



RONGOTAI COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Week 10 (April) Term 1, 2026

COMING EVENTS

Thursday 2 April

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

Friday 3 April

Good Friday

Monday 20 April

First day of Term 2

Monday 27 April

ANZAC Day holiday

Monday 4 May

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

Monday 18 to Friday 22 May

CAA exams

Thursday 28 May

Board meeting at 6pm in the Staffroom

Friday 29 May

Teacher only day

Monday 1 June

King's Birthday holiday

Friday 5 June

Rongotai Experience

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

As we come to the end of Term 1, it is a good time to reflect upon how most students have settled down to work well during Term 1 and have made good progress to date.

Teachers have been reporting on your son's progress each week. These reports are designed to provide you with a snapshot of your son's attitude and engagement in class from week to week. Many whānau attended Whānau-Teacher

conferences, which gave further feedback on their son's work and progress.

YEAR 9 OPTION CHOICES

During Term 1, Year 9 students have had the opportunity to experience the range of our option subjects, prior to selecting their two option choices for the remainder of the year. These option subjects will start at the beginning of Term 2. If you have any questions about options or wish to discuss your son's choices, please contact the Year 9 Dean (Ms See) or your son's form teacher.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

With the cooler months approaching it is timely to remind you that it is expected that your son will wear his uniform in a correct manner and with pride. This means that only plain black jackets are permissible and **NO HOODIES** of any description (including those with Rongotai logos on them) are allowed. Rongotai College puffer and school jackets are available for purchase from the college shop.

PHYS ED UNIFORM

All Year 9, 10 and 11 students are required to wear the Physical Education uniform. This consists of the school PE top and blue shorts. It has been pleasing to see the majority of students are wearing theirs. Students who have yet to purchase the Physical Education uniform are required to purchase theirs from the college shop as soon as possible. If there are any issues in meeting this expectation, please communicate this to your son's PE teacher or Dean. I encourage your son to label their uniform so that it is easily identifiable.



ACADEMIC NEWS

NCEA INFORMATION

If your son is studying for NCEA he should have received an Assessment Statement in either paper or digital form from each of his teachers. These outline when all assessments are taking place. A book containing copies of all the Level 1, 2 and 3 statements is 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. Please encourage your son to look at his diary or calendar often and help him to organise himself to prepare for his assessments.

REWARDING READING

Literacy is a big concern across the country and has had significant media attention recently. One of our strategies to help is through encouraging boys to read – something you can also do at home.

Our Year 9 students have started the year well with our Rewarding Reading programme. Many of them have earned the first reward of the school water bottle and hopefully you have seen some of these at home! This reward can be earned all year by our boys.

The end of Term 1 reward is a pizza for each boy who completes three texts and their Bingo sheet.

Please continue to encourage your son to work towards his reward! Thank you to Mr Armstrong (who leads the Rewarding Reading programme) for organising this.

HOMEWORK HUB

Teachers are running our Homework Hub, after school, in the Library, on Mondays and Wednesdays. All students are welcome to attend, to do their homework or revise, with teachers and senior students present to help when needed.



OLD BOYS' NEWS

RONGOTAI COLLEGE OLD BOYS' AWARDS

The Old Boys' Association have introduced the **Bruce Cockburn Service Awards**, recognising outstanding Rongotai College Old Boys who have made an impact over many years.

The recipients were presented with their awards at Assembly on Friday 20 February.

The inaugural recipients of the award are Rongotai Old Boys

- Mr Andrew Collins
- Mr Malcolm Bridge
- Mr Trevor Rigby (deceased)

Awards were also made to

- Mrs Paddianne Neely (archivist)
- Mrs Shirley McLaughlin (deceased) (former Principal's P.A.)

Congratulations to these fine servants of the school and the Old Boys' Association.



Recipients, family members, Kevin Carter (Principal) and Jimmy Fiso (RCOBA President).



CULTURAL NEWS

MUSIC

RC Choir

This term our Choir started rehearsing with about 18 boys and has grown to about 30 (new singers are still welcome). Student **Mesepa Fepulea'i** is leading the boys and running warm-ups.

