



NPGHS NEWSLETTER

14 August 2026

Tēnā koutou katoa

As adults, we can slip into the habit of thinking about school as simply a place for learning. We focus on lessons, assessments, qualifications, and achievement. While these are certainly reasons that schools exist, research tells us that one of the strongest influences on a young person's success at school is something much more fundamental: a sense of belonging.

Belonging is the feeling of being accepted, valued, included, and connected. It is knowing there are people who notice when you are absent, celebrate your successes, and support you when things do not go to plan. For young people, this is not simply a nice addition to their education. It is a critical foundation for learning, wellbeing, and growth.

Research consistently shows that students who feel they belong are more engaged in learning, attend more regularly, achieve better academically, and are more resilient when challenges arise. When young people feel connected, they are more willing to take risks, participate fully, and persevere through difficulties.

At NPGHS, we see the power of belonging every day. It is evident friendships, the support students receive from staff, the pride shown in our sporting teams and performing arts groups, and the strong sense of connection many students find through the opportunities they take up. It is often found in the small moments too, like a friendly greeting, an encouraging conversation, or an invitation to get involved.

Belonging looks different for every student. One of our most important responsibilities as a school is to ensure that every student has opportunities to find her place. Belonging grows when diversity is celebrated, kindness is shown, and everyone feels they matter.

Our upcoming student led Cultural Night is a wonderful example of belonging in action. It brings people together to celebrate cultures, learn from one another, and strengthen the connections that make our school community so special. Events like this remind us that schools are not only places where learning happens. They are communities where relationships are built, identities are shaped, and young people discover where they belong.

We encourage every student to get involved, whether through a team, group, activity, or event. We also encourage families to support school involvement wherever possible, including choosing school sport instead of club when they can. The more opportunities students have to connect, contribute, and participate, the more likely they are to find the part of NPGHS where they feel a strong sense of belonging.

Ngā mihi mahana
Jacqui Brown



Solar Panels Coming to NPGHS

We are delighted to share that New Plymouth Girls' High School has been selected to participate in the Government's Solar on Schools programme. The initiative, delivered through the Ministry of Education and EECA, will see solar panels installed on 500 schools across New Zealand over the next three years. NPGHS is one of only three secondary schools in Taranaki selected for the programme.

The installation will help reduce energy costs, improve energy resilience, and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. It will also provide valuable opportunities for students to connect their classroom learning with real-world sustainability initiatives. Further site assessments will take place before installation planning begins, and we look forward to sharing updates as the project progresses.



Year 9 & 10

Junior Curriculum & Reporting Information Evening

Thank you to the families who attended our Year 9 and 10 Curriculum and Reporting Information Evening. We know it was a cold evening, and that possibly impacted the numbers attending, but we thoroughly enjoyed the conversations and questions from those who attended. The session outlined the significant curriculum changes being introduced across New Zealand schools and explained how reporting is evolving to better reflect student progress and achievement.

This year, reporting in English and Mathematics has moved to a new format based on year-level expectations, with reports now including progress descriptors, teacher comments, progress over time, and attendance information. From 2027, similar reporting approaches will be introduced across all learning areas in the Junior School.

Families were also introduced to the SMART assessment tool, which provides teachers, students, and parents with clear information about progress in reading, writing, and mathematics. Importantly, no single test determines achievement; teacher judgements are based on a range of evidence, including classwork, learning tasks, observations, and assessment information.

A key message from the evening was that the new curriculum sets higher and more explicit expectations for learning. As a result, being "on track" reflects a different and more demanding standard than in previous years. This does not necessarily mean students are achieving less, but rather that national expectations have changed.

Further evenings will be held as more information becomes available about the curriculum and planned assessment changes.

Takatū Poutama Award Recipients

Congratulations to the many students who recently received their Takatū Poutama Award during Kāwai Huia time. These awards celebrate students who consistently demonstrate our school values through strong attendance, punctuality, positive engagement in learning, excellent behaviour, and pride in their uniform.

The name Takatū Poutama represents being "ready to learn" and reflects the idea of preparing yourself to climb, progress, and achieve success. It aligns closely with our school values and recognises the everyday habits that support learning and achievement.

To receive a Takatū Poutama Award, students must meet high standards across attendance, engagement, behaviour, punctuality, and uniform expectations. This year, an impressive 473 students earned the award for the first half of 2026, demonstrating their commitment to making the most of their learning opportunities.

We are proud of all recipients and look forward to recognising those students who continue to meet the criteria throughout the year. Well done to everyone who earned this award and thank you for the positive contribution you make to our school community every day.

Jubilate Choir Performs "The Peacemakers"

Our talented Jubilate Choir will join the Ars Nova Choir, Ars Antiqua Chamber Orchestra, and Devon Hotel New Plymouth Brass, for a performance of Karl Jenkins' acclaimed work *The Peacemakers*. Juliet Woller, Head of Music, will also feature as a soloist for one of the movements.

This major collaborative performance has involved many hours of preparation and promises to be a memorable musical experience. We encourage members of our school community to support the students and staff involved.

Click on the poster for further details and to purchase tickets





Junior Netball Teams Shine in Palmerston North

Congratulations to our Year 9 and Year 10 netball teams who competed on Sunday 9 August in the Manawātū Junior Netball Tournament in Palmerston North.

The tournament was highly successful, with our players demonstrating outstanding skill, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout the weekend.

