PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

Kia ora e te whānau

3rd April 2026

It's hard to believe it is the end of the term already, and I hope your whānau get to spend some time together this long weekend and that you enjoy having your rangatahi home for the next two weeks. In my principal's assembly on Wednesday, I urged them all to make time to check in on their goals, and make sure they still have all the strategies in place to work towards them. I'll be doing the same in the next two weeks. Just like our young people, I have learned an enormous amount in the last ten weeks, and hope to continue to make progress next term.

Today we farewelled our Sports Co-ordinator, Lisa McFarlane. Her 21 years of service have made such a difference to our school, and we will miss her very much. Applications are open to find her successor, and we'd love to find someone with the same enthusiasm and drive that she has shown. We put a lot of time and energy into all our co-curricular activities, across all our sports codes, arts and culture, and even robotics, and we want to continue to uplift all our students and help them flourish. Lisa has been a steady, supportive presence for so many students, but also for our whānau helpers and our teachers. We want to wish her all the best, and hope we'll see her on the sidelines of heaps of our events in the future.

Ticket sales for Grease will open very soon. It's been amazing seeing so many students working hard to learn their lines and practice their songs, and also those behind the scenes. If your rangatahi is involved with Grease, we appreciate all the rehearsals and practices and fittings that you've supported. We're looking forward to seeing their amazing production.

Finally, it's been amazing to get to grips with my role here at Ngā Moana. I've enjoyed meeting so many of our students and their whānau, and listening to all your ideas and suggestions. I'm delighted to be working in this community to help lift up our young people, and, through them, our community. Thank you to all those I have met for the warm welcome. I'm looking forward to continuing how we have started.

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 3RD APRIL 2026

LEARNING ON THE LAND

Wairuatanga and Whakapapa in Action

Our AOE students recently completed an overnight haerenga across our local whenua, climbing, camping, cooking, and learning together. Along the way, students built resilience, confidence, and knowledge of the places and stories that make this area special. Experiences like this strengthen wairuatanga, whakapapa, and connection to place and to each other.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Manaakitanga Across Cultures

Our kura was proud to host students from Meidai High School in Tokyo. From the pōwhiri to classrooms and homestays, our students showed outstanding manaakitanga and built strong friendships. Exchanges like this grow confidence and cultural understanding, while strengthening the whanaungatanga that makes our kura a special place to learn. These experiences help grow our young people.

FUTSAL CHAMPIONS

History Made

History was made this week as our Junior Girls Futsal team were crowned Northern Regional Champions. In a tense final that went to penalties, the girls showed resilience, teamwork, and belief in each other. We are incredibly proud of the way they represented our kura and supported each other throughout the tournament. A proud moment not just for the team, but for our whole kura.

PADDLING WITH PRIDE

National Stage Success

Our Lakes waka ama teams travelled to compete at the Secondary Schools Waka Ama Nationals, a proud moment for our kura. For many of our rangatahi, this was about more than racing. It was about connection to te ao Māori, the kaupapa of waka ama, and to each other. Across the week, our students showed determination, pride, and deep whanaungatanga, supporting each other through every race and challenge.

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