

CONNECTING
TE KURA STUDENTS

link up.

E WHAKAHONO ANA I NGĀ
ĀKONGA O TE KURA ME Ō
RĀTOU WHĀNAU, HAPORI HOKI

DEC 15 | ISSUE 26


Te Kura
TE AHO O TE KURA POUNAMU
THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL



- BOYLE RIVER CAMP 2015
- MEET SOME OF OUR OVERSEAS STUDENTS
- LOTS OF STUDENT WORK!

Ko Tā Mike Kōrero



Mike Hollings, Chief Executive

**IN OCTOBER WE RECEIVED THE
CONFIRMED REPORT FROM THE
EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE (ERO)
FOLLOWING ITS REVIEW OF TE KURA
LAST TERM.**

The Board and Senior Leadership Team are extremely encouraged by the findings of the review, which affirmed our strategic direction and the actions we have taken since the last review in 2013.

ERO found that implementation of Te Kura's strategic priorities is contributing to improved outcomes for an increasing proportion of students, and that significant progress has been made in responding to the areas identified for improvement following the previous review.

The ERO report noted that many students are well-served by Te Kura, and benefit from being able to work independently on a programme suited to their needs. Improvement in the availability of student engagement and achievement information is enabling teachers, leaders and the Board to respond more effectively to students' needs. The continuing increase in staff numbers in the regions is allowing improved learning and wellbeing support for students. ERO also found that learning advisors work well with students, parents and supervisors to develop and monitor a unique programme for each student, based on the student's interests and abilities. Specialist services are used to further support students if necessary.

Other findings include:

- Increasing percentages of Years 1 to 8 students are achieving the National Standards for their year level. Māori students are improving at a faster rate than the whole school.
- Since the last ERO review, there has been positive progress in overall senior student engagement and achievement.
- Ongoing development of the curriculum is providing choices and pathways for many students through their schooling and into further training and education.
- The focus on personalising learning supports responsiveness to a wide range of student circumstances.
- The Māori Student Success Framework prioritises Māori students enjoying and achieving success as Māori. Regional leaders and teams actively explore and implement strategies that promote success for Māori students.
- Early childhood provision is well placed to promote positive outcomes for students. Teachers make good use of community networks to help meet children's and families' needs. Children with special needs are well supported.
- Well-established and appropriate processes are in place for self-review, direction setting and decision-making.
- Te Kura is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The report concluded that 'raising levels of engagement and achievement for diverse distance learners is a strong focus schoolwide. Continued implementation of strategic priorities is contributing to improved outcomes for an increasing proportion of learners. Growing emphasis on knowing what is working well, why and for whom, and responding accordingly, should allow improvement to be sustained.'

I hope that students, parents and whānau will have increased confidence in their school as a result of this review. You can read the full report on ERO's website at www.ero.govt.nz or contact us on 0800 65 99 88 to request a copy.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihihi me te Tau Hou – season's greetings to you all.

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Front cover photo: Sophie and Sam Hutchinson are both very involved in the new music video project Collaborate to Create. Via OTLE, each has engaged in interesting discussions, contributing ideas for the lyrics, music and visuals. Read more about this on page 5.

Feature Stories

BOYLE RIVER CAMP 2015

BOYLE RIVER CAMP (A STAFF VIEW)

Thoughts before and at the beginning of camp ... I was nervous, I didn't know anyone, a bit anxious, not sure, I'm not an outdoorsy person, I thought it would be good to challenge myself, when can I go home? ...

Adrenalin, excitement, acceleration, beauty, sunshine, chatter, laughter, sand-flies, river valleys, bush, thrills, spills, laughter, toasted marshmallows, awesome, stories shared, star filled skies, words of encouragement, relief, yummy biscuits. Can I do it again?

Seeing the students develop in confidence, build relationships and trust amongst each other, being encouraging and supporting each other, problem solving and pushing challenges, developing the will power to overcome fears, sheer determination, listening and respecting each other – all these things make for a GREAT experience and memories ... as seen in the many photos we took.

So mark your calendar now for an opportunity to attend next year. Boyle River Camp in the Lewis Pass is an outdoor experience not to be missed (usually in September each year) for Year 11–13 Full-time and Young Adult South Island students.

All the 17 students who had the opportunity to go were a little bit apprehensive at the beginning of the week. However, by the end many wanted to stay and couldn't



Ruth Baines and Daniel Bryant

believe the time had gone so fast.

The students actively participated at their own level in all sorts of challenging activities from games, walks, raft building, low ropes, high ropes, abseiling, night orienteering, trust activities, cooking on a camp fire to developing communication skills, team work and self-confidence to name a few.



*Front row (left to right):
Euan Ansley, Samuel Crump-
McKechnie, Liam Makinson,
Aynsley Martin, Zoe Donald,
Ally Adam*

*Back row:
Jordan Devlin, Joe Martin,
Shiloh Stokes (on shoulders),
Daniel Bryant, Celeste Sharplin,
Christopher Eder, Steven Colley,
Donald Walter, Jessica Logopati,
Ruth Baines, Bethany Ferguson*

BOYLE RIVER CAMP REPORT (A STUDENT VIEW)

I loved my time at the Boyle River camp – getting to meet and work with other people from Te Kura was great. I did feel nervous about leaving home for the week without knowing anyone else on the trip, but everyone, both staff and fellow campers, was really open to talking, and this definitely helped me to settle in.

As most of the activities were rope-and-harness related, learning how to belay and backup belay a climber correctly turned out to be a main part of the camp. I liked learning this new skill, and found rock climbing and abseiling to be really fun – something I'd like to do again.

