

We are very pleased that the beginning of 2009 at Mount Roskill Grammar School has been smooth and purposeful. We hope that new students have enjoyed their welcome to the school and the orientation programme led by our prefects and peer support leaders. We look forward to meeting families at the **Year 9 Parents Evening on Thursday 12 March**.

At this time of the year it's all about joining in and settling into good learning habits. Our athletic sports day and swimming days have been tremendous events. Congratulations to all students who participated with exuberance and determination. Together with Mardia Te Whiu, our new Sports Director Clinton Buckley is working to enhance our sports programme for all students, and our sport teams have made a great start to the year. Our Cultural groups are well underway with their performances for the upcoming festival.



Recently Metro magazine identified MRGS as one of the outstanding Auckland schools for gaining scholarships. That accolade was based on the 55 scholarships gained by MRGS students in 2007. We are delighted that **in 2008 MRGS students gained an exceptional 74 scholarships**. MRGS is also proud to have another Premier Scholar – one of only ten in New Zealand. Following on from Chuang Zheng Lee's Premier Scholar award last year, **Timothy Vogel gained six scholarship passes including four outstanding scholarships. He is also the top Chemistry student in New Zealand**. Timothy will receive his Premier Scholar award from the Governor General in Wellington in May. Two other students, Andy Liu and Caleb Saunders each gained five scholarships passes and this has placed them in the top 50 students in the nation as 'outstanding scholars'.

The NCEA results included in this newsletter show that academic success is pervasive in the school. Pass rates for NCEA, literacy, numeracy, and University Entrance are higher than ever. Students are striving for and achieving merit and excellence grades. I acknowledge the hard work of teachers, families and the students themselves in bringing about these successes. The Mount Roskill Community can be very proud of its young people.

To continue to enhance the quality of education offered we are further developing professional learning opportunities for our teachers. The aim is to ensure that our students become confident connected life-long learners who achieve outstanding academic success. Each teacher is working in a learning project that will enhance the achievement of our students. The teachers meet early on Wednesday mornings and the school day begins at 9.15am. This is part of the MERGE project which is outlined later in the newsletter. On **Monday 16 March there will be a teacher only day** for all of the teachers of the Roskill Campus. Students will not be required at school on that day.

We are looking forward to a great year, aspiring and achieving.

'Ki ngā Taumata' ('To the Heights')

G Watson
Principal

PREFECTS

The School Prefects appointed for 2009 are:

Head Prefects:	Alwin Lim and Shruthi Vijayakumar
Deputy Head Prefects:	Keegan Lopez, Ruokai Wang Serah Tuialii, Fiona Ting

The School Prefects are:

Ahmed Abdile	Ashleigh Annereau
Vincent Chow	Brooke Clarkson
Afano Fa'alogo	Briar Elliston
Seve Ha	Julie Chen
Kevin Huang	Nandita Fernandes
Abhilash Kamineni	Aleisha Keshaw
Namrata Modak	Dinusi Kumarawansa
Naseer Mohammed	Dinesha Kumarawansa
Harveer Singh	Antonia Lapwood
Ari Tse	Cornelia Mu
Andrew Tuala	Catie Mulrennan
Niko Uusitalo	Nalisa Sen
Brandon Wallace	Woon-Suan Sow
	Senitila Tutone
	Natasha Smith
	Uinise Tulimaiau

STAFF

We welcomed 13 new teachers for the start of 2009 year: Janette Ryan, Catherine O'Callaghan, Callum Gray, Clark Stewart, (English Department), Danielle Smith (Technology Department), Avinesh Prakash, Kirsty Buchanan, Rebecca-Amy Holliday, Chris McGirr, Babita Mukherjee (Science Department), Michelle Freeman (Maths Department), Arthi Fogelberg (MacLean Centre), Kate McGovern (PE Department).

PARENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS

We absolutely rely on parental contributions to help resource our quality education programmes. The expected contribution is \$150 for one student or \$250 for two or more until 31 March (\$160/ \$260 thereafter). Donations are tax deductible. We hope that you will support the school by paying your contribution by Friday 27 March.

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING HOURS

The shop will open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8.00 – 9.00 am and 3.00 - 4.30pm. The shop is located on Somerset Rd.

MRGS ACADEMIC RESULTS IMPRESSIVE IN 2008

2008 was yet another impressive year for NCEA and scholarship results at Mt Roskill Grammar School. With 74 scholarships, including 18 outstanding scholarships, Mt. Roskill students have, again performed in exams to the highest levels of quality. A detailed breakdown of the scholarship results will be in the next newsletter. Mt Roskill students have also performed extremely well in 2008 in the NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3 qualifications, with pass rates and excellence rates well ahead of national levels. Our congratulations go out to the students listed below, who gained large numbers of standards at Excellence levels in 2008. These students gained the largest number of standards at Excellence level in their year levels.

