



NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL
TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

HEADMASTER'S SPEECH

SENIOR PRIZEGIVING - 2016

THei mauri ora, he mihi ki te runga rawa

He mihi ki Taranaki te maunga

Te whare e tū ake nei, tēnā koe

Te marae kei waho rā, tēnā koe

Ki a koutou rā te kanohi ora,
te iwi o Te Atiawa nui tonu,
te hapū o Ngāti Te Whiti

E kui mā, e koro mā, rau rangatira mā

Nau mai, haere mai ki te kura Tamatāne o Ngāmotu
Ki te kaupapa nunui o te rā

Hei whakahōnore ngā rangatira a apōpō, i mua i te aro
o a rātou whānau me a rātou hoa rānei

Piki mai kake mai whakatau mai rā
Anei te whakatauki - 'Kia Tū Hei Taurira'

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa

To translate, I acknowledged the greater forces at play in our world, I acknowledge our mountain. I acknowledge this hall, this school. Te Atiawa and Ngati Te Whiti. I acknowledge everyone here. Welcome to you all, especially our young leaders who we honour tonight in front of their families and friends. I also referenced our own wise proverb - *Be The Example*. Greetings to you all.

Welcome to all our invited and special guests. To our Board of Trustee members, especially our Chair, Ms Leigh Sampson. NPBHS staff, old boys, parents and caregivers and most importantly students. I say most importantly because tonight is about you. As in my Maori welcome, tonight is about recognising your many great achievements and the great heights you have scaled in 2016.

Last year at Prizegiving I did warn the school we were going to make more changes in 2016 and I am pleased to say we have certainly delivered on that promise.

"Change before you have to" is a quote from Jack Welch, a famous World renowned leader and CEO. It is a quote that resonates with me, and I am proud of the changes NPBHS staff, students and parents have made, most notably, the new senior curriculum for 2017. If we are really true to our purpose, *improving the future*, then we need to be serious about preparing our young men for that future.

There have been many changes, already mentioned by Ms Sampson. I wish to elaborate on some of these.

A deliberate change of focus on '*academic performance*' has seen improved academic results. I can assure you this will continue into 2017 and beyond.

A change in the Senior Leadership Team needs to be noted, with the retirement of our much loved Deputy Principal and loyal servant to NPBHS - Mr Bruce Bayly. It is fitting that Bruce is the school's guest speaker tonight. Thank you Bruce, your contribution to NPBHS will not be forgotten.

We welcome Mr Reid Archer as the new Assistant Principal and we will be welcoming a new Deputy Headmaster to the SLT in 2017, who will be appointed from one of our existing Senior Staff members.

Appointing a Director of Culture/Arts (Mr Davies) has seen a tremendously positive change in the profile of Arts/Culture, and more importantly, increased the opportunities for our students to shine. There is no better way to exemplify this, than the stunning production *Niu Sila* in which students at NP Boys' and Girls' High School excelled. We have had the same positive impact from our newly appointed Director of Sport (Mr Bublitz) and Director of Business Development and Communications (Mr Russell).

I would like to acknowledge all new staff. We have had many excellent additions to our team this year. I would also like to acknowledge all staff who have left in 2016. A special mention goes to Mr Harford who left at the end of Term 2 and to Mr Warner who is finishing up at the end of this Term with over 20 years of service. Thank you for your service to the school.

I would like to make mention of Ms Douds, Mr Simpson and Ms Ingles. All of whom are taking a year's leave in 2017. We look forward to them returning in 2018.

There are changes in the Hostel Master's team for 2017. I wish to thank the current Hostel Masters, and welcome in the new appointments.

It would be remiss of me at this point to not acknowledge the change occurring at New Plymouth Girls' High School, with the retirement of high performing Principal, Jenny Ellis. She will be missed at the helm of our sister school.

I would like to thank our incredibly hard working and dedicated BOT. The changes to our BOT have been outlined by Ms Sampson already tonight, but I do wish to acknowledge the hours and hours Ms Sampson works on behalf of the BOT for the betterment of the students. I feel incredibly fortunate also to have both yourself and the Deputy Chair Mr Scott Anderson as constants during my tenure.

We welcomed Sonja Barrett to the Chair of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) replacing Sandra Walker who was a tireless advocate for the parents of NPBHS.

Head Boy, Bradley Slater, and his Deputy, Te Whatumanawa Ngatai Tangirua, have been a formidable team. Sometimes combinations just work. Sometimes combinations just get stronger with time. I couldn't be more proud of '*Bratu*' as I have been known to call them. Their contribution, humility and high standards will be a very tough act to follow. I am indebted to them for their work, and along with their prefect team, I and others will follow all their progress keenly.

Two other students I would like to mention are our Head Boarder, Liam Younger and Student Representative Fergus Le Pine. Both of these young men have taken to their duties with distinction and determination. I appreciate Fergus has had the added pressure and, maybe misfortune, of being called my son at times because of our matching haircuts. Michael McLeod who has taken over from Fergus has made an excellent start.

Our thoughts tonight should also be with Mr McMenamin the school's previous Headmaster. He and his wife, Tio, were in a serious car accident this year. We wish them both all the best for their recoveries and look forward to seeing them at future school events.

Some more sad news this year was the passing of one of our six Alumni Meriti members (Alumni Meriti - means distinguished old boy) Sir Graeme Douglas is a tremendous loss to NPBHS and New Zealand. His philanthropy and entrepreneurial skills were legendary.

