Rotorua Lakes High School

"Mauria te pono - Keep steadfastly to the truth"

NEWSLETTER ISSUE # 12 – FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2025

"Mauria te pono - Keep steadfastly to the truth"

Tēnā koutou e te whānau,

Having taken the last term away from school on a sabbatical looking at schools in New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom, I am now sat back in the Principal's seat, albeit for only the remainder of this term.

I'd like to start by thanking Jo Sturme, in her role as Acting Principal in my absence, for leading the school and supporting our school community. The rest of the senior leadership team and staff wrapped around to ensure there was seamless continuity, providing the great education for which Lakes is known.

As most, if not all of you, will be aware, I have made the decision to step away from the role of Principal of Rotorua Lakes High School at the end of this year. It has been a difficult decision, mainly because I really love this school and our community. But for various reasons it is now time for me and my whānau to move on. I will certainly miss the ebbs and flows of school life at RLHS.

I don't want this newsletter to become a valedictory, so I will focus the remainder of the content on what's most important – the positives happening around our school and for our students.

Last weekend our boys did extremely well in the U15 Downhill Mountain Biking series at Skyline, with Matthew Wallace and Noah Croucher coming 1st, 2nd and Jaasper Leuchs 3rd respectively. An outstanding result and one that underlines the strength of our students in the MTB arena. Well done to everyone involved in what was a very difficult and technical course. This comes on the back of the National School MTB Championships in Nelson where we placed Third overall – a fantastic achievement.

I have also had the pleasure of celebrating our 2025 Young Achievers this week at The Sir Howard Morrison Events Centre. There is further information about the recipients in this newsletter. I want to congratulate them all for their efforts which are receiving justified accolades.

Last week I witnessed what is always a highlight in our school calendar. The school House Haka Competition was a powerful and emotional display of our school values. It was fantastic to see so many of our students participating, from whatever ethnicity. The event for me displayed the sense of cohesion that we strive for in our school community in times when our world is becoming increasingly factional. Thank you to our Heads of House: Christina de Lore (Okareka); Justin Timoti (Tarawera); Krista Marley (Tikitapu) and Tim Housell (Rotokākahi) for driving this event with their student House Prefects and making it such a huge success.

Our new School Board is now installed, with a small delay in the appointment of our staff and student representatives, who should be in place later this month. I would personally like to thank everyone who put their nominations forward for the board. It is one of the successes of the New Zealand Education system, that local communities have such a strong input into the running of our schools.
I believe that the Board that has been elected provides a really strong reflection of the diverse elements of our community and bring with them a great skillset to continue to provide exceptional governance for the school.

This week, due to the strike action, we have adjusted the time table to make House Group start at 8:45am. We will review this in the near future as to whether we remain with House Group at this time or not for the rest of the year. We will advise any changes.

I will sign off by wishing everyone a pleasant weekend ahead (hopefully with some sunshine).

Ngā mihi nui,

Jon Ward
Principal - Tumuaki

School leadership, boards, parents and the Ministry of Education all play key roles in supporting students to attend school – and addressing absence when it occurs. Lifting school attendance is our shared responsibility. The STAR (Stepped Attendance Response) has been developed in line with the good practice identified in Education Review

If you have any pātai around attendance, please contact Glenda Curtis, Assistant Principal curtisg@rotorualakes.school.nz

FROM THE OFFICE TEAM - LOST PROPERTY

Parents and Caregivers - please come and check lost property regularly for any uniform or non-uniform items your child may have lost during the term. At the end of each term, we recycle all lost property items not claimed.

FROM OUR HAUORA/WELLNESS TEAM

Measles cases in Aotearoa

Recent measles cases linked to overseas travel have been reported in Te Tai Tokerau and Queenstown. Cases were active in the community while infectious and there is a risk of measles circulating there, and more widely in Aotearoa.

Points to share with parents, caregivers and the school community:

- Measles is very contagious and can make people of any age very sick.
- Watch for measles symptoms – fever, cough, runny nose, sore eyes and a blotchy rash.

Measles: Locations of interest in Aotearoa New Zealand – Health New Zealand

- If anyone in your whānau has measles symptoms keep them home and contact a doctor or Healthline urgently on 0800 611 116.
- Vaccination is the best protection from measles. Check all whānau are immunised.