Level 1 NCEA

Top 20 students scoring Excellence
Grades in 2008:

Name	Gender	Number of Standards at E	Number of Credits at E
Gloria Ching	F	37	115
Aditya Sheth	M	36	125
William Quach	M	34	121
Yuming Ding	M	33	118
Timothy Widjaja	M	30	103
Elia Kim	M	27	89
Saaliha Nadat	F	26	97
Nandita Rao	F	26	88
Madhurima Sen	F	25	87
Ravina Pai	F	25	79
Andy Leung	M	24	86
Vijay Dyavadi	M	24	84
Jackie Chun	M	24	83
Yunsi Luoyu	F	24	79
Priya Mittal	F	24	78
Lini Thomas	F	23	81
Angela Zhang	F	23	77
Anaya Mokashi	F	22	79
Sabita Nayak	F	22	78

Level 2 NCEA

Top 20 students scoring Excellence
Grades in 2008:

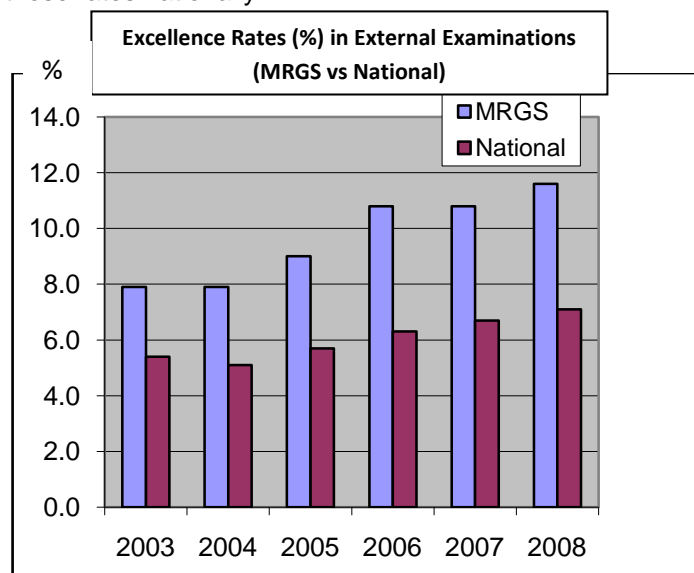
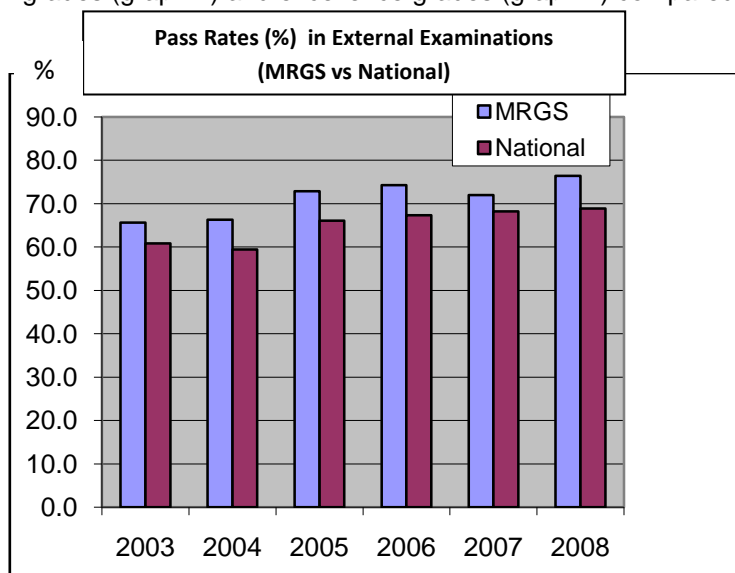
Name	Gender	Number of Standards at E	Number of Credits at E
Priya Ratan	F	22	75
Alwin Lim	M	21	75
Keegan Lopez	M	21	69
Cornelia Mu	F	20	69
Natasha Smith	F	20	67
Tae Kim	M	20	63
Shruthi Vijayakumar	F	19	57
Abhilash Kamineni	M	18	67
Michael Lin	M	18	60
Kelly Zhang	F	16	57
Nikhil Mahashabde	M	15	58
Amanda Shen	F	15	54
Pranav Bhutani	M	13	55
Ezra Arif Edwin	M	13	47
Catie Mulrennan	F	13	47
Nandita Fernandes	F	13	41
Michelle Tan	F	12	71
LJ Tai	M	12	46
Mark Shaio	M	12	45

