



Dear Students, Staff and Parents

## Week 2 Examination Programme

Like you, we were surprised at the announcements on Wednesday this week regarding a return to school next Tuesday for our senior students (Year 11-13). Our response was to act in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Government and the Ministry of Education, which is what we have done following previous announcements.

However, sometimes the best plans can, on reflection, not be in the best interests of all. Since our announcement was made to the Saint Kentigern College community yesterday, the Senior Leadership Team has consulted further with staff and listened to a range of feedback from our community.

**As a result, after discussion with the Trust Board, we have made the difficult decision to revert to our plan and continue with our exams in an “online” format.**

We are acutely aware that this further change will add additional stress to some and relief to others. Over the last week the College staff and students have shown that we can successfully undertake these online assessments and with a very good attendance and completion rate. Next week’s examinations will continue to follow the published timetable and by now most students are familiar as to how to complete their assessments online.

A move on site next week, while beneficial in terms of examination condition practice and higher assurance of authenticity, would be challenging for a number of students and their families. This decision acknowledges the health concerns expressed by some families and staff, the intricacies of arranging safe Special Assessment Conditions (SAC), and also the needs of Boarding students who are currently outside of the Auckland region. Given the complexities of organising and supervising these examinations, we are not in a position to run both formats and therefore stopping the current ‘online’ programme would disadvantage them and indeed would not allow them to complete these examinations.

So, on balance, we believe that the decision to remain in a Distance Learning environment for the whole school until the end of Week 2 is the best decision we can make. This further week online will also enable us and families to prepare fully for the return on site of the whole Senior School. Please note that the Year 13 IB formal examinations will be held on site as planned from next week.

The College and Trust Board are committed to see the return of all Senior School students from the start of Week 3 (**Monday 1 November**). Students will be expected back in class as they commence the final two week run into their NCEA examinations. However, given the recent rises in Covid case numbers, we will continue to respond to the ever changing landscape of the wider Auckland community and further Government decisions.

I sincerely apologise for this change. However, in this time of unpredictability, I hope you understand we genuinely wish to put our students, families and staff at the centre of our decision making. As you can appreciate, it has not been an easy ‘U turn’ decision to make. However, in keeping with our core Saint Kentigern values, the health and safety and emotional and physical wellbeing of our students and staff remains our priority.

Yours sincerely, Fides Servanda Est

Duncan McQueen  
College Principal (Acting)

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