Measles immunity – Health New Zealand
Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine – Health New Zealand

- Anyone closely exposed to measles who has not received two MMR vaccinations cannot attend their school | kura for at least eight days.

CHARTER BUS

- A term pass for the charter bus for Y11-13 will be $150.00
- Y9 & Y10 will be $300.00
  Please pay by the first week of Term 4. Payments can be made at the school office or online. Thank you

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NCEA

All students sitting NCEA external exams in November will be issued with their exam entry slip and briefed on information required on Thursday 31 October. Students must attend to receive this information.

KEY DATES AND ACTIVITIES COMING UP

START OF TERM 4	
WEEK 3	
20 October	Sports Prizegiving
24 October	Te Hiwi o Toroa Event
24-29 October	Spirit of Adventure
WEEK 4	
27 October	Labour Day - school closed
29 October	EOTC Project Day - Wees to Trees
30 October	Senior Prizegiving
WEEK 5	
4 - 7 November	NZQA Exams
WEEK 6	
10 - 13 November	NZQA Exams
11 November	Board Meeting
WEEK 7	
17-21 November	NZQA Exams
WEEK 8	
24-28 November	NZQA Exams

2025 NZQA EXAMINATION TIMETABLE

2025 EXAMINATION TIMETABLE					
Examinations available digitally shown in blue.					
Date	**Session**	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Scholarship**
Tue 4 Nov	AM		Mathematics & Statistics	Dance	Classical Studies
	PM		Latin	Japanese Making Music Spanish	Statistics
Wed 5 Nov	AM			English	
	PM		Geography		Earth & Space Science
Thu 6 Nov	AM		English		Latin
	PM		Chinese	History	French
Fri 7 Nov	AM			Chemistry	Accounting
	PM		Accounting		Biology
WEEKEND					
Mon 10 Nov	AM	French Spanish	Lea Faka-Tonga Te Reo Māori	Calculus	Samoan
	PM	Commerce	Korean	Agricultural & Horticultural Science Chinese German	Media Studies
Tue 11 Nov	AM	English			Physics
	PM	Gagana Tokelau	Dance	Biology	Art History
Wed 12 Nov	AM	Agricultural & Horticultural Science	Chemistry	Drama	Geography
	PM	Korean	Cook Islands Māori Drama	Digital Technologies Samoan	Psychology
Thu 13 Nov	AM	Mathematics and Statistics	Art History	Statistics	Drama
	PM	History	Physics	Accounting	Agricultural & Horticultural Science
CANTERBURY ANNIVERSARY DAY (Fri 14 Nov)					
WEEKEND					
Mon 17 Nov	AM	Te Reo Māori	French	Latin Psychology Te Reo Rangatira	Chemistry
	PM	Japanese	Biology	Economics	
Tue 18 Nov	AM	Science	History	Physics	Te Reo Rangatira
	PM	Digital Technologies	Agricultural & Horticultural Science	Media Studies	
Wed 19 Nov	AM	Chinese	Te Reo Rangatira	Lea Faka-Tonga	English
	PM	Social Studies	Classical Studies	Art History	Economics
Thu 20 Nov	AM	Physics Earth & Space Science	Media Studies	Te Reo Māori	Calculus
	PM	Vagahau Niue	Education for Sustainability Samoan	Earth & Space Science	Chinese
Fri 21 Nov	AM	Reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani		Music Studies	Spanish
	PM	Geography	Music		History
WEEKEND					
Mon 24 Nov	AM	Gagana Sāmoa	Japanese	Geography	
	PM	German	Earth & Space Science		Religious Studies
Tue 25 Nov	AM	Chemistry & Biology	Home Economics	Classical Studies	Te Reo Māori
	PM	Lea Faka-Tonga	German	Home Economics	Digital Technologies
Wed 26 Nov	AM	Religious Studies	Social Studies	French	Japanese
	PM	Health Studies	Business Studies	Health	
Thu 27 Nov	AM		Economics	Korean	
	PM		Health	Business Studies	
Fri 28 Nov	AM		Digital Technologies Spanish	Cook Islands Māori Social Studies	German

ROTORUA LAKES HIGH SCHOOL ENROLMENT SCHEME

ROTORUA LAKES HIGH SCHOOL

'Mauria te Pono - Keep steadfastly to the truth'

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ENROLMENT SCHEME

The board invites applications from caregivers who wish to enrol their children at Rotorua Lakes High School for next year.

