



Northcote Kāhui Ako - Community of Learners - Term 4 Newsletter

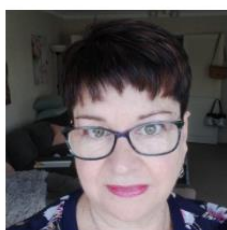
December 3rd, 2022

Kia ora Northcote community!

It's been a very busy year and Term 4 has just flown by. As we prepare to wrap up our schools before the summer break, I wanted to share some of what has been happening across our community of learners and give some ideas around keeping students mentally active over the holidays.

Learning Support Coordinator Team

Our Kāhui Ako is the only one on the North Shore who is lucky to have a team of Learning Support Coordinators (LSC's). Our LSC's work collaboratively to better enable schools to identify needs and provide learning support across the cluster. We coordinate available resources, funding and support and facilitate strategies to remove barriers for our learners with diverse learning needs.



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Our LSC team works together on various projects within their base school, and across the cluster. This includes the development and administration of a shared Learning Support Register, that preserves individual students information, while allowing us to spot trends and address problem areas and achievement across the Kahui Ako. We are able to work together to share transition information, and help students move seamlessly through school levels within the cluster, and to and from feeder schools and Early Childhood settings.

Some of the key issues that we have identified are the large numbers of students diagnosed with, or screening as "at risk" for specific learning difficulties of a neurological type, such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia. This information helps us to develop tailored programmes with a consistent and shared focus across the cluster. We continue to support marginalised and prioritised learners, by developing a culturally responsive relationship-focused approach which will benefit all learners.

The LSC team meets regularly to unpack common issues in our field, to share resources and strategies. We network with key players in the local learning support community, and we share expertise across the cluster. We spend time working on our goals, evaluating our progress against them, and setting targets for learning support in the cluster. In this way we are strengthening the learning support systems across and within school in our Kāhui Ako. Our vision is to empower schools, teachers and families in our community to better meet the diverse needs of our learners within an inclusive student-centred context.

Our focus for 2023 is to continue working in partnership with our community to better understand the aspirations of students and families and to meet their needs within a culturally responsive paradigm, that will lead to successful outcomes for all learners.

Combined School Boards Get Together

On 14th November we had 25 of our board members and senior leaders get together at Northcote Intermediate School. They spent time hearing about the journey we've been on and our purpose then participated in some workshopping around what we can do even better. The team came up with some practical next steps including board Presiding Members (formerly Board Chairs) getting together early next year and further sharing of expertise and networks. I feel it was a very successful evening, further strengthening our support for our learners.

2023 Annual Plan

As well as our 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan which outlines our achievement challenges, our 2023 draft Annual plan has been recently workshopped and refined. We are looking to reduce the number of initiatives for each achievement challenge to improve the quality of the outcomes. The full plan will be shared when finalised. For now here are our key focus areas:

- Continuing to build systems to improve how well we know and support our learners
- Creating a roadmap for maths learning from early childhood education to Year 13
- For all teachers to share more local curriculum knowledge with students

Year 6 Transition Evening

It was great to have over 40 year 6 parents come along to our Transition to Intermediate information evening at Willow Park School in Term 4. Being a part of the Northcote Community of Learning has meant we are able to have skilled and knowledgeable teachers develop a specialised programme to ensure these children will have a smooth transition to Intermediate which we were able to share with our families. It also helps to create strong relationships with staff across the Kāhui Ako which means there is a greater sharing of knowledge and clear transition pathways for children. The night offered an interesting insight for parents as we shared our year 6 children's wonderings about Intermediate. Having these transition teachers and the Year 6 teaching team there as well meant any parent wonderings could also be answered.



End of Year Staff Celebration

On the 1st of December we had an open invitation get together for all staff across our schools to come to the Birkenhead Bowling Club to mix and mingle and celebrate what's been another intense and challenging year. Around 70 people spent some quality time making connections and downloading. Another nice touch to help with connectivity and wellness.

Northcote Kāhui Ako 2023 Conference

The 2nd of June 2023 has been the date set for all our schools to participate in our 'Engaging all Learners' Conference. This will be a teacher only day and is the day before the long weekend. We have a considerable amount of internal expertise that needs to be shared, and we are looking at some world-class external keynote speakers. More will come through as this comes together.

