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TE KURA STUDENTS

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JUNE 16 | ISSUE 28



Te Kura

TE AHO O TE KURA POUNAMU  
THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL

- MEMORIES FROM OUR OLDEST LIVING EX-STUDENT
- THE HEALING POWER OF HORSES
- 2016 NCEA PAYMENT AND REGISTRATION

# Ko Tā Mike Kōrero



*Mike Hollings, Chief Executive*

**NCEA RESULTS FOR 2015 SHOW THAT MORE TE KURA STUDENTS ACHIEVED NCEA QUALIFICATIONS THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.**

The Board and I are very pleased with these results, which show increased levels of participation and achievement at all levels. This is a result of the range of initiatives we have put in place to support students, and in particular the efforts of staff to engage students, especially through attendance at advisories, tutorials and event days.

Te Kura is unique in New Zealand in that many of the students who enrol in NCEA courses – particularly young adult and adult students – often want to achieve specific credits or enrol in just one or two courses with us. A lot of our students come to us after being out of school for a period of time and it can take a while to get these students back on track, so it may take more than a year to gain enough credits to attain NCEA Level 1 or 2. For this reason, the number of Te Kura students participating in NCEA is much lower than the number of students on the roll. ‘Participating’ means the student would have enough credits to be able to achieve the qualification by the end of the year if they were to achieve all of the credits for which they are entered and those were added to any credits previously attained.

An additional 29 students participated in NCEA Level 1 in 2015. This was an increase of 2% from the 2014 participation rate. Seventeen additional participating students achieved the qualification and the overall achievement rate was 57%. The biggest increase in achievement was among Te Kura’s full-time students. Altogether, 123 full-time students achieved Level 1, an increase of 28 students from 2014. The achievement rate of full-time students rose from 68% to 80%.

An additional 49 students participated in NCEA Level 2 in 2015, an increase of 2% from the 2014 participation rate. The number of participating students achieving the qualification rose by 31, and the achievement rate increased slightly to 59%. The achievement rate of full-time students rose from 69% to 85%. The achievement rate for young adult students increased to 68%, with 20 more students achieving the qualification than in 2014.

There was a significant increase (an additional 143 students) in the number of students participating at Level 3 – with an increase in the participation rate from 5% to 12%. There was also a significant increase in the number of participating students achieving Level 3 compared to 2014. An additional 89 students achieved the qualification, while the achievement rate remained at 63%. Changes to the literacy and numeracy requirements had led to a drop in Level 3 achievement in 2014. In 2015, Te Kura not only recovered from this drop but more students achieved Level 3 than ever before. The achievement rates for Te Kura’s participating full-time and young adult students increased to 81% and 74% respectively compared to 2014.

Participation and achievement for University Entrance (UE) increased significantly. An additional 243 students participated in UE than in 2014, increasing the participation rate from 10% to 17%. Also, 143 more students achieved UE than in 2014, with the achievement rate rising by 17% to 39%. The changes to literacy and numeracy requirements resulted in a drop in UE achievement in 2014. In 2015, Te Kura not only recovered from this drop but more students achieved UE than ever before. The achievement rates for Te Kura’s participating full-time and young adult students increased to 74% and 59% respectively.

We are extremely pleased with these results and congratulate all those Te Kura students who achieved their learning goals during 2015.

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*Front cover photo: Claudia Paterson (left) and Kensa Randle have done Te Kura proud winning medals while representing the school in canoe slalom. See page 10 for story.*

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# Feature Stories

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## LEARNING ON THE ROAD



**TYLH (YEAR 8) AND SALYM COLELLO (YEAR 11) CAN STAY IN A DOC CAMPSITE ONE NIGHT AND ON THEIR AUNTIE'S FARM IN SOUTH CANTERBURY THE NEXT, BUT ONE PART OF THEIR LIVES REMAINS CONSISTENT – SCHOOLWORK.**

Their parents, Natalie and Glen, work as pest control officers. Although the family has a home base in Lawrence, a small town in Central Otago, the couple's work can sometimes take them hundreds of kilometres from home for two or three weeks at a time. This hasn't prevented the siblings from making the most of opportunities to learn online.

'Our work is often based in the sticks and we don't always have internet connection so studying by distance requires a lot of organisation,' says Natalie.

She decided to pull the children out of their local school because they were having trouble keeping up with their schoolwork. 'They're doing much better now that they're studying with Te Kura – they're a lot happier,' she says. 'Their learning has taken leaps and bounds too.'

Her biggest concerns were being able to provide an adequate social life, for Tylh in particular, and helping Saly manage his dyslexia. Part of the solution has been providing each child with a smartphone and having a generous data plan.

'Both our kids keep in touch with their mates through Skype, Facebook messenger, Snapchat and so on, and they also have friends all around the country who they catch up with on the road. Tylh even picks up the odd shift at cafes in the places we travel to so she gets to be social for the day.

'Our learning advisor, Claire Horncastle, has sourced so many good online programmes that are really helping Saly, and he's now reading and writing more than ever – so that's been a huge bonus. The good thing about Te Kura is that there's no rush – if it takes one and a half hours to do one lesson so be it, as long as he does it to the best of his ability. If he's made to hurry he gets anxious. At school he never achieved – he was always at the failing end of the spectrum so he's loving it now – it makes it all worthwhile.

Natalie keeps their schedule much the same as school hours, unless it's a travelling day. 'They are generally up by 7am and start school work by 9am and finish between 3 and 4pm with an hour off in the middle

of the day for lunch. I find they actually get more work done than they normally would at school. And if they complete all the work that I set them for the week they get the whole day off on Friday.'

The most important thing is to be well prepared, says Natalie. This can include downloading workbooks before going on a trip so Salym and Tyllh can work offline, doing the preparatory reading online in advance and taking along relevant reading books. If they are away from wi-fi and need more work to get on with they will drive to the nearest town.

'It's been great for both our kids to be able to go at their own pace, while enjoying the comfort of family life. They also get to learn through other life experiences that are just as important, such as helping with the shopping, going into the bush and helping with traps, animal husbandry, as well as how to speak to complete strangers.

'The kids are learning to take responsibility for their own learning,' says Natalie, who admits keeping the role of mum separate from that of teacher can be a challenge. 'I've also learnt a fair bit from helping them with their lessons – it's great!'

## GET CONNECTED THROUGH TE KURA'S ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

An assistance programme is in place to support eligible families of full-time students enrolled in NCEA Level 1 or an online 000 course who cannot provide access to a suitable device and internet connectivity. Young adult students enrolled in three or more courses may also be eligible for assistance.

For more information about online courses or our laptop and internet connectivity assistance programme, visit our website at [www.tekura.school.nz](http://www.tekura.school.nz) or call us on 0800 65 99 88.

