

Teena koutou e te whaanau o te kura tuarua o Te Oko Horoi,

Good afternoon to everyone in our CHS community,

This is the final communication from me for 2022 and what a challenging year it has been. The scale of disruption has made this the most demanding of all of the COVID years and one of the most difficult years I have experienced in education. Looking back on the past 3 years, I am incredibly proud of how we have minimised the health risks to our community, supported each other and responded to the endless shifting of goalposts. Although we have not yet seen the end of the disruption, we expect the scale of the interruptions to diminish. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge how difficult it has been for us all to manage living under this pandemic. The challenge we have faced since the start of 2020 has been unprecedented and the accumulated effect of this has been draining. I have seen the toll it has taken on a lot of our students, staff and members of our community and the effects are still evident in the behaviours and motivation levels of many students. Living through this pandemic has caused hurt and division in our community and some of these wounds will take time to heal. In just one example, there has been a quantity of people in our community who lost loved ones but were unable to farewell them properly and my sympathy goes out to you for the personal cost you experienced during the pandemic. However, we have endured the worst of the challenge and pressure and come through it together. In many ways it will be easy for us to move on from the health risks of COVID, but the social impact looks likely to take longer to bounce back from. It will take a combined effort to fix some of the emerging challenges such as motivation and attendance levels. From what I have experienced over the past few years, we are certainly capable of bouncing back as a community, but we need to make sure that we start with looking after ourselves. Please take time to re-charge and refresh over the summer – we all thoroughly deserve some time out!

There are a few pieces of mahi that we wanted to share with you as we wrap up 2022:

- Lockdown feedback
- Start of year details for 2023
- NCEA update
- The Uniform Shoppe

Lockdown feedback

This year we had two lockdown events, one from a bomb threat that was phoned in to the school from a US number and ultimately turned out to be a hoax and another triggered by the use of a realistic looking BB gun. The Police were pleased with how the school managed both of these incidents, commenting on the safety that was provided in each situation and the way in which students and staff were respectful of the situation. I have attached more specific information which reflects the internal reviews, de-briefs with police and the input from our community. This information has enabled us to further strengthen our processes in preparation for potential future events, however, even the Police acknowledge that each event is different, and we will need to be able to adjust according to the needs of the situation.

Start of Year details 2023

Every year we start with a staggered start and here are the [details](#) of this plan for 2023. The intention behind the staggered start is to start the year smoothly for each year level as the needs in each are different. From the way we welcome the Year 9s into the school with a powhiri and establish connections for them within their houses and with the student leaders through to helping seniors confirm their course of study for the year. These details are stored on the school website for future reference. Please note, school timetables will be available on the Portal shortly before students return to school. Year 9 and other new enrolments will

receive printed timetables during induction and further details about gaining access to the KAMAR Portal in the first week of February.

NCEA update

We have just finished two days of very valuable preparation in anticipation of the upcoming NCEA changes. These days were a provision from the Ministry of Education and we have made excellent use of this resource. I know that Teacher Only Days can place an extra demand on our community and thank you for your support as we prepare for these significant changes. The Ministry of Education has just [announced](#) further days provided for in 2023 and we will share more details of those closer to the time.

I will share with you some reference points, so that everyone is aware of the changes we are working through. Firstly, NCEA is going through a large change package which was started in 2019. NCEA qualifications were evaluated through consultation with a wide range of users (students, whaanau, teachers and employers) and we have been working towards the implementation of these plans. We have been a part of pilot programmes as it is a great way for us to build an understanding of what is involved and how best to prepare our students for success. We will share more details of what this change means for CHS through next year, but for now [here](#) is the overview and 'go to' page from NCEA, along with an updated [timeline](#), which has full implementation of the new standards in 2024. One change in particular to draw your attention too is the numeracy and literacy co-requisites, where all students will be required to meet this standard to receive their NCEA qualification (summary of this expectation is [here](#)). Deputy Principal, Carol Webb, will share more details on this shortly with the families of students for whom this change is relevant.

The Uniform Shoppe

We have changed supplier to SAS Sports and they are running both an [online service](#) and a store. The store is 14 Wilson Street in Cambridge. Phone them on 0273420020 or email cambridgeshop@sas.co.nz with any queries. We will share full opening details of the store with you separately via coming events and our website as soon as they are finalised.

I want to finish today by thanking my staff for all they have done for our CHS community this year and over the past few COVID disrupted years. It has been a time that has challenged us all in different ways. Throughout this time, staff at CHS have provided a safe and supportive space where students have been able to get what they need to progress in their learning and take part in as many 'normal' events as possible. When we think back to the journey from March 2020 and the health threat that this disease produced through to trying to make everything work this year with COVID in our community it has been a very long road. I know that we aren't in the clear yet, and that there are still flow on effects to deal with from this time as a community and as individuals. However, what I have seen from staff and our community is that we support each other well during the most significant of challenges and remain focused on providing our students with incredible holistic learning experiences. We have great plans in place for learning in 2023 and look forward to being able to start the year with more of our normal events, events which help reinforce the positive culture at CHS. However, that can wait until the other side of summer. We are ready for a break and I hope that you are also able to take some time for yourselves and enjoy a nice holiday with whaanau and friends.

Ngaa mihi nunui. Kia pai oo raa whakataa.
Have a great break.

Greg Thornton