Enrolment at the school is governed by an enrolment scheme, details of which are available from the school office.

Enrolment forms are available at the school office or online at www.rotorualakes.school.nz

Parents of students who live within the home zone should apply by Friday 14 November 2025 to assist the school to plan appropriately for next year.

The board has determined that 100 places are likely to be available for out-of-zone students next year. The exact number of places will depend on the number of applications received from students who live within the school's home zone.

For the 2026 school year, there will be three enrolment periods. The first enrolment period runs from Monday 11 Aug to Friday 19 September 2025.

For students seeking enrolment within the first enrolment period, the deadline for receipt of applications for out of zone places is Friday 19 September 2025.

If the number of out of zone applications exceeds the number of places available, students will be selected by ballot. If a ballot for out of zone places is required, it will be held on Tuesday 7 October 2025. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the ballot within three school days of the ballot being held.

Details relating to the second enrolment period are as follows:

- **Length of enrolment period: from Monday 6 October 2025 – Friday 14 November 2025**
- **Deadline for receipt of applications: Friday 14 November 2025**
- **Date of ballot: Friday 21 November 2025**

Details relating to the third enrolment period are as follows:

- **Length of enrolment period: from Monday 17 November 2025– Monday 19 January 2026**
- **Deadline for receipt of applications: Monday 19 January 2026**
- **Date of ballot: Wednesday 21 January 2026**

No out of zone enrolments for the 2026 school year will be accepted after Monday 19 January 2026.

Rotorua Lakes High School Board of Trustees

SCHOOL POLICIES

WHERE TO ACCESS THE SCHOOL POLICIES FOR COMMUNITY REVIEW AND FEEDBACK - TERM 4

Rotorua Lakes High works with SchoolDocs to provide a website for maintaining, updating and reviewing our school policies. SchoolDocs updates policies in response to changes in legislation and Ministry guidelines, reviews/requests from schools and regular research from the SchoolDocs team.

Our school board, school staff and wider school community has the opportunity to view changes/additions, and comment on them before they are implemented. At the start of each term there are policies that are up for review. You can take part in the review of these policies during that current term, by visiting:

https://rotorualakes.schooldocs.co.nz

Username: rotorualakes

Password: community

How to Get started

Go to the Current Review tab at the top of the site - once you are in this site - you will be able to view which policies are currently under review for Term 4 (if a link is inactive, our school doesn't have this topic available)

To start reviewing, click on a topic name - current policy under review, select - start your review - anyone in the school community can submit a review for that policy. Follow the instructions to complete the process for each policy you would like to provide feedback on.

Your feedback will automatically be sent to the SchoolDocs team and to the designated staff and board members of the school. The SchoolDocs team uses content feedback to make changes to policy information as appropriate.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Rotorua Young Achievers

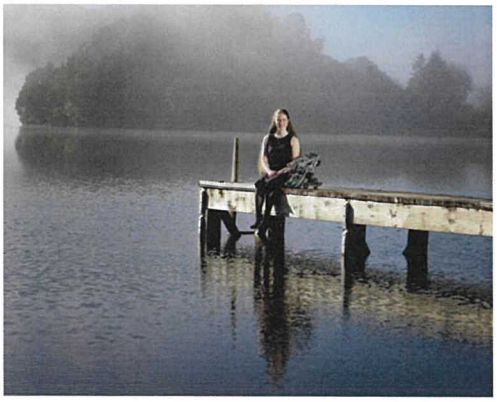
This year marks the 35th celebration of Rotorua's Young Achievers - an iconic event that shines a spotlight on the talent, leadership, and service of students across our city. The exhibition will be on display at PAK'nSAVE Rotorua from 15 October through to the New Year.

Thank you to Ngāti Whakaue, Rotorua Lakes Council, PAKnSAVE Rotorua, Andrew Warner Photography, Kale Print, Advocate Print, and Rotorua Trust for supporting this kaupapa and helping showcase our rangatahi.

Congratulations to our Academic Captain, Siwan Lloyd-Jones 🌟

We are so proud to see Siwan recognised as one of Rotorua's Young Achievers. Her leadership, academic excellence, and commitment to community and environmental action truly reflect the values of Lakes High.