## GOING DIGITAL AT TE KURA

**TO SUCCEED IN OUR DIGITAL WORLD, WHERE TECHNOLOGY IS PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE, LEARNING HOW TO USE IT EFFECTIVELY IS AN ESSENTIAL SKILL.**

Te Kura Chief Executive Mike Hollings says having the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to use a broad range of digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers is vital.

'Learning online at school is one way students can learn these skills in a safe and supportive environment.

'Many schools across New Zealand now require students to bring their own device to school, and students use a range of different devices and online tools as part of their learning. We want to offer our students the same opportunities to learn digital literacy skills, so we are progressively replacing printed booklets with online resources which students can access through our Online Teaching and Learning Environment (OTLE).

'Our aim is that all students in years 7 to 13 will be learning online by the end of 2018.'

Te Kura is also looking at opportunities for younger students, and those enrolled in special education programmes, to benefit from accessing some of their learning resources online.

This year, students enrolled in NCEA Level 1 courses and courses at curriculum levels 3-5 (known as '000' courses) are accessing their learning resources through the OTLE. Many students enrolled in Te Ara Hou, the integrated programme for students in Years 7-10, are already doing some of their learning online using OTLE or other online tools, such as Google Classroom. NCEA Level 2 courses will be online in 2017, and NCEA Level 3 in 2018.

## 100 YEARS YOUNG



*Credit: The Wellingtonian.*

**AFTER LIGHTING THE FIRE, PREPARING BREAKFAST OR BAKING BREAD, MILKING THE COWS AND CLEANING THE COW SHED, ETHEL ROBINSON (NEE HALLIWELL) WAS READY TO START HER DAY OF STUDY.**

Ethel, who turned 100 this year, was among the first secondary school students to be accepted by what was then The Correspondence School, in 1929. She still has strong memories of learning through the school while growing up near Whakaangi on the East Cape.

‘There were four teachers, all based in Wellington, and I would receive mail every two weeks, weather permitting, with new lessons and marked work,’ she says. ‘I had to ride five miles by horseback to deliver or collect the mail.’

### Primary school days

Based on a remote farm with her parents and four sisters and no close neighbours, Ethel was one of the few Pākehā in the district. For some of her early schooling she and her second youngest sister Margery (Marg) attended the local primary school. With the exception of one other student they were the only non-Māori pupils.

‘The Māori kids all spoke Māori at home but had to speak English at school,’ remembers Ethel. ‘They used to call me a ‘white huhu grub.’’

Ethel and Marg wanted to go barefoot like all the other children, but their mother made them wear shoes and socks to school.

‘We used to hide our shoes and socks in the manuka bush just before we entered the school grounds and picked them up again after school. It’s a wonder our mother never caught on, given our shoes never wore out!’

### Studying by correspondence

Ethel says when she first started studying by correspondence she worked hard because she was interested in the lessons. However, her mother was ill much of the time and her father worked on the farm from dawn to dusk, so she wasn’t supervised very closely.

‘Once Marg finished primary school and started studying with me, I didn’t do much work. We would spend a good deal of our day sitting under the grapefruit tree, chatting,’ says Ethel.

‘I really loved books and would read whatever I could get my hands on, which wasn’t much. Sometimes the farm hands would leave books behind, usually books about

the Wild West, and I used to read them secretly. I had a special place under the table where I would hide the book when my mother walked past, while pretending to do my school work!

Because of their mother's illness the sisters were responsible for the household and shared all the chores. The family mostly lived on meat, milk and vegetables grown in their garden, but twice a year a food package would be delivered by boat from Auckland to Hicks Bay. 'We travelled 16 miles to pick up our delivery – usually flour and sugar, cream of tartar, baking powder and hops for making yeast for our bread. Later we would buy most essentials from Te Araroa which was closer.'

One of Ethel's recollections from that time includes the dreaded trips to the dentist. The dentist would travel around the East Cape, staying in hotels and treating patients in a rented room. 'He didn't have an assistant so getting a filling was dependant on your mother being available to turn the handle of the drill,' says Ethel. 'However, the drill was so slow sometimes that it was easier to pull teeth out.'

#### Later years

Ethel spent her last two years of secondary school at Napier Girls' High School, becoming dux in her final year. 'I was so shy I didn't say a word in class – the other girls thought I couldn't speak,' Ethel recalls.

Ethel went on to become a school teacher and developed a passion for teaching children to read. She had five children with her husband Diamond (known as Tai),

a fellow teacher. In her retirement she became an active volunteer for several organisations, receiving numerous awards for her outstanding contribution, including the Palmerston North Civic Honours for Community Service, the Queen's Service Medal, and New Zealander of the Year Award – Local Heroes Medallist.

She also made headlines for becoming an actress at the age of 98, playing the role of Viago's (Taika Waititi) girlfriend in the vampire mockumentary 'What We Do in the Shadows'.

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*So what is Ethel's secret to a long life?  
'I don't have one!' she laughs.  
Just keep going. Don't give up doing  
new things in your life.'*

.....



*Ethel in younger days.*



*Ethel with Taika Waititi in 'What We Do in the Shadows'.*

## HORSE THERAPY



**WHEN CALEB VARCOE ENROLLED WITH TE KURA TWO YEARS AGO HE'D BEEN KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL MULTIPLE TIMES. HE WAS DEPRESSED, ANTI-SOCIAL AND LACKING MOTIVATION. THAT IS, UNTIL HE DISCOVERED HORSES.**

Recognising the emotional behaviour that Caleb was exhibiting, Teacher Aide Terina Puriri from the Hastings Advisory encouraged him to participate in Te Kura's Equine course, a Tertiary Link subject outside the normal school curriculum. In this course students learn everything there is to know about the care of horses.

'I've learned a huge amount of skills, through the birth and death of horses, having to calm down angry horses, moving them from paddock to paddock, feeding them, grooming them, and so much more,' says Caleb. 'There have been hard parts and easy parts, but I've benefited a lot through all of it.'

Because he hadn't had any previous experience with horses Caleb was fearful at first, says Terina, who owns the horse farm where the practical sessions take place, 40km from Hastings.

'Caleb had to overcome his anxiety about working with animals he knew nothing about, so I got him to do research about different horses, spoke to him about grooming and showed him some diagrams and pictures to prepare him.'

She introduced Caleb to three horses in the first instance and he instantly bonded with the colt, Prince.

'He built a special relationship with Prince and really looked forward to going out to see him. Whenever he visited, Prince would gallop up to him and rub his head into his chest.'

Terina took the opportunity to use visiting Prince as an incentive for Caleb to complete his other schoolwork. 'He sometimes didn't want to do his schoolwork so while we were driving out to the farm I'd say to him 'OK Caleb, this book needs to be done so if you don't feel like doing it we'll turn around and go back'. Well, he'd do the work so fast – he'd have everything completed by the time we arrived!'

