



SPECIAL NEWSLETTER – URGENT

20 March 2020

Tēnā kotou katoa

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As everybody is fully aware, things are evolving very quickly regarding the coronavirus pandemic. I personally place the highest possible importance on ensuring the safety, health and well-being of all students and staff at Whanganui High School. We are reacting quickly to all changes on a daily basis.

Due to the large size of the following gatherings I have **CANCELLED**:

- all full House and Year level assemblies for the foreseeable future;
- the Student Achievement Conferences which would have been held in the two big school gymnasiums on Wednesday, 1 April and Thursday, 2 April;
- the 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' school production that would have been held at the Royal Whanganui Opera House from 13 May to 17 May. There will be a new full-school production in 2021.

We are ensuring that:

- our learning and teaching environments – and all common areas within our large school – are as clean as possible;
- hand sanitisers are located in as many places as possible – especially heavy usage areas;
- all student and staff toilets and changing room areas are as clean as possible. A female Support staff members is regularly checking liquid soap dispensers and cleaning all these areas throughout each day of the school week;
- all students, staff and visitors understand the importance of:
 - regular and thorough hand washing;
 - covering mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing, then disposing of any used tissues immediately into a rubbish bin;
 - avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth;
- everybody maintaining a good social distance from each other and that – while this pandemic exists – we will not hug, handshake or hongi within our school;
- as always, encouraging students and staff to stay at home if they are sick for any reason.

Please contact Healthline for free on 0800 611 116 or your GP for medical advice.

At the same time, all students are expected to continue attending school – **UNLESS THEY ARE SICK** or need to be placed into 14 days of self-isolation at home. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health are the only organisations that can direct schools to

close. In this situation, I would then follow the leadership, direction and guidance of the Ministry of Health's Medical Officers of Health on whether to remain open, close or re-open.

All my learning area faculties are currently assessing their digital capabilities to deliver suitable teaching programmes to students at home if we do need to close at any stage. I will keep you informed at the earliest possible opportunity if this appears likely.

All the very best for the health and well-being of your family and friends – take care.

Ngā mihi nui

Martin McAllen

PRINCIPAL

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