



**NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**  
TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

## **HEADMASTER'S SPEECH**

### **SENIOR PRIZEGIVING**

**Thursday 2 November, 2017**

Tīhei 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 e ki raa - 'Kia Tū Hei Tauira'  
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 2017.

Welcome to Millen Baird our esteemed guest speaker. Welcome to your wife Siobhan. Millen, despite his youthful appearance, was actually a few years older than me at school - I remember him well. He was that cool funny older guy and formidable public speaker. Despite being all arms and legs was very popular with the ladies.

Millen, what I admire most about you, other than being naturally funny (something we aspire to but mostly fall way short of), is that you eventually pursued your heart and passion and not what you perhaps thought you should do, or what was conventional, or expected to do. We are very proud of you.

It is fantastic to see you doing so well and, more importantly, so happy. I sincerely appreciate you and Siobhan re-scheduling so much of your busy life to be here tonight.

The year kicked off with the Education Review Office visit as Ms Sampson has referred to. I am very proud of the work our staff have put in to get such a positive review. As with all reviews there are things for us to work on, which we will.

Other than continuous rain, it seems like scaffolding, temporary fencing, and skip-bins dominated our school this year. With so many significant building projects and disruptions, the resiliency and resourcefulness of the staff and students has to be commended.

With no assembly hall until term two (due to significant earthquake strengthening), a library under major refurbishment, no computer rooms (due to re-cladding and weather tightening), a hostel dining room being upgraded, Carroll House undergoing important renovations, significant re-roofing, work on the gully courts and gully, our nerves have been tested.

These completed projects, and some that are in progress like the multi-purpose room (currently the year 13 Study Room) and refreshment of our two gyms which we hope to have completed by June 2018, are significant enhancements to our impressive grounds and facilities.

None of this can occur without your cooperation and assistance. I am thankful to all staff and students for making these projects happen as seamlessly as possible. It's hard to think back now and wonder how we coped for a whole term without full school assemblies or a library and no computer room.

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 2017:

Dave Wright one of our key and dedicated grounds men. He has done a fantastic job during his tenure.

Coryn Stone and Louise Jenkinson who both retire this year and gave 33 and 13 years respectively. Also, Anna Broughton, Cathy Campbell-Smart and Paul Martin who have been outstanding and committed NPBHS support staff.

Teachers: Thank you to Ms Douds, Mr Simpson (who had a years' leave will not be returning in 2018) and Ms Kirkcaldie leaves the maths department for her new role in the school as Finance Manager. Mr Hamilton thank you for your contribution to the school, hostel and Hockey.

Also to Mr Dominikovich, who is relocating to the South Island. Mr D, you will not only be missed as a teacher, but also for your outstanding contribution to cross-country, Christian fellowship, and our very successful leadership programme. So many students have benefited from your dedication and passion.

Mr Sims. You are retiring at the end of this year. When I was a student, you were someone I always looked up to as a calm and caring teacher who really did understand his students, but underpinning your quiet demeanour was this value-set that is uncompromising and strong. I wish you and Pam all the best in your retirement.

To our BOT Chair Ms Leigh Sampson, thank you for your on-going support. Ms Sampson fields calls during weekends and evenings and is always available to support me in the running of the school, for which I am grateful. I would like to acknowledge the rest of the Board of Trustees who spend countless hours reviewing Board papers and attending meetings after hours with the sole focus of making NPBHS as great as it possibly can be.

Thank you to Parent Teacher Association (PTA). We have had a range of very interesting guest speakers this year at meetings and having the full support of the Association is very humbling and helpful.

We inducted two new Alumni Meriti members (distinguished old boys hall of fame), Graham Mourie and Sir Richard Faull. What two exemplary examples of humility and high performance.

Thank you to our hard-working teaching staff. You certainly keep me on my toes. I know you come to work each day to care for the students and willingly invest your time inside and outside the classroom to support them in achieving their potential.