Caleb says having an animal to care for has given him more motivation about life in general. 'Before starting the course, I was at home doing nothing most of the time, but after starting the course, I've had more motivation to learn new things and have become a lot happier in general.'

The horses also taught him how to deal more effectively with people. 'I explained that you don't just go up to a person on the street and start brushing their hair or shoving something in their mouth to feed them – it's the same with horses,' says Terina. 'You've got to build that trust up. He learned that if you show kindness you will get it back.'

'What I like most about it is how relaxing it can be when I'm working with the horses,' says Caleb. 'The course has impacted positively on my relationships with people, as it has taught me to be more calm and collected in stressful situations, and to be more dedicated and motivated.'



Caring for the horses also taught him about the importance of being responsible and reliable, Terina adds. 'He learned that certain jobs, such as picking up the horses' poo and providing them with fresh water, need to be done regardless of whether you feel good or bad that day.'

Caleb is just one of many students who have fallen under the spell of Terina's horses. Other students whose lives have been turned around include previous high offenders and students with drug and alcohol problems.

'You get these tough guys bonding with the horses and learning to talk gently to them. They just fall in love with them!'

## KEEPING AN EYE ON THE GOAL

**TE KURA STUDENT MICHAEL WOULD HAS AN AMBITIOUS GOAL – TO MAKE A LIVING AS A PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER. CURRENTLY CONTRACTED TO PREMIERE LEAGUE FOOTBALL TEAM SUNDERLAND AFC UNDER 18S AS A GOALKEEPER, AND HAVING RECENTLY BEEN TRAINING AND PLAYING WITH THE ALL WHITES, THE 17-YEAR-OLD IS WELL ON HIS WAY.**

'I want to finish all my NCEA levels, so that if football doesn't work out for me I still have other options,' says Michael, who at more than six feet four, towered over all his teachers when he dropped in to Te Kura's Wellington office recently during his off-season break.

When Michael is in training back in the United Kingdom he does a full day of schoolwork on Mondays and studies on Thursday afternoons and in the evenings when he has spare time.

'My biggest challenge is trying to motivate myself after a hard day of training,' says Michael. 'It helps when you start picking up credits and start getting closer to passing NCEA. The teachers at Te Kura give me the support I need which is great.'

Michael's big break came two years ago when his Waitakere City team won the Nike Cup. They then went on to win the championship in Australia, which led them to compete in the Manchester United Under 15 Tournament. It was there that a talent scout for Sunderland noticed his skills. Several months and two trials down the track, Michael had signed his first football contract.



Confidence and concentration is the key to being a good goalkeeper, says Michael. 'Sometimes you're not used in the game for maybe 80 or 90 minutes and then you might have to do something that either wins or loses the game.'

'The main thing is you've got to have confidence because if you concede a goal in the first minute it's your fault. You've got to react and keep your team in the game.'

Michael's ultimate dream is to make a career out of football. 'I just wanted to keep enjoying it and playing for as many years as I can.'

### MICHAEL PLAYS OFFICE FOOTBALL

Michael enjoyed a fun game of football in our Wellington office while he was in town. If you missed out, be sure to check out the video on our Facebook page, posted in June!

# Student Stories

## KAYAKING SUCCESS



**TWO TE KURA STUDENTS HAVE WON MEDALS WHILE REPRESENTING THE SCHOOL IN CANOE SLALOM RECENTLY.**

In the middle of March, Kensa Randle and Claudia Paterson represented Te Kura at the New Zealand Secondary Schools and New Zealand Nationals in canoe slalom. The New Zealand Secondary Schools were held in Hawea, and then three days later the New Zealand Nationals were held in Tekapo.

Canoe slalom is an exciting adrenalin-fuelled sport raced in white water rapids where athletes demonstrate immense skill and physical strength to fight against the water. They struggle against powerful roaring waters, eddies, swirls and stoppers, which makes it a really exciting sport to watch.

A canoe slalom course ranges between 200 and 400 metres down challenging white water. The winner is the competitor that manoeuvres him/herself down the course in the quickest time. However ... canoe slalom isn't just a race STRAIGHT down the river ... There are around 25 gates that hang above the water that the athletes must go through. They can also incur time penalties if they either touch or miss one of these gates.

Over the two events (New Zealand Secondary Schools and New Zealand Nationals) Claudia Paterson came away with nine gold medals, one bronze and the

title of New Zealand Under 18 K1W champion. Her team mate Kensa Randle received three gold, four silver and three bronze medals. Despite the Te Kura team only consisting of two athletes, their placing over the categories they competed in saw them win the Small Schools Cup from more than 10 small schools throughout New Zealand.

Both Kensa and Claudia will represent New Zealand at the Junior World Champs in Poland in July. Kensa will also race in two senior world cup events in the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Both girls have been training on the new Vector Wero White Water Centre in Auckland and are loving the challenge.

By Kensa Randle, Year 13

## SPORT STACKING CHAMP



**GIVE CALEB ARTHUR A DOZEN CUPS AND YOU WILL SEE THEM TRANSFORM BEFORE YOUR EYES.**

The Year 13 student is a champion at sport stacking, a competition which involves stacking 12 specially designed cups into pyramids in pre-determined sequences at lightning speed. At the end of March he attended the world sport stacking championships in Germany and won five individual medals, as well as placing second overall in the world with his four-person relay team. He ranked 13th out of 267 contestants.

Caleb first learned the sport seven years ago through a friend and ‘just couldn’t stop’. ‘My mum had to take the cups off me at the start because I wasn’t doing anything else,’ he says.

‘I don’t play any other sport for teams, so it’s nice to have one I can do, and do well in competition. It’s an individual sport so you don’t have to rely on other people being there and it can be done at home.’

Caleb believes that anybody can get good at the sport. ‘It makes you develop good hand-eye coordination and it gets both sides of your brain working,’ he says. ‘I’ve noticed it helps with my schoolwork, especially maths.’

Caleb’s whole family plays the sport now and most of them compete. ‘The sport stacking community is not huge in New Zealand, and everyone gets together for the tournaments so we get to know everyone really well, which is nice. I want to keep doing it forever!’

## AND BABY MAKES TWO

**THE STUDY SCHEDULE AT IESHA DAVIDSON  
EPIHA’S HOME REVOLVES AROUND THE  
FEEDING TIME AND NAPS OF THE YOUNGEST  
MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.**

The Year 13 student gave birth to her daughter Jaaviah in March, but has managed to successfully keep up her studies. She received a new computer a couple of weeks before the birth and instantly took a shine to communicating online. Just one week before Jaaviah was born Iesha was awarded Student of the Week for her engagement in online learning!



