



Message From The Principal

NCEA Exams Underway

Our NCEA exams are underway. For all secondary schools there is a remarkable change of emphasis regarding the importance attached to external exams.

When I was in Year 11, School Certificate exams were very much 'all or nothing', which placed huge pressure on students.

Now students can achieve a pass in NCEA with a healthy diet of internal assessments. This means that, for the students who are satisfied with passing, there is a distinct lack of enthusiasm for serious study or spending three hours in an exam. This is a nation-wide trend and the students attempting the exams are either aiming for *Merit* or *Excellence* Endorsement; or they have 'left their run late' and they need some extra credits to pass the year.

Interestingly, the changes to NCEA Level 1 which apply from 2024 will, by design, force students to complete external assessments in a range of subjects.

Netsafe Webinar

My thanks to all whānau members who took the opportunity to access the Netsafe Webinar that was organised and advertised for last Tuesday evening. As most of us will appreciate, the misuse of social media has the ability to cause serious harm.

In my experience many parents/caregivers are aware that their child has received potentially harmful messaging via some form of social media. However, it is also very clear that many parents/caregivers are unaware of the potentially harmful messaging their child may be creating or sharing. We work very hard to ensure the well-being of our students but, of course, we cannot control the messaging and content that happens outside of school.

2023 College Cellphone Policy

Ashburton College is working to develop learners who are engaged in learning for life, collaborative, connected and creative. We want to ensure that Ashburton College is providing an environment where students are encouraged to develop these skills, attitudes and attributes.

Our aim is to enhance both the social and academic curriculum. We have gathered evidence over the past year which shows the impact of cell phones on student learning and ability to relate to others.

Strengthening skill sets such as oral language requires time spent talking to other people. This is developed through formal and informal situations, both in class time and during interval and lunchtimes. Conversations are required in order to work together, to connect and collaborate. The ability to relate and engage positively with others also plays an important role in enhancing the culture of our school.

After due consideration, our Board of Trustees has made the following decision, effective from the start of the 2023 school year:

1. From the beginning of the school day until the end, the phone is to be turned off and kept in a bag (not in a pocket). This includes interval and lunchtimes.
2. If a phone is seen by a staff member it will be confiscated.
3. Refusal to hand over the phone will become a pastoral matter.
4. Year 13 students will be allowed discreet use of cell phones.
5. College management will provide more detail on the day-to-day management of this policy in due course.

There are three drivers behind this decision:

Firstly - cell phones are designed to be addictive and distracting, and not having them around will improve our learners' focus and ability to stay on task; thus improving results and achievement.

Secondly - some students are creating or sharing content that is harmful or incites others to do something inappropriate, which causes disruption to a school environment.

Thirdly - the lack of phone accessibility will encourage students to interact with others or be active at break times. Currently, we see large numbers of students sitting at breaks and staring at their screens.

This decision has been under consideration for a year. Our Board of Trustees wanted assurance that students wouldn't miss out on access to learning devices.

If you need to get a message to your child during the day, then the College Office will be able to deliver any essential messages.

We thank you for your support in this matter.



Ross Preece
Principal • Tumuaki

Information

College Closed for Instruction for ACCORD Teacher Only Days

Monday and Tuesday 21 and 22 November

The ACCORD Teacher Only Days are Ministry of Education nation-wide granted days allocated to support the implementation of forthcoming changes to NCEA.

Four days have been allocated for 2022.

The above dates are the final two days for 2022.

Teaching staff will be working in different ways on these days, on-site and/or some may be with staff from other schools.

Therefore, there is no school for students on this day.

We thank you for your co-operation and support.

Congratulations

Year 13 Graduation Ceremony

It was a very real pleasure, after two years of restricted ceremonies, to be returning to a full Graduation Ceremony; with a full audience, live music performances, and a guest speaker.

It was also a pleasure to return to the Ashburton Event Centre with its greater seating capacity and pleasant environment.

This formal farewell evening acknowledging significant successes and farewelling Year 13 students was held on Monday 31 October.

Phoenix Chorus

Music from the Phoenix Chorus, under the baton of skilled and experienced Musical Director Angie Cresswell and accompanied superbly, as always, by Head of Music Stephen Diedricks, enhanced the evening's programme.

The Chorus performed 'Sisi ni Moja' by Jacob Narverud for the Processional; 'Bring Me Little Water, Silly' by Huddie Ledbetter as a performance number; and the Recession was, fittingly, 'And Wherever You Go' by Douglas Wagner.



(Pictured above): Musical Director Angie Cresswell and members of the Phoenix Chorus performing the Processional.

National Anthem and Performance

Following the Processional we were led in the National Anthem by Year 13 student Ngahua Maeva who sang it beautifully, as did Year 13 vocalist Imogene Felton who sang 'La Vie en Rose' by Edith Piaf, following the presentation of the Achievement, Service, Sports and Arts Awards.

