



Hillcrest High School

Te Kura Tuarua o Tihipuke

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Dear parents and caregivers

Ministerial visits

On Wednesday 31 March we will be hosting Minister Sio who is Minister of Pacific Peoples. Minister Sio will be in Hamilton for the day and he is visiting our school and looking at the opportunities and programmes we provide for our Pasifika students. This is the second Ministerial visit at our school this year. Earlier in the year we hosted Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education along with Nicholas Pole, Chief Executive of the Education Review Office (ERO) and Jan Lee, Deputy Chief Executive Review and Improvement for ERO. The Minister and ERO staff were at school to talk to us about our experiences of the new ERO review format for which we are a pilot school. I will be joining the ERO team as a Leadership Partner from the beginning of Term 2. I will still continue in my capacity as Principal of Hillcrest High School, but I will be included in ERO reviews to other schools intermittently over the course of the next 12 months. I am looking forward to the challenges this brings and the learnings I can gain and bring back to Hillcrest.

Tick reports and parent interviews

Staff are currently completing tick reports for both junior and senior students. These will be emailed to parents in readiness for the junior parent interviews on Wednesday 31 March and senior interviews on Thursday 8 April. We encourage parents and caregivers to attend parent interviews and engage with your child's teachers over their progress so far this term.

Students at risk of not achieving (SARONA)

We are currently gathering information from staff regarding those students who are at risk of not gaining their NCEA qualification. Through our Hauora programme we have allocated Kaiaarahi (HOF's and SLT) who will work alongside and support our Hauora teachers. One of the roles of the Kaiaarahi, is to mentor and support those students at risk of not achieving.

Changes to NCEA

You may be aware that changes to NCEA are planned to be implemented beginning with Level 1 in 2023 (therefore affecting our current Year 9's). The Ministry of Education has allocated nationwide planning days to assist staff in the planning process. One of these days was held last year and three others are planned for this year - Wednesday 19 May (Term 2), Thursday 12 August (Term 3), and Tuesday 23 November (Term 4). One change to NCEA that has been implemented this year are the conditions regarding resubmissions. From this year resubmissions will only be made available for students wishing to improve from a Not Achieved to an Achieved grade. Resubmissions will not be provided for students wishing to progress from an Achieved to Merit or Merit to Excellence grade. We will continue to provide updates of the process and changes as planning proceeds.

NCEA results for 2020.

2020 was a difficult year for our staff and students with lockdown, online learning and parents becoming temporary teachers. Our latest NCEA results have been released, and despite the implications of last year, nationally NCEA results were quite promising.

A summary of our results are as follows:

- Level 1 NCEA 82%, compared to 71.6% nationally.
- Level 1 Numeracy 90.5%, compared to 83.5% nationally.
- Level 1 Literacy 88.8%, compared to 85% nationally.
- Level 2 NCEA 87.1%, compared to 80% nationally. Best Hillcrest results ever.
- Level 3 NCEA 66.4%, compared to 72.3% nationally. Less than nationally which is disappointing. We are looking at strategies to improve these results for this year.
- University Entrance 54.4%, compared to 53.6% nationally.
- Strong percentages of students continue to gain Endorsements (Merit and Excellence).
- Level 4 Scholarship. 19 Scholarships, including two outstanding Scholarships. Well down on previous years, but talking with other Principals about results from their schools, it would appear all results are down on previous years. My view is that COVID had a significant impact. We will be working hard to return to the level of success we are accustomed to in Scholarship.

BYOD reminder

Please remind your son/daughter to bring their fully charged Chromebook or Laptop to school each day, and to return any school Chromebooks that have been borrowed but are no longer needed. We have a waiting list of students who are in need of a loan device.

Volunteers for Reader Writers

Our school is looking for volunteers who would like to be Reader Writers. During the course of the year Reader Writers work with senior students who are sitting internal assessments to support them with reading the assessment, writing the student's answers down or carrying out both tasks for the student. The Reader Writer is asked to work with the same students so they become familiar with how the student operates. The Reader Writer is also needed for the external assessments at the end of the year. A Reader Writer needs to have good literacy skills, be a neat writer and have patience. If this is something that interests you please contact Christine Williams (Assistant Principal) either by phone on 021 443 183 or by email: cwilliams@hillcrest-high.school.nz. If you are invited on to our Reader Writer team you will need to fill out a police vetting form. We look forward to hearing from you.

Easter break

We are all looking forward to a break over Easter beginning with Good Friday on Friday 2 April. A reminder that school returns on Wednesday 7 April.

Kelvin Whiting
Principal