From representing Aotearoa on the international STEM stage to mentoring younger students and giving back through community service, Siwan is an inspiration to her peers. Her achievements show what dedication, humility, and hard work can accomplish. 💛💙



Congratulations to our Head Girl, Hannah Kiernan 🌟

We are so proud to see Hannah recognised as one of Rotorua's Young Achievers. Her dedication to sport, leadership, academics, and service to our community truly reflects the values of Lakes High.

Hannah is an inspiring role model for our rangatahi, and we know her whānau, friends, and teachers will be just as proud as we are. 💛💙

Congratulations to our Deputy Head Girl – Poppy Croucher 🌟

We are so proud to see our Deputy Head Girl, Poppy Croucher, recognised as one of Rotorua's Young Achievers.

Poppy is respected across Lakes High for her kindness, humility, and determination - excelling academically, leading with integrity, and competing at the highest levels in mountain biking 🚵.

Her whānau, kura, and community can be very proud of everything she has achieved so far - and of the exciting future ahead. 💛💙

Congratulations to our Head Boy, Liam Heighway 🌟

We're incredibly proud to see Liam recognised as one of Rotorua's Young Achievers for 2025. His leadership, academic excellence, and commitment to service truly reflect the values of Te Kura o Ngā Moana | Rotorua Lakes High School.

Liam's dedication extends beyond the classroom - from tutoring local students in mathematics to environmental volunteering and adventurous pursuits like tramping, climbing, and waterskiing. His drive, humility, and connection to our whenua make him a role model for others to follow. 💛💙

Congratulations to our Deputy Head Boy, Lachlan Hoggard! 🌟

We're proud to see Lachlan recognised as one of Rotorua's Young Achievers for his leadership, academic success, and sporting excellence. His dedication, humility, and commitment to serving others truly reflect the values of Lakes High. 💙💛

He rangatira nō Te Kura o Ngā Moana – Terry Teepa 🌿

Congratulations to Terry Teepa, recognised as a Rotorua Young Achiever 2025 for his leadership, cultural excellence, and dedication to kapa haka.

As a senior leader in Te Kura o Ngā Moana kapa haka rōpū, Terry leads with mana, humility, and aroha - inspiring others through his pride in te ao Māori and his commitment to his peers.

The Annual Kapa Haka Festival for Eastside Schools

24 October 2025 - held this year at our Kura

House Haka Competition 2025 – Whanaungatanga in Action ❤️💚💛💙

Last week, we held our annual House Haka Competition - and what a powerful day it was.

This year, we changed the format so that points were awarded for student and staff participation within each house. The result? A huge lift in engagement, unity, and whanaungatanga across our kura. The energy was incredible - with record participation from staff, who stood proudly alongside their students in every performance.

For the first time in six years, Ōkāreka took out top points! 💛 But more important than the results were the values on display - whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, and whakapapa shining through in every performance.

✨ This event also coincided with Mental Health Awareness Week, reminding us that connection, belonging, and shared purpose are at the heart of wellbeing. The haka gave our students and staff the chance to express that wairua together - loud, proud, and united.

We are incredibly proud of all our students for the pride, respect, and connection they brought to this kaupapa. Over the past term, many have gained a deeper understanding of the haka and its kupū, linking our school whakataukī - Ruia taitea, kia tū ko taikākā anake - to our motto Mauria te Pono and our whakapapa to Te Roro o te Rangi. Through this, the haka has become so much more than performance - its identity, belonging, and pride in our kura.

Visit our facebook page for the winning performance

Mental Health Week – Manaakitanga in Action 💛💙

During Mental Health Week, Whaea Sophie created something truly special for our ākonga - a calm space around the fire where students could come together to connect, rest, and refocus.

Students roasted marshmallows, cooked flatbreads, and enjoyed hot, delicious chicken soup. Even some of our Horticulture students joined in, roasting fresh cabbage straight from our Mara Kai! 🌿 And yes - there was even real butter and cinnamon sugar on offer for the flatbreads. 😋

Whaea Sophie gathered sticks from the Redwoods on her way to Kura and brought everything herself - simply out of the kindness of her heart, to give our students a moment of peace and connection.

Around 50 students stopped by throughout lunch, and the wairua they created together was magic. It was a beautiful reminder of how simple acts of manaakitanga can lift our spirits and strengthen our sense of belonging.

Year 10 International Dishes 🌎

Our Year 10 students have kicked off their International Dishes unit with delicious Pork Tacos - and they were a hit! 🌮🍋

Packed with flavour and creativity - these young chefs are ready to impress their whānau at home.