My favourite part of the camp, however, was the camp-out. Sitting chatting with everyone around the campfire, burning marshmallows in its crackling flames, while the river churned by just out of sight ... it was unforgettable. The sky was clouded over for the most part of the night, but a portion cleared just before it was time to turn in and the white stars seemed cold in comparison with the hot orange embers in the hearth. The tent I shared with the other girls consisted solely of a fly, so everything outside the tent could be heard as easily as if the fly wasn't there. Away from the lodge, the sound of passing trucks was replaced by the calling of a morepork, the rush of the river, and the shushing of the wind in the trees. Waking up in the morning to light filtered through clouds and trees rather than glass and curtains was a new experience for me and was thoroughly enjoyable.

Jessica Logopati, Year 12

Team Slightly Bob

COLLABORATE TO CREATE MUSIC VIDEO PROJECT

TE KURA HAS LAUNCHED A NEW ONLINE MUSIC VIDEO PROJECT FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF KEEP MOVING IN 2013.

The project is an opportunity for learners to help create and produce a new music video to share with our community, New Zealand and the world. A totally student-led project, this is a chance for students to do things they are already good at and learn new things.

Arts Curriculum Leader Jan Bolton says students can take part in lots of different ways. 'This could include arranging and producing the song using music and audio technology, singing a part of the song and recording (video or audio) their performance, and using the ePortfolio in our Online Teaching and Learning Environment to share their contribution(s) and thinking about the project.

'We are also keen for students to dance or move to the song and record (video or audio) their performance, or to choreograph some movement for the song that others could perform.

'So there is huge scope for students at all levels of the school to take part.'

If you are interested in being part of the project in 2016, get in touch with your learning advisor or email jan.bolton@tekura.school.nz.

2015 NCEA RESULTS

In mid-January 2016, all your 2015 results will become available through your NZQA student login page. Take a look at your Record of Achievement for the award of any qualifications.

- Go to www.nzqa.govt.nz/login
- Click on 'login' under Students & Learners



If you would like a paper copy of your qualification and/or an official copy of your Record of Achievement, click 'Order Documents'. The first copy of any document will be free.

ISAAC ONLINE

'I DO THINK THAT MY LEARNING HAS IMPROVED SINCE I HAVE BEEN ONLINE ... NOT SURE WHY BUT I AM GETTING BETTER MARKS,' SAYS TE ARA HOU STUDENT ISAAC CANNING.



Isaac is a Year 10 student at Te Kura who started learning online this year. In addition to the integrated programme Te Ara Hou, Isaac is enrolled in three online courses – maths, agriculture, and social studies.

Isaac has been a student at Te Kura since 2004. Like many students this year, he has been transitioning from paper-based booklets to learning online through Te Kura's Online Teaching and Learning Environment (OTLE). Isaac was one of the first students to receive a laptop through Te Kura's laptop and connectivity assistance programme.

Isaac has a range of interests – farming and machinery, hunting and fishing, and music. His favourite subject at Te Kura is agriculture, although health and physical education and social studies are topics he also enjoys. Isaac likes the way OTLE is presented. 'It is easy to get from subject to subject on OTLE and to see my progress in each unit,' says Isaac, who finds it rewarding each time he completes a topic. Isaac is still developing confidence using OTLE but has been assisted in this by Te Kura's OTLE help desk.

Isaac's mum Tracey is a busy and experienced supervisor with four students on Te Kura's roll. Two are using OTLE: Isaac, and Miriam who has a laptop provided through Computers in Homes. 'I think that Isaac has taken ownership of his work more since being online,' says Tracey. 'He doesn't get me to check everything anymore and has more confidence.'

Tracey's other two children are not yet at the stage where they are learning online. 'With having two students on a paper-based curriculum and two online it is much easier to manage our day,' says Tracey. 'The online programme is more easily self-directed by the students so that frees me up to teach our six-year old while baby is in bed for her morning sleep!'

Tracey feels the children are now making the most of online learning after some initial set-up problems. It took about four to six weeks to settle in and to upskill and learn about the online tools such as Padlet and School Journal. A challenge for the family that they have no control over is their internet connection, which can be erratic at times. The students have learned to work around this problem. 'We have a timetable for their online subjects to ensure that enough work is done each day rather than one question and on to the next subject,' says Tracey. 'This works well for Isaac and Miriam and their attitudes remain more positive as they know what is expected of them.'

Having a laptop has meant that Isaac can also make good progress using programmes like Maths Buddy and Reading Plus. 'I like that I get to choose the topics I read about and they are very interesting. I even have started reading library books now! A miracle.'

Claire Horncastle, Isaac's learning advisor, is positive about the progress he has been making this year as an online learner. She says the Reading Plus programme has supported Isaac's learning, something he wouldn't have had access to without a laptop and internet connection.

Isaac plans to do a Gateway agriculture course in 2016 at the Central Lakes College in Cromwell next year. He will continue to study maths, English, science and pathways with Te Kura. We wish Isaac all the best for his future studies.

ONLINE COURSES IN 2016

Courses at curriculum levels 3–5 (typically years 9 and 10) and NCEA Level 1 will only be available online in 2016, so students must have access to a device and internet connectivity for all of these courses. Language courses at curriculum levels 3–5 (with the exception of Latin) will be a mix of interactive online modules and print-based resources.

Te Kura students in years 8, 9 and 10 have been sent information about online learning with Te Kura in 2016, including details of our assistance programme for students. If you haven't received a copy of our online learning booklet and you have a student intending to enrol in any courses at curriculum levels 3–5 or NCEA Level 1 next year, please ask your student's learning advisor to order it for you or contact us on 0800 65 99 88 to request a copy. Or you can download the booklet on our website at www.tekura.school.nz

Student Stories



Reiana and her mother at the Eureka Awards final in Wellington.

EUREKA! AWARDS

IN EARLY TERM TWO, I ENTERED THE SIR PAUL CALLAGHAN EUREKA! AWARDS.

Not expecting much, I sent in my idea which was continuing stem cell research in New Zealand, I was pleasantly surprised to hear back saying that I had made it into the regionals, thus began my big journey.

