



Principal's Comment

Welcome back to a new school year. Following a smooth start to the year, and with students in class and working, it is time to reflect briefly on 2005 and look forward to 2006.

While we do not yet have access to the national data for NCEA, the data we do have shows a significant improvement on 2004 in most subject areas. A lot of excellent teaching and some innovative programmes have clearly had a positive effect. However, I also need to sound a cautionary note. In 2005 I taught a Level 1 Economics class and what became clear as the year progressed, and what the results confirmed, was that no matter what the teacher does, unless a student is prepared to work hard and take some responsibility for their own learning, they will not achieve. In simple terms, irrespective of ability, those students who really tried achieved in at least some achievement standards. Those who did not make a decent personal effort, despite having natural ability, did not achieve well.

During the holidays I met with a very good former teacher from Edgewater who now teaches at a high profile private school in Auckland. She commented that what sets those students apart is not that they are the brightest but that, as assignments are due or as external examinations loom, there is a total focus by the student and their family on study. We can liken it to the effort that goes into preparation for our cultural festival: an all-consuming focus and effort that, if it were translated into preparation for exams, would see students who fail to achieve academically get far better results. This is the challenge for us in 2006.

Some of you may have read about Avondale College's plan to have results and attendance "on line" for parents. We have also been working on this project during 2005 and hope to have it up and running by the end of this term. It will give parents a wonderful opportunity to monitor progress and hopefully apply some pressure from home when improvement is needed.

A J Vester
Principal

**Next Board of Trustees
meeting:**

Wednesday 15 February 6.30 pm

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Thursday 16 – Saturday 18
Year 12 PE Trip

Wednesday 22, 7.00 pm
"Helping your child succeed at
secondary school" – Year 9
Parent / Teacher evening

Thursday 23 & Friday 24
Year 13 camp

MARCH

Thursday 9 – Sunday 12
Year 12 Geography Trip

Tuesday 14, 7.00 pm
Course & NCEA information
evening – Years 10-13

Monday 27 & Tuesday 28
Enrichment Courses –
9E, 10E & Year 13

APRIL

Week 10 (10 -13 April)
Reports mailed
Parent / teacher interviews
(Two evenings – dates and
times to be confirmed)

Thursday 13
Last day of Term 1

Literacy Focus – Home Help

It is never too late to make a New Year's resolution! Encouraging and helping your child to become a better reader is a good choice. Parents often want to know what they can do to help improve their child's reading once they reach secondary school level. This is not an easy question to answer but here are some tips that may help:

- Listen to your child read aloud for 10 minutes each night.
- Read regularly to and with your child.
- Encourage family reading time – 20 minutes when the TV or stereo are turned off so the family can enjoy written words.
- Actively supervise homework – help with the reading.
- Ask your child questions about what s/he is reading for homework or in class. Ask them what it is about, how they feel about the things they are reading and whether they can relate any of their own personal experiences to what they are reading.
- Buy or borrow a story on tape or CD and let your child listen to it as s/he follows the written text.
- Encourage all members of the family to make regular visits to the public library.
- If your child is in Year 9 or 10, regular class visits are made to the school library. Check that your child is establishing a good borrowing record, is actually reading the books and that s/he completes the reading logs that are required as part of their course work.
- Encourage your son/daughter to read the newspaper.

Please encourage your son or daughter to read at home. Please assist your son with his reading. The more encouragement and assistance that is given, the greater the success.

If you have any concerns about your child's reading, please contact their English teacher at school.

Thank You to the local business community for supporting the 2006 Homework Diary. Thanks to their advertising, we are able to provide this useful booklet to all students free of charge. We encourage you to support these local businesses (you'll find their contact details in the diary):

- G.Smith Builders Ltd
- Exclusive Suit Hire, Botany & Newmarket
- Ajadz Indian Cuisine, Ti Rakau Drive
- Blockbuster, The Hub
- D & M Neilson Electrical Ltd
- Bradshaw Plumbing Ltd
- Armstrong Locksmiths
- Howick & Eastern Buses Ltd
- Ti Rakau Drive Superette & Lotto
- JF Auto Services Ltd
- Texas Steakhouse & Saloon
- Let's Dance Studios

Thanks also to Bunnings Warehouse, Botany, for sponsoring the fridge magnet distributed at the end of 2005. Keep it on your fridge for a quick reference for 2006 term dates.

"Travellers" Programme is a highly successful programme that has been researched and shown to assist students to integrate effectively into their new school.

Year 9 students will complete a survey that will help us gain an in-depth understanding of their needs. The survey will take place during Tutor time in Term 1 and will help identify those students who will most benefit from the programme. For more information see Mr Williams, Guidance Counsellor.

Year 10 Camp, Term 4: Kaimai Ranges Monday 27 November – Friday 1 December

This is an opportunity for Year 10 students to take part in an amazing learning experience where they will develop valuable life-skills. Activities will include kayaking, abseiling, tramping, a one-day surfing course, navigation and river crossings, historical tunnel exploration, climbing and lots of other learning activities.

Cost: \$80 (subsidised) includes food, transport, accommodation, all activities and qualified guides.
Start saving now or pay by instalment.

Only 50 places available – see Mr Gardi at school or phone 5799039 ext. 870.

Congratulations to Keerthi Kumar (Year 13, 2005), who has been awarded a Medico Legal Society scholarship for \$5000 to assist with her future study at Medical School.

Edgewater College Community Education has a great range of adult classes available in the evenings from 7-9 pm. 2006 classes start from 27 February so enrol soon – course booklets are available from the Community Education office.

Courses include ethnic cooking, languages, computers, personal growth, health and wellbeing, arts and craft, learner driver theory, boating, family dog handling, hair cutting - there's something for everyone.

CAREERS

The Careers Office is located in D Block and is open to all students during Interval & Lunchbreak. For an appointment, students write your name on the sheet outside the Careers Office, or parents phone 5770406. Mr Whickman is happy to talk with you about options and career choices.

NZ Police – Speed Kills Kids campaign

From 7 February Police are strictly enforcing speed limits around schools on school days, particularly during the busy periods morning and afternoon when students are arriving or leaving.

**BY LOOKING OUT FOR SPEEDERS, WE'RE
LOOKING OUT FOR KIDS.**

www.police.govt.nz

BEING THE PARENT YOU WANT TO BE

Children grow up happier and more confident when their parents enjoy them and get on well with them. If you are concerned that your stress and anger may be harming your children, these courses are for you.

Courses are available in your area during Term 1. Brochures available from the school office or phone Jill on 476 6947. Email: angerchange@xtra.co.nz

Uniform Shop

Due to staffing changes the Uniform Shop will be open on **Tuesdays only, 1.00 – 5.30 pm**, until further notice.

Phone: 576 9039

Fax: 576 9037

Website: www.edgewater.school.nz

email: enquiries@edgewater.school.nz

Office hours: 8.30 am to 4.00 pm term time

Striving
for

Excellence