Results included:

- Year 10A: Third Place in Y9/10 Grade 1
- Year 10B: Runners-Up in Y9/10 Grade 2
- Year 9A: Winners in Y9/10 Grade 3
- Year 9B: First place in Pool A of the Development Grade

These results reflect the hard work and commitment of our netballers, coaches, managers, and supportive whānau.

We are incredibly proud of the way our students represented NPGHS both on and off the court.



Successful Sports Exchange in Palmerston North

Our recent sports exchange against Palmerston North Girls' High School and Napier Girls' High School provided another fantastic opportunity for our Premier teams to test themselves in competitive sport while building connections and school pride.

Results from the day included some close games and convincing wins.

Hockey • NPGHS 1st XI won 6-1 vs PNGHS • NPGHS 1st XI won 2-1 vs NGHS	Basketball • NPGHS Prem won 50-19 vs NGHS • NPGHS Prem won 60-22 vs PNGHS
Football • NPGHS 1st XI drew 1-1 vs PNGHS • NPGHS 1st XI lost 2-3 vs NGHS	Netball • NPGHS Prem lost 14-27 vs NGHS • NPGHS Prem lost 20-32 vs PNGHS

Thank you to all students, coaches, managers, staff, and supporters who contributed to a successful day of competition.



Belonging Matters: What Our Recent Survey Told Us

At the end of last term we invited students, staff, and whānau to participate in a brief Belonging and Engagement Survey. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to share their perspectives. The survey provides a valuable snapshot of how people experience our school and helps guide our ongoing improvement work.

The results highlight many strengths within our school community. Most students reported that they feel they belong at school and feel safe being themselves. Students also reported positive relationships with teachers, with over three-quarters agreeing that their teachers value who they are and what they bring to class.

Particularly encouraging were the consistently positive responses from students, staff, and whānau regarding Te Ao Māori, Te Tiriti, and our partnership with families. The use of te reo Māori, inclusion of Māori perspectives, respect for tikanga Māori, and the positive relationships between home and school were recognised as areas of strength across all groups surveyed.

While many students feel connected and supported, the feedback identified opportunities to further strengthen students' experiences of fairness and respect, and also highlighted some differences between how students and staff perceive aspects of school life. Understanding these perspectives will help us continue to grow as a school community.

As a result, we will be undertaking further student voice activities, including focus groups and targeted consultation, to better understand student experiences and identify practical ways to strengthen belonging for all learners.

We are encouraged by the strong foundations highlighted in the survey and remain committed to creating a school where every young person feels valued, included, respected, and connected. Belonging is not just something that helps students succeed at school. It is central to wellbeing, engagement, and helping every student thrive.

Cultural Night at NPGHS

On Thursday 20 August our school hall will come alive with a special Cultural Night.

Organised by Year 13 student leaders, the evening will showcase the many cultures represented within our school community. Students have the opportunity to perform, share aspects of their cultural heritage, and participate in a cultural fashion show.

Events such as these provide a wonderful opportunity to celebrate diversity, learn from one another, and strengthen the sense of belonging that makes NPGHS such a special place. We encourage families and whānau to come along and enjoy an evening of entertainment, culture, and community.

Thank you to the students and staff who are working hard behind the scenes to bring this event together.

JOIN US FOR

CULTURAL NIGHT

Be part of something special —
NPGHS's very first Cultural Night!!

Come celebrate an unforgettable evening filled with vibrant performances, amazing food, music, dance, and the rich cultures that make our school community unique

VENUE New Plymouth Girls' High Hall	DATE August 20th, 2026	TIME 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
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Bring your friends and family and be part of the excitement! Everyone is welcome — don't miss out! 🎉

GOLD COIN DONATION Entry by gold coin donation at the door.	FOOD WILL BE THERE! Everyone brings a plate to share and enjoy together.
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Upcoming Events

Please check <https://npghs.bridge.school.nz/notices>, or the 'Coming Events' post on facebook, for even more information.

Sun 16 Aug to Sat 22 Aug	Tongan Language Week
Sun 16 Aug	'The Peacemakers' concert featuring NPGHS Jubilate Choir and HoD Music Juliet Woller as a soloist.
Mon 17 Aug- Tues 18 Aug	Taranaki Careers Expo - All Year 12 students will visit and this is also available to the public
Mon 17 Aug	Taranaki Model United Nations at NPGHS
Wed 19 Aug	TSSSA Hockey 7s and All Ability
	Taranaki Secondary Schools Literary Challenge
	University of Canterbury and Lincoln University visit for for degree planning
Thurs 20 Aug	ICAS Science Competition for those previously registered
	Lean in Girls – Y9 leadership programme continues
	Massey University visit for degree planning
	NPGHS Cultural Night
Fri 21 Aug	Staff only day – Curriculum Planning Day. No lessons for students.
Tues 25 Aug	ICAS Mathematics Competition for those previously registered.
Wed 26 Aug	Takitahi Day – Roderique Hope Trust (non-uniform day, gold coin donation)
Thurs 27 Aug	Lean in Girls – Y9 leadership programme continues
	Year 10 Drama Evening – class plays shared with parents, whānau and friends
Fri 28 August	Next newsletter available. You can click here to see the current and previous newsletters.

2026 DATES

TERM 1
30 January - 2 April

TERM 2
20 April – 3 July
Mon 27 April Anzac Day (observed)
Mon 1 June King's Birthday

TERM 3
20 July - 25 September
Fri 21 Aug Curriculum Staff Only Day

TERM 4
12 October - 11 December
Mon 26 Oct Labour Day
Fri 20 Nov Curriculum Staff Only Day

2027 DATES

<https://www.npghs.school.nz/term-dates>

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