As I prepared for the regionals, I also looked up what this competition was all about.

I found out that it was a science-and engineering-based competition to try and find innovative ideas to make New Zealand a healthier, happier place as that was Sir Paul Callaghan's objective. Regionals came and went and I didn't make it into the finals but I did, however, get a scholarship as 13 were available through this competition. I received the Ministry of Education Gold Scholarship Award for best presentation by a Māori student. This meant that I was now entitled to \$2,500 and a trip up to Wellington to see the finals and have dinner with the Governor General. This was an amazing experience and I highly recommend it to any budding science enthusiasts as this is an excellent opportunity to showcase what you are capable of.

Reiana Cooper, Year 13

PROJECT POSSUM REPORT 2015

BRINGING HOME A BABY POSSUM WAS NOT MY INTENTION WHEN I SET OFF ON MY DRIVE TO TAIHAPE TO ATTEND PROJECT POSSUM. BUT HE IS NOW A SETTLED IN, WELL-LOVED MEMBER OF MY FAMILY AND HAS EARNED HIS NAME 'TIMON'.

Project Possum was a fantastic two days filled with so much fun and heaps of learning. I got to catch up and spend time with some of my friends I had made from the Spirit of New Zealand trip.

Even though I am not a fan of killing animals, in fact quite the opposite (bringing them home), I learnt that there are over 50 million possums in New Zealand and 38% carry TB (Tuberculosis) which affects cattle therefore affecting New Zealand's major agriculture industry. Plus possum fur can earn great money, so I didn't feel as bad when it came to knocking them off.

The course was worth 23 credits in level 2 and 3 if we passed all the standards and the teachers and tutors did an amazing job of helping us achieve that. The whole two days were really not for those who prefer to keep clean and smell nice, let alone climb steep hills, sludge through mud and get covered in possum blood. But for those who are like me and most of the others on the course, the next opportunity for this course is not something you want to miss!

Helen Kuhn, Year 12



A baby possum

MEET SOME OF TE KURA'S OVERSEAS STUDENTS

AMY'S STORY

Hi everyone, my name is Amy, I am 18, born and grew up in Hastings, New Zealand.

I currently am living in Leicestershire in the UK. I am currently fifth in the World in the Individual U17 age group (last season) and second in the World in the Pairs U17 age group (last season). I studied with Te Kura last year as well but because I was lazy I didn't finish year 13 last year which is why I am doing it again (whoops!).

Anything to do with horses I love, which is why, over the past year, I have flown my two best horses from New Zealand to the UK (well ponies because they are only 13.1 hands and 14.1 hands, which probably means absolutely nothing to you guys. If you watch the YouTube clip 'Mounted Games Association – The Best Association in the World' it will explain why my ponies are a little smaller).

I have sold one pony to a really lovely family in Wales and recently travelled to Windsor to watch Mabel at the Royal Windsor Horse show where they compete in front of the Queen and some other royals. And they won which was awesome!

Amy Wiltshire, Year 13



Amy and her pony Mabel



Melanie, Benji and Nicola Fleitas

FLEITAS FAMILY, PARAGUAY

Nestled in the centre of South America, Paraguay is slightly larger than New Zealand – but twenty times as hot!

Nicola (18), Melanie (15) and Benji (12) Fleitas have spent most of their growing up years here, aside from short periods in New Zealand where their mother Joanna is from. As their dad, Francisco, is Paraguayan, they embrace many aspects of both cultures, including speaking English, Spanish and Guarani. All three have been enrolled with Te Kura since five years of age, and despite the challenges of distance education (especially in a country where the postal system is practically non-existent), are all progressing and learning well in their chosen courses of study.

Outside of school hours Nicola enjoys socialising, writing, and creating new ways to inspire and motivate others. Melanie has a love for all animals and saved up to buy her own horse. She also excels in sports, art and creative photography. Benji loves soccer and golf, and all three are part of a cycling group that Nicola initiated. As a family they are dedicated to helping disadvantaged kids and teens from their community, using their knowledge and critical thinking skills to teach and provide educational activities. Travelling is an essential part of who they are and contributes significantly to the shaping of their lives.

MAYNARD PEEL – BMX CHAMPION AND TE KURA STUDENT



Kia ora (hello) my name is Maynard Peel also known as Maynacks. I am 15 years of age residing in Monterey, California in the United States of America.

I am one of three siblings in a family of five, Tina my mother/manager, Thomas my father/coach, Ariel my sister/best friend, Avon my brother/Idol. My family and friends are close and filled with love, care and support. Going to the beach, playing sports, spending time with friends and family, eating food and watching movies is what I like to do in my spare time. My family has helped me with many achievements in my career with BMX racing. I love my family and friends.

This year I endeavour to pass all assignments given, to achieve NCEA level 1 and win the World Championships. I have loved sports all my life and will continue to love sports. BMX racing was where all my passion and desire was found. I started BMX racing when I was 7 years of age and now 8 years later, I am sitting at the top of the sport for my age group. I have made many achievements over the years with sports. In 2010 I went to the World Championships in Adelaide, Australia and placed seventh. In 2011 I captained a trans-Tasman mighty elevens test team two consecutive times. I have held the New Zealand National number one title for four years and am striving for it again this year. In 2013 for the World Championships held in New Zealand I placed third in the 14 boys division, two months later I was fortunate to be picked up by a USA coach who scouted me from the world champs to come and race and live 'the dream' in America.

For the future I would like to achieve the greatest goals of my desire – to win the Olympics in Tokyo in 2020, win four Pro elite titles in America and retain the New Zealand national number one title as well as the USA number one title. I would like to put my name at the top of BMX Racing.

The World Championships were in Rotterdam, Netherlands. I crashed going for the win in second place and ended up finishing eighth. 2015 I had won 15 races leading into the USA Grand Nationals and finished first in the main event, now currently holding the number one title for 15 experts in the USA. I have had great success over the years and will continue to focus on more success.

