



20 April 2020

Kia Ora everyone

Well, here we are at the end of the first week of Term 2 and about to embark on Week 2. Who would have thought even a month ago that this would be what school looks like?

Learning

To the Elim Christian College community - parents, BOT, students and staff – congratulations and thank you to one and all for the way we all navigated the past three days of school. As staff we have gathered much feedback and will continue this next week. Thank you for your support parents and thanks staff for working so hard, listening, adjusting, and shepherding this new environment. Wow!

Just a thought:

This period of schooling is not 'home schooling'! Home schooling is when you as a family choose to do it because it reflects your family's needs (learning, well-being - medical, emotional, social, your location, your firmly held beliefs regarding education) family dynamics etc...and you also select, source, provide the curriculum that you choose! None of us chose what we currently are doing, so we have simply engaged with what we know regarding technology, connected that to our planned NZ and Christian worldview curriculum programmes and set about delivering it to you.

Neither is the term 'on-line learning' the right one. Some of your best learning experiences this past week or more, as a family or as an individual student may well have been and I hope they have been in an 'off-line' activity! Inside or out, paper, construction, physical books, personal interaction, discussion, reflection, playing a musical instrument, painting, dancing, board games, photography etc...this is what it's all about and I would hasten to add, you as parents are brilliant teachers!

The term 'distance learning' perhaps more accurately describes what we are doing and finally, although we didn't choose this path, there are incredible learnings happening, signposts for change, indicators of alternative methodologies and modalities that we will continue to explore. There is an expression "the expertise is in the room" and that is what we as a school are exploring currently. Again, I salute our staff who are phenomenal! What a blessing.

Finance

As you would expect, the GC Y5/6 camp originally scheduled for May this year will be rescheduled we anticipate, to later in the year. We are still keen to do it but need to wait until we have a much clearer understanding of how our society is functioning. There will also be ongoing adjustments to other scheduled events as we bring them into line with government expectations around groupings and social distancing etc...

With this in mind, you will be aware that the school has requested donations for certain camps and overnight trips that have been cancelled or postponed. At this point we have no way of knowing whether these events can be rescheduled this year or not.

Therefore, all donations which were received on or before 31 March 2020 will now show as a credit balance in Kamar. These funds will then be available to parents to be applied to any outstanding amounts due to the school (including the Proprietors Special Character Donation) upon your specific instruction. The donations receipt issued for the year 1/4/2019 to 31 March 2020 will therefore not include any original camp and overnight trip donations paid.

Please give our finance team time to attend to processing the above. We will advise once this has been done and available to you to view in the Kamar portal.

Starting Face to Face School Again

Last week some messages emerged regarding starting face to face school again. You will have read or listened to them all. We have generally heard what you have heard. With the Prime Minister making a pivotal announcement at 4.00pm tomorrow, I will leave it to her to provide further clarification. I would however like to point out the following:

1. We will honour our government and work to their guidelines
2. Safety is absolutely the number one priority in whatever we do as a school, we do not wish any family's safety or any member of staff's safety to be compromised
3. We will embrace the challenges coming our way and will always do our best for you our families
4. When face to face school resumes, it will not be the same as it was before, including but not limited to:
 - a. Y11-13 will definitely continue with distance learning for quite some time, the PM made that abundantly clear.
 - b. The Secretary of Education Iona Holsted has stated that *"the Government has been very clear" about who could go to school during level 3 and who shouldn't. Parents who could keep their children at home should. There are no criteria that dictates who can and cannot send their children to school,"* she said. *"Parents and caregivers best understand their own unique situation and needs and will make the right decision about whether their child can keep learning from home or will return to classroom learning in a safe school environment."*
 - c. Firm and quite restrictive safety measures will change what school interaction looks like daily.
 - d. Some staff may not return to school due to compromised health and may still guide learning from their homes, even if some or all of their class is at school.
 - e. Increased security measures may be needed to ensure no unheralded persons visit any of our campuses at any time.

As we round of this communication, here's snippet of what was sent to our Y7-13 students last week – a video from the superb Attitude team.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkixl_LNL5E&feature=youtu.be

Sir John Kirwan this past week launched this website on wellbeing:

<https://www.mentemia.com/> It may be worth a look.

Two staff used the following poem/hymn in devotions last week, so it is a perfect way to reflect on the week that has been and embrace this week coming:

He sendeth more strength when the labours increase,

*To added affliction, He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, He multiplies peace.*

*When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half-done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.*

*His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men,
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.*

Annie Johnson Flint

**Nga mihi
Regards**

Murray

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