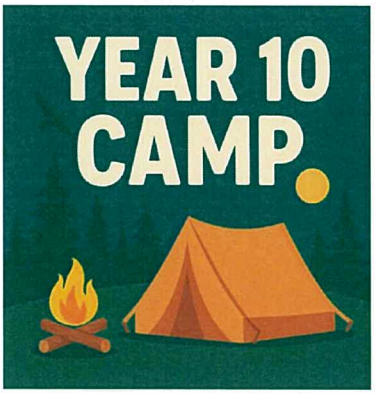
YEAR 10 CAMP - DECEMBER 1-3 TUI RIDGE

The cost is $315, which includes accommodation, catering, activities, and transport.

A non-refundable $100 deposit is due by 31 October, and the final $215 payment is due by 21 November. Payment by instalments is welcome.

A detailed letter will be sent home with students this week.

This is an incredible opportunity for our Year 10s to connect, challenge themselves, and celebrate the end of the school year together.



SPORTS

RLHS 2025 SPORTS PRIZEGIVING

Sports Prizegiving is being held in our Gym Monday 20 October at 2pm

We warmly invite the families of our 2025 Sports Prizegiving recipients to join us for this special celebration of sporting excellence, teamwork, and dedication. 💛💙

This event recognises the incredible commitment our students have shown across a wide range of sports — representing our kura with pride, mana, and passion throughout the year.

Congratulations to all our recipients: 🎖️

Ayden Atkinson, Martin Atkinson, Fraser Barclay, Brooke Barry, Jamie Bennett, Elena Burns, Oscar Burns, Connor Carter, Preston Cleaver, Alfie Cochrane, Julien Collet, Lucas Corson, Noah Croucher, Poppy Croucher, Georgia Davies, Harriette Davies, Michael de Lore, TJ Delamere, Claudia Dunn, Shai Dyson, Whare Emery, Freya Field, Ariana Fitzell, Joshua Ford, Grace Gainsford, Arlo Garden, Emma Goddard, Jade Gordon, Manaia Gorman, Emmett Gouws, Lydia Graham, Tyler Graham, Amaia-Lee Grant, Zara Gray, Sophie Green, Hayley Gribble, Billie Griffiths, Chase Grunwell, Travis Grunwell, Jesse Hannah, Koki Hara, Liam Henwood-Rogers, Ruby Hogg, Lachie Hoggard, Te Rangiwawahia Hohepa-Gardiner, Stella Hughes, Sam Hutton, Oliver Jones, Tamzin Joy, Jovarne Jury, Arshnoor Kaur, Tyrel Kautai, Hannah Kiernan, Kahurangi King, Mase Kingi, Seth Larsen, Ryan Lei, Declan Lescheid, Simon Lescheid, Jasper Leuchs, Nathan Lye, Izabelle Managh, Zoe Marshall, Jessica Martin, Madelin Maunder, Jimmy McFarlane, Owen McGrath, Ella-May McIlroy, Paige Mills, Issy Morey, Amy Morgan, Larissa Murphy, Dane Napier, Elspeth Napier, Maddy Newcombe, Purnima Pahwa, Ruby Parton, Isabelle Paul, Wiripo Paul, Maiah Perkins, Cate Phipps, Ellie Porter, Renee Price, Hailey-Cruz Proctor, Ashleigh Randell, Leonard Rankin, Luke Robson, India Rogers, Teuila Schuster, Zoe Scott, Anna Shapley, Jasmine Sieber, Lia Sinisa, Evan Steere, Sadie Stewart, Taj Sydney, Pikihuia Taipeti-Cribb, Kate Taylor, Waihuia Te Whata, Holly Thompson, Archie Thomsen, Hikairo Ua-Cookson, Kalani Valentine-Halbert, Daniel Waites, Matthew Wallace, Nicole Wallace, Lilli Warren, Ky-Mani White, Raiha White and Storm Yorke.

We look forward to celebrating these outstanding athletes together - with the awards to be announced on the day.

RLHS Dominates NZ Downhill 1st Round!

Rotorua Lakes High School riders took a clean sweep in the Under 15 Boys category at the first round of the NZ Downhill (NZDH) Series held at Skyline Rotorua over the weekend.