When I was 11 years of age I told my parents that it was my dream to go to America and race BMX as a pro athlete, and here I am at 15 years old doing my second year in the States. I am extremely grateful for all the things my family and friends have done to get me where I am today. Last year was a very successful year living in the USA; it was difficult without family/friends in my presence to comfort me in times of need. I was often busy with training and travelling all over America for BMX racing, which also helped a lot coping without family. My parents did not handle it very well with emotions etc., but they knew deep down that this was the right thing to do and the best thing for my career with BMX racing.

I have just recently been home for the Christmas/summer holidays to spend time with my family and friends as I had been away for the year living in the USA. I always love to see the expressions on my mother's face when I come out of the airport in New Zealand to see my family. You can just feel the flow of love as soon as you see their faces from all whānau and friends.

For 2015 I have been picked up and offered a great deal from a sponsor named 'Yess BMX'. It was hard to accept and as I had always dreamed of becoming a fully sponsored rider, the opportunity is right in front of my eyes and I am most happy to take it and seize the moment of becoming something great. Off I am again ready to conquer another year in the United States of America.

I hope to have succeeded and accomplished all that I have strived for by the end of the year. I wish to return home for 2016 knowing that I gave it my best shot and hopefully I get many more great offers in my career as a professional athlete. It will be time to settle in back home and enjoy the best of family and friends but also staying focused on priorities, staying committed to the task at hand. I cannot wait for 2016 to bring everything back to reality and maintain my dream from there.

Maynard Peel, Year 11

CHAMBER MUSIC SUCCESS FOR TE KURA STUDENTS

TE KURA STUDENT CLAUDIA TARRANT-MATTHEWS TOOK PART IN THE NATIONAL SEMI-FINALS OF THE NEW ZEALAND COMMUNITY TRUST (NZCT) SCHOOLS CHAMBER MUSIC CONTEST.

Claudia (piano) was a member of Glivenko from Wellington, one of 12 semi-finalists selected from 500 ensembles from across New Zealand to perform at the national semi-finals in August.

The NZCT Chamber Music Contest is the longest running youth music competition in New Zealand and is the only nationwide chamber music competition for young secondary school musicians and composers in the country.

Another trio, featuring two Te Kura students, took top honours in the NZCT chamber music regional competition in Whanganui.

RD3, made up of Te Kura students Jeanli Boessenkool (harp) and Daniel Aldersley (saxophone), and Jeanli's brother Liam Boessenkool (cello), was named overall winner of the Whanganui competition. RD3 played a composition by Jeanli's harp teacher Rod Thomas called Jubilee Trio, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the schools' music competition.

The group was also awarded the Sounz prize for best performance of a New Zealand work and a KBB award for excellence in a group containing wind, brass or percussion, as well as the Chamber Music Wanganui prize for the winning ensemble. Adjudicator Tom McGrath said he was impressed with the range and level the students had reached. RD3 is rounding off a successful year with a performance at Te Kura's Central South Region prize giving ceremony in December.



Daniel, Jeanli and Liam.



Reef Baltrop with Groggy.

GROGGY THE FROGGY

EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT REEF BARLTROP AND HIS MOTHER FIONA MCDONALD FROM PUNAKAIKI ON THE WEST COAST FOUND GROGGY IN A BUNCH OF SILVERBEET WHEN THEY WERE STAYING IN AUCKLAND WITH REEF'S GRANDMOTHER.

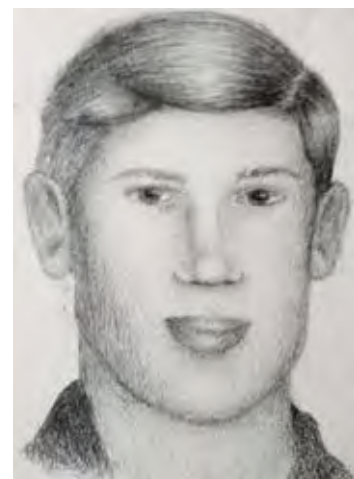
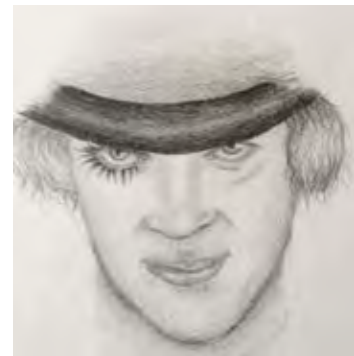
The little green frog was alive and groggy (hence the name). Reef and Fiona spent three days looking after him and trying to find somewhere where there were others of his kind, and where he wouldn't be pussycat or rat breakfast in the middle of the city. They ended up calling the company that grew the silver beet, hiring a car and driving Groggy back to his home. 'We felt this was the best option after all he had been through in the harvesting, delivery, storage and selling process completely sealed in plastic (not to mention missing cutting his toes off by the skin of his teeth on my mum's chopping board before she spotted him),' says Fiona

Groggy was released at a pond on the property where the silverbeet was grown. Fiona says it was an awesome experience. 'I thought it was really important to follow this through to feel good about it and know we are looking after even the smallest creatures in this world.'

Student Work Showcase



Jessie Jenkins, Year 7



Madison Cameron, Year 11



Olivia Rowe's wearable art costume

MR PRICKER AND HIS NEW ASSISTANT

It was exactly 10am, and Mr Pricker was waiting impatiently for his new assistant in his large but clean office. On his desk was a neat pile of clean paper and three pen pots next to his paper pile. Mr Pricker began pacing up and down his office; he was not a huge fan of waiting for other people.

At 10:31am Mr Pricker's door burst open and a foreign accent filled the room. 'I'm sorry, I'm a couple of minutes late but I saw this beautiful blue dress in a shop window, and I just had to get it, but little did I know, the dress had a black spot on it. Oh it was horrible! I walked all the way back to the store and demanded my money back. Oh how exhausting!'

