations to receive timely updates on developments. Termly reporting of updates in NCEA progress reported to the Board. NELP 3 & 4.*

Our Heads of Faculty and Senior Leadership Team are actively involved in national and regional groups. Support has been provided for staff to attend conferences and workshops to greater understand the change package. Overall, the level of accuracy for Level 1 implementation reflected this engagement, with very strong learning programmes. This resulted in a high level of success for our students.

#### **Overall achievement summary**

Staff deserve to celebrate the success of our students, particularly in Level 1 where the difficult conditions for the implementation of the new standards had no impact on our student academic success. This highlights how hard staff worked to ensure the Level 1 programme was meaningful, engaging and achievable for our students. Overall CHS students enjoyed very high pass rates, far exceeding the national and equity band – Level 1 73.5% vs 55.5% for equity band. Level 2 82.6% 77.9% for equity band. Level 3 82.2% vs 71.3% for equity band.

Literacy and numeracy were similarly successful with achievement that significantly exceeded national and equity groups comparisons.

Literacy comparisons with our equity group (the pairing is CHS vs Equity)

Level 1 – 88.5% 81.3% Level 2 – 95.9% 93.4%, Level 3 – 97.7% 95.9%.

Numeracy

Level 2 – 84.5% 77.9% Level 2 – 94.7% 93% Level 3 – 98.1% 95.9%

An area of particular focus through 2024 was the academic success and retention of our Maaori students. There has been an improvement since 2022 in academic performance (approx. 45% to 60% pass rates), going against national and equity group trends. This is promising as we observe comparable academic success for our Maaori and non-Maaori students in Year 13. The longer we are able to engage them in a meaningful learning programme, the better the outcomes are for these learners.

*Mechanism for the ongoing monitoring of student learning progress in the junior and senior school will be embedded. Goals will be set by the end of Term 1 and termly reflection meetings held with the student's Form Teacher.*

*Trial use of PAROT (SMS tool) in Term 1, to build a reporting dashboard to support the monitoring of student learning progress and meet Board needs. NELP 1, Priority 2.*

The academic mentoring of our students remains a priority. Goals were set by students and teachers had access to tools such as PAROT to assist with the mentoring conversations. The effectiveness of these conversations was varied however, and we will review the mechanism through 2025. The learning from 2024 is that using the form class is well intentioned, leveraging the strong relationships that are built there, and the intervention well-resourced with staff supported with tools and data to support the conversation. However, we have learnt that there is an inconsistency with approach across form teachers that is difficult to address and that the best placed person for the



conversations around academic goal setting and performance is the subject teacher. Improvements will be explored in 2025.

- 1.3 *The Curriculum Design Group (CDG) will establish a signature pedagogy for CHS by the end of 2024. The CDG will produce a plan for the implementation of the curriculum, including timelines and resourcing needs. NELPs 1-5.*

Excellent progress was made by the CDG. Initially they were building an understanding of the situation and prioritising the areas where change was needed. As the curriculum had remained unchanged for many years, this part took a large amount of time. This investment in understanding the situation, engaging with the research and exploring options was invaluable. We now have a clear path that is focusing on the reporting of student progress in their learning, the nature of the junior curriculum and its connection to the national curriculum and the tools our teaching can employ in most effectively delivering the curriculum to our students.

- 1.4 *Trial use of PAROT with a soft launch in Terms 1 & 2 to HoFs. Goals set by HoFs in Term 1 using provided templates.*

Ongoing review shared with school Board via scheduled presentations, including a particular focus on aakonga Maaori participation and achievement per faculty. NELP 3, Priority 6.

PAROT has been a useful tool for staff, presenting a large amount of data in a manner which is accessible and therefore readily usable. This, combined with the use of a within school Kahui Ako role have resulted in a schoolwide focus on data and how it can be used to improve outcomes for students.

## **2. OUR CULTURE INCLUDING SPORTS, ARTS & WELLBEING**

**CHS will actively reinforce the school's values and build a safe, inclusive and caring environment that supports students and staff.**

### **Actions**

- 2.1 *Review and continue to embed culturally responsive practice in the school culture, especially within the classroom.*
- 2.2 *Continue to reinforce the CHS culture and behaviours that are articulated by PC4L and within the REACH values.*
- 2.3 *Develop a framework for the definition of an inspiring holistic education including Arts and Sports at all levels in the school.*
- 2.4 *Health and Safety reporting and cross-pillar response to challenges.*

### **Measures / Outcomes**

- 2.1 *Introduction of Niho Taniwha with Te Whiria Kautawa leadership group. NELP 1, 2 & 3. Priorities 2, 3, 5.*

This was unsuccessful for several reasons. There was not a strong alignment with Niho Taniwha and the school learning programmes and this meant delays in trying to understand how to make it all fit together. The leadership group itself became

divided in the best direction forward for developing the cultural competency of our staff. Finally, the funding for PLD providers through Kahui Ako was only to focus on literacy and numeracy needs.

