



Kia ora e te whānau

We have now completed our first full week at Level 4 lockdown. My thanks for the cooperation we have received from our parents and whānau in assisting in the engagement of students with their learning at home. Given the sudden announcement and ongoing uncertainty over the length of lockdown, this has been quite a different experience from last year's lockdown challenges. We are indebted to parents who are actively prompting their children to get online and engage with learning programmes. All teachers have worked hard in developing learning opportunities and are grateful to the parents who are supporting their efforts. Our expectation is for students to participate in online teams' meetings and complete set learning tasks. The bonus of learning from home is students can be flexible when this occurs. We don't expect them to sit for five hours on end and engage in schoolwork. That would be unhealthy. Finding a balance between completing tasks and their personal time is the key to making the most of learning from home.

The goal posts have been significantly shifted for our NCEA students pending the announcement to push back external examinations by two weeks. NCEA external examinations will now begin on Monday 22 November 2021 and run through to Tuesday 14 December 2021. The new examination timetable can be accessed at nzqa.govt.nz. The Level 1 MCAT and DigiCAT (Maths and Digital Technology assessments for Year 11 students) have also been shifted and will now be on either 28 September 2021 or 30 September 2021. We have also pushed back our college practice examinations and they will now begin a week and a half later starting Monday 13 September 2021. The purpose of these changes is quite simply to give more preparation time for students who are sitting these important examinations. It makes it fairer and will provide better opportunity for them to excel.

We were all disappointed to hear of the cancellation of the 2021 Winter Sports Tournament week. This is the second year in a row this has occurred. This cancellation affects over 30,000 students from around New Zealand. We had several teams going away and while we are understanding of the reasons for the cancellation, we are still bitterly disappointed for our students, coaches and management who have worked tirelessly on and off the field to create this opportunity. Let's hope post lockdown there are some new opportunities that will present themselves.

We will know by this afternoon what the next phase of our COVID response looks like. Regardless of what is announced the college will be ready to adapt and be flexible to the meet the needs of our students. We are determined to do the best we possibly can in these uncertain times. Wishing everyone a safe and relaxing weekend, and all going well, we will see our students back on site before too long.

Nga mihi nui

Dave Hunter
PRINCIPAL