

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

2020 was a very difficult year. The emergence of the COVID-19 world-wide pandemic really did have a huge impact and from March onwards many difficult situations arose which tested the wellbeing of our students, staff and community. The effect of the COVID lockdown on many families brought distress and anxiety. Some parents lost their jobs and this had a profound impact on their families, there was the ongoing fear that the COVID cluster in Matamata would see people in our Morrinsville community contracting the virus and the lockdown period was very difficult for large families in small houses when they had to essentially stay home every day for eight weeks. For some of our priority learners a lack of equity was a significant issue, where students were either working to support their families, caring for younger siblings while parents worked, coping with no or one device amongst several siblings in a congested house, or where there was a lack or paucity of an internet connection. When our students returned to school, there was an initial 'honeymoon' phase when everyone was very pleased to see each other again face-to-face, but it was clear very quickly that some students had been negatively affected and were very unsettled and that quite a large number of students had essentially missed out on education opportunities during this time, so that our teachers' focus back at school was for the rest of the year on catch-up and trying to help these students to believe in themselves again and that they could be successful academically. The school also went through the trauma of losing one of our young women and the fallout from this tragedy was understandably very big at school. Despite all of these things, the Board remains very proud that the great majority of our students once again achieved very well academically, in sport and in cultural activities.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board is pleased with progress made during 2020 by the Principal, Leadership Team and Staff of the school to further implement our Strategic Plan. A number of initiatives, both ongoing and new, have been actioned during the year to meet the prioritised goals of the Annual Plan 2020.

IMPROVING LEARNING

Blended Learning

- We successfully delivered a blended learning programme to all of our Years 9-11 classes in 2020, with all curricula contributing to this delivery. Survey and subjective feedback from teachers and students indicated that in most cases blended learning better engaged our students, provided opportunities for differentiated learning, enabled students to work at their own pace and built technological capability
- The Board purchased 15 new laptops to help enable almost every Years 9-11 student to own or lease to buy a good-quality laptop and a bank of laptops was provided at the Library for students to borrow, which was well-used. To further ensure equity, some students were gifted or loaned school laptops. Further work needs to be done to ensure that all students bring their devices to school each day
- Our wider use of *Education Perfect* in most core subjects was a positive aspect, as was a stable computer network, internet connection and on-site technical support
- Our continued emphasis on blended learning professional support for staff, along with the sharing of good ideas and resources in learning areas, led to increased staff capability. Teachers' feedback shows that some are upskilling on their own, which is very encouraging
- Many of our teachers gained confidence in undertaking new pedagogical approaches and producing new resources which for some were more often Modification and Redefinition of existing tasks, rather than Substitution and Augmentation (but there is more work to do here). These resources were often available online and assessments were also more often submitted by students online for feedback from teachers. There is evidence that for some teachers blended learning may be increasingly lessening their workload as they develop more resources and confidence in delivering these online
- Our focus on digital learning over the last four years proved to be very beneficial when the COVID lockdown occurred, making online learning much more easily achievable for most students and staff. There were different lockdown learning experiences, with some students achieving more at home than they would have at school, many others achieving about the same but, sadly, some did not achieve much at all
- Further improvements were made to our Digital Technology Curriculum at Year 9 level. At the beginning of 2020 we delivered a modified, improved digital citizenship introduction to our Year 9 students which made the students aware of the Digital User Policy, as well as the ethics and legalities of posting and sharing on social media platforms.

Priority Learners

- Priority learners at Years 9-11 were clearly identified at the beginning of 2020. Learning areas, especially Maths and English, once again targeted Numeracy and Reading levels of our Years 9 and 10 students and there was regular monitoring and discussion about which students needed additional help to accelerate their learning
- Our teachers shared the strategies that they were adopting in the Profile section of KAMAR
- In Year 9 Numeracy the median of the priority group indicated a shift of five terms' progress in three terms, a very good result. Significantly, 14 students increased their curriculum level by up to five sub-levels. As a result, the number of the 2021 Year 10 cohort whom we will be considering to still be priority learners in Numeracy has decreased by 23 students to 27 students. However, there remains more work to do to lift the achievement of these 27 students
- In Year 9 Reading there was a slightly less significant improvement in the median, but it was nevertheless a sound result. Most importantly, there was a decrease of 25 students who will be considered priority learners in Year 10 in 2021, which has left 22 who remain behind the national mean for all of our teachers to focus on
- In Year 10 the median for our identified priority learners for Numeracy advanced by a tremendous 51 points, five terms' progress, which was an outstanding result. Two boys progressed by six sub-levels, which is extraordinary. Twelve students will no longer be considered Year 11 priority learners in 2021, leaving 14 who are still behind the national mean
- In Year 10 Reading however, disappointingly, the median did not shift, despite the fact that there were some very good gains made by some priority learners. We will have 15 Year 11 students who remain priority learners in Reading in 2021
- The Te Ao Maaori literacy course at Year 11 was continued and once again proved to be a real success for most students in the class in terms of helping them to gain valuable literacy credits
- The Ministry's Regional Mentoring fund supported our Operations Grant's Years 11-13 funding in enabling successful targeted interventions for our Maaori students at Years 11 and 12 levels on the Waikato Taniwharau and Year 12 Te Puaawaitanga leadership camps. In this way we got many of the priority students identified most at-risk of not achieving NCEA Level 1 off to a good start to the year by motivating them to work hard and helping them to gain credits at an early stage. We were also able to later work individually with targeted students to boost their literacy and numeracy levels and to gain sufficient credits. This was by quite a distance the most successful group who have gone through these special programmes, so we are clearly getting better at this
- Our learning coaches supported Mr Jenkins, Mr Forsyth, the Senior Deans and Matua Potaka in continuing to regularly use data to track the achievement of priority learners in their hubs, to mentor them, come up with individual learning plans, contact home where learning, attendance or behavioural issues arose, and to advocate on their behalf with other teachers

