PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

14th August 2026

Kia ora e te whānau

One of the great things about our school is the range of educational opportunities our young people have. This week, a special shout out has to go to our senior Pūhoro students. This is an extension STEM group that meets weekly, with a larger wānanga once a term alongside groups from other schools. All the Pūhoro teams are working towards a term-long competition, and our school is currently top of the table and determined to win. We also hosted Whakapiki Ake, an Auckland University initiative that supports students into tertiary study in the Health Sciences, and it's great to see students exploring their options for future study.

One of our Year 9 classes toured our regional wastewater plant to get an idea of the sort of infrastructure needed to support a city like ours, which has hopefully sparked some ideas about engineering, logistics, and civic organisation in them. Next year, we're planning to spread these opportunities to more students, to help them find the things they are passionate about.

So many of our rangatahi have high academic ambitions, and work hard to learn the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their goals. We encourage them to think deeply, and to master both the important facts of their subjects, and the ways it affects people, our communities, and our environment.

Many students will be sitting preliminary exams soon, which are important to measure their progress and next steps towards the end of year NCEA exams. Their personalised timetables will be out soon. Our teachers are working alongside each learner, to find their strengths and polish them, to fill gaps, and to rehearse the skills needed for success. We also offer Study Skills workshops later this month, and students should watch out for details. If you have questions about your child's progress, please get in touch with the Dean for general inquiries, or the subject teacher for anything about a particular class.

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 14TH AUGUST 2026

HISTORY MADE ON COURT

Junior A Claim First-Ever Title

Our Junior A Netball team has made Lakes history, winning the 2026 Rotorua Secondary Schools Junior Competition for the first time. Coach Blair Leigh tells us the trophy dates back to 1981, making this a very special achievement 45 years in the making. The result reflects the commitment, teamwork and determination our girls have shown throughout the season. Ngā mihi nui to Blair for the time, energy and guidance he has invested in our players, and to the whānau and supporters who have backed the team along the way. Ka mau te wehi, girls. Lakes is incredibly proud of you!

GET2GO SUCCESS

Second and Fourth for Lakes

Two Lakes teams produced fantastic results at the Bay of Plenty Get2Go competition, taking on rock climbing, orienteering, mountain biking and kayaking. Tarawera finished an outstanding second overall, winning Orienteering and topping the Mountain Biking with 44 laps, while Tikitapu finished fourth after strong performances across all four disciplines. Our ākonga showed resilience, problem solving, determination and whanaungatanga throughout the competition. Ngā mihi to Mr Lenihan for continuing to champion these opportunities and for the time, energy and leadership he gives our students.

PROJECT DAY

Learning in Our Community

Students headed into the Rotorua community for a hands-on Project Day exploring sustainability, science and our local environment. At the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Neil Kerrison introduced students to the treatment process, before Lakes parent Matt Dunn shared some of Scion's fascinating forestry research, robotics and drone technology. The day finished at the Redwoods Treewalk. Ngā mihi to Neil, Matt, Mr Thompson, parent helpers Annamarie Jensen and Tegan Stevens, and especially Mrs Hodge for continuing to create memorable learning experiences beyond the classroom.

FINDING THEIR VOICE

Lakes Debaters Take on Regionals

Seven Lakes students put their confidence, critical thinking and speaking skills to the test at the New Zealand Schools Debating Council tournament in Whakatāne. Purnima Pahwa received fantastic feedback for her speaking, while Year 9 Sam Jensen impressed across his rounds. Hannah Rossiter and Alexander Batkin also performed strongly at their very first tournament. The experience challenged our ākonga to think quickly, work together and articulate their ideas with confidence. Ngā mihi to Ms Maley for inspiring and supporting our debaters and providing these valuable opportunities.

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