- 2.2 *Introduction of Restorative Practice, led by the University of Waikato. Staff-wide training and professional learning throughout the year. Behaviour Action Plan will be reviewed to ensure cohesion with Restorative Practice. NELP 3, Priority 6.*

This started well with a phased introduction across staff, so that middle leaders were well prepared for their roles in advance of their staff. The cohesion from a school point of view was strong with resources, the behaviour action plan, language and practices coming into alignment. Uptake was slower than expected due largely to the availability of the providers and the cultural shift that is needed at CHS to embrace the concepts. Restorative practice was used to good effect, particularly targeting emerging difficulties in the culture of some junior classes. The language from RP has aligned nicely with CDG and school-wide cohesion is emerging that is focusing on the essentials which underpin an effective culture of learning. Uncertainty exists around RP for 2025 due to funding reviews, however, we are ready to build on what we have established in 2024.

- 2.3 *By the end of 2024 a framework will be established articulating the curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students and mechanisms for celebrating success. This will include resource allocation, management structures and participation targets. NELP 1, Priority 2.*

This work will be realised over two years. The first piece of work was to create the infrastructure required for to increase participation and resource allocation. This has been done through the implementation of a TIC mechanism to secure greater involvement with staff and share the load of the anticipated increased participation rates. Once established work will be done in 2025 on the remaining part of this outcome.

- 2.4 *Drills will be held termly with feedback opportunities for CHS members. Online H&S reporting system is effective and will be maintained. EOTC approvals will be streamlined by moving online for the staff planning and approval process and parent permission gathering. NELP 1, Priority 1.*

This was well-established and maintained throughout 2024 with a variety of drills conducted and feedback sought. H&S feedback to Board was full and well-received by the Board members.

### **3. LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT**

**CHS culture nurtures ongoing learning and growth.**

#### **Actions**

- 3.1 *Embed the Professional Growth Cycle for ongoing professional learning.*
- 3.2 *CHS staff recognition package celebrating professional milestones, long service to CHS and offers opportunities for ongoing study.*
- 3.3 *Build leadership capability and cohesion to support ongoing improvements and professional development opportunities at CHS.*

#### **Measures / Outcomes**

- 3.1 *Professional Growth Cycle will be embedded in CHS with ongoing promotion, goal setting that is aligned with the faculty and school key priorities and completion by staff through their faculties. NELP 3.*  
*The PGC has been embedded at CHS and attention in 2025 will turn to making the most of the mechanism for cohesive goal setting and staff development. Work has been done to ensure strategic alignment and genuine engagement from staff with this tool for professional growth.*
- 3.2 *Staff recognition offerings established with a regular pattern for recognizing milestones. Reinforce the opportunities available to staff and celebrate the benefits for CHS staff and our community. NELP 3.*  
*This is well-established now with staff being recognised throughout the year and making good use of the 5-year study grant. The focus now moves to ensuring that it is well-maintained and a regular rhythm for recognition is embedded in our school culture.*
- 3.3 *Maintain a fortnightly meeting schedule between middle leaders and the senior leadership team that provides opportunities for feedback, reflection, and a regular focus on impact in areas of strategic importance. Analysis and evidence for these meeting will be supplied by the Strengthening Us team. This will align with regular reporting to the Board.*  
*Leadership development programme will be established in 2024 in cooperation with the University of Waikato. NELP 3.*  
*The leadership programme with University of Waikato has not developed despite the best intentions of CHS staff. Increased opportunities for in house development have been useful, such as staff taking on opportunities to act in Senior Leadership roles. This will continue to be the best mechanism for leadership development at CHS. It has aligned well with the 5-year study grant as staff are financially supported in their leadership development.*



#### **4. PARTNERSHIPS**

**Be Te Tiriti o Waitangi focused. Create and support authentic and meaningful partnerships with students, mana whenua, whaanau, staff and the wider community.**

##### Actions

- 4.1 Develop and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with key education, community and commercial stakeholders and groups, e.g. Mana whenua, Wintec, University of Waikato, ITOs (Industry Training Organisations), Waikato Tainui, Kahui Ako, primary industry providers, local businesses, Waipa Council, sports and cultural organisations, volunteer organisations, charities, SPANZ, CNISPA and WSSSA.
- 4.2 Use the annual communications plan to share evidence of the school's vision and purpose with the community.
- 4.3 Strengthen relationships with our alumni (for both local and international students) emphasising the effectiveness of our purpose and vision.

