Rotorua Lakes High School

NEWSLETTER ISSUE #2 - FRIDAY 7th March 2025

"Mauria te pono - Keep steadfastly to the truth"

Kia Ora Koutou

The year is off to a great start, with numerous events and programmes across our school.

We've had two fantastic sporting events - our athletics and swimming sports - which were great opportunities to build on our school values, fostering Whakapapa, Whānaungatanga, Manaakitanga, and Wairuatanga. The support and respect shown at these events truly strengthened our school community.

Our core focus is helping students succeed academically. Last year, our NCEA results were significantly above national and regional averages. Many students were recognised for their hard work at our Academic Investiture assembly, with several gaining Merit and Excellence endorsements. This success reflects the dedication of both students and staff.

I had the pleasure of attending our Year 13 Camp in Ohope, where the clear skies and focused activities helped students build leadership skills, strengthen relationships, and set goals for the year. A special thanks to Whaea Haana Howard for her efforts in making the camp a success.

Our Peer Support programme has also begun, with Year 9 and 13 students building positive relationships. Thanks to our Year 13 volunteers and Guidance Counsellors Whaea Kris Osborne and Whaea Ashley Gray for their ongoing support. Our Year 13 Geography students also returned today from their Tongariro trip, where they gathered valuable field data and embraced the challenges of outdoor learning. A big thank you to the staff who supported them on this journey.

We are also about to begin significant improvements to our school infrastructure. Contractors will soon address weather tightness issues in the Gym and Admin block. While the Gym will be out of action for a term, we'll use covered areas for Physical Education during bad weather.

This week, we had our first Student Led assembly of the year, where students presented confidently on our value of Whakapapa. It's inspiring to see our students take on leadership roles.

This Friday, we will be sending out Tracking Reports for our students. These reports provide an update on academic progress, effort, and engagement in each subject. If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing your child's report, please feel free to contact their Dean or subject teacher for further discussion.

Finally, I wish the best of luck to our students competing in upcoming sporting events, including the North Island Secondary Schools Rowing Championships, Bay of Plenty Swimming Championships, and Bay of Plenty Athletics.
Wishing everyone an enjoyable weekend.

Ngā mihi

Jon Ward

Jon Ward, Principal / Tumuaki

🎉 CELEBRATORY INVESTITURE ASSEMBLY 🎉
🎉

On Wednesday 19th February, we came together to celebrate leadership, success, and the spirit of Rotorua Lakes High School at our annual Investiture and Celebratory Assembly!

We honoured the incredible academic achievements of students who earned NCEA Level 1 and 2 course endorsements with Merit and Excellence in 2024 - your hard work and determination truly embody our school values. Gaining these endorsements are not easy and require consistent effort and focus throughout the year. Our 2024 school leaders, BOT student rep and peer support leaders were also presented with their badges.

In a truly powerful moment, a rousing haka led by Puketawhero and supported by the entire school reverberated through the gym, showing unity, respect, and pride in our newly appointed Head and Deputy Boys, Girls and Prefects. These inspiring leaders are ready to make a difference in our kura - individual profiles later in this newsletter!

A big thank you to all staff who helped to organise and of course, to all parents and caregivers who attended.

2025 STUDENT LEADERSHIP

HEAD PREFECTS
Head Girl - Hannah Kiernan
Head Boy - Liam Heighway
Deputy Head Girl - Poppy Croucher
Deputy Head Boy - Lachlan Hoggard

HOUSE PREFECTS
Ōkāreka - Robin Kim & Tairen Taunga
Rotokakahi - Shai Dyson & Liddy Zuidmeer
Tikitapu - Amy Morgan & Jimmy Tapsell
Tarawera - Harriette Davies & Declan Lesceid

2025 BOT STUDENT REP
Divjot Bairagi

PREFECT CAPTAINS
Cultural - Manaia Raethel
Sports - Teuila Schuster
Academic - Siwan Lloyd-Jones
Environmental - Alana Bennett
Arts - Eirwen Robinson

PREFECTS
Sports - Ashleigh Randell & Te Hingawaka Shipgood
Environmental - Oliver Jones & Zara Gray
Academic - Freya Kedian & Patrick Allen
Cultural - Sadie Stewart & Amaro Gonzalez Diaz
Arts - Lewis Edwards & Ferne Hannah