Recently the choir attended a barbershop workshop at Bishop Viard College, where 170 students from six schools came together to learn the craft of acapella Barbershop singing. Mesepa also volunteered to sing in a quartet, doing us proud!



The choir is practising towards the USIH Barbershop competition and The Big Sing in Term 2.

Thanks to parents and the Asosi for their support.

If your son would like to join the choir, please email Choir Director, Bridget O'Shanassy (bridget.oshanassy@rongotai.school.nz) Practises are Tuesday at afternoon break and Fridays after school.

Instrument Lessons

If your son wishes to learn an instrument there is limited space available for some instruments. Priority is given to those taking Music, especially at Year 9, for beginners. We are keen to get more people playing violin, in particular.

Chamber Music

We are also looking at beginning a chamber group, that is a smaller, classical-style group for people who play violin, viola, cello, flute, double bass, piano. See Mr Crayford or Bridget to put your name down.



SERVICE NEWS

BLOOD DONATIONS

Once again, a very successful blood drive as held at Rongotai College last week. As part of our service to the community, we had NZ Blood Service at the college for the first time this year. Staff and students (16 years or older) were invited to donate blood, and 51 donated. These 51 donations will help 175 people. This has become a regular event at Rongotai College and we will provide another opportunity later in the year for boys to contribute.



Francois Fourie makes his donation

INTERACT CLUB

The Interact Club is student-led and has been a special part of the school's culture for many years, with volunteering at the forefront. Every year the club assists at many events and services around the Eastern Suburbs. The club provides a great opportunity for students to be involved in our local community.



Heart Foundation collectors from left Griffin Shirtcliffe, Adam Jokuti and Willie Ueese.

The Weetbix Kids Triathlon is an important annual nationwide event that the Rongotai College Interact Club takes part in every year. Thank you to all the students who volunteered at this event recently.

SADD WORKSHOP

Students Against Dangerous Driving started the year strongly, with a group of students participating in a "Kick start" workshop at Wellington Girls' College. Plans and goals for 2026 were discussed. Some of these plans were around students running workshops at their own school, similar to previous years - a series of different challenges / sessions based around driving, or strengthening their own groups. Teaching students how to be leaders and how to teach their peers about the dangers whilst driving is one of the main focusses. **Olly Edwards-Grindell, Jacques Samyn** and **Marcus Young** will now attend a SADD Conference in Cambridge in April about stepping up, standing out, and strengthening youth voice in road safety.

One of the goals for the SADD team is to make an online "advert" for the cause.



BREAKFAST

We want our boys to be successful every day so we encourage them to "win the day" by being on time and with the right attitude. One way to help achieve this correct attitude is to ensure that they are well 'fuelled' and this is the reason we have restarted the 'RC Breakfast Club'. We are providing the boys who arrive between 8.15am and 8.40am on Tuesdays and Thursdays with breakfast.

This initiative is run by the Prefects and while it has only been going for two weeks, the numbers have grown with each breakfast. We will continue to encourage boys to come along.

"Breakfast is an opportunity to nourish not just the body, but also the soul." Anon



SPORTS NEWS

3x3 BASKETBALL

Our 3x3 Basketballers have had success at the recent CSW 3x3 Championships. With two teams entered, our top team made it to the final, narrowly losing to St Pat's Town to finish 2nd in the region. Our team, in the open division, finished top of their section, winning all of their games.

We also had a team represent Rongotai at the NZSS Zone 3 Regional Qualifiers during Summer Tournament Week. The team played well over the two-day tournament to finish in 7th place with a win over Scots College in their last game.

ATHLETICS

NZ SS ATHLETICS SELECTION

Congratulations to **Brooklyn Boyd** who has been named in the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Athletics team to compete in Brisbane in April. Good luck Brooklyn!