##### Measures / outcomes

- 4.1 *Progress with partnerships reported on monthly in Principal's report to the Board of trustees. Principal will co-lead Kahui Ako in 2024. NELP 4, Priority 7.*  
*Regular reporting conducted and engagement with the leadership of Kahui Ako has strengthened relationships across the community.*
- 4.2 *The school success in strategic areas is shared regularly with its community through events such as the open evening, publications (Prospectus, Yearbook and video material) and in alignment with the communications.*  
*We will review the current approach and employ staff to implement the communications plan with recommendations made by the end of Term 2. Metrics for measuring ongoing impact and reach will be established by the end of Term 3. NELP 1, Priority 2.*  
*Communications continue to strengthen and the part time employment of a staff member to assist with this has had a positive impact. This resource will be allocated in the budget for 2025. The role will need greater clarity, and this will be the focus in 2025.*
- 4.3 *The purpose and vision of the school depends on ensuring that students (local and international) have valid outcomes on graduation. CHS in conjunction with CHS Educational Trust will develop mechanisms for understanding alumni success beyond school by end of Term 3. NELP 4, Priority 7.*  
*CHS Educational Trust continues to be an effective mechanism for recognising student success and supporting ongoing positive engagement in school. Exploration around extending this to include an alumni network articulated the challenges with this approach. The resource required to establish and maintain an alumni network is more significant than anticipated and the resource is not available currently. This will be re-visited at the end of 2025.*

## **5. CHS OPERATIONS**

**Strengthening our CHS ability to deliver our purpose and vision; including finance, infrastructure and communication.**

### **Actions**

- 5.1 *Health and Safety implications of property developments.*
- 5.2 *Establish 'Sprints' within CHS leadership to ensure strategic goals are met.*
- 5.3 *Maintaining financial sustainability.*
- 5.4 *Human Resources preparation for school growth.*
- 5.5 *Developing the long-term plan for school investment in facilities and ongoing asset management.*

### **Measures / outcomes**

- 5.1 *Monitoring of Health and Safety will include S-Block and account for construction impact on R & D Block and M Block. Duty to be restructured in Term 1 to ensure sufficient across-school cover and a staff duty policy published and prominently shared. This will be reviewed termly to ensure effective ongoing cover. NELP 1, Priority 1.*  
*Restructuring of the duty expectations was completed with the introduction of R & D block. Following a request from the Board to improve coverage and the safety of the site a trial which involved changing bell times, was conducted in Term 4. Feedback was inconclusive. Was noted significant gains but amendments were needed to accommodate needs such as that of clubs. The trial will extend into Term 1 2025.*
- 5.2 *Sprint routines established and two Sprints completed per annum. Sprint 1 Term 1 Week 7 to end of Term 2. Sprint 2 Term 3 Week 3 to mid-term 4.*  
*Sprints have been a very useful mechanism for maintaining the focus of the Senior Leadership Team on items of strategic importance. The reflections at the end of each year so significant progress, largely due to the ongoing emphasis of the strategic items.*
- 5.3 *Effective budgeting, planning investment and shared financial stewardship across CHS in conjunction with the Finance committee of the Board.*  
*The collaboration with the Finance committee is a real strength with ongoing monitoring and identification of issues in 2024. These were discussed and a plan for 2025 established. Two primary areas were around staffing and the financial risks presented there. We identified areas of over-staffing and reduced this exposure and are prepared to do so again at the end of 2025. The other is the relief expense. The analysis of this spend was improved and that has resulted in a more accurate budget established for 2025. The next step is to use this information to explore efficiencies in the spend.*
- 5.4 *Support and Teaching staff roles are reviewed at end of Term 2 and during Term 4. This allows for future proofing of our staffing and response to increased population*





*demands and the adapt to changing expectations in education. NELP 1.*

To address the teaching shortage we leveraged connections that our Deputy Principal had from his time as a principal in South Africa. This was a successful trip that resulted in the recruitment of a staff member.

- 5.5 *The master property plan will be used to guide construction work and remediation of buildings. Opportunities will be explored to improve facilities while remediation work is in progress.*

*Opportunities to improve facilities in collaboration with the community will be explored and a priority list established annually. Viability of projects will be explored through the Board finance committee.*

The Board took the opportunity to fund two new science labs when the weather tightness work for R & D was underway. This will future proof the school as roll growth was already creating difficulties and the funding to realise increased spaces was not to be released for at least 5 years.

**GREG THORNTON**

Principal

