

Dear Parents / Caregivers,
Teena koutou ki a koutou,

I hope that everyone enjoyed the long weekend with a celebration that is unique for Aotearoa New Zealand. I know there were a lot of celebrations around the country and families that enjoyed time together at the start of a new year. Thank you to our staff, students and the community who put on the CHS Matariki celebration on Wednesday night. It was an enjoyable night out with student performances, activities and food.

Sorry it has been a while since I last communicated home, it has been a very busy term. We have been under pressure this year managing COVID disruptions alongside the demands of a heavy cold and flu season and the normal operations of a school. We are not alone in this, however, as schools I speak to from around the country have also found this an incredibly demanding time for our staff, students and the community. I want to thank our staff for the resilience they have shown in managing this disruption and supporting each other and our students during this time. They really have done an excellent job in the face of such challenging times. Receiving positive messages of support and appreciation from our community during this time has really helped keep our energy levels and spirits up. Please keep letting us know when we get it right either through our recognition system (kapai@camhigh.school.nz) or by getting in touch directly.

Finally, my apologies for the length of today's email. As a result of the busyness of the term there is somewhat of a stockpile of important things to cover today:

- Te reo and Matariki links.
- NCEA update and the importance of submitting work now.
- Confirmed ERO report.
- Board of Trustees upcoming election.
- COVID and sickness update.
- Voice of rangatahi survey.
- Vaping resource link.

Te reo and Matariki links. Following on from our Matariki celebrations I wanted to share a few resources that have been shared with us to help build our understanding of the event (see attachments). I also acknowledge that te reo Maaori is being used much more frequently in daily life around New Zealand. Within teaching it is a requirement of our ongoing registration that we continue to develop our use of te reo so we know that this can sometimes feel like an unfamiliar place. It can be a bit hard to know where to start but I have found the following resources to be very useful in learning more about te reo Maaori:

Te Aka, the online Maaori dictionary <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/>

Kupu, an app from Spark and Google which uses your camera to help you translate into Maaori <https://kupu.co.nz/>
[Koorerorero](#), an app from AUT with beginner lessons in te reo.

NCEA update. In the past couple of years students have received support from NZQA to achieve their NCEA qualifications, but there is no indication that this will occur again. NZQA are regularly monitoring the assessment evidence and reviewing their position. What we do know is what measures were used previously. Learner Recognition Credits (LRC) were used to assist students who had already achieved some credits by adding additional credits to their total. Unexpected Event Grades (UEG) were used as a last resort to replace final examinations with internally assessed work. If either of these measures were used again it is vital that students have met checkpoints in place and submitted work. We are growing concerned that students are not completing work or meeting deadlines. We will be communicating directly with home if this is the case and ask that you recognise the importance of completing and submitting work on time. This will ensure our students have the best chance of academic success in 2022. If you have queries about assessment requirements or would like to seek an extension you will need to contact Mrs Jo Bartch (JBH@camhigh.school.nz), as she is the Principal's Nominee and handles all matters to do with NZQA and NCEA assessment at CHS.

ERO report. Please find attached the confirmed ERO report. ERO now have a new approach to evaluating schools based on an ongoing relationship with an adviser as opposed to the previous where it was a one off visit. This process is very thorough and took place through most of last year. This report is an excellent reflection of the high quality of education offered at CHS and we are proud of this recognition of the excellent learning experience we provide our community.

Board of Trustees upcoming election. Elections will be held for new members of the Board of Trustees on September 7th. This is a really important role to ensure the ongoing success and future direction of Cambridge High School.

COVID and sickness update. We have been carefully monitoring this situation and are pleased to say that the numbers of absences due to illness are decreasing. As I mentioned earlier COVID has been challenging for our whole community and us as a nation and put bluntly we all feel over it. I encourage you all to take some time out over the term break and catch your breath. It has been tough and the evidence shows that the worst of the disruption is behind us. Going forward, we will continue to monitor attendance and strongly encourage the CHS community to wear facemasks to reduce the risk of transmission of respiratory illnesses and ask you to stay home if you are unwell.

Voice of rangatahi survey. We have sent out an invitation to all students on behalf of Sport Waikato. This is an important survey which provides useful information about the quality of physical activity available for our students. From Sport Waikato – Young people are important to us, and experiences during secondary school years can inspire or discourage a life-long involvement in physical activity. We want to ensure that rangatahi have great sport, physical activity and active recreation experiences at school and the more you know about a population group, the better placed you are to provide opportunities and experiences that meet their needs, ultimately supporting a lifelong love of being active. Please encourage your child to complete the survey and help provide their perspective.

Vaping resource link. Vaping has been a major concern for us for a while now and it is alarming how many of our youth are taking up vaping. It is a useful tool in helping smokers to stop smoking, but that is not how it is being used. We are seeing more addiction like behaviour as students use this powerful and potentially very harmful alternative to cigarette smoking. [RadioNZ](https://www.radioNZ.co.nz/) have been running a series of articles recently and I wanted to share some resources that came from this work in the following website. It is a fantastic site which can hopefully help you at home to be aware of some of the risks associated with vaping and give you options for discussing it with your child.

<https://dontgetsucked.in.co.nz/>

Thank you once again for your support over the term. I appreciate the many ways we have worked together to ensure we continue to provide the best learning experiences for our community in the face of the many challenges. I hope that you can all take some time over the coming weeks to recharge and reconnect with each other.

Kia ora, kia manawanui, kia haumaruru te noho.
Stay safe and look after each other out there.

Kind regards

Greg Thornton