LEVEL 1 ENDORSED EXCELLENCE

Divjot Bairagi
Oscar Burns
Alissa Gaugler
Tamzin Joy
Hunter Lewis
Luca Managh
Ava McGrath
Purnima Pahwa
Hanna Smith
Tiffany Ten Haaf
Lilli Warren

LEVEL 1 ENDORSED MERIT

Lyla Alton
Mario Alves
James Barrett
Laris Chan
Julien Collet
Kristin Conradie
Amy Crawshaw
Ella Douglas
Jordyn Fagan
Sophie Flight
Kathleen Galvin-Taingahue
Alyssa Gillions
Asher Goddard
Hazel Herries
Ruby Hogg
Samantha Hutton
Devin Lambert
Briana Lang
Iveejane Macfarlane
Samuel MacFarlane
Jessica Martin
Isabella Morey
Renee Price
Anna Shapley
Alex Snook
Kate Staunton
Lily Tamati
Wharekura Teepa
Ella Thompson
Kristina Troshina
Madeline Van Basten Batenburg
Benjamin Verdonk
Caylee Von-Loggenburg
Sophia Watt

LEVEL 2 ENDORSED EXCELLENCE

Patrick Allen
Alana Bennett
Yulia Corson
Poppy Croucher
Zara Gray
Liam Heighway
Freya Kedian
Declan Lescheid Siwan Lloyd-Jones
Brooke Mills
Amy Morgan
Dane Napier
Eirwen Robinson
Gabrielle Short
Zandre Smit
Tyla Talbot

LEVEL 2 ENDORSED MERIT

Caroly Betterton
Apollo Cameron-Boot
Zayliah Campbell-Dillon Preston Cleaver
Taleigha Cooke
Harriette Davies
Shai Dyson
Grace Edhouse
Lewis Edwards
Amaro Diaz Gonzalez
Lachlan Hoggard
Oliver Jones
Hannah Kiernan
Kahurangi King
Casper Klook
Lewis Lei
Caitlyn Magee
Madelin Maunder
Ella McIlroy
Avishneel Nair
Michael O'Malley
Tokoaitua Owen
Emma Pol
Manaia Raethel
Ashleigh Randell
Sol Rogers
Krynu Sassenburg
Teuila Schuster
Meg Sherborne
Te Hingawaka Shipgood
JimmyTapsell
Tara Thaine
James Walker
Lidewij Zuidmeer

LEVEL 3 ENDORSED EXCELLENCE

Cameron Perry
Matthew Parker
Grace McQuoid
Caroline Lemmens
Jiaxing Geng
Harry Cheesman
Stella Angus

LEVEL 3 ENDORSED MERIT

Mehek Abdul Rahman
Mia Vandy
Lauren Thompson
Kobe Smith
Lakshveer Singh
Mary Schuster
Ryan Sanders
Jack Rison
Sara O'Driscoll
Eden Lynd
Sulis Lambdin
Adifaah Jalil
Maddison Guptill
Rebecca Garmonsway
Tai Cronin
Joshua Belt
Brock Aitchison

SWIMMING SPORTS

We attended School Swimming Sports on Tuesday 4th March at the Rotorua Aquatics Centre. It was an amazing day to live out our school values! The energy, effort, and house spirit were next level - great attendance, awesome behaviour, and so much pride in house colours! Competitive results will be on Facebook early next week.

1st - Ōkāreka (304 points)
2nd - Tarawera (182 points)
3rd - Rotokakahi (150 points)
4th - Tikitapu (107 points)

LEONARD RANKIN

A massive congratulations to Year 12 student Leonard Rankin, who has officially smashed the RLHS breaststroke record with an incredible time of 1:24.78! The previous record of 1:27.78, set by fellow Ōkāreka house member Samuel Trass, had stood strong - until now!

Leonard's achievement is a testament to his hard work, dedication, and competitive spirit. We're so proud of you! Ka mau te wehi!

A huge thank you to our teachers for their encouragement and organisation, and to every student who got involved - whether in the pool, cheering from the sidelines, or rocking the House Hat Competition!