Mr Pricker was stunned. 'That's her excuse,' He thought. 'I've been waiting for over half an hour and this lady was window shopping! How disgraceful!'

'I'm Miss Gotta Have, by the way,' said the lady who had helped herself into a chair in the middle of the room. She dumped her handbag on Mr Pricker's desk which made his neat paper pile fly across the room. Mr Pricker's face began to turn a deep shade

of red. Miss Gotta Have looked at Mr Pricker and said innocently, 'And your name is ...?'

Angeline Tunglux,
Year 8



Miss Gotta Have

POSSUMS

I love possum trapping. Most of the time I use leg holds and cage traps. Sometimes I set traps up by the waterfall. The best lure is to use flour and cinnamon. Sometimes I use peanut butter as well.

I set traps on trees and tracks with possum signs on them. Possum signs are claw marks and eaten leaves on the trees and possum poo on the ground.

I tie the traps to roots of trees so the possums don't run away with the traps.

The next day I go up to the waterfall again to check the traps. If a possum is in a trap, I kill it, then reset the traps and hopefully catch another possum the next day.

I pluck the possums while they are still warm. Wool Marketing is who I sell the fur to. It's \$115 a kilogram. The fur is mixed with merino wool and made into clothes.

Gareth Foote, Year 6

MY STORY

Five years ago my family and I saw a change in my sight which led me to go to my local optometrist to get glasses sorted. But getting glasses wasn't to be the case. I was referred to the Nelson specialist, Anthony Suta, because my local optometrist was unsure of what was going on with my vision. Until I saw the Nelson specialist my mind was all over the place. I was scared of what was to come, but trying to hold it together for my family. It was a rough few weeks of waiting for my appointment. Nerves were showing at home and at school. I was not myself, being down, not socialising, sticking to myself.

The day had finally come to find out what was going on with my eyes. All the weeks of waiting were over, not knowing what to expect. First thing I had to do was get drops put in by nurses to able the specialist to see the back of my eyes and do the tests that were needed. The specialist did a few tests and was finished looking at my eyes. What was to come I was not expecting. I found out I had a condition called optic atrophy, which is when the cells at the back of my eye are dying and leads to loss of sight. As he said, there is nothing that can fix this at the present time but in the future there could be. The specialist was surprised himself as this normally occurs in older men not someone who is young. I was in shock then, not knowing what to think, but I knew things were going to change from now on. I was referred up to Auckland for further testing in a few months time, but during the mean time I knew things would have to be put in place for me to be supported if sight was lost.

Things started getting complicated at school. They tried making things easier for me but it just wasn't working out. School was already starting to be difficult due to the loss of some of my sight and I was not sure if there was support out there for me. I soon found out there was a company called Blehnz, based in Nelson, that helps people with vision impairments in schools. I was struggling to see the written work on the whiteboard and worksheets. After meetings with the school deciding what the first step was going to be, it really turned out to

be all trial and error. I was given equipment and support from Blehnz, but in the end it was what worked for me. Blown up worksheets and a laptop were things that were going to make school easier for me. But I felt different from everyone else in the classroom. I was getting asked questions from students and I was standing out from everyone else. I was getting hassled about my vision impairment. I soon noticed the help from the teachers I was first getting was going out the window and I was not getting the help I needed. At this point, after trying everything I could, I weighed up my options with family and decided to leave school.

After all my tests had been done by specialists, I was registered with the Blind Foundation. For me this was a big step – being put into an organisation because of my vision impairment, but I soon learned it was the best thing for me. There were different support groups in the Blind Foundation which I soon found out about: counselling, mobility skills, career planning and equipment people. Given the loss of sight I was seen about my mobility skills and how it affected me around the town, such as walking and crossing roads. I was shown different ways on crossing roads with vision impairment. People that are vision impaired rely on different senses and with road crossing the main thing to use is your hearing, as I soon learned. I was also shown how to use a cane around the town. I was not comfortable with this as it made me feel different and stand out from other people. However I had to learn the skills that might come in handy later on in life. I was having trouble myself dealing with it all, being based in a small town of the South Island. I was only seen a few times a year, but I made the most of the support given to me as I knew I needed it.

