

Intermediate Team Newsletter

Term 3, 2018

Dear parents, whānau and students,

We hope that you all had a great break in the holidays. Students have returned to school ready for learning and with a positive attitude. There has been a great 'buzz' in the senior school this week, especially with our work around production kicking off earlier this week.

We have two major focusses for our learning this term – Production, and Changes at Puberty. Alongside this, various students will be participating in our Interschool Sports Tournament, Maths Spectacular, cross country events and chess tournaments. Our Year 8 students also start thinking more about their transition to high school with visits, Open Evenings and enrolment interviews taking place this term. A separate note went home about these dates last term, but they are also on our community calendar, which you can access through our school app.

All students have leadership roles in our production, 'Te Wheke - The Octopus. What's in a name?' Some students have major speaking roles and lead roles, some are lead dancers and will be supporting junior classes with this, and some students have selected to take on more of a role back stage, with technology, props or costumes. This is an amazing opportunity for our year 7/8 students in a whole range of ways, and we look forward to watching them all grow in their self-confidence, leadership and communication skills throughout this process.

Our health science inquiry is Changes at Puberty. Students will learn about the social, physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty and how to best manage these changes with effective decision making, and care of themselves and others. If you wish to discuss any of this learning with your student's teacher, please feel free to pop in or send an email to them.

This term we also have a change to our homework programme. As it is such a busy term, full of responsibility for production for our students, we will not have set weekly homework as we've had previously this year. Students will still be expected to read daily, and some will also still learn spelling words and complete basic facts practise weekly. The main focus for most of our students should be learning their dialogue for the production, or completing other tasks to help with production. Students may also have homework that includes finishing learning for the next day if necessary. It was great to see how many of our students recognise responsibility for their own learning in a discussion we had on Monday about homework, and how many of them are choosing to continue their basic facts or spelling practise because they see it as important for their own learning.

As it is the mid-point in the year, some students now start their other language option. Year 7s who were learning Japanese in the first half of the year will start French lessons with Robin Green. The year 8s that were learning French will learn Japanese. Students learning Mandarin have chosen a whole year course, and other students learning a language online through the VLN will continue with their classes and follow up sessions. All students will also start a new rotation at Devon Intermediate for Technicraft.

We are continuing to build on our collaborative practice and develop student independence in their learning. This will look different in different subject areas, and is personalised for different students. They will be making choices about subject content and selecting learning steps that are appropriate for them with guidance from teachers. We believe in our students interacting with content and people in various ways, building a range of skills that make them successful members of our community. Another reason we organise learning this way is so that students work with different teachers and move between three classrooms to help prepare them for the high school model of learning. Students will participate in a range of learning - individual learning and goal setting, choices about guided exploration of content, inquiry research, and teaching groups that teach specific skills and knowledge. It is important that you regularly touch base with your child/ren to see who their teacher is and how they are managing their own learning.

As our students participate in a range of learning, at different times with different tools, we would really appreciate all students having their own headphones, or earbuds at school. This helps with managing classroom noise, and more importantly, helps students to have more focus on what they are reading, viewing, or working on online. Additionally, we use a tool that lets us drop learning into our students' Google Drives, hence saving paper and making learning accessible for students anywhere, at any time. We have noticed a big drop in students bringing their own devices to school for learning, and this impedes on their and others' learning, especially when we have access to such great online learning tools/supports.

Interschool Sports Tournament

There has been a change in the organisation to our interschool sports tournament. Instead of visiting and hosting schools in our league, we will now have a one day rugby and netball tournament. Soccer will be played on alternative days. There are benefits to this, but we are also sad that our students do not take part in meeting other students from our district at their schools and learning how to host visitors. At this point in time, we only have the date for the rugby tournament, which is **Thursday 16 August**.

Maths Spectacular

Some students have selected to participate in the Maths Spectacular competition by entering a 2D artwork based on a tessellation, or by completing a statistical investigation. We will also select students to participate in the quiz which will take place on Wednesday 15th August, at The Plymouth Hotel. Students will need to submit their artworks to Mrs Jackson by Thursday 2 August, and the statistical investigations by Monday 13 August.

Debating

Both of our Year 8 debating teams have made it through to the next rounds, and will next debate during Week 3, with one debate taking place at Omata School, and the other here at Oakura School. Well done to our debaters, researchers and timekeepers, and a big thank you to Ms Judith Hanline who coaches these teams with such expertise.

Term 3 Learning

Maths	Multiplication, Ratios and Proportions
Literacy	Creative writing, speeches
Inquiry	Changes at Puberty - Science
PE	Cross country, interschool sports tournament
Health	Changes at Puberty
Te Reo	Hauora and Tinana – health and body
Languages	Japanese, French and VLN language options

Term 3 Important Dates

Cross Country	Oakura School, Tuesday 21 August Coastal, Thursday 6 September Taranaki, Wednesday 26 September
Performances/Shows (paid by activity fee)	Stig the Story Teller – Monday 30 July, at school The NED show – Wednesday 8 August, at school NZ Playhouse Red Riding Robin Hood – Thursday 9 August, Oakura Hall
Choir Practice	Wednesday 1 August, at Highlands Intermediate
LEAD conference (18 year 8s)	Friday 3 August, at Citywest Church, New Plymouth
Production – Te Wheke	Tuesday 25 September Wednesday 26 September Thursday 27 September

Ngā mihi,
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