Level 3 NCEA

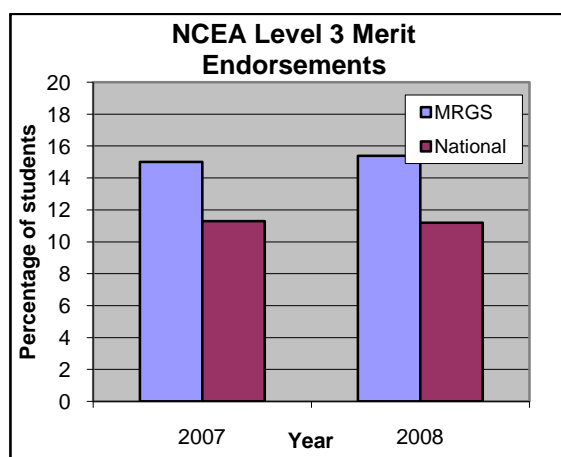
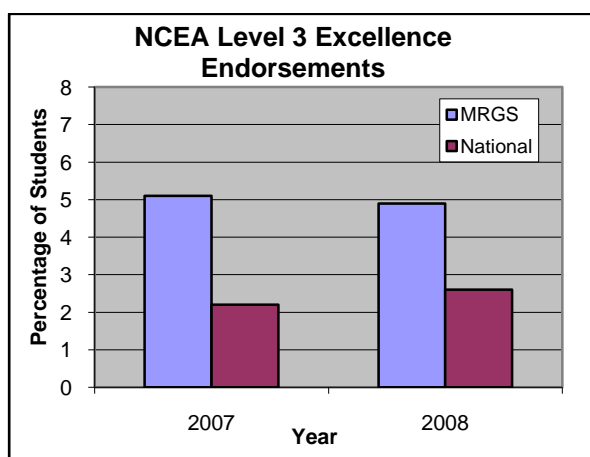
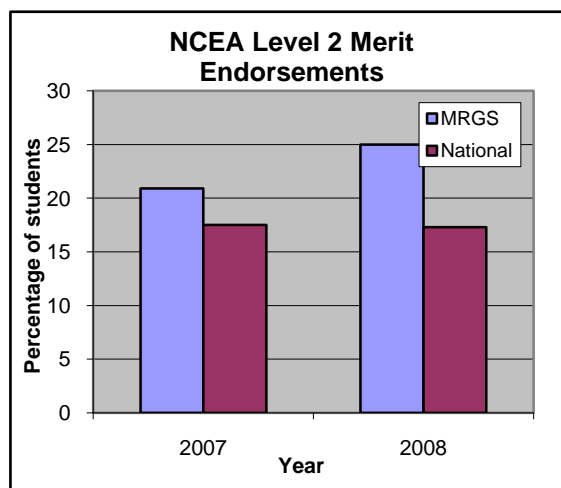
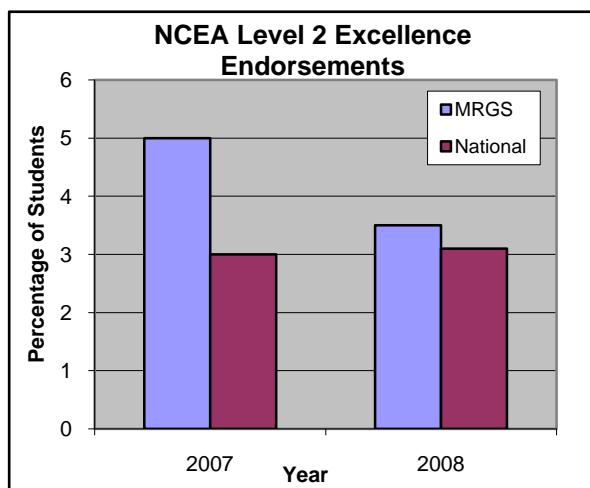
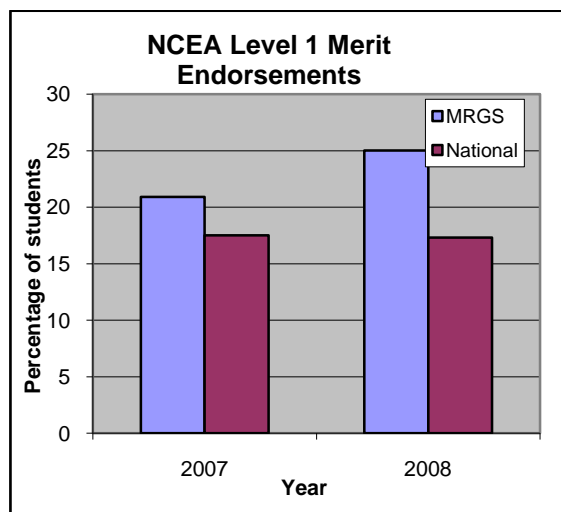
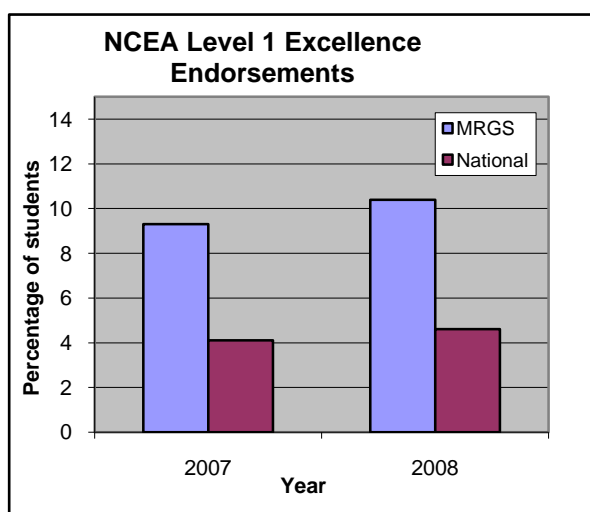
Top 20 students scoring Excellence
Grades in 2008:

Name	Gender	Number of Standards at E	Number of Credits at E
Andy Liu	M	24	97
Rushi Penumarth	M	22	92
Wenyi Yi	M	21	82
Jennifer Kirby	F	20	82
Zelin Ma	M	20	81
Ricky Tsai	M	20	79
Tony Huang	M	20	78
Bethany Windsor	F	20	74
Caleb Saunders	M	19	82
Timothy Vogel	M	18	77
John Henderson	M	18	75
Ashley Tao	F	18	74
Jun Li	M	18	72
David Kang	M	18	62
Tatyana Soares	F	17	70
Jenny Jiang	F	17	70
Annie Lu	F	17	69
Abhinav Jain	M	16	65
Jonathan Wang	M	16	63

The graph below show the proportion of Mt Roskill's students external examination grades (L1, 2 and 3) that gained passing grades (graph 1) and excellence grades (graph 2) compared to those rates nationally.

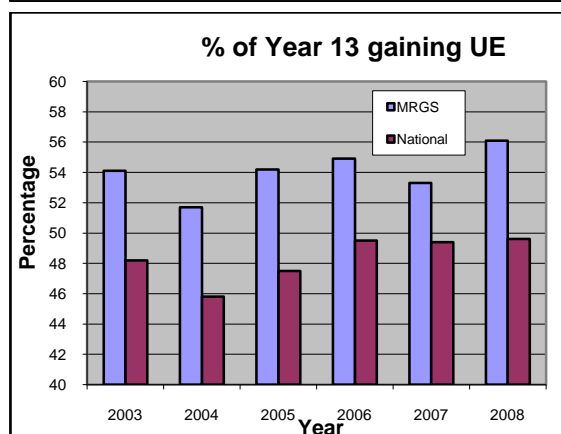


Excellence and Merit Endorsements were also well ahead of national levels at L1, 2 and 3 NCEA.



The levels of University Entrance gained by Mt. Roskill Students also compares favourably.

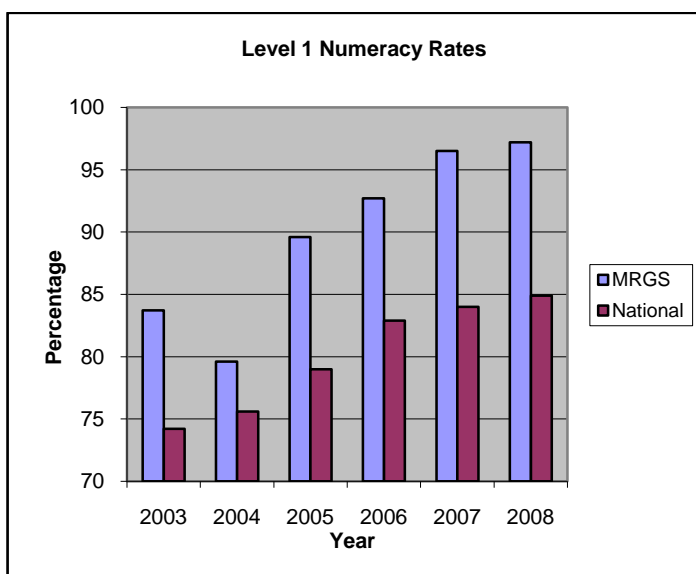
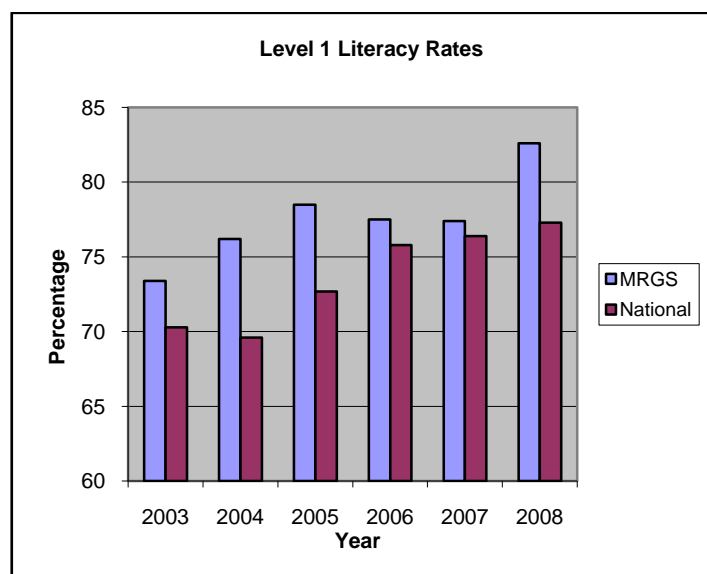
	% of Yr 13 gaining University Entrance	
	MRGS	National
2003	54.1	48.2
2004	51.7	45.8
2005	54.2	47.5
2006	54.9	49.5
2007	53.3	49.4
2008	56.1	49.6