- As a result of all of these efforts, and despite the COVID interruptions, our NCEA Levels 1 and 2 achievement results were maintained at the very good 2019 level, our Level 3 results improved substantially, and we exceeded the national mean at both Levels 2 and 3, while meeting the mean at Level 1. These were satisfying results given the inequitable situation faced by a significant number of our students during lockdown.

Kawenata Partnership

- Our year began with a very successful teacher-only day for staff from all of our Kaahui Ako schools with local iwi. The three speakers were excellent and this occasion undoubtedly built understandings within our local schools of the history and background of our Maaori students who are Ngaati Hauaa, as well as building a collective responsibility for ensuring that these local histories are correctly told when the New Zealand Histories Curriculum becomes mandatory in 2022. The day's activities helped our staff members to further develop better understandings of our tamariki and mana whenua
- In 2020 the Board was able to offer Te Reo and Te Ao Maaori at all three senior levels, Maaori Performing Arts in a class for all three senior levels and we were able to sustain a strong kapa haka roopu through a modified programme developed by our kaiako
- We were once again well guided in things Maaori by our kuia Te Ao Marama Maaka and our Whanau Support Committee, when this committee was able to meet around COVID interruptions
- Due to COVID restrictions there was no opportunity in 2020 to undertake our biennial consultation with our Maaori community. This will be deferred to 2021 if we remain COVID-free

Kaahui Ako

- Our Kaahui Ako (CoL) now consists of 11 schools and eight ECEs. Our cluster enjoys strong collaboration across our community. Each learning organisation establishes their own individual strategic priorities and collectively we work towards how these support the four Achievement Challenges of the CoL
- In 2020, our key focus was "Developing cultural understanding to enhance cultural responsiveness". Two TODs were planned to provide engaging PL to our CoL staff which would add to our previous years' CoL hui and to enable staff to begin thinking about developing localised curriculum. Our aim continues to be to enable our staff to grow culturally-responsive practices and pedagogies which acknowledge, strengthen and support students' identities so that achievement gaps will be narrowed and closed, especially for our priority students
- TOD 1 was hosted by Ngaati Hauaa in collaboration with our CoL and underpinned by the Iwi Collaboration Fund which we successfully applied for. Held at the Matamata Civic Centre, staff listened to three excellent speakers who shared stories and history of the iwi, knowledge of Te Reo and the educational aspirations of Ngaati Hauaa through their vision through to 2040
- TOD 2, which was to have included Dr. Ann Milne and Professor Mere Berryman, had to be cancelled due to the COVID pandemic
- Working around COVID, meetings were held for CoL Leaders, whole-CoL staff and Boards of Trustees to make further plans for the CoL moving forward
- Our College's With School Leaders' (WSL) team had some changes of personnel and continued to make strong progress. They were involved in three main tasks as a team: enhancing our blended learning, organising the Year 10 connected learning programme and engaging in the insight coaches' course run by Tabitha Leonard. This latter will support our new Professional Growth Cycle model from 2021
- The WSL team conducted a survey of Year 9 students to ascertain how well they are prepared for transitioning to high school by their previous schools. We worked in collaboration with MIS and shared data with our CoL schools. This new initiative was a positive approach to rethinking some aspects of transition and we have adjusted some processes as a result.

Property Development

- The John Inger Performing Arts Centre was opened on 5 September by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. Soon after it was used for a musical production which proved highly successful, and the Board, Principal, Staff and community are very happy with our new multi-purpose facility. It will undoubtedly enhance the delivery of the Arts in our school. We hope that Stage 2 can commence later in 2022, after we receive our next 5YA instalment in July 2022
- Regular property maintenance was continued in 2020.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

The Board continues to maintain that the methods of evaluating the achievement of our students must be broad and varied, and we acknowledge that in the evaluation process many of the factors are not easily objectively measurable. The school aims to produce all-round citizens, who achieve to their full academic potential and also have wide involvement in sport, the Arts and cultural activities so that they can enjoy a balanced life when they leave school. The school continues to be very proud of a large number of our ex-students who have gone on to excel in their lives. This includes of course our wonderful Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. Subjective evidence suggests that our school does a very good job in ensuring that all of our students are well-rounded and most go on to live happy lives.

