

# St Mary's Diocesan School



## Mini Newsletter September 2018



This term, often referred to as the business term, has seen us continue to focus on preparing students to realise their potential to achieve strong academic outcomes. In our background we have also been aware of a wide range of government led reviews of all aspects of education including NCEA.

We have spent considerable time as a staff looking at the possible changes that are both legislated for us and the choices we will also have in designing a school curriculum that maximises opportunities for girls at our school.

We are aware of societal trends and concerns focused on mental and physical wellbeing. To date we have surveyed the local Stratford population, surveyed some of you at parent teacher evenings, spoken face to face with those of you who have attended our parent evenings such as the Social Media and Sex evening facilitated by the Centre for Science and Citizenship and the NCEA parent evening. Your input is appreciated and valued; we believe we are in a unique position to offer a holistic, 21<sup>st</sup> century programme that empowers each of our young women to be resolute, courageous and successful.

Our consultation process is far from over, we will work alongside changes mandated to develop a strong graduate profile and then relook at the options and opportunities we offer here at St Mary's Diocesan build capacity for our girls. We believe very strongly in the single-sex education ethos and celebrate that all leadership opportunities in a girls' school are filled by girls. We are also committed to ensuring the wellbeing of our students is paramount and we are working with best practice research around ways to enhance the wellbeing of your daughter and how we can best deliver this at our school.

The Nigel Latta series "Curious Minds" on TVNZ for the last few Sunday nights gave a small insight into our brain and behaviour under stressful conditions. Episode 4 gave some practical steps for anyone in a stressful or anxious state to use to calm their thoughts and actions, this may be helpful if your daughter is slightly stressed about internal deadlines and external examinations. <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/the-curious-mind>

A further great resource is through girls using their mobile phone to decrease stress and access programmes that are calming and self-regulating. We often see mobile devices as accelerators of stress as some girls appear to stay connected 24/7 but the tools available at <https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety/top-iphone-android-apps> many of which are free, provide a solution or two to busy buzzy teens.

Staff are focused on providing report feedback for senior students prior to the holidays so that girls can fine tune study techniques and focus on finishing internal assessments in a timely manner. We strongly encourage parents who have concerns to attend the mentoring meetings scheduled for the last week of term so that senior school mentors can give you and your daughter a holistic overview of your daughter's next steps.

End of year planning is well underway and we remind parents of senior students that their leaving ceremonies will be on Monday 10 December - year 13 leavers dinner, Tuesday 11 December – leavers chapel service for all leavers and Wednesday 12 December – prizegiving commencing at 11am. Junior students have a "project" based programme for the final week of school and further details will be outlined to parents early next term.

We look forward to celebrating all of our successes at our many Term 4 occasions.

*P. M. Sreen*

### Uniform change over dates

With the move from Winter through Spring to Summer we are now planning for the change-over in uniforms.

Girls will remain in winter uniform until after Labour Weekend, Tuesday 23 October 2018.

During the weeks of 23 October until 02 November girls can select to wear either full winter or full summer uniform depending on the weather forecast.

After seniors leave for NCEA study prior to examinations commencing on 07 November all girls must be in full summer uniform.

The following special events will require formal winter uniform

**23 October** Marchant Day Chapel Service 10.30am

**28 October** Founders Day Chapel Service

**02 November** Sports Assembly

**11 December** Prizegiving

## Year 13 Updates

### Halls of Residence Common Confidential Reference Forms

First round applications for accommodation at some university halls have closed and others close before the end of September. Offers will be made shortly. If you have any concerns please contact Mrs Green in the first instance.

### TET scholarships

Applications are open to Year 12 or 13 students (or students who have had a minimum of 3 years secondary education) whose parents or caregivers reside in the TET area. Preference will be given to those students who live in the TET area. Only electronic applications will be accepted & are available on the TET website - [www.taranakielelectricitytrust.co.nz](http://www.taranakielelectricitytrust.co.nz) - these must be received by 3pm on 2nd October 2018.

Applications must be endorsed by the Principal and require a written reference from the school. Applicants will also need to source a further character reference from outside of the school community.

### Monthly Accounts

The final base fee instalment for 2018 will be added to your account on the 01<sup>st</sup> October 2018 (Instalment 10 of 10), if you are paying your account by weekly instalments then please remember that this account will need to be paid in full by the 31 December 2018. If you are having trouble making your payments then please feel free to phone Alison Chamberlain, Executive Officer to discuss this to ensure that you will not be charged interest on the outstanding debt.

All accounts for students who are leaving us at the end of 2018 must have their accounts up to date.

### 2019 Intentions

Final planning is in place for timetabling and staffing for 2019, as such we need to know from parents by the end of the holidays, if they are intending on withdrawing their daughter(s) for 2019.

We would remind you that one terms fees are charged in lieu of a term's notice in writing if we have not been advised and your daughter does not return.

## Wellington Trip

Sixteen of our year 13 girls experienced all aspects of Wellington on our recent leadership trip.

Highlights (other than the stunning windless and sunny

weather) included two hours of service at the Wellington City Mission sorting "Soap for Society", consisting of hygiene product donations from the public to aid those in need.



A visit to Parliament alongside our BoT chair Andrew Judd who also shared his leadership journey, then on to the National Library to see the Suffrage Petition and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, a visit to Pukeahu and laying a wreath during the Last Post Ceremony at 5pm, a live theatre performance at Circa Theatre, dinner at Asian fusion restaurant Monsoon Poon, an impromptu recital on an outdoors out of



tune piano and then Te Papa and /or Tertiary Open day visits plus some retail therapy saw three action packed days and an opportunity to think deeply about our possible contributions back as future leaders.



## Your PTA needs your help please!

We are expecting 100 stalls of quality arts and crafts and food on our field and in our gym.

Last year we had over 1000 visitors through the school gates. Our biggest influx of people at school all year!

Volunteers warmly welcomed to help:

- Lay the carpet squares in the gym on Friday
- Set up the grounds early Saturday morning
- Direct and help stall holders
- Host the pre-start cuppa for stall holders
- Sell raffles
- Man our PTA food tent
- Be on the gate welcoming and collecting donations
- Baking for our Bake Stall
- Pack up after and later in the weekend picking up the carpet squares!

We also need your help with:

- distributing posters
- checking our facebook page "Under the Mountain Arts and Crafts Fete"
- donations of sausages for our BBQ

## Sports

### Tournament Week

Well done to the Senior A netball team who played courageous Netball and competed at Lower North Island Secondary Schools in cold and blustery weather during tournament week. You took on all the challenges of the tournament and were wonderful representatives of the school. Pre game and refuelling pictures below.



## Congratulations

Congratulations to Nikita Katene who is currently playing for the Taranaki Under 18 Rugby Team



Congratulations also to Katie Neild who after winning the TSSSA senior gymnastics competition has been selected to represent gymnastics in Hawaii in January

