

Teena Koutou,  
Dear parents / Caregivers,

It has been great to see the students back in school this week and helping them get ready for their final assessments. It is an understatement to say that COVID has been incredibly disruptive, particularly at this point in the year. It has been an anti-climactic finish to school for our Year 13 and some Year 12s time at school and it is frustrating for us all. It is important to remember that this is only one part of what has been an incredible year. I am currently flicking through the "hot off the press" yearbook and the students have had a wonderful year. There are some fantastic memories to hold onto and significant achievements that seem even more special given the challenges we have all faced this year.

Unfortunately, there are a more disruptions to share with you in today's attached message.

- Prizegivings and senior celebrations
- NZQA and the UEG explained
- Year 9 and 10 continue learning online
- Year 10 camps cancelled
- Guidance Team offering support

**Prizegivings and senior celebrations.** Normally, we have a range of celebrations to acknowledge the success of our students and congratulate them as they graduate from CHS. Unfortunately, COVID disruptions have forced us to change our celebrations for the end of the year. Where possible we have delayed these events in the hopes that we can hold them later, pending an Alert Level change. In an example, we have been informed that we are not able to hold our prizegiving until we are under Level 1, due to the nature of the gathering. Here is a summary of the changes we have needed to make:

- Ngaa Poutiaki, Sports, and Arts and Culture celebrations have all been delayed. We are looking at alternative ways of acknowledging our student success and/or the possibility of holding these events later in the year.
- Senior Prizegiving. We have needed to cancel this event as we have known it, as there is no way that we can host this size of gathering this term. We plan to celebrate the success of our Year 11 and 12 students early next year. We are also planning an event to publicly recognise our special award winners in Year 13 towards the end of the year. We will keep you updated as these plans develop, and the Alert Levels adjust to enable gatherings.
- Year 13 graduation and leavers' dinner. These both need to be cancelled, unfortunately, as they are not events which can be held under Level 3 conditions. We feel for the Year 13s in this situation as it is normally such a good finish to the year. It has been a great year, however, and they need to remember how much they have achieved even if they can't finish it off with the style, they have shown all year.
- House assemblies. This will be a great online video, acknowledging the great house spirit of the students in events from across the year. Awards will also be presented to students and the Year 13 graduates from each house profiled. It promises to be a great clip and we are looking forward to sharing it with you all.

**NZQA and the Unexpected Event Grade.** There has been a bit of uncertainty around what this means for our students. Essentially it is a mechanism that NZQA have always had at their disposal for when something unexpected significantly impacts on NCEA final examinations. In this instance, NZQA have chosen to use it to support students whose final examination performance and preparation has been impacted by COVID restrictions, like are currently in place for CHS. Basically, it

means the best of the school grade and the externally assessed exam grade will automatically be applied to a student's performance for these externally assessed standards of work. Students are still expected to sit the end of year examination.

**Year 9 and 10 students will continue with online learning.** We will be entering another week of online learning and will share the document with you first thing on Monday morning. There has been no update on when Year 9 and 10 students will return to school. It appears that the priority for now is to get the senior students ready for their exams before we consider what a safe return to CHS would look like for junior students. We will keep you updated with any changes.

**Year 10 camps cancelled.** It is at about this point in the letter that I feel keenly the disruption that COVID is causing. Unfortunately, we have no choice but to cancel the Year 10 camps. All the options for camps depend on a freedom of movement in our area, or between Alert Levels, with large groups of students. We have no confidence on when changes will occur that will enable this, and when we would then be able to plan for a camp to take place. We remain hopeful that we can run a scaled back local option later in the year for our students. We will explore this further as the Alert Levels change and we can re-assess what is feasible.

**Guidance Team offering support.** We are all aware of the pressure that this pandemic is placing on households. For some that can be temporary and for others you may need more support. We are particularly aware of the challenges students are facing in managing assessment demands and their preparation for final exams. The Guidance Team want to offer their support during these difficult COVID affected times. The best way to contact the team is to email them and arrange a time to meet. Whaea Kate, Jessica, or Marty Gleave can be contacted at the following address, [counsellors@camhigh.school.nz](mailto:counsellors@camhigh.school.nz) during school hours. For support outside of school hours please contact either 1737 (this is a free call or text option to talk with a trained counsellor 24/7 or Lifeline on 0800 543 354. Both options are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Kia ora, kia manawanui, kia haumaru te noho.

Stay safe and look after each other.

Greg Thornton