Brooklyn Boyd

NZ ATHLETICS TITLE

Congratulations to **Desmond Reddy** on winning the New Zealand U20 5km track race. This outstanding achievement is a testament to his dedication, resilience, and countless hours of hard work. He has represented our school and region with pride and excellence, and we look forward to seeing Desmond's continued success in the future.



Desmond Reddy

REGIONAL ATHLETICS

A team of 26 students attended the College Sport Wellington Regional Athletics event, where our students gained six regional titles. Results were:

Junior

Tadhg Pierse 3rd in the 3000m

Davui Tikoimatuku 2nd in Javelin

Intermediate

JJ Popham 1st in 100m Hurdles

Gyan Wilson 1st in the 400m and 2nd in the 200m

4x100m Relay 2nd (**Remy Boswell, JJ Popham, Flynn Walters, Gyan Wilson**)

Senior

Brooklyn Boyd 1st in the 100m and 200m

Caeden Ioapo 2nd in High Jump

Desmond Reddy 1st in the 3000m and 3rd in the 1500m

4x100m Relay 1st (**Lucas Brister, Healthlee Biskowiak-Williams, Jona Radravu, Brooklyn Boyd**)

Sebastian Champion then attended the North Island Secondary Schools' Athletics Championship (in Auckland), finishing 11th in the Intermediate Boys 3000m.

McEVEDY SHIELD

Rongotai competed in the annual McEvedy Shield athletics competition on Monday 2 March, coming 4th. Our athletes gave of their best in the event, despite the inclement weather conditions, with many achieving personal bests and certainly not giving up.

McEvedy Shield was a mixed bag of performances this year. Although we failed to secure as many points as 2025, overall the outcome was not as disappointing as the overall score suggested. When we start to

break down the overall scores, the margin between us and St Patricks Town has remained the same as last year, and the decreased score has been due to the emergence of St Pat's Silverstream, who took the points that Rongotai and Town lost.

However, it is important to recognise the success we had, gaining seven McEvedy titles across all grades. The following athletes won their events. **Tadhg Pierse** (U14 3000m), **Gyan Wilson** (U16 100m, 200m and 400m), **JJ Popham** (U16 100m Hurdles), **Desmond Reddy** (Senior 3000m) and the **U16 4x100m Relay (Remy Boswell, JJ Popham, Flynn Walters, Gyan Wilson)**. Additionally, **Gyan** broke the Under 16 400m record and the **U16 Relay**. They were the first Rongotai College Relay to win a McEvedy title in the last 21 years.

Overall, the school is continuing to perform well, having an athlete place in the top 4 in the majority of all track events. However, to move forward we need to place more emphasis on the field events and in particular our throws. Additionally, we need to be able to identify more athletes within our Year 9 cohort and further athletes to help support the depth across all age groups.

BOWLS

The Rongotai teams had success in the Wellington competition this year, with the pair of **Sam Doggett** and **Tiki Bennett** winning the Wellington Competition. They, alongside **Spencer Ravji**, have been selected amongst the top 5 in their competition to represent the Wellington Section in the Regional final.

Congratulations to the Rongotai Blue team for winning the Division 2 competition.

Our two winning pairs from the Wellington competition went to the Regional tournament - a senior team of **Sam Doggett** and substitute **Baxter Fitzgibbon**, plus a junior pair of **Blake Tweedie** and **Spencer Ravji**. After pool play the seniors had two wins and two losses in a tough section. The juniors however, played very well and had three wins, and a draw against a strong Aotea team. They progressed to the

quarter-finals and after a good win played a semi-final against a much older and more experienced Kurunui team. They were beaten, but kept the game close and did exceptionally well. This resulted in them being placed third equal for the tournament.

CRICKET

The 1st XI competed at the annual Hunt Family Trophy competition hosted by the Wanderers Cricket Club during Summer Tournament Week. A highlight for the team was an impressive 9 wicket win in their Plate Semi-final against Onslow College, finishing 6th overall in the tournament.

Congratulations to the 2nd XI for winning the Senior 1 grade of the CSW Competition. The team has come together to put in some strong performances, including bowling Silverstream all out for 26 in their semi-final, where **Jack Scanlon** took a remarkable four wickets in four balls without conceding a run, in his two-over spell.

