PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

Kia ora e te whānau

11th September 2026

This week, I was lucky enough to take three of our Year 10 students to Lynmore School for their Middle School Speech Competition. Not only did our students do an excellent job as judges, but it was amazing to see the enthusiasm and effort of the primary students. Some were very nervous, but they conquered that fear to present, and I learned a lot about the topics they chose.

In the spirit of our Eastside schools staying connected, we're now looking forward to Te Hiwi o Toroa on September 22nd (or the 24th if postponed due to weather). I can't wait to see the skill and pride on display from all our young people. I will also be collecting feedback from our community on our draft strategic plan, so, if you're at the event and you'd like to talk about how things are going at Lakes and what you think could make our school even better, please come to our stall.

This week, Rotorua Lakes Council got in touch to let us know about some important changes to parking and traffic management around schools. They included an information brochure about various aspects of getting to school, including the rules about parking or stopping on yellow lines, across driveways, or on crossings. Their aim is to reduce the risk to our young people, and, hopefully, the stress on us all during peak drop off and pick up times. You may see the Council team at our school or at others in the area.

We will have some work being done on the gym in the next little while, to hopefully apply a short-term fix to the weathertightness issues while the Ministry of Education decides on a long-term solution. If it will affect classes or access, we'll let you know, but we anticipate it shouldn't interfere with learning.

Finally, next week is preliminary exam week for our seniors, and I hope they have all had the chance to prepare thoroughly. If they forget where they are supposed to be or get worried, we can provide timetables at Reception in the Admin block. Usual NZQA rules apply; you can find them online on the NZQA website.

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 11TH SEPTEMBER 2026

DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

Students Step Into Model United Nations

Eight Lakes students stepped into international diplomacy at a Model United Nations event hosted by Rotorua Lakes Council. Harriet Wright, Purnima Pahwa, Sam Jensen, Jack Te Kiri, Sukhman Kaur, Penelope Agnew, Jaeden Antipas and Jessica Christensen represented UN member states, forming alliances and negotiating resolutions on agricultural production and sustainable development. After training and a practice committee session, they put their skills to work in a full caucus plenary, building confidence in public speaking and tackling global issues alongside other local rangatahi. Ngā mihi to Rotorua Lakes Council, UN Youth and Mrs Hodge for preparing and supporting our delegates.

STUDENT VOICE

Jenny Elected to School Board

Year 12 student Jenny O'Malley has been elected Student Representative on the Rotorua Lakes High School Board. Jenny says she has a genuine interest in representing her peers and wants students to feel comfortable approaching her with their thoughts and concerns. Active across school life, she hopes to strengthen connections between students, whānau and the wider Lakes community while learning more about governance. Jenny plans to use conversations, email and Google Forms to hear from students throughout her term. Congratulations to Jenny and to all the students who had the courage to stand and put themselves forward.

HOUSE SPIRIT SHINES

Spirit Day Brings Lakes To Life

Lakes came alive for Spirit Day as all four Houses embraced their themes. Tarawera became The Incredibles, Rotokākahi brought Shrek to life, Ōkareka was overrun by Minions and Tikitapu reported for Police Academy duty. Amber Van Schalkwyk won Best Dressed Student, Mrs Hodge Best Dressed Staff, Rotokākahi Best Theme and Tarawera Best Attendance. Beyond the awards, the day brought colour, laughter, friendly rivalry and plenty of whanaungatanga. Students and staff threw themselves into their House themes. Ngā mihi to Heads of House Matua Justin, Matua Tim, Whaea Te Ao and Ms Maley, and to everyone who got involved.

BOYS FOOTBALL

Lakes Finishes On A High

Senior Boys Football represented Lakes at the Trident Football Tournament, facing schools from Kerikeri to Wellington across a week of competition at Ray Boord Park and Westbrook. The boys played some great football while representing their kura with pride both on and off the field. They saved one of their best moments for last, beating Fairfield College 4–3 in a seven-goal thriller. Ngā mihi to Matua AJ Harris, Praneel Nair, Jamie Grunwell and Liam McFarlane for their support, and to Ryan Stevens and Marlowe Alton for helping over two days. A huge mihi also to the parents and whānau who supported the team throughout the tournament.

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