(Pictured right):
Ngahua Maeva
leading the
National Anthem.



(Pictured left):
Imogene Felton
performing 'La Vie en Rose'



Principal's Address



Following the welcome by Deputy Principal and MC for the evening, Jono Hay, Principal Ross Preece welcomed and addressed attendees. Acknowledged was the celebratory purpose of the evening, and the opportunity for the AshColl community to celebrate the achievements.

Ross noted that senior students had had three years of disruption and challenges as they navigated the interruptions of COVID, time out of school, illness or that of family members, teacher absences and online learning. The out-of-classroom activities which often provide lasting school memories had certainly been disrupted over the past three years.

COVID, Ross said, had provided a unique world-wide shared experience with everyone on the planet facing the same health and community challenges at the same time.

Looking to the future Ross reminded students that certain skills and dispositions will be required for success, and especially for future employment. Included in this are the skills of flexibility and adaptability, creativity and co-operation, plus working with digital tools in their entirety. Ross suggested that the students' experiences over the last three years had equipped them well for acquiring these skills, through learning outside of a normal classroom setting, and becoming creative problem-solvers and working collaboratively with others, in many cases via online or social media.

Ross acknowledged the challenges for teachers, and their hard work over the challenging COVID years working with and for students, online and in the classroom and, at times, managing both learning options at the same time, while also supporting catch-up learning.

Thanked were the Board of Trustees who continued to provide oversight and wisdom during the challenging time. Ross thanked them for their governance on behalf of our students and staff.

Ross wished students all the best as they leave College, saying they had every reason to be excited about their future prospects with career opportunities available and the return of international travel.

Students were reminded that the AshColl Way Values of striving to Achieve Quality, Show Pride, and be Respectful to others would always stand them in good stead. His one piece of advice for students into the future was to find something that challenges and brings a sense of fulfilment, saying a working career is too long to be doing something you don't enjoy or which doesn't bring satisfaction. He concluded with the advice that students are in charge of their own destiny and should look to have a future which feeds their soul.

Traditionally, Ross looks back eighteen years to inventions that arrived in the world at about the same time as the Year 13 students.

In 2004 the cool new thing to do was blogging! The other notable invention was the creation of Facebook which now regularly connects two billion people around the world, albeit the social media platforms often provide a mixed blessing.

Ross concluded by congratulating the students on their successes, and wishing them well for their futures.

Head and Deputy Head Students 2022

Deputy Head Students TC Trusler-Clark and Millar Newlands announced the Academic and Subject Awardees, which were presented by Guest Speaker Hayley Whiting; while Head Students Jorja Roulston and Jack Brown spoke.

Head Student Speech – Jorja Roulston

Jorja noted that Year 13 students never thought this day would come; saying they wished for its quick delivery, crossed days off calendars, counted hours, minutes and seconds and now that it's here she said 'I'm sorry it is, because it means leaving friends who inspire me and teachers who've been my mentors, so many people who've shaped my life, and my fellow students' lives impermeably and forever. It is a bitter-sweet feeling, with a familiar chapter closing and another unknown one opening'. Jorja said that their College journey had been full of inconsistency and change; unexpected, unrelenting, unusual, uncertain and unprecedented. However, Jorja linked the word 'unprecedented' with all of the Year 13 students, emphasising they are unprecedented, they are a secondary school class that has done something never known before.

Jorja said that, as a year group, all had grown and overcome so much during the last year three years, and the fact they were sitting at the Year 13 Graduation Ceremony showed their strength and resilience. They had formed relationships with the people they love, people they care about, people who went on this crazy journey along with them, the journey without a consistent school week, yet still being stressed out over internal assessment deadlines! Students were challenged to continue to encourage and inspire themselves and the people around them, adding that many had inspired her.

Looking ahead was a future fast approaching, moving away from our friends and families for many, and leaving behind the familiar. It would be a first time venturing into the 'big wide world' whether tertiary, apprenticeships, jobs or a gap year.

Acknowledged were parents and family members who had brought students to this point, believing in their children, with Jorja specifically thanking her family for all of their support, including when the challenges of being overwhelmed set in.

Appreciated were the dedicated teachers at Ashburton College, noting their commitment to students' education and ability to make College both fun and a safe place for acquiring knowledge.

Jorja thanked staff and the Year 13 Leavers for entrusting her with the role of Head Student, one of her most challenging yet rewarding experiences. Jorja said she would be forever indebted to the number of opportunities which had arisen during her time in the 'red stripes'. Support and help from the Head Student team and fellow Student Leaders was acknowledged with appreciation, including from all students.