Mt Roskill students have also improved markedly in literacy levels, something that has been a school focus now for two years. Also, even though last year's numeracy rate was over 96%, this soared in 2008 to a staggering 97.2%. Both literacy and numeracy are now well above national levels.

	Level 1 Literacy	
	MRGS	National
2003	73.4	70.3
2004	76.2	69.6
2005	78.5	72.7
2006	77.5	75.8
2007	77.4	76.4
2008	82.6	77.3

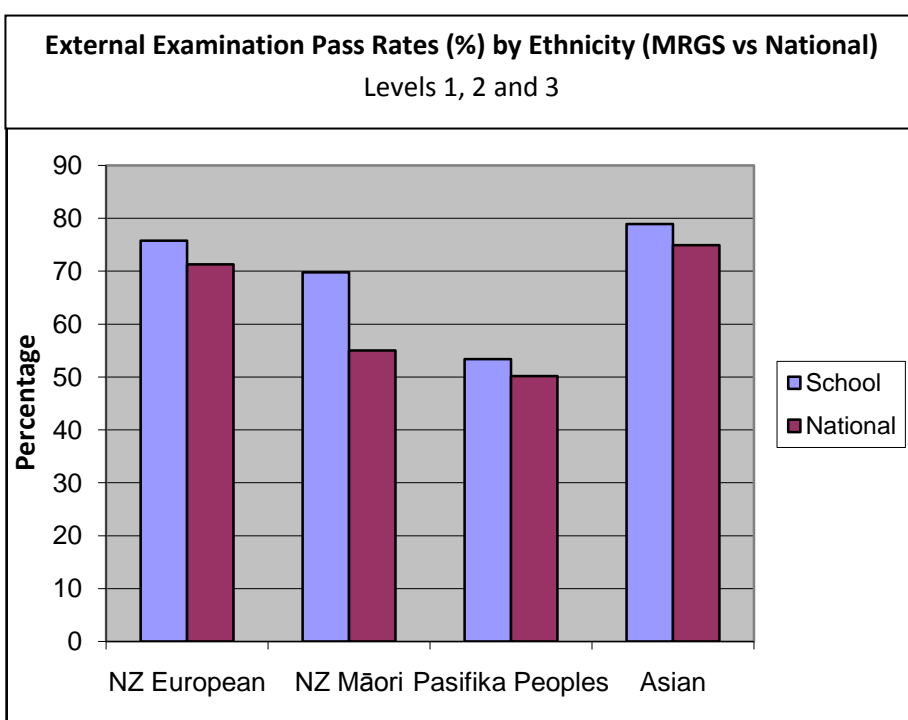
	Level 1 Numeracy	
	MRGS	National
2003	83.7	74.2
2004	79.6	75.6
2005	89.6	79
2006	92.7	82.9
2007	96.5	84
2008	97.2	84.9



Mt Roskill students have continued to exceed expectations in their academic performance in terms of both quantity and quality. One final set of statistics for this newsletter is a breakdown of the external exam pass rates by ethnicity. It is well known how ethnically diverse Mt. Roskill Grammar school is and it is pleasing to report that all of the main ethnicities at the school performed ahead of national levels in the 2008 external examinations. This includes a big improvement in Maori achievement at the school.

	MRGS	National
NZ European	75.8	71.3
NZ Māori	69.8	55.0
Pasifika Peoples	53.4	50.2
Asian	78.9	74.9

Congratulations to all of our students who performed well in the NCEA examinations. Special congratulations to our top scholars and scholarship winners. Their names and a breakdown of their prizes will feature in the next newsletter.

