



# Ashburton College

Individual Excellence in a Supportive Learning Environment

Issue 39  
23 November 2023

## News

### Message From The Principal

#### NCEA Exams

There has been a fair amount of media coverage over this year's round of NCEA exams, particularly those that are online.

A change to any long-established system such as external exams will always cause a degree of uncertainty and angst for staff, and staff are always concerned about problems that might upset or disadvantage their students.

NZQA is aware of this and had taken steps to ensure, and were confident, that the online system would operate effectively. However, for this year's Level 1 English exam there were 20,000 students enrolled to do this exam online.

NZQA was aware of this number but, unfortunately, their network slowed after 18,000 students logged on. NZQA was monitoring the load on their network and, on finding it was slowing down around the 18,000 students' mark, they closed it to any further log-ons. This decision obviously affected 2000 students nationally.

Fortunately for Ashburton College, only three of our students were affected. While this did cause undue stress on them and the exam supervisors, the back-up plan was put into action.

The back-up plan, via NZQA in case of such an eventuality, was always to revert to using the personalised hard copies of the same exam and completing their exam in hard copy written form. All students nationally had this fall-back option, and these papers were then available to be downloaded for each individual student impacted on by lack of online access.

NZQA is working on details of, and will advise, their approach to ensuring that students not able to log-on are not disadvantaged.

At College, as no doubt for a number of schools, our students already had experience of logging-in, having completed their English Derived Grade exam online.

My thanks go to our key staff who ensured that our students were well-prepared.

#### Ashburton College School Board

Our School Board does a fantastic job of governing our school. I have worked with many Boards and, as a College, we have benefitted from our current Board's collective wisdom.

With regard to Board membership, people tend to self-doubt if approached about considering standing for a school's Board.

A strong quality any member can bring to the table is common sense. A balanced world view and a willingness to consider all points of view, are part of the requirements/factors/contributors to being an effective Board member.

Boards are run as a democracy, with each member having the same voting rights.

So, at some stage in the future, please consider putting in some time as a member of a Board.

Our current AshColl Board has been ably led by Presiding Member Jen Muir and Deputy Presiding Member Tony Gilbert. My thanks to them both.

#### International Students

Another issue in the media has been the re-emergence of international students within the New Zealand education system. As we know, Covid destroyed the global international school market and it also hit us at AshColl.

All schools and universities are now in the process of reconnecting with agencies and contacts. As a country, New Zealand's handling of the Covid pandemic has only enhanced our reputation as a safe place to be, which is a helpful perception.

Agents report plenty of interest in students returning to New Zealand, and we look forward to welcoming more students to College.

#### Rangitata Block

Later in January we will be officially opening our new Rangitata block. There will be some time set aside for interested people to have the opportunity to come and visit our new block. We will set out times later for various aspects of the opening and these will be advised.

Ross Preece  
Principal • Tumuaki



### Events

This means that both the Meningococcal ACW&Y vaccine and the Meningococcal B vaccine are available free of charge to 13 to 25 year olds who are entering into, or in their first year of, certain close-living situations.

#### Vaccine Opportunity for Ashburton College Students

An opportunity was provided at Ashburton College on Monday 30 October for students to access the vaccine.

This was taken up by approximately forty-five Year 13 students.



(Pictured left): A busy waiting room in the College's Pastoral/Whare Tauawhiwhi Suite, with Public Health Nurse Pam Eaden in the doorway.

Ashburton's Te Whatu Ora Public Health Nursing representatives undertook the process, with the nurses' positive, calm approach much appreciated by the injection recipients.

(Pictured left, left and right): Ruby Leverton being administered to by Public Health Nurse Dee Wheeler.



(Pictured below, left and right): Lily Campbell under Pam Eaden's care.



The work of the Meningitis Foundation and those who have lobbied for free access to vaccination is acknowledged with appreciation, as was the opportunity for students to have the vaccine procedure readily available at College at their end of school year.

### Level 1 New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills Camp

Twenty five students from the College's Foundation Skills Class had the opportunity to take part in a camp, from 06-08 September, held at the South Canterbury Raincliff Youth Camp and Conference Centre.

This was part of the programme to develop leadership and communication skills and to work towards credits for NCEA and the Foundation Skills Course. Head of Department for Foundation Studies Liz Carrick said that the camp was held over three days and two nights. She said the students were amazing for the whole camp and all have followed up with some excellent newsletters describing what they had done and what they enjoyed.

Spotlight at night was high on the enjoyment stakes, along with Fairlie pies! Liz said that this camp will now become a regular feature of the programme.

Further through this newsletter you can read of the successes of the students undertaking this programme.



