

Kia ora koutou katoa. This year has been another successful year for Saint John's College. Our school is in a strong position which is a tribute to the teachers, students, whanau and the wider community.

I would like to start with focusing on student performance which is a key part of our strategic goal to *develop a culture of excellence where all students aspire to fulfil their academic potential*. Our NCEA results from 2023 demonstrate that our boys are doing exceedingly well. Over 94% of our boys attained Achieved or better in NCEA level one, approximately 93% for level two and approximately 88% for level 3. This is on average 25% higher when compared to all schools in New Zealand. An outstanding result.

I would also like to single out those involved in the Gateway programme. I think this is one of the real strengths of St. John's. The way we interact with the business community and have our boys placed in roles, where they gain skillsets and work experience, which makes the transition from school to work so effective for so many. Thank you those who contribute and lead this programme.

We continue to aspire in building a culture where academic success is encouraged, valued and celebrated across the school. This year an honours board has been established where academic success is highlighted. In addition this year we have had our Academic Council students volunteer in tutoring other students over many subjects. This has been extremely beneficial to the recipients and thank you to those young men that volunteered their time and knowledge. This encapsulate the spirit of Saint John's.

I am also pleased that in 2025 we will have a new Academic Dean position that will further our focus on our strategic theme of students fulfilling their academic potential. Our wider community has a very important role in student performance and one of the key aspects is ensuring our boys are attending school. This has been shown over and over again as one of the key factors in student achievement. To date this year, 89% of the boys are at school 80% or more of the time. Whilst this compares favourably to national figures, we will continue to work with whanau on the importance of school attendance and the impact on academic achievement.

It is rather paradoxical that we have the situation where we have boys that are at St John's but are not attending school, whilst we have a number of students that are unable to attend Saint John's College. For the year 9 intake for the 2025 academic year, we have had approximately 300 boys with preference cards enrol for the 210 available spots. This has resulted in a number of families that are very disappointed that their sons will not attend St John's. We will explore with the Diocese the possibility of future roll growth to meet some of the demand while at the same time retaining the current culture of the school.

This year has seen progress on our strategic goal of *elevating the Catholic Character of the College and to be the school of choice for Waikato Catholic boys*. Given the number of enrolments, we are certainly the school of choice, and the Board are progressing the scoping of a new chapel that will elevate the Catholic character of Saint John's. For many years it has there has been a dream to have a chapel where students, old boys and school community can gather to celebrate Mass.

A number of options have been explored through the year and now the focus is on a construction of a new building with a strong preference from the Board for a chapel that can seat 500 for Mass. Over the coming months the Board will continue to work with the Diocese and a local architecture firm to design a chapel that not only meets our needs but also reflects the spiritual significance that such a space deserves.

In 2025 we will share the vision and design more widely with the community. The building of the chapel will require significant financial support and we are pleased that the St John's Foundation is committed to spearheading the fundraising initiative. This will be an important phase in the history of St John's College and one that we should all be very excited by.

As a Board we have the strategic goal, to *strengthen our community connections to provide more opportunities for our students*. Community involvement especially from our parents is an integral component of the success of the school. Thank you for your contribution to the wider life of school through the time that you invest in coaching, managing, transporting and supporting your sons in their interests, be that sporting, cultural and/or arts. On any given day you will find 'Johnnies Boys' excelling at any number of activities and this simply wouldn't be possible without your help.

Another opportunity to contribute to the school community is through the Board of Trustees. It is important for the school that we have a strong Board that is skilled and represents the diversity of our community. Elections are in September 2025 and there will be a number of positions available. I would like to thank the Board for their contribution throughout this year and especially to

those that commenced with me in 2019. I look forward to the transition to new Board members in 2025 and really encourage you to consider being one of them.

To our departing students we thank you for your immense contribution you have made over your time here. Please keep the connection to the school and the community as you embark on your new adventures. Education is a gift that is absolutely important throughout one's life. For all of the students I ask for all of you to be curious and to continue to learn. It doesn't stop when you leave St. John's College, it continues. There will be more responsibility on yourselves to seek the knowledge out there. You've been given a fantastic base here at St John's, make sure you make the most of it.

I have been involved at St. John's now for over a decade. Being part of the Board, we see on an annual basis those that lead and contribute to the school. We see the Leadership team, Deans of the Junior and Senior year groups, Heads of Department, Director of Catholic Character, the leads of Māori and Pasifika and leads of Sport and Pastoral care. Without exception all of those teachers and staff have an incredible passion and drive for these boys to succeed. Thank you so much for your contribution.

I am not an Old Boy of St. John's but I'm very proud to see how Saint John's prepares young men for life. It has been an absolute honour to be involved in the school. However our job isn't done, for the future school communities, teachers and boards, society continues to change the demands on what is expected from an education. We can't be complacent and also need to ensure that we continue to think how can we improve the education that we're giving these young men.

So to finish, St. John's is in a very strong position as a school and the challenge for us, is to maintain and improve that in the future.