PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

Kia ora e te whānau

24th July 2026

It's lovely to have our young people back at school, and I know many of them have already dived into some of the big NCEA assessments that they'll have this term. I've heard some of them talk about their holidays, and I hope you all enjoyed some quality time together.

With the end of the holidays comes an uptick in phone use, so please remind all our rangatahi that phones need to be off and away in their bags during the day. If you need to get hold of them, please call the office and we will find them and pass on the message. If they need their phone for medical or another serious reason, please get in touch with the Dean about a pass.

We're looking forward to the Senior Ball next weekend. It's shaping up well, and we appreciate students bringing in their forms and organising their outside partners. We appreciate all our parents checking the expectations about times and behaviour. The school ball is often an opportunity to go all out in terms of appearance, but we want to remind everyone that appointments should be outside of school time. I'm looking forward to seeing all our young people bringing their A game and enjoying a great experience together.

Around the holidays, I sent home a number of letters about the amazing positive behaviour of our students. Our school wants to make sure we recognise all types of effort, improvement and achievement, so I want to congratulate all the students who got a progress letter, an attendance certificate, or a positive recognitions letter. The small things our young people do each day, to choose to be amazing, are the things that build up a great school.

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 24TH JULY 2026

NAU MAI, HĀERE MAI

Shujitsu High School Visits Lakes

Our kura is delighted to welcome 15 students and staff from Shujitsu High School in Okayama, Japan, who are visiting from 19–30 July. Their stay began with a special pōwhiri before they joined classes and met their Lakes buddies, building friendships, sharing cultures and experiencing life at Lakes. A warm welcome also to former Lakes student Andrew Cown, returning after 18 years teaching at Shujitsu High School. Ngā mihi to our Māori Department, Te Ao Haka students, homestay families, Marion Forbes, Jackie McIntyre and everyone helping our visitors create lasting memories of Aotearoa.

9RIMU TRAPS

Learning Through Adventure

Our Year 9 Outdoor Education Academy class recently completed two overnight camps alongside the Te Arawa Wallaby Kāhui, gaining hands-on experience in one of our region's most significant natural environments. Students developed winter camping skills while learning about the history, pūrākau and restoration of Lake Ōkataina. They also experienced the Wallaby Kāhui's conservation work firsthand, strengthening their understanding of kaitiakitanga and the importance of protecting our ngahere and native wildlife. Ngā mihi to the Te Arawa Wallaby Kāhui and Sophie Hoskins for this opportunity.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Get to Kura, Go Up the Poutama

Attendance celebration assemblies were held across every year level this week to recognise students who achieved 100% attendance during Term 2, along with those who reached 90–99% and earned entries into prize draws. More than 80 Year 9 students achieved over 90% attendance, demonstrating the importance of showing up every day. Strong attendance helps students build confidence, strengthen whanaungatanga with classmates and kaiako, and continue moving up the poutama in their learning. Term 3 also introduces new Biggest Gainer Awards to recognise improvement.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Neal's Outstanding Debut Season

Year 10 student Neal Palmero has enjoyed an outstanding first season in Ministock racing, competing in 81 races across the North Island and Nelson while recording eight race wins. His impressive debut earned him second place in the Waharoa Ministock Class B Championship and Rotorua Speedway's Rookie of the Year award. Neal's achievements reflect countless hours of commitment from both him and his whānau, whose support has helped him pursue his passion. We look forward to following his motorsport journey and celebrating many future achievements for years to come.

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