



**NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**  
TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

**Assembly**  
**June 22, 2015**  
**Academic Success**

I had had boys across the stage for Sporting and Cultural Excellence and today I want to recognise a student of NPBHS for just 'Being the Example'.

This boy found a woman's wallet at the Hurricanes Chiefs game. Handed it in - it was clearly loaded with cash, hundreds of dollars. As it turned out, it was a Texans woman's wallet, who was on holiday in Taranaki. As you can imagine she was very delighted to get the wallet back. The boy who found the wallet has an important decision to make and I wish to acknowledge that the right decision was made. Mika Walsh-Munuirangi, Year 10 was that boy.

What a fantastic thing you did Mika. Very proud of you for your honesty and integrity.

We are over halfway through the academic year and so I thought it was appropriate that I talk to you about your academic progress. Your academic plan for the rest of the year.

I have three messages to you.

1) Question everything

Everyone knows the international sign for assistance in the water. In the classroom it is the same thing. You put your hand up. Your education is too important to flounder. You are too important to be lost to the system, to drown in the classroom. You are not a number, you are a boy with a name with potential with a future. Please put your hand up.

You must ask intelligent informed questions constantly in class. Questions like...

I don't understand this concept, I don't understand what we need to know, I don't understand your explanation, can you help me to improve my answer of this question. What should I study? Where should I focus my attention. Where are my weaknesses?

Boys you have the most committed staff I have seen at any school. All you have to do is ask them questions, the help will always be forthcoming.

Staff at NPBHS will do anything for boys who are genuinely interested and committed to their own learning. If you are asking and you are not getting the help you need, please come and see me. I very much doubt I will get anyone, but the offer is there.

2) Those who fail to plan, plan to fail. I don't necessarily like negative quotes, but this does emphasise the importance of planning.

You need a plan. You need a plan. By asking questions every period every day you have identified your gaps. It is now time to plan on what you are going to do.

## BE THE EXAMPLE



Your academic plan does not have to be complicated. But you need to write it down. Write your plan in a diary or on a piece of paper or a chart - when you will study, what you will study and how long you will study for. You will be amazed at how much you can do with careful planning and discipline.

You need a plan of what credits you need to get.

You need to plan for the maximum credits not the minimum. Time and time again students don't turn up to exams, or plan only to do the minimum to pass not the maximum. By doing the minimum you are gambling with your future.

Why would you want to gamble with the one thing that could be the difference between the career you want to embark on and one you don't. The course you want to get into or not. Every year we end up counselling students who have failed because they aimed low and fell short.

Employers are never impressed with the minimum they want the maximum. They want the maximum effort they want the maximum example. Mediocrity is not your goal, it is not cool.

Excellence is your goal. Get used to being the best you can be. It's a habit that will reap unlimited rewards for you. It is time to plan what you need to do for the remainder of the year.

Make sure your academic plan is in place before the upcoming holidays. Utilise the holidays to catch up and then get ahead! Not to socialise and relax. You don't have time to relax. Relax over the summer.

### 3) Sacrifice

Anything worth getting in this life is not easy. If it was everyone would have everything they want.

Credits and results take hard work, they take application and you need to sacrifice things to get them.

It is the time of the year to stop excessive socialising. Stop gaming all hours of the night, get off Facebook, and devoting time to your study.

Have discipline and encourage your friends to have an academic plan as well and stick to it, don't be distracted. You can still have fun and reward yourself but *after* you have completed your study and homework plan for the week not before.

If you are doing extra-curricular activity you have even less time for TV, socialising, gaming Facebook. You can't do everything. Something has to give. Your priorities need to be:

1. School (class, homework and study)
2. Extra curricular (music, sport, culture)

If, and only if, you are managing those things then some socialising can fit in. Not before.

Eat well, exercise, get to bed early. Drink plenty of water. I can tell you just by doing those simple things you will get more credits learn more. That's credits / learning for free. Just by being healthy and sleeping (yes sleeping - it is underestimated). That doesn't mean you have a pass or an excuse from the Headmaster to sleep in. It is a clear message to go to bed earlier. Week-nights and weekends. Being alert in class, enables you to concentrate in class and will give you improved results.

Use your school time well. You have taken the time to attend class, you might as well concentrate and learn as much as you can. If you have a study class, study. Every minute extra you concentrate in class or at school is 1 minute extra study you have fitted in.

## BE THE EXAMPLE



Education is integral to your future. Invest time in your future because that is where you are going to spend the rest of your life.

If you have trouble sacrificing for your future, then ask your parents or friends to help. Ask them to remove your distractions, police the internet and phone use. Ask them to get on your case about your study. Have a quiet and comfortable space to study.

Finally, don't say to your teachers, parents, I will try and ask questions, try and have a plan, try and make the right sacrifices for my education. It's OK to try your best with your sports and cultural activities, but with education you must not just attempt, you must do!

This concept is reinforced by the famous philosopher Yoda! The very wise, albeit ugly, Jedi Master. He said this -

“Try not. Do or do not, there is no try.”

P J Verić  
Headmaster