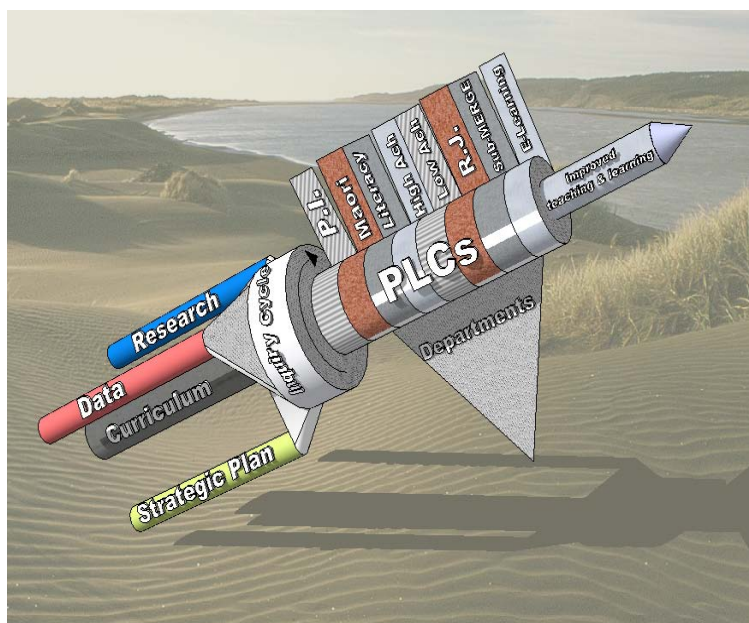
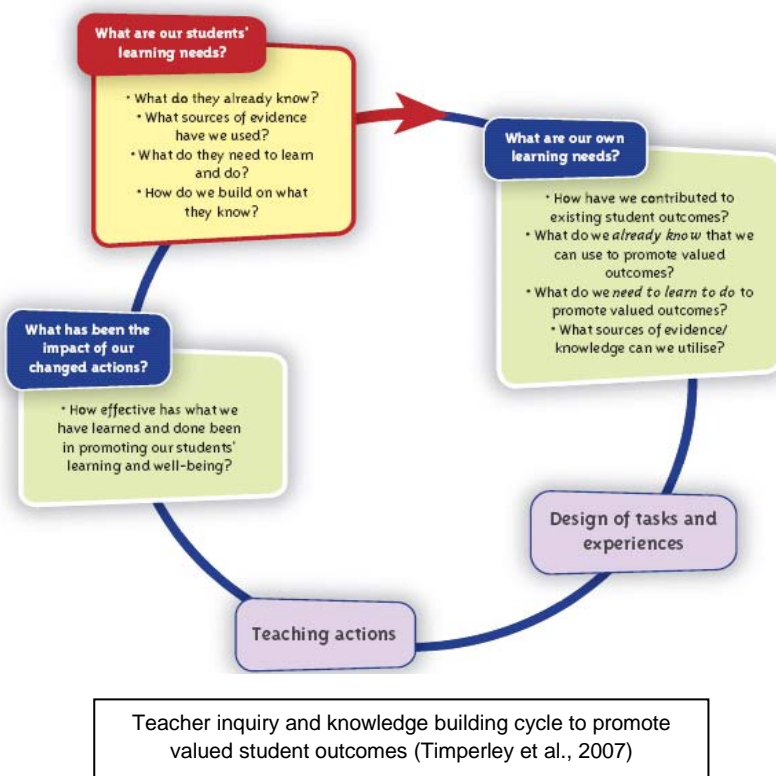


MERGE: MAXIMISING ENGAGEMENT OF THE ROSKILL GROUP'S EDUCATION

A new and exciting opportunity has arisen for the teachers from Mt Roskill Grammar, Intermediate and Primary to work together to improve teaching and learning across the campus. Teachers will be devising new, exciting and more effective ways to implement the new NZ Curriculum and lift the achievement of students from when they start school at five years old, through to their senior secondary qualification years. The new curriculum requires schools to equip students for the real challenges of the 21st century through initiatives to encourage them to become **confident, connected, actively involved life-long learners**.

In order to do this, teachers from all three schools will meet together to reflect on their teaching, data from tests and surveys and read up-to-date research. Doing this will assist teachers to **creatively design and trial new strategies in their classrooms that will enable students to become better learners**.