(Pictured left): The class at Raincliff, with instructor in the foreground.

### Language Weeks

In this newsletter we take a final look at another of the Language Weeks co-ordinated by the College's Cultural Committee who, with their Committee Head Edelmá Kelsall, have contributed amazing work organising innumerable language recognition weeks within the College.

The recognition of the various ethnic language weeks during the year is an inclusively valued focus for staff and students.

### Fijian Language Week

#### Nisa Bula Vinaka, Happy Fijian language week!

This was the final language week held, during the week commencing 09 October, before the senior students' year on-site finished.

#### The programme

The programme followed a pattern which has worked well during the year.

#### Monday 09 October: Fijian Ako Quiz Competition

This digital quiz was sent out to Ako teachers, with an answer sheet, for teachers and their Ako class to read through and answer general knowledge questions about Fiji. The questions referred to Fiji's traditions, sports, rulers and islands.

The first Ako class to complete the quiz with correct answers earned themselves a Winner's Trophy and a free lunch.

#### Try yourselves on a sample of these questions:

- What does the light blue on the Fijian flag represent?
- Which of these three crops is not on the Fijian flag – banana, sugar cane, rice.
- What is the capital of Fiji?
- What are the national languages of Fiji?



The Union Jack and St George's Cross are symbolic of the once close connection with Britain. The light blue field represents the Pacific Ocean.

The sugar cane, bananas and coconut signify the rich lush land and its agricultural production. The dove is a symbol of peace.

#### Tuesday 10 October: Backdrop Day

Students were able to take pictures in front of the backdrop, during the lunch break. The Masi (Fijian tapa cloth) is made from the bark of the paper mulberry tree.

The Masi signifies Fijian culture and is used at many important occasions as a gift or decoration.



In front of the Masi (pictured above left, left to right): Nisha Sharma, Barsha Shrestha, Manuli Morawakage and Astha Gurung; and (pictured right): Nuku Penisoni.

#### Wednesday 11 October - Interview and Frame

Committee members went around school asking quiz questions to test students' general knowledge on Fiji, as well as taking this opportunity for students to learn more about Fiji.

Questions were related to the Ako quiz questions as well as to phrases posted on the Student Executive Instagram page. Phrases were also posted throughout the week.

'Toso Viti Toso' stands for 'go Fiji go'. This was used to show encouragement towards the Fijian Rugby Team as they played in the Rugby World Cup.

Students who participated were rewarded with lollies!

(Pictured right, left and right): Shylah Johnston and Mere Apaipo in the photo frame.



#### Thursday 12 October - Fijian Touch

Fijian Touch was played on the field. In this game the first pass has to go backwards before the ball can be passed forward. Four touches, or a dropped ball, meant ball handover to the opposing team. After scoring, the same team can take the ball again and aim to score on the other try line.

Team Yellow and Team Green contested this game, with the winning team being Green as they scored the tie-breaking score, 5-6.

#### Friday 13 October - Fijian Cultural Attire Day

On this day Fijian students were able to wear their cultural attire to school.



(Pictured left, left to right): In cultural attire Rishaan Kumar, May Penjueli, Disa Rayawa, Sera Vatuwaliali, Haedyn Kumkee.



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### Congratulations

#### Foundation Skills for Students – Awards Ceremony

Over the past three years, three teachers - Deputy Principal of Papatoetoe High School Dr Karen Dobric, Lead of Learning Support Esther Williams from Pukekohe High School, and Ashburton College's Liz Carrick (Assistant Head of Senior School, Head of Department Foundation Studies and In-School Community of Learning for Foundation Skills and Pathways), have been working on the development of the Foundation Skills programme for secondary schools.

This included working with personnel within the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Sector to develop and design the twelve Unit Standards for the Level 1 New Zealand Certificate for Foundation Skills. This meant an inordinate amount of work and monthly trips to Wellington to work on these.

The trio has now established a subject association and have several schools now wanting to implement the programme which we are supporting.



(Pictured above): Liz Carrick welcoming students and whānau members to the Awards presentations, held in the College Auditorium on Thursday 26 October.

#### College Students Experience New Zealand's First-Ever Prize-giving in Foundation Skills Level 1

Our students at Ashburton College are the first in New Zealand to complete the Foundation Skills Course.

Liz Carrick said that, if the success of these ākonga is anything to go by, then the future is looking bright. She emphasised that it has been an absolute pleasure to watch these young people become proud and eager for success, saying they now have the grounding to support them, no matter what they choose.

The whole premise for the course is to re-engage learners and help them to find a pathway that suits their skills and long-term goals.

Liz affirmed that the New Zealand Certificate for Foundation Skills Level 1 is here to stay, with work on the Level 2 programme already underway, by a rating panel within which Liz is writing the standards currently.

