

Ata marie ki a koutou

Good morning everyone,

I have just returned from several fixtures as a part of Winter Tournament Week. It has been 3 years since the week was run and it is so good to see it back in the calendar again. As a Cambridge community we can be so proud of how our students represented us. The week is an excellent opportunity for our top players to finish their season together, taking on a range of secondary schools from around New Zealand in a sport they love. There were some excellent performances, lots of moments that enabled personal growth and even a few results that went our way over the week. Notable successes were the Boys U15 Basketball, beating Ōtūmoetai College in the A Grade of the Zone 2 Junior Secondary Schools Premiership and the 1st XI Boys Hockey team winning the Olympic Stick tournament beating Orewa College (Auckland) in penalty shootouts. And over the weekend the NZSS champs were completed with our Premier Girls Lacrosse team winning the tournament, beating St Peters in the final, and our Premier Boys Lacrosse team finishing third. We will share full details of the results from the week separately and acknowledge the players in the formal assembly in Week 8.

On behalf of the school community, I want to thank all of those that were involved in making this week happen for our students. We had staff, parents and other members of our community helping with coaching, managing, physio, head chef duties and more across the week. It was a huge undertaking, but they did it willingly because of the positive impact it has and the learning that comes from the week. Thank you for your energy, care and passionate support you have shown our students and our sport. It is a formative experience that they will take with them for many years to come.

On Friday, the Cambridge community also hosted the combined schools Kapa Haka Festival at the Don Rowlands Centre. This very successful day of performances from all schools in our rohe was made possible by the input from CHS students and staff. They did an incredible job bringing the day together and I was particularly impressed with the performance from CHS and the adoration and respect they enjoyed from the audience. Ngaa mihi nunui ki a koutou. He rawe te mahi o teenei raa.

There are a few other things that I need to share with you this week:

- SADD week and wellbeing committee events.
- BoT elections.
- NCEA information powerpoint.
- Update on measures to relieve pressure at CHS.
- Ongoing vaping concerns for our youth.

SADD week and wellbeing committee events

This week students are running events in support of SADD week (Students Against Drunk Driving). They are mocking up a crash and having police visit the school to help our students learn of the dangers associated with driving, in particular while under the influence of alcohol and drugs. They will finish the week with Mike King coming onsite to speak to our Year 9 and 10 students about mental health and wellbeing. This topic is always important, but it is particularly relevant after the challenges of the past few years. We are really fortunate to have Mike King join us to share this important message and thank the student leaders of the wellbeing committee for organising this week and equipping our students with knowledge that will help keep them safe mentally and physically.

NCEA information

With the school examinations just around the corner in Week 8 our principal's nominee (the person who manages all NZCEA assessment details) has run a series of assemblies with our senior students. I have attached a copy of her powerpoint here to help with the preparation and conversations around home. These exams are really important as both a practice run before the final assessment and a grade that we can come back to if we need to provide evidence of learning in the case that a student cannot sit their final exams.

Update on measures to relieve pressure at CHS.

Thank you for your support over the past few weeks with the measures we have needed to put in place. It has helped relieve some of the additional pressures that have been under. There will be no changes this week as we want to maximise in class time and prepare our students for the school exams. Please note the final day of the term is for senior students who are in practical subjects only. This day is invaluable for those students needing to finish their work as they will have full access to staff and facilities as they catch up after the disruptions of the year and finalise their projects. Details of who is required and the expectations on students for the day will be shared directly with the student and home closer to the time.

Vaping concerns.

As I have mentioned previously, vaping is a real challenge for us and other schools nationwide. The marketing machines of vape companies have taken full advantage of pitching a new option for youth to try. It can be a useful tool for those wanting to cease smoking, but we are seeing too many of our youth pick it up as a new habit. We continue to speak out on the issue in our forums and challenge it with discipline measures and conversations with home, but it is something we need to continue to address it as a community. The risks associated with vaping are significant and we are concerned about the impact it is having on the health and behaviour of our youth. I encourage you to have a look at these resources, challenge its use and reach out to support other parents in our community to stop our youth from getting addicted to nicotine through vaping.

<https://vapingfacts.health.nz/the-facts-of-vaping/>

<https://www.youthnow.me/parents/resources/>

<https://www.smokefree.org.nz/help-advice/learn-about-vaping>

<https://www.hpa.org.nz/programme/education/young-people-vaping>

<https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/healthy-living/v/vaping/>

Kind regards

Greg Thornton