‘The effort Iesha puts in is truly inspirational and she is a fantastic role model to everyone around her,’ says Iesha’s liaison teacher, Margaret Sullivan. ‘She is lucky enough to have the unconditional support of her whānau too.’

Iesha, who lives in Te Kao in the Far North, says that when she was pregnant she was tired all the time but pushed herself to study longer hours. ‘Now that I’ve had my baby it’s a struggle but also a great challenge to push and try everything harder.’

Iesha is planning a career in nursing. She says giving up school was never an option. ‘I like a challenge,’ she says. ‘And my mum and dad encouraged me to keep following my heart and choose the right decisions in life for me and my baby.’

‘Te Kura is really great and I’ve been able to achieve much more than I would have in a regular school.’

## IMPROVING THROUGH FAILURE

**FIFTEEN YEAR OLD KEIRAN LEWELLEN IS OFF TO HONG KONG THIS JULY TO REPRESENT NEW ZEALAND AT THE INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD, BUT SAYS IT'S BEEN A TOUGH JOURNEY TO THE TOP.**

People are often surprised that I have failed more maths olympiad exams than I have passed. But for me failure is just part of the path to success, and it has been a long, difficult path to make it to the New Zealand national team in mathematics.

Olympiad mathematics is different from what we learn in school. It focuses on problem solving rather than computation and algebra. It also includes different content to school maths, like number theory, combinatorics, and Euclidean geometry. I love it! When I first see an olympiad problem, I have no idea where to start, and that is the challenge.

Here is an example of an olympiad problem that I find super fun to solve:

An ant starts on the boundary of a large round paving stone with a radius of one metre and walks in a straight line. Every now and then, it turns left by 60 degrees or right by 60 degrees, alternating each time. When the ant reaches the boundary of the paving stone again, it decides to stop for a rest. What is the maximum distance that the ant could have travelled? (from *Problem Solving Tactics* by Pasquale et al.)

I first started down the competitive mathematics path when I was in Year 8. I wanted to find kids who loved maths as much as I do, and I heard about a maths camp in Auckland. I had to study for eight months to prepare, and it took me 50 hours of work to complete the entrance exam. I was thrilled when I learned that I had been chosen as one of the 26 kids to attend the camp! Two months later, I took the British Maths Olympiad exam, and got one question right out of 60. I worried that I only got into the camp by luck and that in reality I wasn't ready yet. I was wrong.

The maths olympiad camp is a wonderful experience. We do maths all day long! Over the three years I have attended, I have met some fascinating kids and dedicated mentors. In addition to lectures on different mathematical topics, we do a lot problem solving in teams and try to poke holes in each other's arguments. The atmosphere of the camp is incredibly supportive and playful. For fun we play pool, ping pong and mafia, and even have a traditional paper airplane competition.



This year's camp was really tough, but after a large amount of work, I was selected for the national team of six who will travel to Hong Kong to compete in the International Mathematical Olympiad. Once there, I will take a nine hour exam over two days which contains only six problems. While they are grading the exams, I will have the opportunity to travel around Hong Kong, meet people from all over the world and see the sights.

The New Zealand Maths Olympiad programme has encouraged me to develop my problem solving abilities, which will help me in my future career in maths and science. Through this programme, I have met wonderful people and learned that although successes are great, failures are the only things that really teach you how to improve.

By Keiren Lewellen, Year 11

## GET AHEAD EXPERIENCE DAY

**ELLA SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF THE GET AHEAD EXPERIENCE DAY SHE ATTENDED IN WHANGANUI, WHICH SHOWCASES ALL THE DIFFERENT CAREERS AVAILABLE IN THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY.**

I had an awesome day at Get Ahead. It was really sweet to be able to find out about all the jobs available within the primary industries and the modules gave you the opportunity to experience them hands on. My favourite module was either the fencing or PGG Wrightson one. The guys at these modules were extra helpful and great to get sound career advice off.

The day was organised by putting us into random groups and then we'd go around the modules, collecting 'Get Ahead money'. The team with the most points won at the end of the day. My team, the 'Huntaways', (my name suggestion) came second, which was awesome because at the last Get Ahead I went to my team 'The Random Farmers' (not my name idea) came last.

Another cool thing on the day was the working dog demonstration by Otiwhiti Station and a rodeo guy showing us roping. I got roped into his demonstration (literally and figuratively) and then I had a go at roping.

Overall it was a fun day I would recommend to anyone interested in the primary industries. It was a great opportunity to find out about jobs and the people in the industry that support the farmers. There are a lot of new jobs that weren't around 10 years ago out there now, so it's a good opportunity for people interested in being a farmer to see that agriculture isn't all early starts and physical labour.

I am into the practical side of farming but it was interesting to hear about the other jobs like fertiliser reps and consultants or plant managers.

The people running the event did a really good job and it was very well organised, with lots of opportunities to win prizes. What I found mint was the amount of information available and I could ask heaps of questions. I was surprised and inspired to hear of so many female fencers around the district. I also got some really good career advice and so did everyone in my team.

Another cool thing was that morning tea and lunch was provided. The only bad thing about the day I can think of was the weather. It was warm and sunny where I live but the same couldn't be said about Fordell. In fact it was REALLY cold and the breeze was the 'freeze ya butt off' variety. Quite unpleasant for those inappropriately dressed like myself.

I look forward to attending Get Ahead next year for the last time and then being able to use the career advice in real life.

By Ella Thomas, Year 11

## FUN-FILLED CAMP



*Madison O'Connor (left) and Frances Tribble tackle the high ropes.*

Twenty Te Kura students enjoyed an action-packed camp at the Hillary Outdoors Education Centre in Tongariro recently. Activities included high ropes, tramping around Tongariro National Park, caving and braving the flying fox.

**For a taste of what they got up to, check out the video posted on 10 June on Te Kura's Facebook page.**

## BLACK FURY



HERE'S AN EXTRACT FROM ONE OF OUR NELSON STUDENTS, WHO WRITES ABOUT TAKING PART IN THE NELSON TROLLEY DERBY DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

At the start of February, we started to go around getting parts to build a trolley for the Trolley Derby. For the next month we went around picking up parts to use. We went to the recycle center mainly, and also bought a BMX bike off Trade Me really cheap. At the Nelson Recycle Center we found a pickle barrel to use as the base for the trolley. We also found another BMX and an office chair to use. We spent one day writing out plans on what the trolley would look like. We started taking off all the wheels on the BMX bikes and put them to the side to use later on.

The next day we got some help from a guy named Gus, who works at Sharland Engineering. He took all the parts back to his shop to start welding the parts that needed to be welded. We came back a few days later to see that the trolley had an axle, the wheels were attached and the barrel was attached to a chassis. We took it back to our course and took it for a bit of a ride.