#### The Awards Presentation

In introducing the presentations, Liz said that this was New Zealand's first-ever prize-giving for the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills Level 1, Version 3, using the new suite of standards specifically designed for this course.

The purpose of this course is to re-engage learners, support them and provide pathways into further education at Polytechnics, YMCA's and Universities. It also acts as a stepping-stone into apprenticeships and the workforce.

The course provides students with the chance to develop self-management, resilience, leadership and communication skills within communities. It also focuses on developing the literacies needed for life such as numeracy, reading and writing. The students also gain confidence in interacting within groups, wider society, across cultures and in the workplace.

Alongside of this course students have worked in their other subjects to gain additional credits, plus working on their NCEA numeracy and literacy credits. Some students have achieved these while others are still working towards them.

The course itself is worth 60 credits, and students who have achieved this course can continue on to undertake NCEA Level 2 should they wish to.

Liz credited the students, saying they were an 'awesome bunch' of young people who have developed qualities and attributes they should be proud of, saying that we as a school are certainly proud of them.

#### Acknowledgements to staff

Acknowledgements to staff who have worked with the students were made, with presentations being made to the staff as a small token of thanks for the mahi put in.

Liz acknowledged the invaluable work and skills of each of the teachers supporting the programme, and called on student Jenna Halkett to make a special presentation to Nicki Wilding.

As Learning Support Assistant, Nicki has sat alongside virtually every Foundation Skills student in one or more of their classes and has been Reader-Writer helper and supporter. Nicki is the one person who sees the students in all of their classes.



(Pictured right, left and right): Nicki Wilding being presented with a thank you gift and card from Jenna Halkett.



(Pictured above, left to right): Staff members involved in the programme: Teacher of one of the Foundation Classes John Cook; Foundation English Teacher Sean Hewett; Teachers of Foundation Mathematics Stacey Monk and Jason Vannini; Learning Support Teacher and Reader-Writer support Nicki Wilding; Foundation English Teacher Amy Dean.

#### Presentation of Student Awards

Each student was called across the stage, and credited with a personalised and perceptive citation from Liz Carrick which emphasised the strengths they had shown within the programme.

The awards were then presented by the various Foundation Skills programme teachers. We highlight four of these below.



(Pictured left): Brilee Hurst listening to her citation. Brilee was described as a quiet, industrious worker who is kind and caring and just gets on with her work. Her high level of results spoke for themselves.

#### Brilee went on to be awarded the Top Student in Foundation Studies Award at the Year 11 Prize-Giving.

(Pictured right): Austin Soal receiving his award from Amy Dean.



Austin was described as an inspiration, a quiet and effective worker who persevered until his work was completed, gaining an impressive number of credits.

(Pictured below): James Andrew is presented his award from Head of Junior School John Cook.



An amazing young person, James has developed as an individual and put in an amazing amount of mahi to gain both his First Aid Certificate and his Learner Driver's Licence, as well as achieving academic credits. Being a pretty good cricketer, the class is regularly updated with cricket scores and facts and figures.

### Coming Events

Please note - \* denotes subject to confirmation of student availability.

- 20-24 \* Aoraki Junior Sports Week
- 24 Orientation Morning (New Zealand Incoming Year 9 students), 8:45am-12:30pm
- Year 10-13 Dance, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Hansel and Gretel, Isaac Theatre Royal, Christchurch
- 27-28 Year 10 Outdoor Education Bike Trip (Group 1), Ashburton River Track, Hakatere
- 30 NCEA exams finish
- 30-01 Dec Year 10 Outdoor Education Bike Trip (Group 2), Ashburton River Track, Hakatere
- December 01 Te Whare Manaaki Prize-giving and Afternoon Tea, Te Whare Manaaki, 1:30pm-3:00pm

- 03 Year 13 Graduation Dinner (refer below)
- 05-06 Year 10 Outdoor Education Bike Trip (Group 3), Ashburton River Track, Hakatere

- 07 GOT (Get Out There) Day
- 08-09 \* NZSS Track, Field and Road Championships, Ngā Puna Wai, Christchurch

#### 2023 End-of-Year Final Day, Prize-Givings, Events

Parents, caregivers, family/whānau, friends and interested community members are most welcome to attend the remaining two 2023 Prize-givings.

- December 03 Year 13 Leavers' Graduation Dinner, Hotel Ashburton, arrive at 6:30pm, seated at 7:00pm.
- 11 Year 9 and 10 students' final day. Year 9 Prize-giving, 5:30pm, Ashburton Event Centre. Year 10 Prize-giving, 7:30pm, Ashburton Event Centre.