INVOLVEMENT IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Board continues to be very grateful to many staff who give up their time in order to provide our students with opportunities in co-curricular activities. There is high involvement of students in a wide range of sports throughout the year, particularly in the sports of netball, rugby, football, basketball, hockey, lacrosse, volleyball, cricket and touch rugby. The Board has been pleased that the work of the Sports Co-Ordinator, Mrs Vicky Broomfield, has led to increased participation in school sports.

Our school offers a wide range of 27 sports currently. At our Sports Prizegiving around 100 trophies were given out to our talented sportspeople, with 10 students receiving Blues Awards and our top two awards for Sporting Excellence and All-Round Excellence going to Jordan Rogers and Alesha McQuoid respectively, both in strong fields of nominees

At our Cultural Awards' Evening, which was once again an excellent and entertaining event, we were able to see a number of performances and to celebrate the wonderful success of our students, culminating with 10 students being awarded Cultural Blues, which are the pinnacle of achievement for any student.

PERSONNEL

The Board would like to thank all staff for their hard work in 2020. Our academic, cultural, arts and sporting achievements are a true reflection of the excellent work done by our staff, supported by community members, and we thank them for their continued passion and dedication to educating our students.

At the end of the year we had four long-serving teachers leaving us, with three retiring. Mrs Alison Dawson, Mrs Jacqui Fitzgerald and Ms Marian Fogarty were all outstanding teachers for between 23 to 40 years and Mr Tom Chapman-Smith was an amazing Music teacher for 13 years. This commitment to the young people of our Morrinsville community has been extraordinary and during this time these four staff members have changed many young lives for the better. All have had high expectations of their students and believed that every one of them could achieve, and they worked tirelessly to make sure that all of their students achieved to their potential. Mr Moroni Sunnex was promoted to the role of Assistant Learning Area of English at Kapiti College and Guidance Counsellor Mr David Watson accepted a position at a school in Hamilton. Both were highly-regarded staff members. The Board is very confident that it has appointed strong replacements to begin in 2021.

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

The Board is satisfied that it is continuing to fulfil its obligations with EEO.

THE SCHOOL ROLL

Our roll at Morrinsville College is expected to rise significantly over the next few years, both because there are more young people currently coming through the top end of our local intermediate and full primary schools, but also because Morrinsville is very much in a growth mode. As far as the College is concerned, this will bring considerable pressure on the classroom capacity on our site so the Principal and Board will continue to lobby the Ministry of Education for the new classrooms that we already need.

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

There were no changes to the Board during 2020. David Bhandari, the Student Representative, stood down after his one-year term but put himself up for re-election and he was duly re-elected. In November, Mrs Margaret Wilton and I stood down by rotation at the end of our previous three-year terms and put ourselves up for re-election and with no other parent putting their names forward, no election was needed and we were both duly re-elected. We are honoured to be able to continue in our Board roles to provide direction to the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Staff of a school which we are very proud of. This continuity of Board members means that our school has a very experienced Board of Trustees' team and with 2020 having been very difficult at times post the COVID lockdown period, this experience was invaluable. We had to deal with some very difficult circumstances with some families/whanau and due to the unsettled nature of some of our students we had more Board discipline meetings than would normally be the case. I thank my Board team very much for their willingness to give up so much of their own personal time in the best interests of our students and their whanau.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge:

- Our Principal Mr John Inger. Our leadership team is strong because Mr Inger models leadership and he has his finger on the pulse of our school. Nothing much gets past him. For the past 24 years as Principal he has made it his top priority to support and care for our students, staff and community
- Deputy Principal Mrs Thilo Govender. The Board was proud that Mrs Govender successfully completed her doctorate in 2020, to a very high standard. The Board also once again acknowledges Mrs Govender's excellent work in 2020 as our Kaahui Ako Leader and commends her on leading our local schools to an even closer cooperative relationship in the best interests of the learning outcomes of all of our community's youngsters
- Our two other Deputy Principals Mr Jenkins and Mr Forsyth and our Senior Leader Mr Prasad. All three have once again carried their responsibilities admirably, particularly during the period of the COVID lockdown when they, and other members of the Senior Leadership Team, often exceeded our expectations. The Board feels very fortunate that we have such a strong Senior Leadership Team
- All of our wonderful Staff. On behalf of the Morrinsville community, I thank you for your sterling efforts in such a difficult year. Your commitment to online learning delivery during the lockdown and your subsequent commitment to helping so many of our students to catch-up with their learning throughout the remainder of the year was extraordinary. The Board acknowledges that Mr Symon and Mrs Fitzgerald endured the loss of their loved partners during the year and that they were grieving. We shared their grief and their emotion and our aroha remains with them
- All members of the Board of Trustees for their commitment and dedication and input into decision-making, and for the very able way in which they carried out their responsibilities in 2020, despite the difficulties that we often faced during this year of COVID
- All parents and caregivers for their ongoing support for the school and for trusting that our school will provide a quality education for their children
- Our school volunteer - Parent Teacher Association, coaches, assistant coaches and support members.
- The generosity and support of the local business community and service clubs

CONCLUSION

We believe that all parents and community members should continue to have great confidence in the quality of teaching, educational achievement and the overall performance of Morrinsville College.



**NGAIRE TE AHU
BOARD CHAIR**