The next day we went to Crank House bike store to ask for help to get brakes attached. Luckily they helped us put brand new brakes on instead of using our old crappy brakes. We then took it out for another ride when we noticed the barrel was on a bit of a lean and moved side to side. To fix this we got some cable ties and tied the barrel to the back axle to restrict its movement. A few days later on another test run the trike started tilting again and soon the front axle snapped and it was only three days until the trolley derby race. So the next day we got some foam from a bed roll and wrapped it around the chassis to keep it stable and secure. Then we took it back to Gus to weld it back together.

Finally, it was finished. All we needed to do was to spray paint the trike. We called it 'Black Fury'. We spray painted that on the sides and added the number 56.

*Black Fury came fourth overall and managed to reach speeds of up to 50 kilometres per hour.*

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE



SAPPHIRE BOYD LOOKS FORWARD TO THURSDAYS EACH WEEK, BECAUSE THAT'S THE DAY SHE GETS TO WORK WITH WOOD.

The 18-year-old Auckland-based student heads to G and H Trade Training every Thursday to learn the woodworking trade as part of Te Kura's Huarahi Trades Academy programme. So far she has made a mallet, a workbench, a toolbox and a picture frame. As well as finding her way around hand and electrical tools, Sapphire has also been learning woodworking theory, such as measurement and how to work safely.

'It's so much fun dealing with wood,' says Sapphire, who also does wood turning as a hobby. 'I definitely want to work with wood in the future – I just have to work out what path to take exactly.'

She's learning alongside mostly full-time trainees as well as one Te Kura student. All except one are male, but that doesn't worry Sapphire.

'It feels pretty good. You know you've got the expectation of all the boys watching you so you've got to be careful and make sure you do it right. But I'm doing fine – I'm enjoying it.'

To learn more about Huarahi Trades Academy, visit [www.tekura.school.nz/subjects-and-courses/huarahi-trades-academy](http://www.tekura.school.nz/subjects-and-courses/huarahi-trades-academy).

# Student Work Showcase

## GRAN AND GRANDAD'S ANNIVERSARY



Gran and Grandad celebrated 50 years being married. It was at a restaurant in Gore.

Everyone in my family went. We had speeches. Possum said a poem. She was nervous. I was proud of her. So was Gran and Grandad.

We had family photos.

We had lunch. It was lovely. I didn't like the pudding. It tasted sour.

I played ring-a-ring-a-rosie around a tree. I was happy.

We had lots of photos. Some people pulled funny faces.

There was a band. My cousin Luke did a jiggy dance.

I had a great day out with Gran and Grandad.

Abby Wallis, Year 2

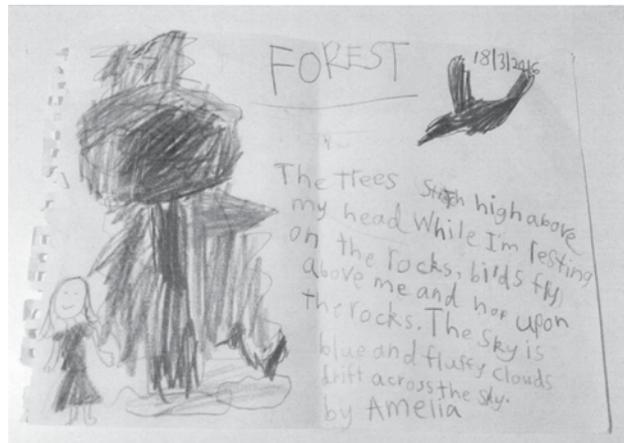


PORTRAIT OF MY SISTER BY ALEX BISHOP, YEAR 10.

## FOREST

The trees stretch high above my head while I'm resting on the rocks,  
 Birds fly above me and hop upon the rocks,  
 The sky is blue and fluffy clouds drift across the sky.

Maia Nilsson, Year 2



## DIVING FEVER

Yippee, I was finally going diving. It was a lovely, sunny February morning, but the water was still freezing like chilled beer, as it always is at Cosy Nook on the South Coast of New Zealand! But that didn't put Mum, our friend Bob and me off.

I put my head under water and almost immediately jerked it back out. I then lowered my whole body into the water and saw sights you can only see under water.

As I adjusted to the cold, I started to realise how amazing the underwater world really is. Little fish darted in and out of weeds and deep crevices, jagged rock shelves were elaborately decorated with seaweed and corals which scratched and cut my hands.

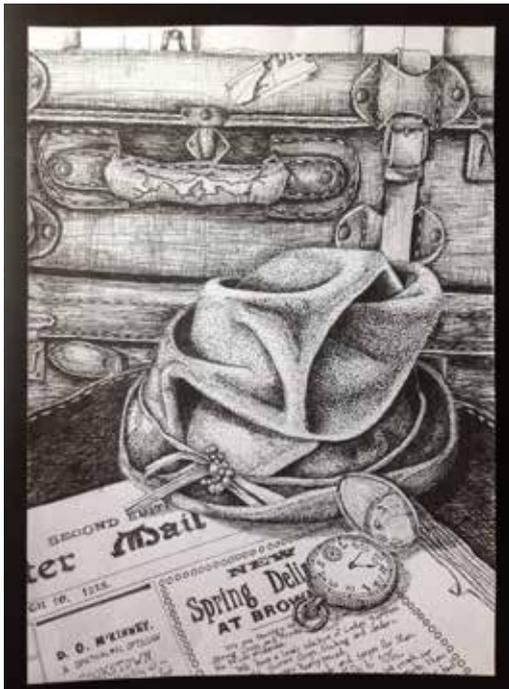
The salt was disgusting, it was so strong and seeped into my mask and snorkel and made my eyes water. The waves crashed and rumbled against rocks, tumbling over and over like in a washing machine. They sucked me out and then dumped me back on the rocks, as if I was a toy being chucked about.

During a calm spell in the waves I discovered some paua clinging to an enormous rock face, like a wart to a witch's nose. I dived down and could touch them, feeling their rough surface. I couldn't wrench them off, because I had no paua tool! So I went to look for some in shallower water, but couldn't find any. So I lay there, drifting in and out of swaying weeds and sharp rocks, seeing sights that took my breath away. Blue Cod darted about and even a seal was playing about near us. He was amazing to watch, with his shiny skin and long whiskers. What intrigued me the most was the fact that I could come within a metre or so of the little fish that were darting about everywhere.

So that's how my first time paua diving was spent. Bob got 16 paua, because he's an experienced diver. As we walked back to the car I realised that I had caught a disease that I would never lose.

Diving fever!

Sam Abbott, Year 8



A4 pen by Olivia Simpson.



A5 pencil by Olivia Simpson.

