

Newsletter



PUKEKOHE HIGH SCHOOL

Issue Seven, 28 July 2023

From the Principal

Kia ora koutou

I hope you were able to spend time with whānau and friends during Matariki, and to reflect on the past year, celebrate the present, and think about the future. Last week's student led celebration of Matariki was an outstanding way to mark the Māori new year with our own kapa haka rōpū and Dance students, together with students from Pukekohe Intermediate and The Hill School.





We have had a settled start to the term. It is really encouraging to have all students on campus focused on their learning. This term we are maintaining our emphasis on students wearing their school uniform with pride. This continues to help create a positive learning environment and it is interesting to note that the number of serious behaviour incidents has dropped sharply. No doubt, this is also due to the hard work that students and staff are putting into bringing the "fun stuff" back into school life. As I am typing this, students from Year 9 to Year 13 are holding a fantastic Model United Nations debate in the Hall. Over the coming weeks we celebrate several of our different cultures, including Te Wiki o te reo Māori, the KBB music festival, various House events, Pukekohe's Got Talent and Winter Tournament Week. All of these and more hopefully make high school a more enjoyable and stimulating experience so that students can achieve the educational outcomes they need. A reminder for our NCEA students that Grading Exams take place in Week 6.

You may have seen a critical report by the United Nations about use of smartphones in schools around the world. According to the report around 1 in 4 countries have now banned smartphones in schools including France and the Netherlands. The UN noted that student use of smartphones in school could be distracting, disruptive and result in a detrimental impact on learning. At PHS we are continuing to enforce the ban on cell phones during lessons. Phones need to be switched off / put on silent mode and placed in bags not pockets. Again, this has had a positive impact on learning.

Next Wednesday we are holding our Open Evening and we encourage families who are considering PHS for 2024 to come and see all the activities and different subjects that are available. Many areas will also display information including about NCEA to help with course selection for next year, so the evening is also relevant to our current students. We look forward to seeing as many people as possible between 4.00pm and 6.00pm.

Earlier this week I let the Board of Trustees know that I am resigning as principal with effect from the end of this school year. It has been an immense privilege to lead Pukekohe High School during the last five years and I'm extremely grateful to the whole PHS community for the support that I have received during that time. I am proud of what we have achieved together and also clear about what remains to be done. I look forward to working with the Board as they appoint and transition the next principal into the role.

Ngā mihi,

Richard Barnett
Principal