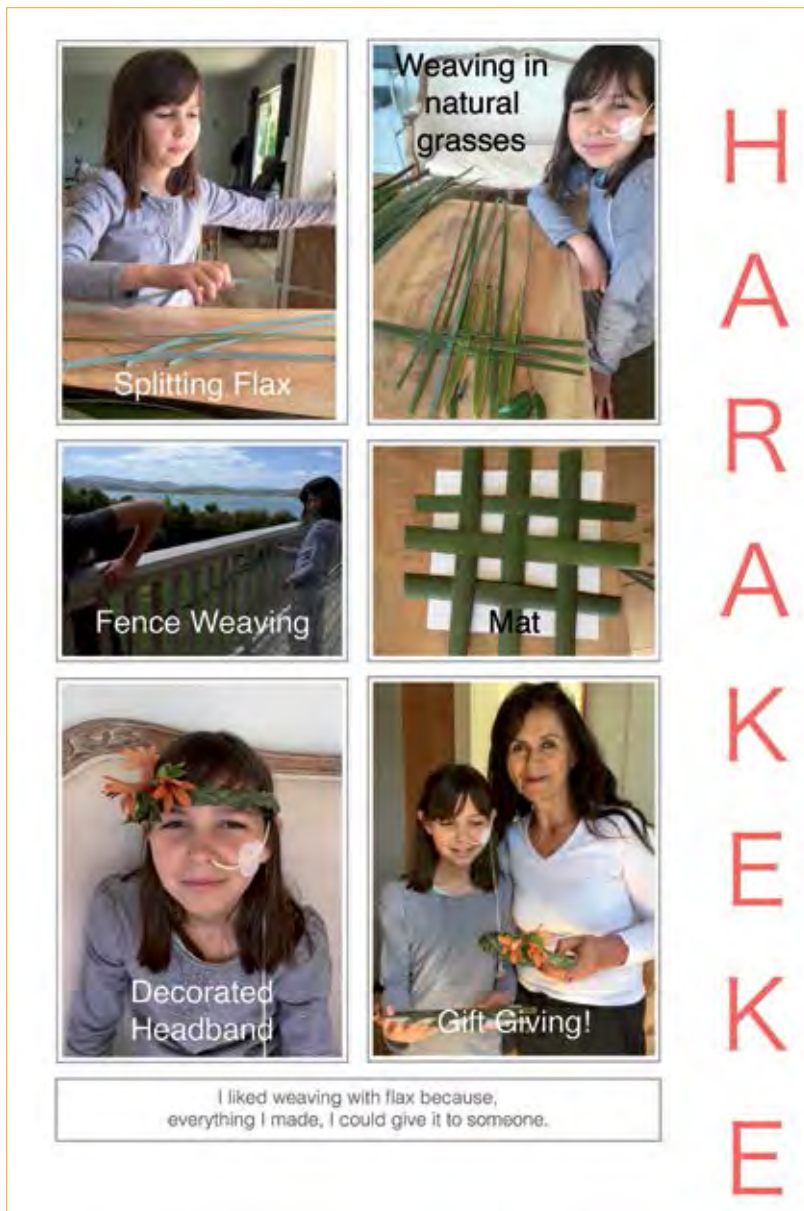
Due to everything that happened with learning to live with a vision impairment, it wasn't easy dealing with how I was affected doing everyday tasks and life skills, and how I could handle people. As much as I knew my family were there for me, I knew it was affecting them too with all the sudden changes, so I thought it was best if I stayed strong for them. Living with a disability isn't an easy thing. To live

with it impacted on me mentally and physically. I am still dealing with it myself at age of 19. But being diagnosed with the condition at 15 years old, it overruled my life at school and at home. My social life was being affected due to my sight. I just wanted a normal teenage life. It all took its toll leading to depression. I was seen by a counsellor for about a year and that really helped me deal with all the changes that had to happen and all the adjusting with the start of living with a vision impairment. It took me a long time to come to where I am at now, still learning day by day what a

disability can throw at you and what limitations it brings.

After all that has happened and occurred, I am still looking toward to the future. I am setting myself up for further education such as counselling, as I like to help others. Having a disability makes you no different to any other person. I wrote this to make people aware of the challenges vision impairment brings, and to show that however hard things get, there is always another side to it. I am living proof.

Bronsen Ebejer, Year 13



Ava Wilton, Year 7

1958 Kaitiaki flood

On the 23rd of February 1958 a raging flood came to Kaitiaki. In 24 hours 25.1cm of rain fell.

Kaitiaki was completely cut off from surrounding areas. All businesses closed except the Kaitiaki Hotel. There was no telephone or telegraph.



There was looting in the town. 90% of the businesses were damaged, Kaitiaki Hotel was the worst. The water was 90cm deep down the main street.

Farmers had heavy stock losses and some down areas were under water for up to 12 days.

Damage costs in Kaitiaki amounted to £140,500.00


£1,918,000 - 2008 figures.

well done!

Interview with Mr. Vince Mason.

1. What happened in the flood?
Rivers flooded, out-flooded. Water went down all the trees. Houses etc. were covered in toilet paper.
2. What changes happened to the town after the flood?
Sewage system was installed. Rivers changed.
3. What was important to save back then?
Houses were taken to high grounds. Car yards were empty.
4. Where were you at the time of the flood?
At Hillside School approx 6 years old.



Ephraim Jordan, Year 5

[UNTITLED]

An excerpt from a novel, yet to be completed, by Ariana Morrison.

The dinner bell would sound eventually, shattering the fragile silence. We would file into long lines and wait, hoping that there would be enough food for everyone. Often there wasn't. People died all the time of starvation. One time there was no food for four days. Everyone was tired and hungry and generally sick of living. When the prisoners at the front of the line heard there was no food, all hell broke loose. The big man at the front grabbed the cook's shirt and slammed his face into the wooden serving bench. A roar erupted from the group at the front as they leaped over the bench in a desperate search for food. The guards were shocked and hurried towards the threat. Prisoners surged forward, grabbing knives and forks and spoons from the kitchen, anything that could be used as a weapon.

There was something horribly rehearsed in their actions, although nothing had been planned. I suppose it was the mind-set of the prisoners that made them all react similarly. Hunger does things to people. Awful terrible things. There had been several cases of cannibalism in the past weeks. We couldn't even sleep easy at night any more, not that sleep came easily at the best of times. People behind me and in front of me ran forwards. A glint of malice and desperation in each man and women's eyes. Me on the other hand, I stood stock still. My legs turned to lead beneath me and I couldn't move. My head swam with thoughts and fear. I watched blankly as prisoners piled on top of a guard, almost how the guards had piled onto my father. But this was different. The guards had killed my father because he was an obstacle. It was clinical and swift. Not like this. The prisoners screamed and yelled like animals as they pounded the man, most with their bare hands. When the guard stopped moving, stopped trying to protect his face from the relentless pounding, so did the prisoners. He lay motionless, blood seeping from

underneath his helmet. This all happened in less than a minute. Forty seconds tops. I thought for a second of how odd it was that the man laying no more than twenty metres away from me would have been so sure of his life five minutes ago. I thought of his family, his friends. A crying mother and a sobbing daughter.

I felt nothing.

Why should I? After all they'd done to us?

I turned, assessing the situation. Prisoners and guards were fighting everywhere. The guards were shooting at everything that moved. Prisoners littered the hard frozen ground. I had to move. I had to get away from the guards' guns. There was a barracks nearby about fifty meters to my left. The guards seemed to be ignoring anyone inside. I sprinted in that direction, stepping over bodies as I went. I was careful not to look at the wounds that had killed them. The dead ones weren't so bad, it was the ones that screeched and writhed along the ground, clawing their way towards the barracks. I wouldn't stop. I was halfway to the barracks when a voice boomed through the speakers usually reserved for roll call.

