Board Pānui

August 2026

Kia ora te whānau

We had our first hui of Term 3 last week and it was a full agenda!

We began by farewelling our Student Representative, Divjot Bairagi, who has served on the Board for the past two years. Divjot has consistently advocated for the student voice and made a valuable contribution to our discussions. Thank you for your mahi, Divjot. We hope you wear your one-of-a-kind RLHS branded scarf with pride! We wish all the candidates who have put themselves forward for this role the very best, and we look forward to welcoming our new Student Representative at our next hui.

Welcome to our new board member

Our first major piece of business was considering the applications for our vacant Board position. Thank you to everyone who put themselves forward. We had a very strong field and appreciated the experience, skills and commitment each person offered.

We are delighted to welcome Joanna Rogers (also known professionally as Joanna O'Keefe) to the Board. Joanna brings extensive governance experience and strong connections across our community, and we are looking forward to having her join the team.

Property update

Our five-year property plan has now been approved by the Ministry of Education, which means we can begin progressing some much-needed maintenance projects around the school.

Some areas need more attention than others, including our administration block, where we are addressing weathertightness issues. At some point, it will mean temporarily relocating the staff based in this building, so we will provide plenty of notice when we have more information. For this reason, along with other minor building works, we had to push pause on having a big celebration for our Jubilee in September.

We still don't have a timeline for improvements to the gym. It may yet be eligible for a rebuild, so for now we continue to wait for further information. We know the situation has created significant inconvenience for our P.E. staff, and we appreciate your patience and flexibility.

On a more positive note, RLHS has been selected by the Ministry to have solar panels installed. We hope these will help reduce our power costs over time.

Growing our governance capability
Four Board members attended the Te Whakarōpūnga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa/NZSBA national conference during the school holidays. The organisation provides governance advice and development opportunities for school boards, with seminars covering a wide range of topics.

Annamarie, Gwyneth, Bruce and Divjot attended sessions in Auckland and have brought that learning back to our Board. We see ongoing professional development as an important part of being an effective..

Strategic plan
We are now moving into the next stage of developing our strategic plan for the coming years. The Board held a planning session in July to identify some initial goals, and we have since sought feedback from staff.

The next step is to hear from our whānau, hapū and wider community. We want this plan to reflect what matters to the people who make up our kura, so we encourage you to take the opportunity to have your say when consultation opens. We want to know that we are heading in the right direction together.

Uniform review
We spent some time this month hearing directly from our ākonga/students about the school uniform, and the range of views was really valuable.

We are not planning any changes to the uniform at this stage, other than the introduction of a school hoodie. Our ākonga have now agreed on a fabric sample, so production can begin soon. Just a reminder that hoodies, including sports hoodies, are not part of the approved uniform at this time.

Our longer-term goal is to take the feedback from our ākonga and, where appropriate, turn it into practical solutions that work for our students and our kura.

Policy review
This month we are reviewing the School Community Engagement Policy, Inclusive School Culture, Student Attendance, and Concerns and Complaints Policy.

Our policies are available for our community to review at any time through SchoolDocs. You can find the link on the RLHS website.

Whānau are always welcome to attend Board hui as observers. Please email board@rotorualakes.school.nz at least 24 hours in advance if you would like to attend.

Next hui: Wednesday 16 September

Annamarie, Ben, Bruce, Divjot (for the last time!)
Gwyneth, Tāmati, Te Ao, Vernon & Joanna!

board@rotorualakes.school.nz