



RONGOTAI COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

24 February, 2026
Week 5, Term 1

COMING EVENTS

Thursday 26 February

Board meeting, 6pm in the staffroom

Monday 2 March

McEvedy Shield Athletics at Newtown Park

Monday 17 March

Rongotai College Pasifika Parents' Asosi meeting at 6pm in the staffroom

Tuesday 17 & Thursday 19 March

Parent Teacher Interviews (more info to come)

Monday 23 to Friday 27 March

Summer Tournament Week

Thursday 2 April

Board meeting, 6pm in the staffroom
Last day Term 1

Friday 3 April

Good Friday

2026 TERM DATES

- Term 1** Monday 26 January to Thursday 2 April
- Term 2** Monday 20 April to Friday 3 July
- Term 3** Monday 20 July to Friday 25 September
- Term 4** Monday 12 October to Friday 4 December

Kia ora koutou.

We are now well into what is already proving to be a busy and exciting Term One. The boys are settled and working well in class; several visitors to the school have commented on the calm atmosphere around the college.

It was great to see so many parents at our recent Year 9 Parents' evening, where they got to meet their son's core curriculum teachers and in doing so, strengthen the home-school partnership.

PRESIDING MEMBER

Louise Carter

advised the Board at their January meeting that she has been appointed to a position as Lead Senior Education Advisor for Porirua with the MOE. MOE employees are unable to sit on any school board, regardless of position or school. Because of this, Louise was forced to give her resignation as the Presiding Member and a Board member, with immediate effect.



Louise has worked tirelessly for the college over the past 10 years, the last seven as Board Presiding Member. She has been an active Presiding Member, supporting the school in every possible way. We wish her well in her new position.

of our students in 2025. While I will give a detailed review when NZQA releases the final results to the public in April, you will be pleased to know that our students continue to do themselves and the school proud. 2025 was another good year of achievement with very pleasing results in all measures of NCEA, especially the results of our Year 11 and 12 students.

Of course, school-wide results are the consequence of a number of individual successes. At this assembly, we awarded Academic Honours to those students who gained Excellence endorsed certificates for NCEA.

Academic Honours for gaining NCEA with Excellence were awarded to **Oliver Brooke, Fletcher Cowan, Jesse Davies, Alex Fraser, John**

NEW PRESIDING MEMBER



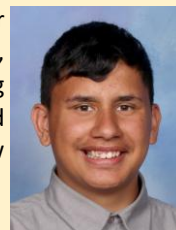
At the January meeting of the Board, **Devon Heaphy** was appointed the Presiding Member. Congratulations on your appointment, Devon!

TE WHERO DONOHUE-BRAAS

Te Whero sadly passed away on 13 February after a short battle with cancer. He had been a student in Tamatoa since the start of 2023.

Te Whero grew immensely during his time at Rongotai College. He loved shooting basketballs, enjoyed drum lessons, going to Hospitality classes in the mainstream and being part of his form class. He had an infectious smile.

He lived our school values, always showing resilience, and was open to new experiences.



Te Whero was a proud Rongotai College student who gained strength from his sense of brotherhood and belonging. Our thoughts are with his whānau, classmates and teachers.



ACADEMIC NEWS

NZ SCHOLARSHIP

NZQA recently released NZ Scholarship results for 2025. Congratulations to **Ben Young** who was awarded a scholarship in Physics.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

At assembly three weeks ago, we celebrated the NCEA performance

Kersey, Joshia Matatia, Carlos Morris-Matchitt, Leo Powdrell, Leo Stein, Yannick Sternagel-Silao and Ben Young (all Year 13 2025 – Level 3), while the following 2025 Year 12 students were also awarded Academic Honours – **James Aitken, Oliver Atkinson-Peat, Joshua Bethell, Lewis Brown, Tobie Crawford, Oliver Earley, Francois Fourie, Otis Galloway, Jackson Garland, Sebastian Heaphy, Liam Hendry, Connor Herries, Daniel Jarvis, Franklin Martin, Desmond Reddy, Thomas Sadler, Mohammed Saiyad, Billy Smith, Blake Szeto, Hunter Taylor and Willie Uelese** Year 11 students from 2025 who were awarded Academic Honours were: **Elois Bodeux, Lenny Hoggard, Jai Jackson, Sione Moala, Hemish Patel, Nooh Patel, Adam Pengelly, Taiki Sligo, Marco Stevenson-Loboa and Felix Walton.**



Academic Honour recipients

Congratulations are also due to the large group of boys who gained Merit endorsements. Well done boys!

