



## Ōtāhuhu College Newsletter

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

### Important Dates

Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	2.30pm – Kapa Haka performance (Duedrop Centre)
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Last Day of Term 1
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	First Day of Term 2



## *From Our Principal*

This week has been a week of celebration with both our Scholars and Polyfest assembly. The success of our students is a tribute to their hard work and commitment, their determination to keep getting better and to put in the extra work needed to be amongst the best in the country.

This week we also received what is known as Leaver Data from the Ministry of Education. This shows the highest qualifications students have when they finish their school. Otago College students did better than the national averages for all schools for Levels 1,2 and 3 and our best ever UE results as well.

We are very proud of these fantastic results and extremely grateful for the excellent classroom teaching, the fantastic support staff and the ongoing support and encouragement from our families and our community.

## *Our Commitments*

Our commitment next week is to be respectful. Being respectful includes being aware of the language we use both at school and to and from school. Swearing is not acceptable, and can often make situations worse than they need to be. A key to success is keeping calm under pressure. Students also demonstrate respect by the way they wear their uniforms, again this is both to and from school. The vast majority of students look well dressed as they come to school and thanks to all the families for your hard work which makes this possible. Just a reminder that our young men should be in school socks, or plain black socks.

## *Attendance*

When students miss school, it's vital for parents to provide a written note explaining the absence. This ensures the school can record the absence accurately and identify any ongoing issues that might affect your child's ability to attend regularly.

At Otago College, we encourage parents to notify the school as soon as possible, either by phone, email, or a handwritten note. Together, we can support students to overcome barriers to attendance and ensure they don't fall behind.

'Oku mahu'inga ke faka-fetu'utaki mai ki he 'apiakó 'a e 'uhinga 'oku 'ikai ma'u ako ai 'a e fānaú.

O le tusi o faamatalaga e fesoasoani i le aoga e fesoasoani ai i le fanau.



## Study News

### **Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) – Coming Up Next Term**

Next term, in Weeks 5 and 6 (18 May – 29 May), many of our students will take part in the Common Assessment Activities (CAAs). These are online assessments for Literacy (Reading and Writing) and Numeracy. Students need to achieve these corequisite credits (10 Literacy and 10 Numeracy) to gain NCEA Level 2 and Level 3.

#### **In May:**

- All Year 10 students will sit the Reading CAA.
- Some students in Years 11–13 will sit one or more CAAs. These students' parents | caregivers have been notified by text message.

The next round of CAAs will take place in September, and more details will follow in due course.

To support students, we have included two helpful links:

- One shows how to access past CAA assessments. These can help students become familiar with the format and try some practice questions.

#### [How to Access Past CAA Tests for Practice.pdf](#)

- The other includes fun, everyday activities from the Ministry of Education that families can explore together. These activities build reading, writing, and numeracy skills in simple and practical ways.

#### [Fun everyday activities for numeracy and literacy.pdf](#)

The upcoming break could be a great opportunity for students to try out past assessments and explore some of the fun learning activities at their own pace; using them to become familiar with the skills and format.

We are dedicated to supporting your children's learning at school, and we truly appreciate your partnership and support as we work together. Thank you.

Melinda Christensen | Academic Navigator – Senior School

email: [mchristensen@otahuhucollege.school.nz](mailto:mchristensen@otahuhucollege.school.nz)



## Arts and Culture News

The Auckland Arts Festival has been an exciting period in Tāmaki Makaurau over the past fortnight with performances by local and international artists.

The Dance and Drama dept have taken students to 3 shows over this period. 55 senior Drama students witnessed a powerful performance of Waiora by the Auckland Theatre Company.

This was bookended by 2 circus shows titled Duck Pond and 10,000 Hours, 30 students came to these 2 outstanding performances. It was great to take students out to the city in the evenings, to enjoy being in different theatres and to take in the overall atmosphere that a festival brings to a city.

A big thank you to the teachers who drove our mini-buses, our students genuinely appreciate this rare opportunity.

Ka Kite Kerry Lynch. HOD.



### Ihi, Wehi, Mana



He mihi nui ki te Auckland Arts Festival for last Friday nights opportunity to watch Te Waka Huia perform in celebration of years involved with Māori cultural performances at an elite level. 35 taura in Te Kapa ō Te Tāhuhu sat in awe watching poi performed with fluidity and grace, waiata-a-ringā synchronised with ease and other waiata sung to celebrate time. Ka mau te wehi!

