

Principal Report – AGM 2022

Review of 2021

The direction for Tereora College continues to be derived from our Learning Charter.

Tereora College is the National College of the Cook Islands for year 9-13 students. Learning is at the core of the College. We believe that all students are capable of learning and that it is our job as teachers to ensure that all learning is maximised. We want each and every one of our students to be the “best that they can be”. Our college motto of “Kia Toa” provides us with our overall strategy. We want all our students, and teachers, to be strong and courageous in their pursuit of learning. Learning can be of all kinds: academic, personal, social, cultural and sporting. Together, these aspects of learning provide us with our mission of developing Tangata Tiratira Tu, “excellence in citizenship”.

Our school wide goal for 2021 centred mainly on our junior school in terms of curriculum and assessment and research in to what best practice looks like. This was carried out with varying degrees of success and progress shown suggests that this will be carried over as a school wide goal in 2022.

A school-wide decision to have a bigger focus on our junior students so that foundations are set and can be built upon was implemented. **New testing** for all Year 9 & 10 students was undertaken by the English faculty as part of their combined goal for the year. The data that they gleaned from the testing has provided the school with excellent base-line data and was used in a multitude of curriculum areas. The data did reveal that there is a gap in learning, or what is expected, once our children come through to College level.

Challenges

One of the challenges for Tereora College in 2021 was teacher shortage resulting in certain subjects and programmes being removed from our timetable. Shortage of teachers also impacted on teacher well-being, impacting on workload and responsibilities of each teacher. Some of this was relieved when pay parity was addressed, as teachers felt valued and supported.

A shortage of IT devices across the school was evident during our School Review where senior students were having to share devices from one class to another. This was another area that had been raised as a matter of urgency. PTA members again rallied together and put forward a proposal to MoE/Government. Outcome is still pending.

Looking Ahead 2022

The insurmountable support that our PTA provided for Tereora College in terms of pay parity resulted in a number of staff remaining and extending their contracts for the start of 2022. Four staff returned to New Zealand at the end of 2021, however, we were able to make appointments for nine teaching staff for 2022; this has ensured that we have a full contingent of teachers currently on staff.

Enrolment numbers for the start of the year had been slightly up on predicted numbers with 150 Year 9 students enrolling with us. Base line data for our junior students shows that there are pockets of students from across contributing schools that require remedial support, as a percentage of new students are currently well below the expected academic level. Information has been shared with the Ministry of Education; earlier interventions are needed and this does need to be a collaborative approach to education. Again, the focus for our teachers is going to have to be on providing strategies, interventions and a change in programmes for our younger students to ensure that there is some success for them. Resources will be needed to support the interventions; this may be in the form of an increase in human resources; IT devices and general expenses to support a new programme.

With the COVID situation evolving within the community we have had to take different measures to cater for the safe delivery of learning at Tereora College. Home based learning was adopted in the early stages and then a switch to rotating year levels which saw our learners provided with four days a week of face to face learning. A further change in the last week of Term 1 sees all of our learners back for face to face learning.

In terms of learning, the piloting of NCEA standards has gone ahead for Tereora College students. Year 10 students will be introduced to this in Term 2, with the first assessment being delivered in the latter part of the term. Students undertaking Cook Islands Maori at NCEA Level 1 are fully involved in the piloting of the new standards and teachers of Cook Islands Maori, Mathematics and English have been involved in workshops that support the changes.

It is well noted from 2021 that there is a need for better access to digital devices for all learners and a better working IT infrastructure framework. We cannot stress enough the importance of this to ensure our learners are not left behind. This has been reflected in separate reports tabled with the Ministry of Education and with key Government personnel. Challenges will arise in the form of academic outputs for our students if this request is not supported. We remain positive that an outcome will be relayed to us in terms of the proposal put forward to the MFEM budget team.

Mrs Tania Morgan

Principal, Tereora College