RONGOTAI COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Week 11 (July) | Term Two, 2026

UPCOMING EVENTS	
3 July	End of Term Two Reports sent Home
20 July	Term Three Starts Simply Dental on-site (to 24th)
21 July	Parents' Association Quiz Night *(See page 9 for more details)*
24 July	Tu Tagata Festival
27 July	Asosi Meeting @ 6.00pm
29 July	CSW Road Race
4 August	CSW Badminton Champs
5 August	Blood Drive
6 August	Board Meeting @ 6.00pm
7 August	NZSS Squash Champs (to 9th) CSW Table Tennis Champs (Ind.)
12 August	Traditional v PNBHS (away)
14 August	CSW Table Tennis Champs (Teams)
18 August	Music Evening
23 August	3OE Ski Trip
31 August	Winter Tournament Week
4 September	Mid Term Break

TERM DATES 2026	
Term One	Monday 26 January to Thursday 2 April
Term Two	Monday 20 April to Friday 3 July
Term Three	Monday 20 July to Friday 25 September
Term Four	Monday 12 October to Friday 4 December

Kia ora Rongotai whānau,

Friday, 3 July marks the end of Term Two and the halfway point of the 2026 school year.

As we end this eleven-week term, I would like to thank our students, staff and families for their continued commitment and support throughout what has been a busy and productive time. Despite the challenges that winter weather can bring, our students have continued to embrace the many academic, cultural, service and sporting opportunities available to them, and I am proud of the positive contribution they make to the life of the College.

I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of parents and caregivers. Strong partnerships between home and school are an important part of every student's success, and we greatly appreciate your encouragement of your sons throughout the year.

Mid-Year Reports

Mid-year reports have been finalised by staff and will provide a summary of your son's progress and achievement during the first half of the year. These reports complement the Weekly Engagement Reports and provide valuable feedback on academic achievement, effort and next learning steps.

Reports will be available through the Parent Portal during the holiday break and will also be emailed or posted to families on Friday, 3 July. I encourage you to take the time to read the report carefully with your son and discuss both his successes and the areas where further effort and improvement may be required.

The beginning of Term Three provides an excellent opportunity for students to continue to work towards achieving their set goals and approach the second half of the year with renewed focus and determination.

2027 Subject Selection

One of the key events early in Term Three will be the subject selection process for students entering Years 11, 12 and 13 in 2027.

Students will receive information about course options and pathways during the first few weeks of next term. Careful consideration should be given to future career aspirations, tertiary study requirements and personal interests when making subject choices.

We encourage students to discuss their options with teachers, deans, family members and our Careers Department. Additional guidance and support will be provided throughout the process, and further information will be sent to families early next term.

2027 Enrolments

In early June, we welcomed hundreds of prospective students and their families to

PARKING REMINDER FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Parents and caregivers are asked not to enter or park in the main car park by Reception, particularly at the end of the school day. This area is reserved for our school buses, official visitors, taxis for our Tamatoa students and delivery vehicles during this busy time.

There is parking available along Tirangi Road for both drop-offs and collections, and we kindly ask that you use these areas instead.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us keep our students safe and traffic flowing smoothly.

Keep in Touch

RONGOTAI COLLEGE

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PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Rongotai Experience Day and our annual Open Evening.

Both events were extremely successful and provided an opportunity for visitors to experience the unique character and culture of Rongotai College. The positive feedback we received from whānau highlighted the friendliness of our students, the dedication of our staff and the strong sense of community that exists within the College.

I would like to sincerely thank the many students and staff who assisted with these events. Your willingness to give your time and share your experiences showcased Rongotai College at its very best.

Enrolments for 2027 are progressing well, and enrolment interviews will begin early next term. If you know families who are considering Rongotai College for next year and have not yet submitted an enrolment application, I encourage them to do so as soon as possible to ensure they are included in the enrolment process.

As we head into the holiday break, I hope students and their families have an opportunity to rest, recharge and enjoy time together. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for Term Three on Monday, 20 July.

Kevin Carter
Principal

Academic News

CAREERS NEWS

It has been a busy and exciting term in the Careers Office, with a steady stream of university visits and future planning opportunities for our senior students.

We have now completed individual exit interviews with our Y13 students and have begun hosting University 2027 course planning and scholarship sessions here at Rongotai College. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for students to explore study options, ask questions, and start making informed decisions about life beyond school.

Year 12 students recently attended the Victoria University of Wellington Open Day, gaining a valuable insight into university life. The visit allowed them to explore study options, discover potential career pathways, and learn about scholarships and the VicStart programme as they begin planning their futures. We strongly encourage you to support your son in attending these sessions. Universities offer a wide range of scholarships, and many are straightforward to apply for.