Not many schools have the level of dedication and after-hours commitment that we do and I never take that for granted. I know our community appreciate it immensely and the comments made by ERO independently endorse my sentiments.

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.

To my SLT team. Not many know the hours you all put in behind the scenes for the betterment of this school and our students. I sincerely thank you for your service and commitment.

Thank you to Michael McLeod, our student representative. Yes, you are a world class public speaker and a very good prefect, but your advocacy in your role of student representative will be your legacy.

Your idea to re-structure the student council was a great one and you had the conviction to follow this through. I know the students of NPBHS are grateful for your contribution.

Anton Besseling takes over from Michael and I know he will add his own unique but high performing style to the position.

We have had a very strong top six student leadership team this year. I would like to thank the Heads of Houses who have all performed their roles with distinction.

Particular mention must go to Joby Hintz who has been outstanding in his role of head boarder. Joby, you have been reliable, honest and have represented the hostel and the school with mana and integrity.

To our high performing deputy Head Boy, Qingfeng Du. You set the highest of standards for yourself. While at times you are hard on yourself, I hope you can reflect on what an amazing year you have had. I and the school have no doubt you are 'high performance' in everything you do. I, and the staff, are very proud of you and your achievements.

Head Boy, Drew Wood. There are different types of leaders. There are those types of leaders that say 'Look at me, I am your leader, this is about me not you, follow me and charge forward.' And there are those that guide from the back, steering, mentoring, enabling, and caring for their flock.

Drew, you epitomise the leader who enables and guides. The countless conversations you have with your peers, organising, helping, at times holding them accountable, has been nothing short of impressive. You have looked at ways to enhance our traditions and standards and your initiative to wear Tiger Jackets at formal assemblies was a superb one.

On occasion there have been times the school and I needed you to step up. You never disappointed, and for that I will be eternally grateful. Something that sums you up as a person Drew, was while overseas at World School, you took the time to contact me about your concern for a former NPBHS Student, and Prefect, James Park who sadly passed away this year, you wanted to, and did, contact the family on behalf of the students and school.

That's you Drew. Constantly putting others before yourself. A selfless, humble servant of our crest.

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.

Thank you to my wife Angela and my two boys. They have to put up with a lot having a Headmaster in the family. They are so very supportive and I love them dearly.

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.

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. I felt that the message of true care wasn't really getting through because it was too subtle - we were too afraid to say exactly what we felt. By adding the simple but powerful word 'love' I feel we were able to convey to our students just how much the staff and community cared. I was immensely proud of our students maturity and response. On reflecting back it was such a shame that such a big deal was made of how we feel, and I am disappointed in myself for not being as clear as I could have been in communicating our love and care for you.

As I said in my speech, (and this is the important part) love is not soft. Love is not easy. It's hard, as it requires both strength and vulnerability at the same time, and doing the right thing, not the easy thing, for those you love and those that love you.

We will continue to do the right thing, which is not always the popular thing, for the students and different parts of our community.

I will speak again briefly at the end of the night as we announce our leaders for 2018. 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.

Thank you.

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Like last year we are finishing the prizegiving with the announcement of all the key student leaders for 2018.

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 will now announce the Head of Houses for 2018.

I will call them up one at a time. If you can please walk up the side of the stage.

Head of Donnelly 2018	-	Gavin Bishop
Head of Barak 2018	-	Daniel McWatters
Head of Syme 2018	-	Tom Nicholls
Head of Hatherly and Head Border for 2018	-	Adam Smith

I view the Deputy and Head Boy as a team who 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 these as a burden or as shackles, view them as strength, courage, and support that will guide and carry them through the toughest of times during their tenure.

I would like to call Drew Wood to come forward and announce the Deputy and Head Boy for 2018.

*Deputy Head Boy for 2018* - *Oak Jones*  
*Head Boy for 2018* - *Isaac Jourdain*

Thank you Drew, and congratulations again to our new leaders for 2018. 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.

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