For some of our taura Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre was an experience in itself. Huge mihi to Nurse Vicki and our whānau for your support with transport and supervision.



## *Health and Wellness Centre*

Travellers supports young people to navigate life's changes and challenges, build resilience, and strengthen their sense of belonging.

All Year 9 students are invited to complete a short wellbeing survey, and a small group will be invited to take part in the nine-week Travellers programme facilitated by Karlo and Vicki.

The programme has been delivered in schools across Aotearoa for over 25 years and has helped thousands of young people develop confidence, emotional regulation, and healthy coping strategies.

At the end of the programme, all Year 9 students will complete the wellbeing survey again.

If you do not want your child to take part in programme, please let the Health reception office (09 9634081) know by 23.4.25. If we do not hear from you, we will understand this as consent for your child to be invited to the programme if chosen – and info will be sent home.





## School Health Clinic News

At the beginning of term 2, the nurses will start to catch up with all the Year 9 students for a general mini health check. This is part of the school nurse contract in all the health funded schools throughout NZ and happens throughout the year.

The nurses ask the students about their health and wellbeing. If you do not want your child to have this Year 9 check just ring and let us know.

Likewise, let us know if you want your child's health checked urgently or if your child has health issues you want to discuss privately with the nurses.

## Community News

### Scholars Assembly

On Wednesday, 25 March, our school proudly hosted the 2025 Scholars Assembly — a special occasion dedicated to honouring the outstanding academic achievements of our students. This year, we celebrated an impressive number of learners who were endorsed with Merit and Excellence, a testament to their hard work, resilience, and commitment to learning.

The atmosphere was filled with pride as whānau arrived in support of their tamariki. Many came bearing beautiful lei, creating a vibrant and heartfelt display of love and celebration. Watching families embrace their children as they were acknowledged on stage was a truly moving moment for everyone present.

Following the ceremony, students and their whānau were welcomed to a lovely morning tea — a chance to relax, connect, and share in the joy of the occasion alongside senior management and teachers. This gathering added a warm, personal touch to the morning, strengthening the sense of community that underpins our school.

A special thank you goes to the Kindness Collective, whose generosity made the morning tea possible. Their support helped create a memorable experience for our students and their families.

The Scholars Assembly remains one of the most uplifting events of our school calendar — a reminder of what can be achieved when dedication, encouragement, and community come together.



## **Our school community is invited to Village Fest at Eden Park!**

Date: Saturday 28 March

Time: 2–6pm Ahead of the Blues v Fijian Drua match - kick-off 7:05pm

Celebrate Pacific culture, connection, and wellbeing, and grab your chance for free game tickets and spot prizes by completing the Village Fest Passport on-site. Bring your whānau — everyone's welcome



## The Duke of Edinburgh Experience: Mt. Taranaki.

The Duke of Edinburgh trip was one of the most fulfilling activities of the year as it provided us with four days to build our confidence, bond our friendships, and acquire life skills that I would not have learned in the classroom. On the first day we reached the Camphouse where we were settled down, and sight-seeing around, and got ready to have the fun of the thing.

Even this initial day provided us with the opportunity to train as an independent and collaborative team as we arranged ourselves and prepared to go. Spending time together in a new environment served everyone well in bonding together, and it really brought about the real feel of excitement as to what was in store.

On the second day, we started a hike and arrived at Holly Hut. This proved to be the beginning of our real learning of resilience, determination, and cooperation. Hiking long distances and carrying our own equipment was not very simple, but it helped us to learn to continue on, support each other, and work as a team. The very arrival to Holly Hut was a great accomplishment, and it gave us the impression that going out of our comfort zone could result in a sense of real pride and achievement.

Day 3 was the worst of the trip since we had to travel the length of Holly Hut to Henry Peak and then continue to Pouakai Hut, yet it was also the day in which we realised how capable we can be. The uphill trek and sore legs had us training our minds to persevere, be patient and always stay positive despite the difficult times. When we finally made it up Henry Peak it was one of the most memorable moments to many of us not only due to the amazing sites, but it also made us realize that we can do anything as long as we have each other and continue going.