## DEAR JOHN

The sun pours through the tartan cage. Stagnant shadows on concrete walls reaching to the wire. Men don drab clothing giving a sense of anonymity. Unscrupulous, redundant, illiterate. Misfits of society converge. John reads, as the words flow, so too do the tears.

Actually, this story begins two years prior in Mount Eden Prison. As the mail was being distributed a bright red envelope caught my attention. The recipient glanced at the sender details on the reverse, grimaced and discarded it. I approached the disgruntled man whom we shall call John. I enquired why someone would do such a thing. His face reddened, lips tightened and he assumed a threatening stance. In less than three words he suggested that I remove myself before he erupts.

A couple of days passed without incident, then John called me to his den. As I sashayed my way to his cell I debated the possible consequences. After a bit of small talk we were more at ease with each other. John unexpectedly diverted the topic of conversation to his education and in particular, reading.

For John, reading was a stressful experience that produced anxiety. These fears became deep seated which resulted in resistance to reading. As John entered into adulthood his pre-literacy skills became more evident especially when it came to his job. John felt ostracised by employers and work mates. His resistance to reading grew into animosity which fuelled feelings of anger, frustration and shame. Limited by his warrior mentality and warped understanding of what it means to be able to read, John turned to shady dealings to generate income he so desperately needed to survive. What started out as a second class operation quickly turned into a million dollar drug ring. Then, Boom!!! Forty-six years old with a 33 year prison sentence. His life would never be the same. The next words to depart his lips left

me feeling queasy. 'Now I tell yah everyting Gurl. I trust yah aye, now yah gotta teach me tah read, k'. It wasn't a question, more of a statement that required no answer. The lessons with John began immediately, however eventually seven of John's buddies joined our group.

Over the next nine months I witnessed a change. The distorted, one-dimensional perception of what it means to be able to read had been challenged. The inherent defeatist attitude towards reading gradually evolved to become embracing and constructive. For the first time in his life John was optimistically aware of the doors that were now open to him. His writing skills, vocabulary, confidence all improved as a result of his increased reading ability.

The group met together in the mess for the final time. Everyone had chosen something special to share. One chap opens with a reading from his beloved King James Bible, joyous that he could now discover the Word for himself. Someone else reads an old newspaper clipping that describes his escape from police custody, laughter and banter echo through the corridor. Another guy reads a few pages from his daughter's favourite Hairy McClary book, their bond even stronger as he spends quality time with her reading in the visit room.

John is the last to share. He holds a bright red envelope, the same one that had prompted me to approach him all those months ago. He explains that this letter is the catalyst for his desire to read. His voice stammers through the first few lines then he finds his rhythm. His speech alters, almost stuttering to a halt. His body language betrays a sad mix of shame and regret. The author of the letter describes her husband's last moments on earth then turns her attention to the killer, her words surprisingly forgiving. You see, the author is the widow of the man John had shot three years earlier. John reads, as the words flow, so too do the tears.

I can only contemplate and imagine the different life John could have led had his reading difficulties been identified when he was a child and his potential nurtured and encouraged. Before knowing John I could easily peruse the newspaper, order from a menu or check my tweets, never considering the implications of reading. To be able to read means that one can function successfully in a three-dimensional world. Through reading we are able to communicate and interpret ideas, strengthen relationships and form new ones. No longer is John dealing in the shadows of society. He has a sense of identity, belonging and purpose.

John has taught me a great lesson. Pre-literacy is preventable, the ramifications avoidable.

By Ngawiki



GUM LEAF SCULPTURE BY AMY NILSSON, YEAR 6.

## FEAR

I want to push away the fear,  
 And all the horrid things it brings,  
 The depression of being alone,  
 To bring the happiness,  
 To create a caring world,  
 So we can all be brave,  
 I want to push away the fear.

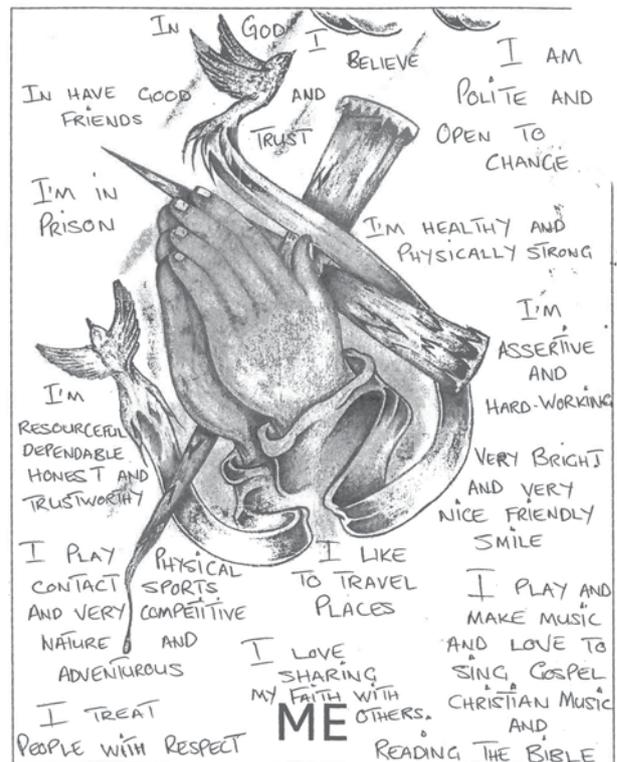
## THE BURNING SUN

I would like to taste the burning sun,  
 The transparent heat,  
 The illuminant light,  
 When it cleanses the darkness,  
 When it chases away the pale moon,  
 I would like to taste the burning sun.

Josh Coe-Walters, Year 9

## I AM WHAT I AM

The following Pathways task required students to do a drawing or collage of themselves to show who they are and what their future might look like.



## BUDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Year 7 and 8 students studied an online 'Photography' topic earlier this year. They learned a range of techniques including the rule of thirds, wide shots for landscapes and taking photos from interesting points of view. The following photos demonstrate some of these techniques.