In conclusion Jorja had one sentiment she wanted students to take away from her speech, saying 'you are all capable of taking on any obstacle that may lie in your life'.

All had faced a challenging high school experience that had never happened before, had overcome it and made it worthwhile.

The students were challenged to grasp every opportunity that comes their way. Having shown immense grit and determination they were encouraged to embrace this resilience in future goals, jobs and aspirations. Jorja signed off with the wise words of Harry Styles – 'Treat People With Kindness' – as this will get you where you want to be in life'.



Congratulations

Head Student Speech – Jack Brown

Jack opened by also thanking his parents, staff, students, Year 13 students and fellow Head Students and Student Leaders.

Jack advised that he wanted to make his last speech fun and to the point, so he started with a game 'put a finger down' if students had –

- more than one fire alarm go off at school in a day.
- forgotten to wear sunscreen and got sunburnt on a summer day at school

- a change of Ako teacher at least once during their time at AshColl
- forgotten to bring a coin on non-uniform day.
- forgotten what a previous Head Student had said in their prize-giving speech.

Jack then said he knew the above was 'cringe worthy' but he wanted to get the point across that everything is temporary, with all of the above having happened in the past while students are now moving forward into the future.

He suggested that students may have thought they would be Year 9 students forever, but now they are 'big, scary Year 13 students'. He said that, yes, he is a Head Student now, but next year all Year 13s move out of their AshColl nest into the big, wide world and a new set of students will fill that space.

However, no matter where each Year 13 student is headed, thirteen years of schooling has been a ride for all, and Jack noted they had made it through and are ready for the sequel; all on their own paths – whether university, apprenticeship, or full-time work.

For all that may be forgotten, Jack reminded students that now is 'our time, keep going'.

Jack concluded with some words from his 'best friend Taylor Swift'! 'So make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it. You've no reason to be afraid. You're on your own, kid. Yeah, you can face this'.

Guest Speaker – Hayley Whiting

It was our very real pleasure to introduce Hayley Whiting as our guest speaker for this evening.

Hayley is a former College student who, this year, represented New Zealand at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games in her chosen sport of weightlifting.

Hayley's story included what is required to achieve highly, rather than just achieving well, and what it takes to respond to pressure.

Hayley introduced herself as a proud Mid Canterbury and former Ashburton College whānau, feeling great honour at being asked to speak to those who sit where she once sat.

Hayley did ask what she had to add, what value did she bring, and determined her value as being in sharing her story. The story of having big goals, following her heart, being sensible, taking risks, being brave, ensuring she had strong supporters and working hard to prove to herself that she could be great.

Hayley outlined her history in Ashburton through to graduating with a Bachelor of Physiotherapy in 2014, being based in Christchurch in 2019 when she relocated to her current home in Mt Maunganui where she has been a self-employed physiotherapist for the last two years. Hayley highlighted her Ashburton College experience as one she will always treasure, saying it prepared her academically for progressing through university and into her chosen career, taught her many resilience and hard work lessons through both academic and sporting pathways. A break from sport ensued while at university as she chose to focus on studies and enjoying the university experience.

From 2013 she began some casual training and cross-fit exercise. Moving to Christchurch in 2014 was when the love for weightlifting really took hold, despite it being a brutal sport. Training for approximately 15 hours per week, all year, year after year, leads into two or maybe three big competitions a year – a maximum of six minutes on stage, and three chances only at each discipline: the Snatch, Clean and Jerk.

Hayley then outlined her various selections, the first for a New Zealand team being at the end of 2016, having 'hit' A Grade and being eligible for New Zealand team qualification, competing for New Zealand for the first time in March 2017 in Melbourne.

Significantly, competitors had to fully fund their uniform and travel. Hayley tellingly noted – 'enter here the endless support of her parents, family and community'.

However, success is seldom linear, and Hayley outlined very honestly the times of under-performing and what this requires from an athlete. Her first telling event was at her second New Zealand national championships in September 2017 where she missed all her snatches and was out of the competition. Devastation was described as an 'understatement'.

Events were to follow, with some misses and some close outcomes on a third attempt, and some placings; and being ruled ineligible for the Oceania

Championships in New Caledonia due to her log whereabouts not being updated. Drug testers can and do turn up to an athletes house to blood and urine test at 5:00am.

However, with family support, it was decided to attend this trip as part of the team and with qualification standards within weightlifting New Zealand increasing, Hayley saw this as maybe a last chance to be a part of the high performance environment.

This trip changed the trajectory of her weightlifting career due to sitting on the plane beside Ray, who was to become her coach. He asked many searching questions of her during the flight, all related to goals, standards and reasons for not aiming higher.

