



Awatapu News

Whai mana, whai oranga

30 September 2011

www.awatapu.school.nz

Issue 9

From the Principal...

Dear Parents and Students

Tena koutou katoa

Over the past few days I have read all of the senior reports. Many students did not prepare well enough for the school exams and now need to ensure they get their notes in order, prepare a study plan and action it from now until the end of November. This must include revision during the term holidays. I have not permitted any school trips for these last two weeks of the term as students and their teachers complete internal assessments and the content for the external examinations. By the time you read this newsletter, there will be only 16 more days of classes for senior students before NCEA examinations begin.

This week's soiree reminded me yet again of how many talented students we have in our school. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed greatly by the audience and showcased music and drama talents as well as featuring a parade of the Wearable Arts entries. There will be a junior soiree in term four which I encourage you to attend for a great night's entertainment.

We have begun the process of selecting the 2012 student leaders. With our change to vertical forms next year the student House Leaders will have increased responsibilities in conjunction with the teacher Heads of House. Once again, the nominees for the Co-Leaders (Head Boy and Girl) are capable and skilled, which will make the final selection a very difficult decision. All senior students will contribute to the mentoring of junior students in their vertical form so there will be increased leadership opportunities for senior students as well as greater mentoring for our junior students.

The new vertical form system means we will no longer have year level Deans. Instead there will be two Heads of House for each of the four Houses, who will be responsible for the pastoral care of a quarter of the school each across all year levels. Students will remain with the same form teacher for all five years of their time at Awatapu, so they will have an additional person who will look after them as well as their Head of House. We expect that each

form class will be around 25 students so students will have an increased level of support at school.

Enrolments are looking strong for 2012. There are still places available at all year levels but I encourage anyone who has still to complete enrolment to do so as soon as possible to ensure that they can get a place in all of their preferred subjects. Decisions about the number of classes we will timetable in each subject are being made now so it is important that we have accurate information about the demand for places.

Board of Trustees Community Consultation

Thank you to everyone who returned the questionnaire which was sent out with the last newsletter. These are now being collated as part of the Board's work on the next strategic plan.

Student Success

Paris Evans in year 12 received a huge honour this week in being asked to welcome the Georgia and Argentina teams onto the field at the start of their Rugby World Cup game. We are very proud as a school to have one of our students selected for such a significant role at the game and congratulate Paris for this fine achievement.

Conclusion

By the time of the next newsletter the Rugby World Cup will be over. It has been exciting to see the community getting behind the teams now that the tournament has begun. Let's hope that we begin term four celebrating New Zealand's success and with students ready to follow the All Blacks' example of hard work and commitment to achieving a goal, and being the best that they can be.

Regards

Tina Sims
Principal

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Rebecca Owen who competed recently at the Woodfoot House Secondary School Equestrian Event. Rebecca, riding her pony Acho was placed 5th from a field of 51 riders. Well done on this excellent achievement Rebecca.

Eilish Tipper & McKenzie Milne who have been awarded their Netball Centre Umpiring badges. Both girls have umpired Intermediate School netball games each week throughout the season and Eilish has also umpired the Year 10 netball team on Saturdays. Both girls had to sit a theory exam followed by a practical assessment. They both received very favourable comments from their assessors regarding their level of competence. A big thank you goes to ex-student **Deepika Gosai** who tutored and mentored the girls.

Jonathon O'Brien who scored his 4th hat-trick for the 4th XI Football team this year. Keep them coming, Jonathon!

Shaolong Wang who was selected in the Manawatu U15 Boys Basketball Representative team.

Shane Mihaere who has been selected to represent New Zealand at the World Speed Skating Champs in Korea. He has also represented NZ at the Oceania Champs in Australia and the Nationals In Auckland. Well done, Shane, this is an outstanding achievement.

The 8th Grade Mixed Hockey Team who were runner up in their grade.

A WORDS WORTH

While working with Junior classes, I notice that some of our students lack comprehension strategies. One simple habit will help students to become more active readers. When facing a piece of text, it is worth stopping for a moment and reflecting on four or five things that might be contained in the text. Help your student to make such a prediction. Good readers get very adept at predicting fairly accurately the content of text, particularly when they have encountered that type of text before. For example, when faced with a recipe, we can predict that it will tell us the name of the dish, ingredients and quantities, how to prepare and cook, and how many it will feed.