"You have twenty seconds to stop fighting."

It said clearly and confidently. As it spoke, guards appeared from nowhere, surrounding us on all sides. The guards had batons which crackled with electricity and long shields made of black steel. The guards ran to surround the remaining prisoners, blocking the entrance to the barracks. I sprinted faster. My chest heaved and my thin arms pumped harder. How could they move so fast? They were only a few steps from the door way. I leaped, throwing all my weight forward. A guard swung his baton wildly, hitting me in the shoulder. The force of the hit distorted the direction of my leap and I found myself careering into the door frame. My face connected with the hard wood and dots appeared in the corners of my vision. My skull hurt so much I could hardly feel the pain in my shoulder. A hand grabbed my hair and I screamed and lashed out with my fists.

"It's no use."

Said a voice in my head.

"Ha-ha fists against bullet proof vests and electric batons. I am pathetic."

More hands grabbed at me. They held my arms and tugged at my shirt. I went limp in an effort to at least make it more difficult for them. I was face down so I couldn't see the faces of the guards who had me. It hurt to open my eyes anyway. All I knew was that they were dragging me into the barracks.

"Wait, into the barracks?"

A sudden thought flashed through my mind.

"But the guards are outside."

The hands released me once I was in the doorway. I pushed myself up. Nobody stopped me. I turned to see who had pulled me in. several faces stared at me. All unfamiliar, but friendlier than the guards. They had just saved my life after all. They looked me over, eyes blank and unsmiling, but there was no threat in them, so I tried moving into a sitting position. Big mistake. I used my left arm, pain shot through my upper arm through to my shoulder and all the way down my back. I winced and bit my tongue to stop from sobbing, but tears still filled my eyes. I used my other arm to help myself up. My head pounding with pain every time I moved, so I resigned myself to lean against a wall for a few minutes. All I could think about was the intense pain in my shoulder and the throbbing of my head. I didn't know which barracks I was in and had no way of knowing where Teddy and Pilot and Toes were. A lump formed in my throat when I thought of them crushed under the bodies of a hundred people, or bludgeoned to death by the guards. They had been slightly ahead of me when the riot started. I didn't know where they were, and that scared me. I closed my eyes and concentrated on my heart beat. Ignoring the noise outside. The screams, the loudspeaker warning that guards had permission to shoot on sight. I pushed it all aside.

Ariana Morrison, Year 12



SIBLINGS MAKE FINAL PLACINGS IN CYCLE TOUR

SIBLINGS AND TE KURA STUDENTS ETHAN, SOPHIE AND KATIE BATT WERE AMONG THE TOP PLACINGS IN THEIR AGE DIVISIONS IN THE SOUTH ISLAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS CYCLE TOUR EARLIER THIS YEAR.

The trio represented Te Kura in a competition involving more than 100 riders competing over two days. The tour involved four stages over two days – a hill climb, road race, individual time trial and a criterium.

Ethan finished first in the under 20 boys division, winning the Polka Dot jersey, Green Sprint Ace jersey and Yellow GC jersey, after dominating much of the competition.

Sophie finished third in the under 15 girls division with strong performances through all four stages. Younger sister Katie took out the under 13 girls competition, winning the Polka Dot Queen of the Mountain jersey, the Green Sprint Ace jersey and Yellow general classification (overall leader) jersey.

In October the Batt family travelled to Invercargill where Ethan, Sophie and Katie competed in the annual Junior Yunca Tour of Southland, again with top results.

In the under 19 boys Ethan was third in the GC and King of the Mountain, and first in Sprint points. Competing in the under 15 girls Sophie was second GC and third Queen of the Mountain. In the under 13 girls, Katie was first in the GC, Queen of the Mountain and Sprint points.

It has been a very successful year of racing both locally and nationally for the siblings. Ethan is now waiting to hear back from Cycling New Zealand whether he has been selected into the under 19 NZ Cycling Development Squad.

FINDING YOUR FEET, ONLINE

THIS YEAR MANY SUPERVISORS HAVE BEEN LEARNING NEW COMPUTER SKILLS TO SUPPORT THEIR STUDENT TO NAVIGATE TE KURA'S ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (OTLE).

For some, this may have been a steep learning curve. If you are one of these supervisors, do take some time out to reflect on the skills you have learnt and are still learning. As Roselie James who supervises her 14 year old son commented, 'at this stage we are still "finding our feet" and not quite getting everything right!'

Learning new skills takes time. As many supervisors are already busy people this is an extra commitment. Next year supervisors like Roselie will have extra support through an informative guide to online learning for families of full-time students enrolled in online courses at curriculum levels 3-5 or NCEA Level 1.

Since her son began learning online, Roselie has noticed changes in the way she supervises his work. Previously Roselie checked and marked her student's booklets and discussed the learning with him. Now she can log on to OTLE as a supervisor and check his progress. It is still important for supervisors to maintain contact with their student's learning advisor through email, text or phone.

When students are working online there is more opportunity to engage with their teachers and with other students through OTLE. This helps students to build and maintain independent relationships.

Teachers are available to monitor and respond to students' input through online discussions and through work submitted to the OTLE course dropbox. Once submitted, the student's work is immediately available to the teacher for marking or comments. Receiving feedback and ideas from the teacher helps to keep the topic alive and ongoing for the student.

The OTLEHUB course has been designed to help students and their supervisors to get the hang of online learning. If you find yourself stuck, have a look at the Hub course. For technical problems, contact the OTLE helpdesk by email to helpdesk.OTLE@tekura.school.nz or phone 0800 65 99 88 Ext 8712 between the hours of 8am and 5pm.