On behalf of the Board, I would like to congratulate our Year 11, 12 and 13 students of last year on their achievements, and thank our staff for their excellent work. Striving to be “better than before” is the challenge that I set for students each year.

Our NCEA results highlighted something that we have long believed as a school – that success is significantly impacted by effort and attendance. Our Weekly Engagement Reports measure student effort in class each week. Coupled with attendance data, a clear picture emerges on what it takes to succeed. Data below shows that **there were significant differences in average attendance and effort grades between students who gained NCEA Level 1 last year and those who did not.**

This data is consistent over the last three years.

	Attendance (%)	Av Weekly Effort / 5
Gained NCEA	91	4.1
No NCEA	75	3.4

These differences were similar at both Level 2 and Level 3, highlighting the simple equation for success:

Achievement = Attendance + Effort

Another interesting piece of data is that the average attendance for Excellence endorsed students was 95% while their weekly effort grade was 4.5!

CASTLEPOINT GEOGRAPHY TRIP

Level 3 Geography students recently enjoyed a two-night field trip to Castlepoint. Throughout the trip they explored and analysed a range of coastal processes, comparing how these shape and influence the surrounding environment. With stunning landscapes as their classroom and picture-perfect weather throughout, it was an incredible opportunity for hands-on learning and real-world application.



NCEA INFORMATION

By now, your son should have received an Assessment Statement in either paper or digital form from each of his teachers if he is studying for NCEA. These outline when all assessments are taking place. Copies of all the Level 1, 2 and 3 statements are able to be downloaded from the website.

Please check that your son enters all his assessments in his diary or year planner. Alternatively, you can download a blank ‘assessment calendar’ from our website (<https://www.rongotai.school.nz/academic/senior-qualifications-assessment-guide/>). Please encourage your son to look at his

diary or calendar often and help him to organise himself to prepare for his assessments.

Our student NCEA Handbook has been updated for 2026. It contains the policies, regulations and guidelines for students related to our national qualifications. Students in Years 10-13 who are studying for NCEA have been given a copy and it can be downloaded from the website.

PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal allows you, via a secure log-in from the website, to check your son’s attendance, personal details, results and groups with which he has registered. Daily notices are also found on the Parent Portal. Login information regarding our Rongotai Parent Portal for parents of Year 9 students was sent to you early in February.

If your son is in Year 10-13 and you do not have access details to the Parent Portal, please email the.principal@rongotai.school.nz or contact the college office staff who will arrange for these details to be sent to you.



MUSIC DEPARTMENT

BIG BAND

The Rongotai College Big Band has started for 2026, again under the leadership of Mr Greg Crayford. The band is currently preparing for the national youth jazz competition in Tauranga. The band is looking for new members on trumpet and trombone. If your son already plays the trumpet or trombone, he might be interested in joining.

They are also always looking to the future, so if your son is keen to start learning a suitable instrument he should speak to Mr Crayford. Standard big band instruments are saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, drums and voice.



SPORTS NEWS

Summer sports are well underway with around 350 of our students representing the school in different summer codes. Term 1 has lots of opportunities to participate in weekly sport, but also in many other sports and tournaments.

BOWLS

Bowls is once again looking strong for 2026 as we look to make it 3 years in a row as Wellington Champions. We have 5 teams competing in the weekly competition at Lyall Bay Bowling Club.

ATHLETICS

Athletics takes centre stage in Term One. We kicked off with an exciting, but rather wet, House Athletics day at Newtown Park on Tuesday 3 February. Although the weather could have been better, participation numbers were good and the students and staff enjoyed a fun day with some great performances.

Congratulations to Mackay who were crowned House champions.



Athletics Finals Day

We couldn't avoid the rain once again, but still had a successful day at Newtown Park competing against Wellington College athletes on Friday 13 February.

Congratulations to the many athletes who performed well. We now look ahead to McEvedy Shield on Monday 2 March.

CRICKET

We're excited to have three teams competing in long-format CSW Competitions this term. The 1st XI has won one game and lost two to date. The individual highlights for the 1st XI include:

- **Cooper Burwell-Garratt:** 96 runs v Wairarapa College, 62 runs & 4/19 v Wellington College.
- **Theo Norris:** 51 runs v Wairarapa College, 58 runs v HIBS & 4/34 bowling against Wellington College.
- **Toby Randall:** 3/27 v HIBS.

FUTSAL

We have an exciting 20 futsal teams competing in the CSW competition this term.

FLOORBALL

With nine floorball teams, we are looking strong heading in the CSW Competition and Nationals. We have two senior and two junior teams competing in their top grades.

SOFTBALL

Congratulations to **TK Maladina** who has been selected in the Junior Black Sox Squad ahead of World Cup qualifiers in April.