At Mt. Roskill Grammar School this year, teachers will meet each Wednesday before school begins, in "Professional Learning Circles" or PLCs. During this time, teachers will participate in a group that concentrates on a topic of interest and also a group within their own departments. These PLCs will operate using the "Teacher Inquiry Model" (shown to the right):



The "rocket" diagram (left) shows how the PLCs, with their various topics are intended to produce better teaching and learning within the school. It also shows how data and research assist the teachers to implement the curriculum and advance the goals of the school's strategic plan. The topics that teachers will be working on this year are listed below:

- Raising Pasifika Achievement
- Literacy
- Differentiated Learning for High Achievers
- Engaging Low Achieving Students
- E-learning
- Raising Maori Achievement
- Restorative Justice
- Sub-Merge (cross campus focus on literacy)
- TESSOL (for students who speak other languages)

Through this initiative, we hope to be able to make learning more relevant to all of our students and make the transition through their education, both within school and beyond, easier and more seamless. We believe that our school campus is a community of learners. By encouraging and fostering learning as inquiry, all of our learning community including teachers, students and families will be empowered to work together to the benefit of our whole society. This is because societies will always function best when its members are **confident, connected actively involved life-long learners**.

SPORTS

This year we continue to have lots of students involved and enjoying the opportunities offered.

Volleyball

Senior Boys organized by Mr Rewiti and coached by a parent Mr Malifa, who also helps coach Touch and winter Netball Juniors; Senior Girls are organized by Miss Hughes and Miss Harvie from the P.E department.

Softball

Senior Girls and Senior Boys played in the one day tournament at Rosedale Park last week. The boys finished 5th in their division and the girls finished 6th in the A grade. The girls fought hard to put bat to ball, having to face schools with dynamic pitcher/catcher combinations. Well played to both teams on the day. The season starts this week. The boys play on Mondays after school and the girls Wednesday; both teams play at Eden/Roskill Club in May Road.

Cricket

Mt Roskill is fielding 9 teams this year, a mighty jump from what we have had in the past, with 6 boys and 3 girls teams. We are entered in the Colts, 2A, 4A, 6A, 3B, 1st X1 Boys 1B, Premier Girls, Senior girls and Intermediate/Junior girls grades. Great thanks go to the Head of Code Mr Severinsen for the organization of the teams and all staff coaches and managers for giving up their time for our students.

Tennis

This season the teams are playing at Cox's Bay. The Senior Girls are coached by Mr Taunga from the P.E department, and in their first game they lost 3-6 to Marist. The Senior Boys, who are coached by Mr Koloamatangi, drew in their latest game with St Pauls 5-5, in a fast paced encounter where both schools showed great skills.

ZONE SWIMMING COMPETITION

On Tuesday 24th February the Mt Roskill Swim team competed at the Central/East Secondary Schools Zone Swimming at the Phillips Aquatic Centre.

Results from finals races were:

Ryan Grbich	7 th 50m	Junior Boys Butterfly
	4 th 50m	Junior Boys Freestyle
Harry Thomson	7 th 50m	Intermediate Boys Butterfly
	8 th 50m	Intermediate Boys Freestyle
Briar Elliston	2 nd 50m	Senior Girls Butterfly
Mattie Tuiali	7 th 50m	Intermediate Girls Backstroke
	3 rd 50m	Intermediate Girls Freestyle
Serah Tuiali	4 th 50m	Senior Girls Breaststroke

Senior Girls: Kathryn Frankcom Burgess, Serah Tuiali, Briar Elliston and Holly Elliston competed in both Medley and Freestyle relays and the team came 6th in both events.

SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Another regular event at the start of each year is the Swimming Championships held on Thursday 12 February. Over 40 expert competitive swimmers participated.

Championship winners were:

JUNIOR BOYS

- 1st Lucas Chen
- 2nd Richard Xu
- 3rd Ryan Grbich

JUNIOR GIRLS

- 1st Alana Miller
- 2nd Diana Ng
- 3rd Emily McIntosh

INTERMEDIATE BOYS GIRLS

- 1st Harry Thomson
- 2nd Sam Saunders
- 3rd Jerry Chen

INTERMEDIATE

- 1st Mattie Tuialii
- 2nd Mone Koga
- 3rd Eva Penny

SENIOR BOYS

- 1st Walter Zhang
- 2nd Nick Miller
- 3rd Nick McIntosh

SENIOR GIRLS

- 1st Briar Elliston
- 2nd Serah Tuialii
- 3rd Holly Elliston



ATHLETICS

Athletics Day was held on Tuesday 17 February. The events were a model of organisation with groups going with seniors students (peer support leaders) and teachers in House groups to various activities. Again participation is the main aim and each attempt at an activity brought at least 1 point for the participants' House. Students who showed particular skills at an event were invited to take part in the championship section of the event earning further points for their House. The photos give a small indication of the enjoyment and high level of involvement of all the students.