YEAR 13 CAMP

What an incredible few days at Year 13 Camp - challenging adventures, personal growth, and plenty of laughs along the way! From epic hikes up the Ōhope Kiwi Hill Track, haka sessions led by Matua Justin, mindfulness sessions led by our Hauora Team, and competitive house challenges, to waterslide relay madness (with bonus dishwashing liquid for extra speed!), our students made the most of every moment.

The kai was top-tier, featuring nachos, ambrosia, fresh veggie sticks, and the legendary sausage sizzle (big shoutout to Matua Craig and Mrs Jo Chemis for their chef skills). We also shared grace in multiple languages, with Waihuia blessing dinner in Latin and Freya Kedian leading lunch grace in Portuguese Brazilian - a true reflection of our diverse and inclusive whānau.

A huge thank you to our incredible Year 13 Dean, Whaea Haana Howard, for her leadership and dedication, as well as to all of the teachers, volunteers, and staff who gave their time and energy to make this camp such an unforgettable experience.

🏃‍♂️🏃‍♀️ATHLETICS DAY 2025 - CHAMPIONS CROWNED & HOUSES UNITED!🎉

What an epic day of competition, spirit, and determination! Our students showed incredible energy and lived up to our school values of Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Wairuatanga, and Whakapapatanga.

Final House Placings:

1️⃣❤️Tarawera - Overall House Winner!
2️⃣💙Tikitapu
3️⃣💛Okareka
4️⃣💚Rotokakahi

Senior Girls Champ:
1st Lia Sinisa | 2nd Shari Hayward

Senior Boys Champ:
1st Taj Sydney| 2nd Troy Backler

Intermediate Girls Champ:
1st Georgia Davies | 2nd Tamzin Joy

Intermediate Boys Champ:
1st Julien Collett | 2nd Owen McGrath

Junior Girls Champ:
1st Maddy Newcombe

Junior Boys Champ:
1st Liam Henwood-Rogers| 2nd Luke Robson

Equal Junior Girls' Runner-up: Samantha Carter| Brooke Barry| Charlotte Woerd

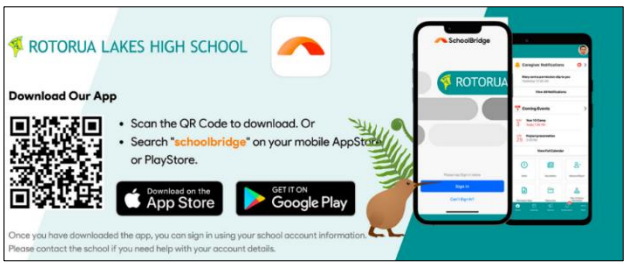
Huge thanks to our incredible staff and volunteers for making the day a success, and to our amazing students for bringing the vibes and competing with heart.

SCHOOLBRIDGE - MAKING SCHOOL LIFE EASIER FOR WHANAU

We're excited to introduce SchoolBridge, a digital platform designed to make communication and school administration smoother for our students, caregivers, and staff.

With SchoolBridge, you can submit absences easily, access reports & timetables, receive important notices, complete forms online, and make payments online.

SchoolBridge is accessible via the school website and can be used on both desktop and mobile devices. If you haven't yet set up your access or need assistance, please contact our school office.



📣 ATTENDANCE FOCUS - 📣 OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE 📣

Regular attendance at school is important to your child's success and there is a clear connection between going to school regularly and doing well in the classroom. Making sure students attend and engage in learning is a shared responsibility. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure your child attends school every day.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason it is essential that you let us know as soon as possible. It is important that you contact us with a reason via:

📌 **SchoolBridge**
📌 **Phone:** 07 345 6124
📌 **Email**

We acknowledge that there are genuine reasons students may occasionally be absent. However, without regular attendance your child will struggle to make progress. If your child is absent regularly, or for extended periods, we will reach out to you to discuss the situation.

We are committed to supporting your child to attend school. If you are facing challenges with getting your child to school, we are here to help. You can:
✓ Speak with your child's **dean**
✓ Send us a message via **SchoolBridge**
✓ Call us on **07 345 6124** and ask to speak with the dean

We can work with you to develop a support plan that addresses any barriers to regular attendance. More information on attendance, including your rights and responsibilities as parents or caregivers, is available on the Ministry of Education's webpage: Look under 'Attendance'.