ALEX STEPHENS,  
YEAR 7



REBECCA CHINYANI, YEAR 7



SASHA SMITH-GRAY, YEAR 7

## DEVELOPING A SENSE OF BELONGING

**'HANANIAH'S WHAKAPAPA INCLUDED ALL THE PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND FEATURES FROM HER HOME IN RUATAHUNA THAT WERE SIGNIFICANT AND SPECIAL TO HER.'**

**HELEN MCCONNELL, EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER.**

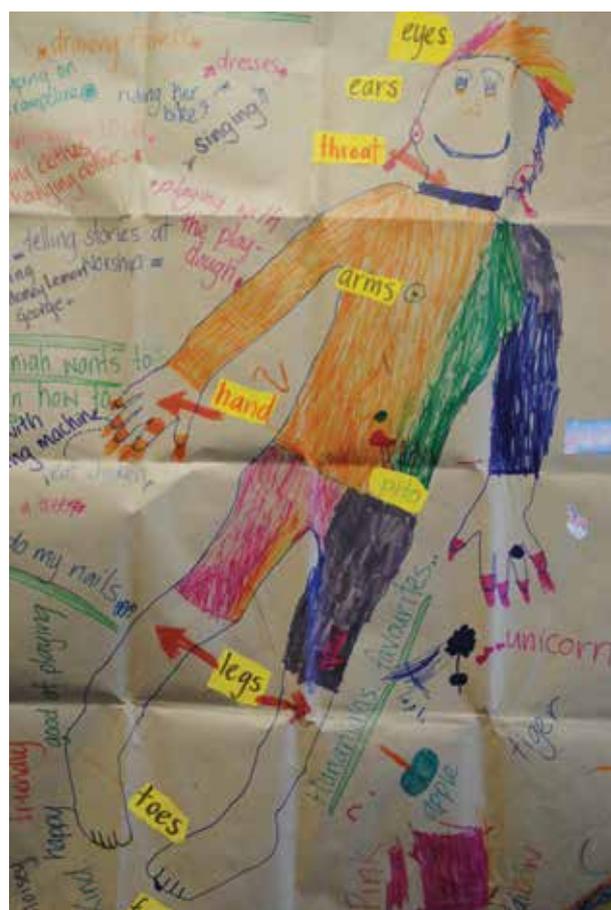
Hananiah Heemi, an early childhood student at Te Kura loves rainbows, unicorns and the colour pink. She recently learnt to put her head under the water at the local river and is developing the confidence to tell and 'read' stories with her whānau as part of their evening routine. To further develop her confidence Hananiah's teachers sent her a large piece of paper and some drawing materials to create a self-portrait. With a learning goal to support Hananiah to identify and explore her place in the whānau, everyone contributed to Hananiah's self-portrait (pictured).

Renee, Hananiah's mother, guided Hananiah to talk about her strengths and added these comments and others from Hananiah's family members, including grandparents. These discussions and written words build on Hananiah's literacy skills and knowledge.

Hananiah's completed self-portrait included the words and drawings of her parents and siblings alongside Hananiah's own creative interpretation of herself with colourful hair and earrings. When working on this self-portrait Hananiah engaged in a reciprocal learning model; she was learning about herself from her whānau, while they in turn learned more about her aspirations and values.

Early childhood teacher Helen McConnell commented that Hananiah's entire whānau supported Hananiah to identify and enhance her awareness of herself. Hananiah also identified things she knew, things she was good at, things she enjoyed, as well as identifying her interest in learning to sew.

The early childhood teachers at Te Kura work alongside whānau to ensure that the interests, skills and abilities of individual children are met through the range of ideas, resources and activities that are sent in each posting. Having Hananiah's 'voice' alongside positive comments from the whānau helped her teachers plan the next learning goal



*Artwork by Hananiah Heemi.*

which was in response to Hananiah's interest in sewing. The resources in Hananiah's next posting, alongside input from her teachers will support the development of Hananiah's concentration as well as her hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills.

By Adele Harris, Early Childhood Teacher

## KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE IN WINTER

WITH THE COLDER WEATHER SETTLING IN, SUPERVISORS WILL BE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO KEEP STUDENTS ACTIVE AND ALERT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS.



*Adele Harris, Supervisor Support Advisor.*

Try to have small breaks for physical activity between subjects or showers of rain. Jumping on the tramp, a short bike ride or kicking a ball for a few minutes are some ways to burn energy before settling back down to schoolwork.

During a break your students can play stick games or use poi. Tī Rākau is a traditional Māori stick game using the seed stalks of harakeke (flax), or rolled up magazines or newspapers. It is often played to a rhythm or chant. Students can make their own poi or rākau sticks using instructions from YouTube tutorials. Rākau and poi can help develop children's reflexes, hand eye coordination and concentration, and use both right and left sides of the brain. The waiata, songs or chants that accompany these activities are an easy and fun way to develop Māori fluency.

The 2016 Olympic Games take place from 5 to 21 August. Many Te Kura students will be inspired to run, jump, throw and compete with extra energy after watching media coverage of the sports.

In preparation, why not set up a mini Olympic Games using ideas from Sport NZ:

[www.sportnz.org.nz/get-into-sport/for-parents?](http://www.sportnz.org.nz/get-into-sport/for-parents?)

Check out the Kiwidex manual, aimed at children 5-12 years, for practical ideas, many of which can be modified for home.

Do you remember the fun you had as children playing games like hopscotch, skipping, marbles and string games? These traditional games, along with ball games, help children to develop coordination skills, spatial awareness and balance. Try Kidspot.co.nz ([www.kidspot.co.nz/kids-activities-and-games/Activity-ideas+30/Old-fashioned-games--Retro-fun-for-your-kids+12046.htm](http://www.kidspot.co.nz/kids-activities-and-games/Activity-ideas+30/Old-fashioned-games--Retro-fun-for-your-kids+12046.htm)) for useful ideas.

Finally, My Family Kiwi Activities [www.myfamily.kiwi/activities](http://www.myfamily.kiwi/activities), has ideas such as scavenger hunts, hopscotch, ball games and obstacle courses. This site also has a great range of easy-to-make, tasty recipes that your students can help prepare. My Family Kiwi Activities is maintained by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) so it has an emphasis on healthy living.

You can contact Adele during term time on 0800 65 99 88 ext 8244 or email [adele.harris@tekura.school.nz](mailto:adele.harris@tekura.school.nz).

## STUDENTS STUDYING NCEA COURSES

By now you should have received your 2016 NCEA Payment and Registration pack. This pack includes instructions for completing your online NCEA registration on our website, as well as how to pay your 2016 NCEA fee. Your personalised pack includes:

- a blue 2016 Financial Assistance application form (if eligible to apply, your 2016 NCEA fee will be reduced)
- a pink Exam Centre Permission form (for those also registering to sit end of year exams)
- payment instructions for your 2016 NCEA fee.

If you didn't receive a pack, please go to the NCEA payment and registration page on our website at [www.tekura.school.nz](http://www.tekura.school.nz) and follow the instructions.

## COLLABORATIVE CREATIVITY

**SINGING, DANCING, ARTWORK AND EVEN HORSE JUMPING WILL FEATURE IN TE KURA'S ONLINE MUSIC VIDEO COLLABORATION 'ECHOES OF THE SUN'.**

More than 50 Te Kura students have contributed, with the youngest aged just four.

The next step in the project, which kicked off in October last year, is to find a way to represent everyone's contributions visually in the video and a senior student has been given this challenge.

