

Dear Parents / Caregivers,
Teena koutou ki a koutou,

A very warm welcome to Term 2, well at least it is once that frost clears. I hope that you enjoyed some great time with your family and whaanau and feel well rested. It was fantastic to see so many students enjoying the cross country earlier this week and a wonderful performance of Pride and Prejudice by our Year 13 students. There are more great things coming up for our students this term, so encourage your children to get involved. Some of the things that we are planning for this term are:

- Arts and Sports involvement. Winter sports are starting up again and many of our arts performances and events are happening throughout the term. Restrictions are eased compared to last year so there will be much more opportunity to get out and support our students as they perform and compete.
- Well-being week in Week 4. This is student led and has a range of activities for staff and students during break time to enhance our wellbeing.
- Library week in Week 5. This is always a great week where we promote the joy of reading, including listening to stories being read in an old school style on the mat in the library.
- Blood bank drive in Week 7. This is a really well supported event led by our students where we are reliably one of the best contributing organisations in the Waikato.
- Te Wiki o te Ao Maaori in Week 8. This week has a range of events and activities from the Maaori world including our Matariki celebration evening on Wednesday 22nd June.
- School Ball for Years 12 and 13 on the 11th June.
- Parent evenings with Junior on the 19th May and Senior evening on the 24th May.
- 2 public holidays (Queen's Birthday and the new Matariki celebration on the 24th June) and the Cambridge-wide Teacher Only Day on the 17th June.

So please keep an eye on the incredibly helpful 'coming events' for details and reminders. These are emailed out weekly and stored [here](#), along with all school communications, on our school website.

There are a few other things to update everyone on today:

- Health and Safety update with regards to COVID restrictions.
- New administration block and access to school.
- Parent evenings and isolation impact.
- REACH emphasis.
- Uniform reminder and expectations, especially around hoodies and nose piercings.

COVID restrictions update. The Board of Trustees discussed at length the best position for CHS to hold with the easing of restrictions around COVID. Of particular focus was the wearing of facemasks. The Board of Trustees has decided to monitor the situation. As it currently stands there is no mandate for the wearing of facemasks at Cambridge High School. However, if numbers in our community begin to climb again to levels we saw at the end of last term, then we will instate mandatory wearing of facemasks indoors for a minimum of two weeks. This decision will be made by the Principal and Board Chair and based on the quantity of student and staff absences that are related to COVID (either due to the illness or isolation requirements). In taking this position the Board want to stress their support and encouragement for students and staff to wear facemasks. We have a very supportive environment here at CHS and we strongly encourage the wearing of facemasks indoors. As a sign of this support I will continue to wear a facemask indoors. It does make a difference for reducing the risk of transmission, but this remains an individual's decision at this stage.

Administration block all done. We are delighted to move in to our new offices and think they look fantastic. Gone are the days of dark narrow corridors and a building that leaked. Apart from the bright new feel, there are a few functional changes that you will need to be aware of when you come in.

Student office (for absences, student payments etc) is now conveniently close to the front visitor's carpark. To add to the efficiency, you can come up to the exterior window beside the main entrance, do what you need to do and leave again.

For all other access, come in the main entrance to the reception area. Carmen will be able to help guide you and sign you in, as needed.

Parent evenings. These are really well subscribed, and we are looking forward to meeting with you and discussing your child's learning. Just a couple of things to note. We encourage you to bring your child to the meetings as it is great to discuss their learning with them present. We are also aware that isolation requirements may increase absence. As with normal absence please contact the teacher directly and organise another time. This could either be via a phone call or Teams meeting on another day. If staff are unable to attend the evening, we will let you know as soon as is practical and they will arrange another time with you. We explored supporting Teams meetings on the night, but this was too difficult to support across the numbers attending our evenings.

REACH emphasis. For the next few weeks, we will be emphasising the A from our REACH values. This is 'Act with Integrity'. Here is the [Act with Integrity Video](#) we are using to promote this in form classes. It will be followed up with an emphasis in class, including the use of our new rewards system for Year 9 students. All Year 9s have a card with a QR code on it. When they are meeting expectations and Acting with Integrity staff will scan the QR code and give them points online. Students can then login to a webpage and spend these points on a range of items. We intend to roll this out to other year levels also and will trial its effectiveness with Year 9s firstly.

Uniform expectations. A part of our drive students to Act with Integrity is taking pride in wearing their uniform. It makes a great statement of respect when students wear their uniform correctly and represent the school proudly. We are aware that it is always a bit of a challenge for students to transition back into wearing uniform after a break, and we have been reminding students over the last couple of weeks of expectations. Please make sure that your child(ren) are well-presented in the school uniform (visit the [school website](#) for full details about our uniform). Your support makes a significant difference in how the students present. A couple of key areas we are targeting currently are hoodies and nose piercings. It would appear that one of the benefits of wearing facemasks is that students could get their nose pierced and no one would be any the wiser. If your child has pierced their nose, they will need to wear a clear stud or sleeper. We have these at the student office if needed.

Once again, welcome back. I look forward to seeing many of you in the audience for performances and alongside the sports field this term.

Kind regards
Ngaa mihi

Greg Thornton