

March 23, 2020

Tēnā Koutou Katoa

The Board of Trustees is delighted to announce that Mr Michael Hart has been appointed the new principal/tumuaki for the school. After a thorough search and selection process, Michael emerged as the candidate with the mix of skills and experience that the board was looking for. Michael is currently deputy principal at Botany Downs Secondary College, a large multicultural coeducational high school in south-east Auckland, that first opened to Year 9 in 2004. He has been part of the senior leadership team for the last 10 years, and has led many school-wide initiatives, including professional learning, learning with digital technologies, positive learning for behaviour, and academic mentoring with a focus on using achievement data and setting goals with students, staff and parents.

Michael has acted as principal on several occasions, most recently to cover a sabbatical leave position in 2019. Prior to being deputy principal, he was the school's foundation Head of Science and Whanau Leader (kaitiaki/dean) in a unique opportunity to both lead curriculum and pastoral teams that set the stage for the successful school it is today. He has also been Head of Science at Mount Albert Grammar School, leading the Science Department as the school transformed from a boys' school to a coeducational environment.

Michael has significant experience in both traditional and modern learning environments, and has established a reputation for innovation and focus on ensuring a safe environment and positive outcomes for students. He has an absolute focus on raising student achievement, and believes in the importance of a strong co-curricular programme (arts, culture, sport and service) to develop the personal qualities and values of our young people. His main contribution to co-curricular life has been to coach cricket and hockey, both sports he once enjoyed playing. Nowadays, Michael enjoys jogging, sea kayaking and walking/hiking.

The board believes that Michael is an outstanding educational leader who will make a big difference to our school and to the Thames community. Along with his skills and experience, he brings passion, focus and a deep care for people. We are very fortunate that he has chosen to come to Thames and are looking forward to working with him.

I have asked Michael to write a few words to share with you: "I am honoured to be appointed as tumuaki/principal of Thames High School, which has such a long and proud history of serving its community. I am looking forward to working with the board, staff, students, parents and wider community to ensure that every student experiences success in a safe and nurturing environment. We must reflect the absolutely high expectations of our community, making the most of the fantastic physical resources and staff the school enjoys. I cannot wait to join the school, and hear from you all, and I hope you will take the opportunity to meet with me and share your aspirations."

Michael's first day will be on Tuesday 28 April, the start of term 2. We will welcome him to the school with a powhiri. More information will follow. Please join with the

board in extending a very warm welcome to Michael - to our school and to Thames.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Whaea Maria. Whaea Maria stepped into the role of acting tumuaki in term two last year. She accepted the board's request to lead the school in uncertain and challenging times. At times, leadership can be a very lonely role. But Whaea Maria handled it with courage and commitment. We couldn't have asked for more. Whaea Maria will return to the role of deputy tumuaki from next term.

Ngā mihi
Mary Hamilton
Board Chair



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