The original chord structure of 'Echoes of the Sun' was written on guitar by Seth Austin (Year 10) from Whanganui. To take the song further Seth worked closely with Bayley Milne (Year 12) from Cooper's Beach in the Far North, who was given the responsibility of arranging and producing the song. Bayley writes and records his own songs and already has three years of recording experience under his belt.

'It's been a really good learning experience, especially learning how to work with people when you're not face-to-face,' says Bayley. 'It's such a big project with so many different people involved, so it's taken some effort to sort out how everybody else's parts will work with my own.'

In April, Bayley met with three specially selected vocalists in Auckland, Renee Plumpton (Year 10), Taylor Taraare (Year 12), and Ada Wong (Year 10), to record the song.

'The vocalists were really good and easy to work with,' says Bayley. 'Most of the music I write is electronic, so the song has a largely electronic feel but incorporates guitar, piano and orchestrations as well – and I've gone for a happy, upbeat sound.'

To pull the chorus together Bayley had to work with recordings that had been captured through a wide range of devices. The entire collaborative process has occurred through Te Kura's Online Teaching and Learning Environment (OTLE), with students providing ideas through a discussion board every step of the way.

Kaihautu Matauranga for the arts Jan Bolton says the process demonstrates how effective online learning can be.

'The students have had to sort out issues and make decisions almost completely by themselves with just a little facilitation from me,' she says.

The final video should be ready for release in July.



*From left: Bayley Milne, Renee Plumpton, Taylor Taraare and Ada Wong.*



*Jemima from Gore painted her interpretation of 'Echoes of the Sun'.*



*Alyssa from Masterton bent over backwards to get into the video.*

## OUR VERY OWN DAME

A STELLAR CAREER IN EDUCATION SPANNING 50 YEARS HAS EARNED TE KURA'S BOARD CHAIR KAREN SEWELL ONE OF THE HIGHEST ACCOLADES IN THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS – A DAME COMPANION OF THE NEW ZEALAND ORDER OF MERIT.



'I couldn't believe it at first – I had to reread the letter about two or three times,' Dame Karen laughs.

As well as working as both a teacher and a principal, Dame Karen has held a variety of high-profile roles in the education sector. She has been Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education, Chief Executive of the Education Review Office and Acting Chief Executive of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

Although she officially retired in 2011, Dame Karen isn't ready to step away from the education sector just yet. As well as chairing Te Kura's board, she is also a board member of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

'Any time I've gone into a school, or gone into a classroom, or talked with young people, I'm energised to go and help out while I still can,' she says.

'I'm amazed by the resilience of young people and their ability to learn and adapt, their ability to care and support each other. For the country that I want to live in, the future is dependent on them and I think we have an education system that prepares them for their future.'

Dame Karen believes that Te Kura is going in the right direction by transitioning to delivering all its courses online. 'Future learning will be digital, part of a network, individual but part of a community of learning, and for every child,' she says.

'I love being part of Te Kura and its whānau, and am encouraged and strengthened by the energy, enthusiasm and determination of its staff to do the best for every student.'

## PILOT LANGUAGE PROGRAMME IN GISBORNE REGION

IF YOU GO TO TOLAGA BAY AREA SCHOOL YOU MAY BE GREETED WITH 'NĪ HĀO', 'KONNICHIIWA', 'HOLA', 'GUTEN TAG' OR 'SALUT', AS WELL AS 'HELLO' AND 'KIA ORA'.



*Waitakeo Banks and Te Hinota Kururangi embrace language learning.*

Since the beginning of the year, Year 9 and 10 students at the school have been learning Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, German or French through an online pilot programme run through Te Kura – Te Aopuangiangi.

The students got to meet their Te Kura teachers, along with Chief Executive Mike Hollings and Board Chair Karen Sewell, during a special school visit in May to officially launch the programme.

'Students loved putting faces to the names of their teachers and had plenty of questions to ask,' says Adele Scott, Kaihautu Mātauranga: Ngā Reo. 'Without exception, we witnessed an openness and willingness to learn, with the children readily giving new words, phrases and songs a go. This was especially pleasing to see as we want to encourage all of our students of languages to not be just learners of the languages but also to be users of languages.'

Chief Executive Mike Hollings says he is delighted with how the programme is going so far. 'The students are improving so quickly and are really embracing the online programme,' he says. 'It was wonderful to see their enthusiasm.'

'Because Aotearoa is so geographically isolated from much of the world there is a tendency for New Zealanders to downgrade the importance of learning languages. But in reality, it's your passport to the world – it really opens your mind.'

## SPECIAL ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS AT TE KURA

**STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL, MEDICAL,  
SENSORY OR LEARNING DISABILITIES  
MAY BE APPROVED TO HAVE SPECIAL  
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS (SAC) FOR  
THEIR NCEA ASSESSMENTS.**



SAC includes things like being allowed to have someone (not a family member or friend) read or write the assessment for you if you have dyslexia, or being able to sit your exams in a separate room if you have attention problems or severe anxiety. These are only some examples of SAC.

To get more information, check out our website [www.tekura.school.nz/student-toolkit/special-assessment-conditions](http://www.tekura.school.nz/student-toolkit/special-assessment-conditions) and, if it applies to you, please contact Jennifer Hardiman on 0800 65 99 88 ext 8127 or email [jennifer.hardiman@tekura.school.nz](mailto:jennifer.hardiman@tekura.school.nz).

If you are a SAC student who has recently come to Te Kura from another school, it is important that you contact Jennifer as soon as possible to have your SACs transferred from your old school to Te Kura.



## Join us on Facebook!

Have you joined our Te Kura Facebook community yet? It's your place to share successes, top schoolwork, burning thoughts, latest news and more.

If you would like to share amazing photos or videos related to your studies or successes outside of school, please contact us at [comms@tekura.school.nz](mailto:comms@tekura.school.nz).

To like our Facebook page, find us at [www.facebook.com/tekuranz/](http://www.facebook.com/tekuranz/).

## COMPETITION

### GET CREATIVE AND BE IN TO WIN

What do you love best about Te Kura? Enter our competition and be in to win a Prezzy card worth \$200.

You've seen our Learn Your Way videos ([www.learnyourway.org.nz](http://www.learnyourway.org.nz)) of Te Kura students talking about why studying at Te Kura suits them. Now we want to know what you love best about being a Te Kura student. Make a piece of art, video, poem, song ... whatever creative outlet you love best, and email your entry to [comms@tekura.school.nz](mailto:comms@tekura.school.nz). We'll share a shortlist of the best entries on our Facebook page and the one that gets the most likes will win.

Entries close on 24 July. For criteria and terms and conditions visit [www.tekura.school.nz](http://www.tekura.school.nz).



*Zoe told us what she loves about Te Kura in one of our Learn Your Way videos. Now it's your turn!*