TRIATHLON

Harry Barton and **Seb Campion** both competed in the U16 Wellington Secondary Schools Triathlon in early February. Seb finished in 5th place, with Harry placing 7th. Well done!

VOLLEYBALL

Congratulations to our Senior A Volleyball team for qualifying for the regional Premiership grade this term after finishing first in their grading pool with HIBS and HVHS.

McEVEDY SHIELD

This is a highly anticipated annual athletics competition contested between Rongotai College, Wellington College, St Patrick's College (Town) and St Patrick's College (Silverstream). The 103rd McEvedy Shield event will be held **Monday 2 March**. All students are required to report to Newtown Park at 8.55am on this day to compete or to support our team. Students are required to wear school uniform.

Students must make their own way to the park; if your son is travelling by bus, he should ask his bus driver to drop him as near to Newtown Park as possible.

Students are required to report for a roll call at 8.55am, and they should report to their form teacher who will be located in the grandstand.



Students will be dismissed from Newtown Park at the conclusion of the day (approximately 2.30pm) and are required to make their own way home.

The event will take place no matter what the weather is. If it is raining, please make sure he has appropriate rain protection gear (no umbrellas). If it is sunny, provide him with sun block. Limited food will be available at the park, so he should also bring lunch and something to drink.

We would ask you to talk to your son about his behaviour both at the ground and on the way to and from the event. With over 2,000 students attending the special event, we would hate for your son to be the boy who, through his behaviour, jeopardises the event in the future.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Lastly, staff have commented that some boys are currently not living our school value of 'TAKING PRIDE' in the way they are wearing our school uniform. I would like to remind you that it is expected that your son will wear his uniform in the correct manner and with pride at all times. This means that only black jackets are permissible and NO HOODIES or sweatshirts of any description (including those with Rongotai logos associated with sports teams). Shoes should be black leather and able to be polished. Crocs are definitely NOT an acceptable item of footwear at school, and socks are not to be worn with sandals.

FROM THE PREFECTS

The past few weeks have been significant for our school community, marked by both celebration and reflection. Athletics Day (3 February), brought outstanding energy to the track and field, with students demonstrating determination, house pride and strong support for one another throughout a sodden day. This brotherhood carried into the inaugural running of the Chris Wells Cup (13 February), where teams competed with passion, teamwork and resilience in another challenging day that brought wind, rain and sun. These major sporting events were followed by the Wellington Schools' Valentines Rose Exchange (17 February). Rongotai College students were involved in the planning and execution of the event which saw roses delivered to schools across the Wellington region. Roses that had been provided by students from other schools were delivered to our students in their classes.

The next major event this term will be the McEvedy Shield event on Monday 2 March.

Desmond Reddy

Deputy Head Prefect & Student Board Representative.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Rongotai College has Emergency Evacuation Procedures which have been developed with input and feedback from Civil Defence. We hold regular evacuation drills and have outlined our procedures for students.

In the event of an emergency such as major destructive earthquake or fire at the school, students will be held at school and not be allowed to leave the school grounds until dismissed by myself or a Deputy Principal acting on behalf of the Principal, and a decision made if they can go home directly or if they should be collected by their parents or a person listed as an emergency contact. For the safety of all, it is important in these circumstances that parents check with the school office or administration before collecting students and taking them off-site. The school holds stocks of water as well as medical equipment and blankets in case we are required to keep students safe at school and a skeleton staff will remain with the students.

In the case of an evacuation for a tsunami, our procedure will be to evacuate to the west, heading to Melrose Park, where toilet facilities are available. Again, a skeleton staff will remain with students until they are collected by parents.

If and when it is deemed appropriate by the school that students need to be collected from either the school (in the event of an earthquake) or Melrose Park (following a tsunami evacuation), this will be communicated to parents by:

- An announcement that will be made on the local radio stations (Newstalk ZB, The Hits, More FM).
- A message left on the school phone (939 3050) asking parents to collect their children immediately.
- If we have access to our servers, we will send a SMS and/or emails to all parents for whom we have cell phone or email contact details.
- A message sent via the school app.
- A message on the school website and Facebook page.
- A telephone call by form teachers if it is practicable.

Ngā mihi nui

Kevin Carter
Principal

RONGOTAI COLLEGE

170 Coutts St, Kilbirnie, Wellington
PO Box 14-063, Kilbirnie, Wellington, 6022
PHONE: +64 4 939 3050
EMAIL: the.principal@rongotai.school.nz



www.rongotai.school.nz

www.facebook.com/RongotaiCollege

www.youtube.com/RongotaiCollegeNZ