LOOKING AHEAD…TERM 1

7 March	Tracking Reports Issued
7 - 9 March	NISS Rowing Regatta
12 March	BOP Athletics
12 March	School Photos
14 March	BOP Swimming
16 March	BOP Schools Debating Tournamemt
18 March	Year 12 Tourism Trip
20 - 29 March	Medai High School Visit
21 March	GRIP Student Leader Conference (All Prefects)
24 - 27 March	RLHS Summer Tournament
24 - 28 March	Secondary Schools Waka Ama
24 - 29 March	Maddi Cup
26 - 28 March	FUTSAL EBOP Champs
26 March	NCEA me te Whānau Workshop
31 March - 4 April	Absolute Dental onsite
1 - 2 April	Parent Teacher Interviews
9 April	Principal's Assembly
10 – 11 April	Overnight tramp for 10AOE & 13AOE
11 April	Tracking Reports Issued
11 April	**END OF TERM 1**
14 – 27 April	**EASTER HOLIDAYS**

🌟 CELEBRATING OUR NEW KAIAKO AND AN INCREDIBLE ULTRA MARATHON! 🌟

🌟

One of our new teachers, Paul Lenihan, has truly embraced the Lakes High spirit - both in the classroom and on the trails! Over the weekend, Paul took on the UTMB Tarawera Ultra, an event that brought over 3,500 competitors and 10,000 whānau to Rotorua. 🏃

With four epic trail races - 21km, 50km, 100km, and the grueling 100-mile challenge - this event was a huge success, thanks to the incredible organisers and volunteers (including some of our very own students and whānau!). Their support, energy, and smiles kept runners going all day.

Paul ran his first-ever 100-mile race and finished in an amazing 13th place - crossing the finish line with a well-earned smile! What an incredible achievement!

Nau mai, haere mai to the Lakes High whānau, Paul! We're so proud to have you on our team, both in the classroom and out in the community.

🌿✨GARDENING CLUB VIBES! 🌞🌱

Here's a great bunch of kids! Our Gardening Club is always buzzing with activity - usually Friday lunchtimes in S6, but sometimes our awesome students just can't wait to get stuck in!

Recently we cleared soil from the concrete path, watered our seedlings, fed the fish, sowed swan plant seeds, re-potted plants, and sorted recycled pots.

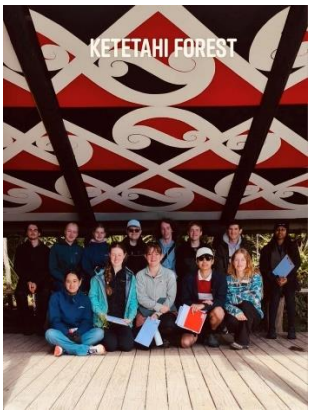
Newbies are always welcome - just pop into S6 at the start of Friday lunchtime! A huge mihi to Mrs Napier for her passion and dedication in running this awesome club. It's the perfect chill spot to unwind on a busy Friday!

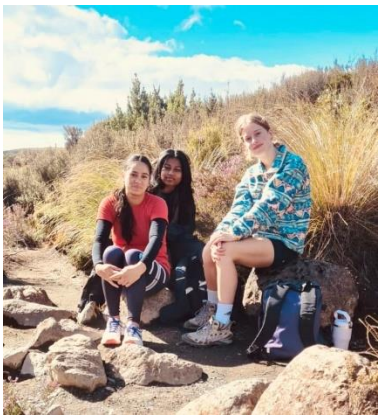
📌 YEAR 13 GEOGRAPHY TONGARIRO HAERENGA 📌

Our Year 13 Geography students have returned from an incredible trip to Tongariro, where they gathered data for their assessments and experienced the unique volcanic landscape firsthand.

Students completed the Taranaki Falls Walk, participated in safety briefings - including learning how to use Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) and took on the challenge of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. This is a demanding trek, but our students showed resilience, teamwork, and determination every step of the way.

They also demonstrated fantastic self-management skills, looking after each other, cooking meals, and embracing the outdoor experience. A huge thank you to the staff and volunteers who made this trip possible.





ALUMNI NEWS

🌿RLHS ALUMNI REPRESENT AT TE MATATINI 2025 🌿

We are so proud of our alumni who performed on the biggest kapa haka stage at Te Matatini ki te Kāhui Maunga!