We returned on Day 4 and visited new locations, such as the clock tower and other fascinating places which gave us the opportunity to rethink all we had already accomplished. At the conclusion of the trip, we went back home exhausted yet proud with more teamwork skills, more independence and enhanced confidence in ourselves.

Though it occurred in some painful moments on its way, it was those hardships, which made the experience so valuable.

-Johan Tom, year 13





## Book Shop

Orders for ID cards close on Tuesday 31 March, \$15 , please pay at student services/book shop. Eftpos or cash accepted

If you didn't get a photo taken 19 March you will need to wait until next term when the catch up is done .

## Kotuku Unit

On Tuesday 24th March, my classmates and I went to Massey Park in Papakura for the Special Olympics Athletic event to take part in running races and field sports.

I raced in the 100 metre and got tired, but it was good fun. Next, I did the 200-metre run and I came first. Then, I took a little break to eat some food and refuel. I listened to music on my phone. We watched the other races and supported the runners.

After lunch I went to the field and did some long jump and threw the javelin and shotput. The day was great!

By Dontay Tiatia Y10 KTK



## Polyfest 2026

***Mālō e lelei – “Oku ou mafeia ‘a e me’a kotoa pe ‘iate ia oku ne fakakaukaua au” I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***



~Congratulations~ to our all mighty Otago College Tongan Group 2026 consisting of 87 students for an astounding and successful polyfest journey. The Tongan group performed with unity, pride, elegance and power returning with 2 victorious wins:

1<sup>st</sup> place: LAKALAKA (National dance of Tonga)

1<sup>st</sup> place: SOKE





# ŌTĀHUHU COLLEGE

Otago College was the hosting school for the Tongan stage 2026. Our students did a marvelous job hosting wearing Otago College blue lanyards, clipboards and great customer service. Hosting responsibilities included: Ushering, conducting a directive flow of schools to the stage entrance/tent/ramp/stage/exit, cleaning of the stage after each performance, answering questions from students and school staff, and collecting/stacking/removing chairs and benches to support different performances and more.

The Tongan group would like to thank our non-Tongan year 13 students, Matalupe & Petuliki Teputepu who helped host through out the week – Everyone arrived at 5am each morning ready to serve and did a fantastic job – Malo ‘aupito.



Our Tongan group had a total of 44 year 13 students demonstrating leadership, cultural honor and harmony. 16 students represented our Tongan group at the 'Polyfest Opening Launch' at the ASB Cube North Wharf. Malo 'aupito these 16 students: Milika, Jenna, Manako, Esther, Melesete, Gabby, Fele'unga, Ana' Tupou, James, Danyal, Halatau, Narason, Usaia, Viliami, Toutai and Isikeli.



Fakamalo lahi 'aupito/Thank you immensely to our teachers, tutors and chairpersons for all their hard work and working tirelessly behind the scenes:

**Main teachers in charge:** Mrs Tina Otunuku and Mr George Finau

**Supporting staff:** Mr Maiala Tuinukuafe, Mr S Hart & Ms T Blackman.

**Tutors/Punake & family:** Mr Vili Paea, Sam Paea, Kalotiane Paea, Ms Iunisi Paea

**Chairpersons:** Ms Kato Tuakalau & Sela Latu

The Otago College Tongan community is amazing and supported the Tongan group wholeheartedly.



Tongan group positions of prestige:

**Vahenga:** Danyal Latu (Male leader + endorsed with Merit)

**Vahenga:** Beauty Tuakalau (Female leader + highest 'Excellence endorsement' level 2)

**Ta'ofi vahenga:** Meliame Mafoa (Head girl + endorsed with Excellence).

**Fika tolu (Male):** Narason Nemani-Paea (Deputy Head Boy + endorsed with Merit)

**Fika tolu (Female):** Melesete Aiuta Paulo (Endorsed with Merit)

**Fakapotu (Female):** Ana Tupou Mosa'ati (Endorsed with Merit)

**Fakapotu (Male):** Lloyd Kuli (Year 12).



Well done Otago College Tongan Group 2026 and to everyone who was involved – You have made our college proud! Tu’a ‘Ofa ‘Eiki atu **#KIATAMATANE**

