PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

Kia ora e te whānau

6th March 2026

You might have seen that the plastic wrap has come off the gym, and we were lucky enough to be able to start using it on Wednesday. Two of our classes, our PE and Health teachers, and Matua Paraone were involved in a karakia to prepare the space for use again. We were able to have a full school assembly there later in the day. It was the first time I have been able to meet with the whole school, and it was great to see everyone. A special shout out has to go to the Year 10 students, who were the first to be seated properly and waiting quietly.

We do have a new area of work being done, with a small amount of scaffolding and temporary fencing up around the admin block as we get some work done on the largest and most persistent weather tightness issues. We've let our rangatahi know to stay away from the area. The work should be completed by next Friday, March 13th.

Tuesday was Swimming Sports, and I was impressed by the fortitude of our students and our teachers. It was quite chilly as they climbed onto the buses to go to the aquatic centre, and I can't imagine that the water was very welcoming. Big congratulations to those students who swam in either competitive or fun events.

We are about halfway through the term, and by far my favourite thing so far has been delivering Recognition Awards each week. These are low-level awards for the small things that show our school values and contribute to making the school a great place. So far, our teachers have given out 1717 awards, with by far the largest number going to Year 11 students. Over 500 of our 650 students have one or more award, and one student has 16! Because we have so many awards each week, we do a prize draw. If your young person hasn't received a prize yet, it doesn't mean they haven't been awarded. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to display the number, but they can check with their House Group teacher, who can find it in the Pastoral system.

We know that when we notice and reward small things, we find more and more to appreciate about our ākonga and the way they bring our school values to life. In his kōrero on Wednesday, Matua Paraone reminded our students that they are the water that shapes the life of our school, by the way they relate to each other, work together, and lift each other up. Mauria te pono, e te whānau!

Ngā mihi

Gwyneth

Feel free to contact me at
principal@rotorualakes.school.nz

THIS IS LAKES

Celebrating the moments, achievements, and spirit of our students.

Friday 6 March

SWIMMING SPORTS 2026

House Spirit Takes the Pool

Swimming Sports brought strong participation and house pride to the Rotorua Aquatic Centre. Championship races were fiercely contested while fun events kept energy high, with whanaungatanga across houses on display. Okareka won overall, followed by Tarawera, Rotokākahi and Tikitapu.

LOVE GRACE

Manaakitanga in Action

Students are leading the Love Grace Handbag Appeal, packing donations that will support women in our community. With support from FreshChoice Te Ngae and a live interview on The Heat FM alongside Otonga Primary, our students are putting manaakitanga into action and helping raise awareness for this important kaupapa across Rotorua.

FUTSAL SUCCESS

Junior Girls Claim Second

Our Junior Girls futsal team delivered an outstanding tournament at the Bay of Plenty Championships, finishing second overall. The Senior Boys also impressed against strong opposition, showing determination, teamwork, and the whanaungatanga that sits at the heart of Lakes sport.

GREASE ON STAGE

Confidence Growing in Rehearsals

Rehearsals are in full swing for our school production of Grease, the first Lakes musical in many years. Students are growing in confidence and forming a strong ensemble as choreographer Turanga Merito joins rehearsals, bringing energy, movement, and stage presence to the cast ahead of performances 8–16 May. Rehearsal excitement is growing.

We're authentic. We're real. We're pono. Mauria te pono.