ACCESS TO A SUITABLE DEVICE AND INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

TE KURA HAS AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN PLACE FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLING IN ONE OF OUR NEW ONLINE COURSES IN 2016 BUT DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AND/OR A SUITABLE DEVICE FOR ONLINE LEARNING.

Te Kura offers a laptop computer and/or internet subsidy of \$30 per month for each eligible student enrolled in an online course at curriculum levels 3-5 or at NCEA Level 1 for use while they are enrolled with Te Kura.

The devices we provide are re-refurbished (second-hand) laptop computers which have been loaded with Microsoft Windows and some other software students may find useful, such as Adobe Reader. The internet subsidy is \$30 per month during the school year and is paid directly into the applicant's bank account. Eligible full-time students enrolled under the geographical isolation, geographical inaccessibility and itinerancy gateways may receive a top-up of their internet subsidy of a further \$30.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, students must be either a full-time student or a young adult student enrolled in three or more courses. The student must be enrolled in an online course at curriculum levels 3-5 and/or NCEA Level 1.

Applications must be made by the person who is primarily responsible for the education of the student, or by a young adult student applying on their own behalf. The applicant must be a beneficiary or Community Services Card holder, and be resident in New Zealand. This assistance programme is not available to overseas students.

The fastest way to apply is online through our website at www.tekura.school.nz. Applications can also be made over the telephone by calling 0800 65 99 88 and selecting option 1 from the menu. Families with more than one eligible student may apply for a laptop and internet subsidy for each student.

Applicants are required to declare that they will advise of any changes in their circumstances and that the laptop will be well looked after to prevent damage, loss or theft. Te Kura will not replace mis-treated devices. Students who withdraw from Te Kura must return the laptop if requested. The subsidy will cease as soon as the student is no longer enrolled with Te Kura.

Other assistance

People who do not meet all of the eligibility criteria can apply to Te Kura Chief Executive Mike Hollings for special consideration. Please note that there are some pre-requisites which must be met before special applications are considered:

- The student must be a full-time student, or a young adult enrolled in three or more courses, and
- be enrolled in an online course at curriculum levels 3–5 or in an NCEA Level 1 course.

These applications must be made in writing outlining the reasons why the student requires assistance to access a suitable device and/or internet connectivity. Applications should be sent to:

Mike Hollings
Chief Executive
Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu
Private Bag 39992
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045

Free 'My Te Kura' email account and Microsoft Office software

Te Kura has partnered with Microsoft to give Office 365 to every student free of charge. With Office 365 Pro Plus, Te Kura students have access to the latest version of Word, for writing; Excel, for spreadsheets; PowerPoint, for presentations; OneNote, for organisation and note taking; and much more. Students can install Office 365 Pro Plus on up to five compatible PCs and Macs, plus five tablets (including iPad).

To enable our students to take up this offer, we have allocated every student a 'My Te Kura' email address which they must use to sign in and download the software or access it through the Cloud. The format for this email address is the student's firstname.lastname@mytekura.school.nz and the password is their student ID number. Students may nominate to use this email account as their primary account for emails to and from Te Kura.

The software must be downloaded from the internet. Our website provides simple instructions to download Office 365 at www.tekura.school.nz/enrol-with-us/free-microsoft-office-for-students/.

NCEA Level 1 students with no internet connectivity in their location

Full-time students whose location means they are unable to access internet connectivity can make an application to be sent paper resources in 2016.

This is a transition arrangement for NCEA Level 1 only and will not extend beyond 2016. The student's

parent or guardian needs to apply in writing, providing the physical address of the property where the student does most of their school work and outlining the level of existing internet access, if any.

Application forms are available from the student's learning advisor. Completed applications should be sent to the regional manager for the region where the student lives.

Please note that this does not apply to existing online courses (such as te reo Māori, media studies and digital technology) as there are no alternative resources for these courses.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EVENT DAYS

'CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH RESPONSIVE AND RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS.'

TE WHĀRIKI EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

Te Kura early childhood teachers work in partnership with families to provide a range of learning opportunities for their students. Early childhood event days, which are organised by the teachers and take place throughout the country, are another way of ensuring that students have the opportunity to meet with their teachers, to visit interesting places and discover new things. Event days provide teachers with valuable opportunities to communicate and interact with students and their families and to learn more about students' skills, abilities and interests.

During the year early childhood teachers invite students and their families to a range of events, some held in local early childhood venues and others using community facilities.

Although it is not possible to offer all early childhood students a place at an event day, the venues are chosen to ensure as many students as possible have the opportunity to attend. The teachers try to vary the parts of the region they visit from year to year.

Event days usually begin with a change of routine for an early childhood student – getting ready for a day away from home, packing lunches and extra clothes. There is great excitement for some children knowing they will meet their Te Kura teachers for the first time. Families need to prepare in advance for an event day as there are often other family members to consider. Usual routines and responsibilities are rearranged and supervisors often return home to very busy households.

Event days provide a setting for families to get know each other, share ideas and develop relationships. New friends can be made by supervisors who either discover



they are neighbours or whose children find friendships during the day. This can lead to the development of closer community connections for the family and further social interactions for the student.

For early childhood students, event days provide an opportunity to take an interest in something new or to build on a current interest, to explore different environments and to meet as a group.

Every child is an individual so the learning outcomes for each child differ. Some children will be developing the skills to interact with unfamiliar people, places or things; others will be strengthening their communication skills, learning to follow instructions or take responsibility for their learning.

The day is often seen as an extra special day for early childhood students who bring along other family members to share in their day. Sometimes grandparents and other extended family join in which helps to build on important intergenerational relationships for our students.

For students, families and teachers, having the opportunity to meet in the community is a valuable and rewarding way to build strong interpersonal relationships and strengthen the effectiveness of the learning programme.

*From top left:
Natalie Saunders, Cooper Burgess and Gracie Copeland*