Open Days for Wellington's main tertiary providers are also coming up this August, providing a great opportunity to explore campuses, courses, and future pathways. We encourage every student to make the most of these opportunities and start planning for life beyond Rongotai College.

LANGUAGES NEWS

¡Olé! A Term of Spanish Success

Spanish students have enjoyed a busy and engaging term, with many opportunities to extend their language learning.

Senior students recently took part in Spanish immersion sessions alongside students from Queen Margaret College, Scots College and St Oran's College, providing authentic opportunities to practise their language skills. Our Y9 students combined creativity with their

Term 3 Tertiary Pathway Planning

University of Auckland
Open Day - 29 August
Information Session at Rongotai College - Wednesday 5 August

AUT University
Open Day - 29 August

University of Waikato
Open Day - Hamilton - 22 May
Open Day - Tauranga - 1 July

Massey University
Open Day - Palmerston North - 5 August
Open Day - Auckland - 15 August
Open Day - Wellington - 21 August
Information Session at Rongotai College - Thursday 30 July

Victoria University of Wellington
Open Day - 21 August
Information Session at Rongotai College - Tuesday 11 August

University of Canterbury
Open Day - 28 August
Information Session at Rongotai College - Friday 21 August

University of Otago
Open Day - 3 , 4 May
Information Session at Rongotai College - Thursday 20 August

Lincoln University
Open Day - 24 July

Whitireia and Weltec
Open Day - Porirua 12 August
Open Day - Petone 16 September
Information Session at Rongotai College Tuesday 21 July

learning by making Mother's Day cards and cakes, while a visit from a representative of the Spanish Embassy gave students valuable insight into the importance of learning additional languages.

One of the highlights of the term was Y12 student, **Marco Stevenson-Loboa** (pictured right), being invited to appear on a local Latin radio station, where he confidently conversed in Spanish with native speakers. Students also embraced Language Week through a range of interactive classroom activities.

The term will conclude with our Y10 students visiting *Viva México*, where they will have the opportunity to use their Spanish in an authentic setting while experiencing the language and culture first-hand.

Congratulations to all of our Spanish students for their enthusiasm and willingness to embrace new learning opportunities this term.

HEALTH & PE NEWS:
Fit to Achieve

The Level 2 and 3 Personal Training classes took part in the regional Tough Guy and Gal Challenge earlier this term. **Charlie Little** finished second in the Senior Boys.

The Level 2 and 3 Personal Training class is a subject option that allows senior students to learn about the human body and train for its improvement.

❶ The Tough Guy and Gal Challenge is a 6km mud/obstacle course, and was an event to train towards for a practical achievement standard. Many other schools also train and compete at this fun yet challenging event. ❷ Our Y10 students organised and run an interclass tournament day at Ākau Tangi. They took on roles and responsibilities such as coaches, managers, referees, and led the day. Well done to the team 'Zuccs' who won the day. ❸ Level 2 Personal Training have been leading some of our Junior PE classes in group exercise activities such as yoga, HIIT and Jump Jam for one of their assessments.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY & HOSPITALITY NEWS
Where skills and flavours come together

At Rongotai College, our Kaimahi Cooking Club and senior Hospitality classes provide a vibrant, inclusive environment where ākonga gain essential life skills. The Kaimahi Cooking Club is a supportive space where students come together every Wednesday to develop

practical abilities - from knife skills and flavour balancing to safe food handling - transforming them into confident cooks ready to prepare healthy, affordable meals for themselves and their whānau.

This initiative fosters a strong sense of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, with students collaborating, sharing ideas, and celebrating successes together. The Club frequently celebrates diversity, evidenced by participation in cultural food fairs and events like the Music evening.

Parallel to this, our Hospitality classes offer an exciting learning journey. Ākonga build real-world skills in food safety, nutrition, and commercial catering, understanding the importance of hygiene and professional standards. Through simulated real-life service opportunities, students learn to present dishes with pride, demonstrating responsibility and care. Whether mastering complex culinary techniques or exploring international cuisines, these programmes empower students to grow into capable young adults, equipped to serve their wider community with aroha and expertise.

Arts & Cultural

MUSIC NEWS

NZ Chamber Music Competition Success

The NZ Chamber Music Secondary Schools' Competition has been running since 1965 and attracts more than 1,000 students each year through district, regional and national rounds. Chamber groups perform one or more works with a combined performance time of no more than 15 minutes.

The Wellington District Final was held over the weekend of 6–7 June, with 32 groups competing. Eight ensembles progressed to the District Final Concert on Sunday evening, with Rongotai College students **Liam Whatman** and **Edgar Watson** performing in three of those eight finalist groups.