Many of you will not be aware we have four buildings in the school that require significant earthquake strengthening. While I can assure you they are absolutely safe for us to use (and officially cleared by the MOE engineers) they require extensive work to bring them up to the new earthquake codes introduced post the Christchurch earthquake. The first one is Ryder Hall (which will be completed over the holidays and Term One next year).

The other three buildings are all in the hostel (the Dining Room, The Boarders' Lounge and the Director of Boardings' Residence). We receive not one dollar from the M.O.E for these buildings. It really is financially crippling for the hostel, as the total bill is over \$1.5M. A figure we have to find within 14 years' time.

Well..... I have some very good news that only a handful of people know, as I was only informed on Tuesday. Not even the BOT know, which is a little dangerous, and some of them will be sweating now..... as not everyone likes surprise announcements.

The legacy of Sir Graeme Douglas will forever be enshrined in the fabric of this school. His family's charitable trust have generously donated over half a million dollars to strengthen and upgrade the hostel dining room in its entirety. Words can't explain the gratitude we have to the Douglas family for the impact this will have, not only on the hostel, but day school, as we use that building every day (including tonight). This has to be one of, if not the largest, donation in the history of the school. A lot of people have put in a lot of work behind the scenes to make this happen, in particular, Mr Russell, Mr Moore and Ms Campbell.

The upgrade of the Sir Graeme Douglas Dining Room is anticipated to be completed by the end of next year.

We have opportunity to find out what else we can change in 2017, with the Education Review Office (ERO) coming in Term 1. Independent review is healthy and I am looking forward to what they may find to help us further improve.

Upon reflection of 2016, I can only step back and admire the incredible staff we have. They are the change agents, the catalysts, the shapers and implementers. Without them change would not be possible in any shape or form.

Thank you to the many unsung heroes, all of the NPBHS support staff, including but not limited to office staff, ground staff and cleaners, led by our very capable Executive Officer Michael Graham. The students are the beneficiaries of the hard work these people put in.

While we are farewelling many students, it is the parents and families we also farewell and sincerely thank. I know for many of you, it is emotional and quite hard to believe your formal association with the school might be coming to an end. Well..... you can always have more sons. We will be happy to take them!

Thank you to the passionate old boys. You are quick to remind us what this school is about. You are open with your praise and also quick to point out, as you should be, when we deviate from our high standards.

Thank you to Tiaki Tamihana the schools and my cultural advisor.

What a great school we have: what amazing staff and parents, what passionate Old Boys, what inspiring students, what potential, to realise our vision, Kia Tu Hei Taurira (Be The Example).

As students, I know you find the standards tough and unrelenting at times. I can promise you however, those standards are making a positive difference to our school, and to you as individuals, even if you struggle to see it sometimes.

I can assure you we are definitely improving. And, as I say time and time again, we have high standards. We expect the best you can give because we care, because we want you to reach your potential.

Whaia te iti kahurangi, ki te tuohu koe, me te maunga o taranaki. Which means, strive for the stars, and if you have to settle for anything less, let it not be less than the highest peak on Mt Taranaki.

I will speak again briefly at the end of the night as we announce our leaders for 2017. Thank you again for your support. Congratulations to all the award recipients here tonight. You are worthy winners and worthy ambassadors of our fine school.

If you didn't receive an award or the award, you wanted, move on from it quickly and focus on your next goal.

An award doesn't define your life..... nor does it define your character.

The future is in all your hands, and I have no doubt you will improve the future.

Thank you.

Like last year we are finishing the prizegiving with the announcement of all the key student leaders for 2017.

While I am excited and proud of who we have selected in our premier student leadership roles, I know some of our young men will be incredibly disappointed. We are spoilt for choice and have taken the selection process very seriously.

The process to select our Student Leaders is long and gruelling. Many adults would struggle with the process. I know Hillary and Donald would not pass any of our tests.

I am going to start by announcing the Head of Houses. I will call them up one at a time. If you can please walk up the side of the stage.

Head of Donnelly 2017	-	Dominic Barry
Head of Barak 2017	-	Corrigan Millar
Head of Syme 2017	-	Calum Sutherland

The next role, Head of Hatherly House or Head Boarder, is very prestigious. Leading the boys whose home it is here is an honour and an immense responsibility.

I will ask Mr Moore Director of Boarding to come forward and announce Head Boarder for 2017.

Head Boarder for 2017	-	Joby Hintz
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Thank you Mr Moore and congratulations Joby Hintz.

I view the Deputy and Head Boy as a team whom must complement each other, cover for each other and together lead the school. It is an immense responsibility and privilege. It is an experience these boys will remember and cherish for the rest of their lives.

They have the weight of expectation and the pressure of tradition. Rather than viewing this as a burden or shackles, view it as strength, courage and support that will guide and carry them through the toughest of times during their tenure.

I would like to call Bradley Slater to come forward and announce the Deputy and Head Boy for 2017.

Deputy Head Boy for 2017 - Qingfeng Du

Head Boy for 2017 - Drew Wood

Thank you Bradley, and congratulations again to our new leaders for 2017. You can take your seat.

A reminder that guests, prize winners, parents and caregivers are invited to the boarders' dining room, the Sir Graeme Douglas Dining Room, for a light supper.

Thank you to our talented musicians/singers and everyone who has helped organise tonight, including Mr Hyde, who organises the prize winners. It is a logistical challenge that has gone very well.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and thank you to all of you for making this night, and this year, so very special for NPBHS.

Please stand.

P J Verić
Headmaster