



Titiro Whakarunga Ki Nga Puke

TAITA COLLEGE

"Pride through Success ♦ Honour through Service"

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5 August 2013

Kia Ora, Talofa and greeting to parents, whanau and students

Welcome back to Term 3. At the college we find ourselves at the mid-point of the year and an excellent time to review progress for learning and achievement. This year the focus has been strengthening the partnerships between families and the school through learning conferences and plans.

It was wonderful to see so many parents attend the parent/teacher evening on 31 July. It is critical that parents have a clear understanding of student progress and achievement and it is vital that we are able to communicate this as clearly as possible. For junior students this understanding is based on the curriculum levels of the subject (Level 4-5), and for seniors it is about understanding the number of credits a student has achieved to date and the career and vocational pathways that a student is working towards.

To this end, please note that we have the next round of learning conferences in Term 3 for seniors in Week 4, on Friday 23 August. These learning conferences will work much like the conferences in Term 1 where parents, students and lead teachers will meet to plan and review goals for this year, and 2014. It is a critical time, given the Taita College exams begin on Friday 13 September until Friday 20 September. Please note, the school will not run classes on this day, but provision will be made for any student who chooses to attend school.

Key dates for the term:

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| 12 August | Te Roopu Awhina – Te Whararuruhau Marae (6.00 pm) |
| 20 August | Celebration of Sound (7.00 pm) |
| 21 August | Sacred Heart Poly Fest (4.00 pm - 9.00 pm) |
| 23 August | Learning Conferences for Senior Students (school closed for instruction at all levels) |
| 26 August | Careers Week Begins |
| 28 August | Careers Expo & Option Choice Evening (3.30 pm - 6.00 pm) |
| 31 August | School Ball |
| 2 September | Tournament Week Begins |
| 10 September | Mural Exhibition (2.30 pm) |
| 13 September | Senior Exams Begin |
| 23 September | Tu Tangata |
| 27 September | Last day of Term 3 |

Leslie Raymond Mackaskill

It is with sadness that I acknowledge the passing of Les Macaskill, Principal of Taita College from 1992 - 1996. A number of staff and students attended his funeral at St Patrick's Catholic Church in Paraparaumu on Thursday 18 July in respect for a man who made a significant contribution to the college and to the lives of thousands of young people. Les was responsible for supporting the college through the change in governance due to Tomorrow's Schools and was known for his intelligence, kindness and sharp wit. The students represented the school with pride and honour and were involved in a haka as his coffin was brought out of the church. The family was very thankful for the support and kindness that had been shown to them at this sad time.

Te Roopu Awhina

An invitation is extended to all parents to attend this meeting on Monday 12 August in the school marae at 6.00 pm. This will be a community meeting to share recent successes and gain important feedback from parents, teachers and students. The agenda will be to discuss Te Reo Māori in the college, performing arts (including kapa haka) and provide information about Careers Week.

Year 9 Success

Congratulations to our Year 9 students who have completed their first half-year at secondary school and are well on their way to achieving their JCEA certificate with merit or excellence. I am very proud to see that these students, particularly a large portion of them achieving now at Level 5 & 6, which is well above the national average. I am in no doubt whatsoever that this is due to the excellent work being done at local primary schools and at Avalon Intermediate in preparation for students coming to Taita College.

Earthquake Drill

A full site inspection following the major earthquake on Sunday 21 July was carried out by property staff and I am pleased to report that there was no damage to the school that could be seen from this inspection. On Wednesday 31 July we had a full school earthquake and fire drill. We have purchased three 200 litre water containers which are stored in the boiler house and the emergency water containers under the hall stage have been filled with fresh water.

This is an opportune time to check the option you chose regarding civil defence for your child. On the enrolment form you were asked to indicate in an emergency whether they are to stay at school or make their own way home. If you need to update your child's information, please contact the office.

Attendance

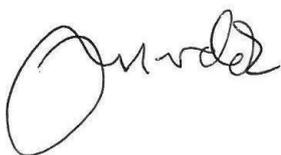
Please be mindful of your child's attendance which you can view on line through your KAMAR portal. If you do not have a password, please ring the college office. All attendance needs to be considered. While sickness or a family occasion does take young people away from school legitimately, the greatest impact for non-achievement is lateness and absence, not ability or brains. Having contact with your child's tutor teacher by email or phone is often a good way of checking whether students are making the most of their learning. Our goal is for all students to achieve – attendance in every class will help to ensure this.

Te Ara Reo Māori

The Koraunui Marae in Stokes Valley is running a free course for 36 weeks on a Wednesday night from 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm. It is available to New Zealand residents over the age of 18 and will include one noho marae and 3 one-day wananga. This is an entry level course and amongst the expected outcomes will be the ability to correctly identify the Māori alphabet, greet both formally and informally and give a 5 minute presentation about somebody famous of your choosing. Please contact the marae on 939 6665 if you are interested in attending – there are a few enrolment spaces available.

Visit by Mr Ray Wallace, Mayor of Hutt City

This morning in assembly we welcomed our mayor to the college. Mr Wallace is a strong supporter of our school and spoke about the importance of punctuality and hard work.



John Murdoch
Principal