Matthew Wallace (Year 9)

Noah Evans (Year 9)

Jasper Leuchs (Year 9)

In slippery and technical conditions on the Mt Ngongotahā track, our boys showed true grit, focus, and determination - powering through to claim all three podium spots.

This is an outstanding start to the 2025 NZDH season and a moment of real pride for our kura. Ka mau te wehi e tama mā!

Velosolutions Pump Track Nationals 2025

Great results from the 2025 Velosolutions Pump Track Nationals held over the school holidays in Rotorua. Racing was very fast with fractions of a second between times.
Three Lakes High students ended up with National rankings:

Colton Boardman 2nd
Noah Evans 2nd
Maddie Newcombe 4th

North Island Provincial Regatta Success! 🚣

Recently, four of our incredible RLHS students represented the Bay of Plenty at the North Island Provincial Regatta – and came away with outstanding results, new friendships, and an unforgettable experience. 💛💙

At just 15 years old, our girls were the youngest crew in the Women's U20 division, racing against teams with up to four more years of experience. With only 10 weeks of training alongside the Bay Coast Rowers, they showed just what hard work, determination, and talent can achieve.

Congratulations to:

Ella-May McIlroy

Grace Gainsford

Jasmine Sieber

Ruby Parton

Women's U20 Eight – 3rd place

Women's U20 Double – 2nd place

Women's Open Eight – 4th place

Women's Open Double – 4th place

Rotorua Lakes High School - 3rd Overall in NZ! 🥉

Incredible results for our Lakes High mountain biking team at the National School MTB Championships in Nelson! Competing against strong competition from across Aotearoa, our riders showed grit, skill, and true Lakes spirit - finishing 3rd overall in New Zealand! 💛💙

Outstanding Results:

Poppy Croucher – 1st in Enduro (beating the local favourite!) and accepted the overall team award on behalf of Lakes High 🏆

Matthew Wallace - 1st in Downhill and 2nd in Enduro.

Nicole Wallace – 3rd in Cross Country.

Jasper Leuchs – 3rd in Downhill.

Jovarne Jury – 2nd in Enduro in a hugely competitive field.

Dan Cheesman – 9th in Downhill.

Noah Croucher – 17th in Downhill, 14th in Cross Country, and 17th in Enduro.

So many top-20 finishes, epic racing, and no injuries - what a weekend!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Calling Rotorua Lakes High Alumni & Former Staff 🌟

We're looking to connect with past students and staff who are interested in being part of building stronger links between our kura and its alumni community. 💛💙

If you'd like to be actively involved in shaping ways to unite and support our wider Lakes whānau, we'd love to hear from you.

👉 Please get in touch with Jo Sturme at sturmej@rotorualakes.school.nz for more details.

RLHS Humanities and Social Science Trip Fundraiser

Rotorua Lakes High School is selling delicious artisan cheese to raise funds for an unforgettable Humanities and Social Science trip to Vietnam and Cambodia in 2026 !

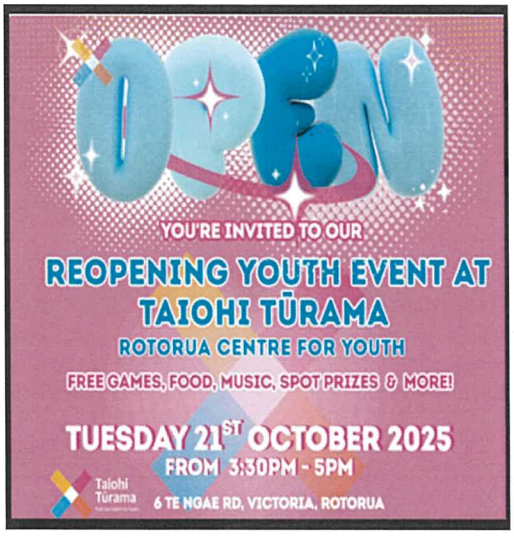
This incredible journey will allow students to immerse themselves in the rich culture, history, and vibrancy of these regions, providing unique educational, social, and personal growth opportunities. Funds raised will go directly towards trip expenses, helping make this life changing experience possible for our students.

Artisan Cheese is perfect for sharing at Christmas and every purchase supports our travelers on their overseas adventure. Thank you for supporting Rotorua Lakes High School!

https://raised.nz/f/vietnam-and-cambodia-trip

Te Miro Mountain Bike Clubs

Youth Event - Rotorua Centre for Youth



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