As exposure to different styles of writing in text books become more familiar, students become more proficient at accurate prediction. Good readers express surprise when their prediction is off the mark. If they make assumptions on the basis of a headline and then realise that the prediction was off target, the brain reorganises to amend predictions. For example, this headline challenges the reader:

“Milk Drinkers Are Turning To Powder.” Or “Hershey Bars Protest”

Similarly, when we read a novel and the story takes unexpected twists, the reader will either become annoyed or be more engrossed because of the unexpected.

Suppose your student has some reading to do. Try to think of three or four things that might be in the text. Then after reading, check off which ones were there and then discuss anything that was there but not predicted. If this becomes a habit, reading comprehension will improve. The brain already has a file activated to receive the information. Don't forget to visit the public library in the holidays. It is free and provides fabulous reading of both fiction and non fiction books. Try the large print section for more reluctant readers. Bigger text makes the reading task easier.

FACEBOOK BULLYING

We are seeing some friction amongst students at school as a result of messages being exchanged on Facebook in the evenings and weekends. I urge you again to monitor your son or daughter's Facebook page closely.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In our New Zealand Curriculum there are principles that are the foundations of the curriculum. These are High expectations, Treaty of Waitangi, Cultural diversity, Inclusion, Learning to learn, Community engagement, Coherence and Future focus. At Awatapu College we endeavour to plan our courses around these principles. In this short article I shall concentrate on how we are endeavouring to include the principle of 'Community engagement' in the Social Sciences.

Families, whanau and members of the wider community are involved in our students' education in many areas of the College. In the Social Sciences we have included outside speakers in our courses and field trips. This term I would like to thank a number of people: Dr Ian Fuller from the Geography Department at Massey University who took time to teach Level 1 Geography students about the Geology and Physical Geography of the Manawatu. He had gone to a lot of trouble making the topic of river terraces accessible to our students. He began his talk telling us of when Palmerston North was a coastal settlement 120,000 years ago and the sea was lapping at the shore where Summerhill Heights and Massey University are now located. Dr Jennifer Burke from the Institute of Veterinary Animal and Biomedical Sciences gave up a whole morning of her time to take us around the Massey farms on Tuesday 20 September as part of our Level 1 Geography course. Dr Burke has been kind enough to accommodate us at the Massey farms since 2007 to help our students learn about agriculture. Mr Jeff Baker, a planner from the PNCC took time to talk to our Level 3 Geography students about the wind farms near the city.

During terms 1 and 2 this year Social Sciences went on a number of fieldtrips and have had a lot of help and expertise from the following organisations: NZ Transport Agency and Greater Wellington Regional Council for the Year 12 Geography fieldtrip; Caccia Birch, PN City Archives and Library and Regent Theatre for the Year 12 Geography fieldtrip; the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, All Saints Anglican Church and Massey University History Department for Year 13 History. Much help has been given to our students by these organisations. We thank them all.

Sue Stirling, HoD Social Sciences

MANAWATU SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY FAIR RESULTS

New Zealand Institute of Chemistry – Education Trust Prize:

For the best exhibit relating to chemical principles
Highly commended: Brooke Williams for her project: Vitamin C

New Zealand Society of Soil Science Prize:

For the best soil related project
Natalia Dowrick for her joint project with students from PNGHS:, A. diffringens

Dairy NZ Runner up to premier prize:

Natalia Dowrick for her joint project with students from PNGHS:, A. diffringens

Massey University BEST EXHIBIT IN FAIR –RUNNER UP

Prize: Science

Natalia Dowrick for her joint project with students from PNGHS:, A. diffringens

UPCOMING EVENTS

Senior Sports Awards - 27 October 2011, held in the College Auditorium

Whakamana - 3 November 2011, held in the School Gymnasium

Senior Honours Awards - 9 November 2011, held at the Regent Theatre

NCEA exams start on 10 November 2011.



What's On at Parentline Manawatu

"SUPPORTING PARENTS TO CARE FOR CHILDREN"

GROUPS Please ring to register (06) 355 1655 and confirm time and venue.

Triple P Teen Parent Group improve family life with your teen, build positive relationships and manage difficult situations.

PN: *Starting Tuesday 25 October 7-9 pm*

WEBSITE www.parentlinemanawatu.org.nz

TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGE

Edward Hills, Karl Judd, Liam Scott and Joshua Wheeler won the prepared section of the BP Technology Challenge held at St Peter's College. They had to prepare a six pack of Ginger Beer, complete with their own logo, advertising material and portfolio.



Karl Judd, Edward Hills, Joshua Wheeler