REALISE THE DREAM

In early December last year, three Mount Roskill Grammar students were part of a group of 29 other students from across New Zealand who attended the prestigious Genesis Energy 'Realise the Dream' event in Wellington.

The Genesis Energy 'Realise the Dream' event celebrated the work of students who have carried out excellent science or technological practice. The students were chosen through nomination from regional science and technology fairs across the country to present their projects to a panel of judges, as well as attending workshops and activities in the week-long event.

Alwin Lim (13RHRA) investigated the maximum air temperature for frost to form, after noting frost formation with the air temperature above freezing, thus his project titled 'There's frost on my car but it's not freezing cold'. Joseph Windsor (11MROB) wanted to know how exercise affected classroom concentration. He used a number of concentration tests on a group of friends as a control group to investigate his problem, calling it 'Boys on Bikes'. Abhilash Kamineni (13BFTZ) was a prize winner in the Bright Sparks Competition with his touch screen clock and tic-tac-toe robot. At the event, he was awarded an all-expenses paid for trip to Taiwan to attend the Taiwan International Science Fair, where he was awarded 2nd prize (1st prize went to another NZ student). Congratulations Abhilash.

"The event was very full-on, but it was an awesome experience in an invaluable environment. We all had the opportunity to share our work with others who have similar interests as well as enjoying and learning from the exciting activities planned for us through the week. And on top of all that, we all made a new bunch of friends."



Organised by the Royal Society of New Zealand, students visited science institutions around Wellington such as GNS Science, Island Bay Marine Centre, Massey University Wellington and the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary. The Genesis Energy 'Realise the Dream' is also sponsored by DairyNZ and the New Zealand Commission for UNESCO. The students return to Wellington on March 9 for the awards dinner, where cash prizes of up to \$7,000 and international travel to countries such as China and the United Kingdom will be presented.

Doing science and technology projects are a great form of hands-on learning where the skills and information picked up often cannot be taught by a teacher in a classroom. Students are encouraged to get involved and attend science fair meetings to find out more and for help to get started. For more info, visit <http://www.realisethedream.org.nz> or Alwin's 'Realise the Dream' website www.alwinatrealisethedream.synthasite.com

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is a compulsory subject at Mt Roskill Grammar from year 9 – 12 where all students have two periods per week. All students are expected to wear correct PE uniform for all lessons. Please ensure your son/daughter has their uniform clearly named in full.

We all know the benefits of exercise and eating properly, we have read it, most of us have acted on it, yet we still get many parents signing letters to get their child excused from PE. Please think about what you are doing before signing – there are many things in life we do not feel like doing but most often, once we have done them we are glad we did.

If your child is well enough to be at school then they can still take part in some of the PE lesson. The Physical Education curriculum area is often referred to as having the most valuable skills you can learn for life – by learning; teamwork, sportsmanship, peer friendships, cooperation, leadership, self esteem, self confidence, personal identity and self worth and even though students maybe fully involved in sport outside of school they can still benefit in these areas during PE.

Interpersonal skills: Respect for diversity and cultures, care and concern for others, social justice, communication skills, tolerance. These are some of qualities we want to install in our students as well as being physically active.

Most of these benefits are not measurable but clearly lead to a more production and healthy life style.

As parents we hope you can help us to help you build these skills in your child while they attend Mt Roskill Grammar so please next time your son/daughter asks for a note to be excused from Physical Education you may think twice Physical Education is no different to any other subject – you wouldn't think of asking your child to be excused from Maths or English, why PE? Are your childs' medical records with the school up to date, has their PE teacher been informed of any medical issues that might need to be recognised in a PE class? Please contact Mrs Bennett HOD Physical Education ext 824 if you have any areas in the Physical Education curriculum you would like to discuss.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

TERM 1		
March	Monday 2 - Friday 6	Year 13 Camp
	Thursday 12	Year 9 Evening
	Monday 16	Whole Staff PD – No Students at School
	Wednesday 18 – Saturday 21	Polyfest
	Thursday 19	Junior Report Evening
	Wednesday 25	NCEA Evening Meeting
April	Thursday 2	Senior Report Evening
	Thursday 9	END OF TERM 1 Closing time 3.10pm
	Monday 27	BEGINNING OF TERM 2
May	Monday 11 – Thursday 14	School Production
	Friday 22 – Friday 29	Senior Exams
June	Monday 1	Queen's Birthday
	Tuesday 2	School Holiday
	Tuesday 9	Pukekohe Exchange
July	Friday 3	END OF TERM 2 Closing time 3.10pm
TERM DATES 2008		
Term 1	Monday 2 February	Thursday 9 April
Term 2	Monday 27 April	Friday 3 July
Term 3	Tuesday 20 July	Friday 25 September
Term 4	Monday 12 October	Tuesday 8 December