Kingi Aupouri (Head Boy 2022) - performed for Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao

Kahurangi Dewes-Green (Head Girl 2022) - performed for Ngāti Rangiwewehi, who placed 2nd overall!

Allison Rapana-Brailey (Deputy Head Girl & Young Achiever, 2016) - performed in the finals with Te Pikikōtuku o Ngāti Rongomai. She is also a Kairāranga (master weaver) at Te Puia - NZ Maori Arts & Crafts Institute, showcasing her dedication to Māori arts.

We also congratulate Ngāti Whakaue, who were crowned overall winners, along with all the Te Arawa rōpū who represented our rohe with pride and passion.

We're sure there are more RLHS alumni who were part of Te Matatini. Please let us know if you hear of any present or future alumni news. We are always keen to inspire our students and celebrate alumni.

STUDENT SUCCESSES

✨INTRODUCING YOUR HEAD AND DEPUTY HEAD GIRLS ✨

Kia ora, my name is Hannah Kiernan, and I am honoured to be RLHS Head Girl for 2025.

I love getting involved in all aspects of school life, especially sports, photography, history, and the sciences. Swimming has been my main sport since childhood, and I've proudly represented RLHS at the BOP champs every year. I also compete in open water swimming, water polo, running, netball, and waka ama. Beyond sports, I've supported community events like motocross, triathlons, and the Rotorua Marathon.

This year, I aim to help my peers grow in confidence, make school a more welcoming place, and raise recognition for our top athletes. I also hope to create more opportunities for students through partnerships with the council, Rotary, and Next Gen. I'm excited to lead with positivity and see our kura thrive!

Hannah Kiernan

Poppy Croucher

Kia ora, I'm Poppy Croucher, and I'm proud to be your RLHS Deputy Head Girl for 2025.

I have a passion for sports and the outdoors, competing nationally in mountain biking - a sport that has taken me to incredible places. I also love tramping with friends, exploring new challenges, and pushing my limits. Hockey has been another big part of my life, teaching me teamwork and collaboration - skills I value both on and off the field.

Lakes High has given me so many opportunities, and my goal is to ensure everyone feels the same sense of support and belonging. I want to help make our school a positive, welcoming space where everyone feels valued. If you see me around, feel free to say hi - I'm always happy to help!

🎾BAY OF PLENTY SECONDARY SCHOOL TENNIS CHAMPS 🎾

A huge congratulations to our talented RLHS tennis players, Jessica Martin and Joshua Kim, who competed at the Bay of Plenty Senior Secondary Schools Tennis Championships!

Jessica dominated Division 2 Girls' Singles, winning all her matches to take the title!

Joshua put up a strong fight in Division 2 Boys' Singles, securing a win in one of his three matches.

An awesome effort from both players - well done!

PERFORMING ARTS

🎶OPERA IN THE PA - RLHS REPRESENT! 🎶

We are incredibly proud of our students who performed in the Opera in the Pā Youth Choir at the Sir Howard Morrison Centre this past weekend! 🌟👏

Ferne Hannah, Abigail Ten Haaf, and Novayah Tawhara took to the stage as part of the choir, showcasing their talent alongside some of Aotearoa's finest opera singers. Troy Backler set the atmosphere with beautiful welcome music in the foyer before the concert.

Matua Tim Smith, our dedicated Music teacher, was one of the volunteer tutors, supporting the students through two weekends of rehearsals leading up to this stunning event.

Opera in the Pā is a world-class celebration of Māori and classical music, and it was an amazing experience for our students to be part of such a prestigious event! Ka mau te wehi!

🎧🔥HIP HOP VIBES AT LAKES HIGH WITH SAM PATANGAN! 🎧🔥

Rotorua Lakes High was buzzing last week with an epic Hip Hop Dance Workshop led by none other than Sam Patangan! 🕺✨Sam brought the energy, teaching students a foundational locking set and sharing his passion for dance.

The coolest part? Sam was taught by our very own Whaea Te Ao Tahana-Prangnell back in the day at Western Heights High School - talk about coming full circle!

But this is just the beginning - Sam will be back throughout the year to mentor and choreograph with a Mega Crew of dancers from Years 9-13, heading for the Dance NZ Made Interschool Competition in September.