FLOORBALL

Our Senior Blue Floorball team won the CSW Premier Competition for Term 1, beating Wellington College 3-2 in a close final.

Our Senior A and Junior A Floorball teams then competed in the NZSS Floorball Cup over Summer Tournament Week. In a great week for both teams, our Juniors finished 3rd in the country, with our Senior team ending up in 7th place.

FUTSAL

Our Senior A and B futsal teams both had an exciting time at the recent CSW Championships. Our Senior A team went through the tournament undefeated in regular time, only going down to St Pat's Town in the final on penalties to finish in second place.



The Senior B team had some excellent results, including a win over last year's National Champions, Scots College on penalties. They finished in 11th place.

Congratulations to our Junior 6, and Junior 8 teams for winning their divisions.

Our Junior A and Senior A teams both competed at their respective National Tournaments during Summer Tournament Week. Both teams made it through pool play and qualified for quarter-finals. However, against tough opposition both teams lost those games. Congratulations to our Junior team for winning all remaining games to finish in 9th place, whilst our Seniors finished 16th.

GOLF

Four Rongotai students qualified for the CSW Golf Championships held at Royal Wellington on Tuesday 10 March. Congratulations to **Monty Shirtcliffe** for winning the Nett Championship, with a net score of 61.



Monty Shirtcliffe

The inaugural Rongotai College Ambrose tournament was a huge success. Congratulations to **Toby Ashwell** and **Dylan Anderson** for winning the tournament.

TENNIS

Four students qualified to participate at the CSW Senior Championships this term. Congratulations to **Griffin Shirtcliffe** for winning the Boys' Singles Bronze division, and **Monty Shirtcliffe** for placing third equal in the Boys' Singles Gold division.

TOUCH

Rongotai had two teams entered in the CSW Senior Touch tournament, with our A team finishing fifth and our B team finishing seventh - congratulations boys!

VOLLEYBALL

Our Senior A Volleyball team performed well at the recent CSW Regional Tournament, with notable wins against HIBS, and Naenae College, to finish fourth at the tournament.



The team then went to the NZSS National Tournament in Palmerston North over Summer Tournament Week, where they were graded into the Division 4 competition. The team finished the week in first place after defeating rivals Naenae College 2-1 in the final - congratulations boys!

WATER POLO

Our Senior Water Polo team, which is a combined team with Wellington High School, finished second in the CSW Weekly competition after going down in a close final against St Pat's Town. The boys now play in the NZSS Division 2 Water Polo Cup over Easter Weekend.

WINTER SPORTS CODES

Winter Sport is now swinging into action and over the next week all teams will be finalised. Just a friendly reminder that you needed to register for the code using the online portal and you will need to have paid your Summer Sports fees AND your Winter Sports fees to play in Term 2.

SPORTS FEES

Students are expected to pay fees if they represent the college in sport. If you are unsure about the amount of the fee then please contact our Sports Department. The fees are vital to the operation of sport, and can be paid online or at the college shop. All summer codes fees MUST be paid prior to participation in winter sport.

SPORTS COACHES

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the sport volunteers who have helped make sport possible in Term 1. Parent and staff support continue to be the driving force behind sport and without, sport simply would not advance. Every parent who coaches, manages, transports or helps in any capacity, is appreciated and we sincerely thank you for your support.

Whether playing sport for fun with friends or competitively, it remains an important part of life at Rongotai College and it was great to again see such high sport participation rates in Term 1. We hope all boys play at least one sport each year and it is not too late if your son hasn't registered for winter 2026. Please contact our Sports Department (sport@rongotai.school.nz), to discuss what might be a good fit for your son and appeal to his interests.

Thank you to all those who have offered to help in winter too. We still need more volunteers so please contact the sports office if you can coach, referee, manage or help with transport in any of our winter codes.

Have an enjoyable and safe holiday and we look forward to Term 2!

Kind regards,

Kevin Carter
PRINCIPAL

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