From this arose lessons we can all learn from. Hayley realised since, that it seemed easier and safer to set the success ceiling low and touch it easily, rather than set it high and risk never touching it. Essentially, she said, she had limited herself by setting the ceiling low.

2018 and 2019 brought development, both in strength and belief gains, and Silver Medal in the Snatch at the Pacific games, but missing her three Clean and Jerks. Nationals that year brought a win, but Ray and Hayley reviewed and decided that getting to the Commonwealth Games was going to require some changes.

Here came the reminder quote from Albert Einstein, being 'the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results'.

Courageously, Hayley made some huge changes professionally and personally and moved to Mt Maunganui for January 2020 to a new city, new lifestyle and in-person coaching. Despite some wobbles, in May 2021 Hayley had personal best numbers and in July 2021 broke her first New Zealand record. COVID also impacted however, on competitions with the February 2022 bringing one competition only for lifters to qualify for the Commonwealth Games.

At 29, she beat her arch-rival for the first time in her career, broke the New Zealand Clean and Jerk record again, and the New Zealand record total and qualified for the Commonwealth Games with 98/125 and 1kg more than her key competitor. She said 'I did it. We did it. It was worth it'.

Again, Hayley gives us some valuable advice, highlighting – 'so many times in that process it would have been easier to stop, play it safe, pretend I had given it my all'.

I do believe that the saying 'everything you ever wanted is on the other side of fear', is absolutely on the money.

Again, at the Commonwealth Games, life offered another lesson. Hayley said she learned you actually have to go and get up on that really big stage!

Her summary was that she 'placed 5th at the Commonwealth Games with a performance well under my best. I am not satisfied, but I am proud of my determination, bravery and staying power which now stands me forever as a Commonwealth Games athlete'.

Publicly she has said she is still not done. Her internal drive to push for more than what is perceived is huge, with the 2026 Commonwealth Games and a medal being the goal.

As she concluded, she observed that, throughout these last few years of her life a couple of things have sat with her and pushed her toward her purpose, being:

- It's only when you risk failure that you discover your fullest potential, and -
- Be who you were created to be and you will set the world on fire

To students she recommended – 'As you navigate your life post-high school, I urge you to choose the path that really lights you on fire, a path that truly fulfils you. If you do not know, that is ok too - take your time, have fun, give yourself permission to figure it out'.

Hayley covered many options that the future could be, or what the priorities could be, but over-riding all of it should always be about prioritising happiness and seeking growth, while also knowing it takes some hard work.

Hayley said that 'I stand here tonight and I am a partner, daughter, sister, friend, business owner, Commonwealth Games athlete, and a girl proudly from the mighty Ash Vegas. I get up every day and choose to follow my passion, I choose to work hard, to not settle and to be great'.

I sincerely look forward to what greatness evolves as you all take the next step in your lives'.



(Pictured left):
Ma Apoldo having
received her Level 3
and AshColl Way
Awards from
Principal Ross Preece.

(Pictured right):
Caendal Harris with the
Duncan Norrie Farrier
Equestrian Trophy and
her AshColl Way Award.



Awards

The awards presented indicated commitment, hard work, focus and contributions from each student, and support from families and staff. Each recipient is commended for all that they have achieved.

It is also with very grateful appreciation that the College recognises the significant community support of many of these awards.

Special Congratulations are given to –

DUX of Ashburton College 2022

Ella Skinner

and therefore recipient of the

Rotary Club of Ashburton Trust Scholarship Award

and the Ashburton High School Centennial Trust Plaque



Ella's pathway to this achievement came via

General Mathematics (General Mathematics Cup)

Business Studies

Accounting (Gabites Ltd Prize)

Level 3 Excellence Award

Ella also attained the

AshColl Way Award

Proxime Accessit (Runner-Up to the Dux)

Georgia Blundell

And recipient of the Rotary Club of Ashburton Scholarship Award



Georgia's pathway to this achievement came via –

English (Maria Jarman Prize and Cup)

History (John Stewart Memorial Prize and Digby Prosser Cup)

Law and Society (Argyle Welsh Finnigan Prize and Mark Gleason Cup)

Design and Visual Communication

Top Senior Student in Design and Visual Communication

(Studio 4 Architects' Prize and A W Thomson Trophy)

Level 3 Excellence Award

Georgia was also presented with the –

AshColl Way Award

**Rakirua Trophy for the Top All-Round Achievement
by a Māori student in Year 13**

Ngahua Maeva



Ngahua also received awards of –

Te Reo Māori

Level 3 Merit Award

AshColl Way Award

Senior Speech Trophy

Ashburton Musical Club Trophy for The Best Performance Student

**Please see next week's Newsletter for the
Community Contributed Awards and additional photos
from the Year 13 Graduation Ceremony.
We will also publish successes and photos from the
Year 11 and 12 Prize-giving.**