Our Across School Leader (ASL) Team:

From left to right are Niki Manoa (Northcote College) David Taylor (Northcote College), Phil Muir (Lead Principal, Northcote Intermediate) and Theresa Kinloch (Willow Park School).



Our Within School Leaders (WSLs):

- **Northcote College:** Antonia Williams, Chadd Davis, Sophie Lindfield, Jordan Bradly, Adele Tunnicliff, Rochelle Gosling, Stephanie Tanner
- **Northcote Intermediate School:** Kelly Singer, Mirela Lapuste, Justin Lintern
- **Birkenhead Primary School:** Simone Nair, Kerrie Little, Sarah McMenamin
- **Northcote Primary School:** Ruby Cameron, Kelly Mattock
- **Willow Park School:** Niall Wilson, Rachel Clapham, Carrie Joyner, Jessica Neutze
- **Onepoto Primary School:** Kristen Webster
- **Northcote Baptist Preschool:** Rosemary Turley

We are also including other talented staff as we grow our momentum, including Ange Teague from Northcote Intermediate, Heather Bartlett from Northcote Primary, and Carey Thomas from Northcote Primary.

Summer Learning!

The summer holidays are about to begin and our students have earned themselves good breaks (as have YOU) after all the effort they have put into school this year. While it is most unlikely there is any formal schoolwork to do over the holidays there are some fun activities we would really like students to have a go at over the break both for enjoyment and for the benefit they will have for your child's brain. Some of you may have heard about the 'summer learning effect', and some students can regress in the weeks they are away from school. There are some things parents should consider to keep young brains developing.

Students who read over summer return to school with the same, or better, ability in all their subjects than at the end of the previous year. People who don't read over the break, however, can end up going backwards – they can start the next year further behind than at the end of the previous year.

The reason for this is actually quite straightforward. If we think about it in sporting terms then the summer break is the off-season. While it is definitely a time to rest up we know that sportspeople who do some low-level off-season training don't lose too much fitness and start the next season rested but still in good physical condition. So we need to try and make sure this happens with our brains too – that we don't lose any of the 'braininess' we have worked hard this year to grow.

Don't Worry!

Students - we want to stress that the activities here are supposed to be fun and while not everyone automatically thinks of reading when they think of summer fun, whatever your interests there are non-fiction books, magazines, articles, and stories which are about what YOU like and which you will find interesting. We also want you to know that this is not something to dominate your summer – just something fun to be doing along the way. Some suggestions for a summer reading fitness programme include:

Make your own Christmas and New Year's greeting cards and write thoughtful messages including thank yous, words of acknowledgement and appreciation!

Find a poem or short story which you think someone you know would like and make a time to read it to them

Read a comic book and retell the plot only using emoji's

Find a biography about one of your heroes from the public library and read it

Get a recommendation from someone your age for the best book they have read this year and after you have read it meet up, eat ice-cream and talk about it

Ask about different people or places in your family history then read a book about that place or time or one set in that place or time

Get 10 photos of yourself reading in different places – 5 must be outside, at least 1 sunny and 1 rainy day and 1 on some kind of transport

Find a new poem about summer and write the whole thing out on a beach

Look out for a big international news story and follow it each day – you could cut out/ print out and keep everything about it

Use the library to find and read 2 short stories set in Aotearoa New Zealand

Other great brain activities to do over the holidays:

- museums and art galleries are usually free and have really interesting displays and activities to get you thinking – most have special things on for the holidays

<https://www.aucklandartgallery.com/page/current-and-upcoming-exhibitions>

<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/>

- if you're travelling somewhere, find out some more about the place – the history, what the area is known for, why it has its name
- summer is a great time for stars – see if you can learn a new constellation and show it to someone else
- choose a topic – birds, trees, insects, ice creams - take photos every time you see a new one and work out what it's called
- summer can include a lot of waiting time - learn a new card game
- think of something you can do well – handstands, noseslides, bombing in the pool, sitting in the lotus position – and teach someone else how to do it

Whatever you do, have a wonderful, restful, safe and happy summer break and the very best wishes to you all from the Northcote Kāhui Ako team. Let's look forward to a super successful 2023.

Ngā mihi nui



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