🎭✨SHOWQUEST 2025 – WE'RE BRINGING THE STAGE TO LIFE! 🎶💃

The countdown is on for Showquest 2025, happening 29th May at the Sir Howard Morrison Performing Arts Centre! Our students are creating an epic performance, blending dance, drama, music, and digital storytelling!
Shoutout to Kristin Comradie and Cora Aitchison for leading the creative process, with support from our amazing student choreographers!

Last week's contemporary dance workshop was a hit, and more are coming soon! No experience needed - just bring your energy! Students, stay updated! Join the Google Classroom for Showquest - grab the code from Mrs. Stunell in the music room! Let's light up the stage, Lakes High!

SPORTS

🔥⚪RLHS SENIOR VOLLEYBALL UPDATE! ⚪🔥

We are incredibly proud of our Senior A Volleyball Teams, who represented RLHS with determination, skill, and spirit two weekends ago as they kicked off their BOP Championship campaign in Tauranga!

✨Senior A Girls ✨
After a close match against ACG, they bounced back with a dominant win over Taupo-nui-a-Tia. On the Sunday, they showed resilience and determination, wrapping up the weekend with another impressive victory over Taupo!

🔥Senior A Boys 🔥
The boys came out strong, securing wins over RBHS and Tauranga Boys High. Sunday brought two thrilling five-set matches against ACG and Western Heights- narrow losses, but we are so proud of their grit, teamwork, and positive attitude.

Huge thanks to our supportive parents and our amazing Coach Jacqueline for backing our teams all the way!

⚡FUTSAL JUNIOR BOP CHAMPS⚡

This week, our junior boys' and girls' teams hit the court at the BOP Champs! Both teams came away with a win each in pool play, gaining heaps of experience and valuable lessons to take into the EBOP Champs coming up in March. Watch this space!

Massive mihi to Jamie Grunwell, Shaun & Jonnelle Gribble for coaching and supporting our players. Thanks as always to Whaea Christina for looking after RLHS Futsal with passion.
Shout out to our incredible tuākana Renee, Izzy, Julien, Alex, and Mario for giving up their time each week to help guide the next generation. You all embody our school values - whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, and whakapapatanga - and are an absolute pleasure to work with.

“Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini.” (My strength is not that of an individual but that of the collective.)

🚣✨MAKING WAVES AT LAKE KARAPIRO!✨🚣

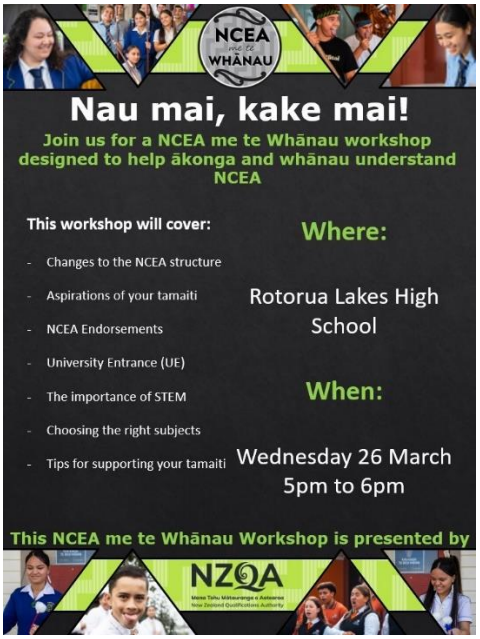
Over the weekend, our incredible Rotorua Lakes High rowing crews competed at Lake Karapiro, with some students taking on events for the very first time - achieving awesome results!

A huge congratulations to:
🏅Ayden Atkinson, 🏅Marco Andric 🏅Tyler Graham, 🏅Nathan Graham, 🏅Jasmine Sieber,
🏅Grace Gainsford 🏅Ruby Parton, 🏅Grace Annabell, 🏅Holly Thompson, 🏅Aurora Roger-Scott

We mihi to Mrs. Gainsford, our dedicated Teacher in Charge of Rowing, who gives countless hours to support our tauira through training and regattas.

We also acknowledge the amazing whānau backing these rowers every step of the way - getting them to early trainings and cheering them on with unwavering support.

NOTICE BOARD



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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