Liam performed on cello in two ensembles: Triple Shot, performing Piano Trio No. 1 in C minor, Op. 7 – II. Romance by Édouard Lalo, for piano, violin and cello; Trout Hover (the collective noun for trout), performing the first movement of Piano Quintet in A major, D.667 'The Trout' by Franz Schubert, for piano, violin, viola, double bass and cello.

Edgar performed on violin with the Freylakh Trio, playing Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano by Paul Schoenfield: Freylakh, Nigun, Kozatske.

The winning ensemble automatically qualified for the Regional Final on 27 June. Edgar's ensemble and both of Liam's ensembles were awarded Highly Commended by the adjudicators, placing them in contention for selection to the Regional Final, with successful groups to be announced around 15 June. Edgar's group also received the KBB Music Award for the Best Ensemble featuring a wind, brass or percussion instrument.

The National Final will be held in early August. Typically, eight ensembles are selected from across New Zealand based on merit, with no fixed quota allocated to each region.

Congratulations to Liam and Edgar on their outstanding achievements. To have performed in three of the eight finalist ensembles is a remarkable accomplishment and reflects the exceptional musicianship, commitment and dedication of both students.

➤ *(L-R): Edgar and Liam with their certificates following the District Final.*

Where Talent Takes Centre Stage

The Music Department continues to thrive with a comprehensive programme from Years 9–13, supported by a talented team of instrumental tutors and an extensive co-curricular programme. Whether students are interested in jazz, rock, funk, classical or choral music, there is something for everyone. Our current ensembles include:

- The Disciples of Leigh Jazz Combo
- The Junior Rock Band
- The Funk Ensemble
- Southern Voices Choir
- The Chamber Group
- The Medium Band
- And, of course, the mighty Rongotai College Big Band.

Three of our jazz ensembles travelled to Palmerston North to compete at the Youth Competition as part of the Manawatū Jazz Festival.

Our newly-formed *Southern Voices* Choir (pictured below) has enjoyed a busy term, performing in a range of competitions and events, including *The Big Sing*, Aotearoa New Zealand's premier secondary school choral competition. They also achieved an outstanding second place in the *Young Singers in Harmony Barbershop Competition*. Congratulations to all.

Big Band vocalist **JJ Popham** (pictured left) also enjoyed a memorable guest performance with the *Capital City Big Band's TNT! Reo Māori Project*, sharing the stage with acclaimed vocalist Lisa Tomlins at the Whirinaki Whare Taonga Music Festival.

You can hear many of these talented performers at our ever-popular Annual Music Evening on Tuesday, 18 August, from 6.30pm–8.30pm in Renner Hall. Hospitality teacher and chef Gabe Chambers will once again have delicious food available to pre-order and enjoy in a relaxed cabaret-style setting. Be sure to mark the date in your diary - it promises to be another fantastic evening of music and community.

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Chess Team continues to make the right moves

Rongotai students enjoyed an excellent outing at the Wellington Chess Regionals on 25 June. Two teams of four students represented the College, with our top-performing team finishing an impressive ninth overall. This marked a significant improvement on last year's results, particularly as many of our players are relatively new to competitive chess.

Special mention goes to our youngest players, **Daniel Pengelly** and **Jack Scanlon**. Daniel won five of his six matches, narrowly missing out on being the tournament's highest-scoring player on Board 2 after a final-round defeat. Jack was outstanding, remaining undefeated by winning all six of his games and earning the certificate for Best Player on Board 3.

Pride in our many cultures

What an incredible House Sasa Competition! At a recent Assembly, the Renner Hall was alive with energy, colour, and pride as students came together to celebrate the rich diversity of cultures that makes Rongotai College such a special community.

Congratulations to every house for delivering outstanding performances. The passion, teamwork, creativity, and school spirit on display were truly inspiring. Thank you to everyone who performed, supported, and helped make the event such a memorable success.

Boys going the distance for World Vision

Deputy Head Prefect, **Desmond Reddy**, reported back on the recent Walkathon, which saw more than 80 Rongotai boys complete an incredible 6,000 laps around the College corridors in support of World Vision.

This year's campaign focused on ten-year-old Prynia from the Solomon Islands. Rising sea levels, cyclones and changing weather patterns are making it increasingly difficult for families to grow food and make a living.

Inspired by her story, the Rongotai community once again showed its generosity and determination, raising more than $18,000 to support children and communities across the Pacific facing the impacts of climate change.

A huge congratulations to everyone who took part. Every lap walked and every dollar raised will help provide hope and practical support to families like Prynia's and is a reminder that even small actions can make a big difference.

Sports News

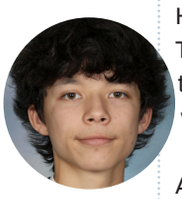
Winter Sports in Full Swing

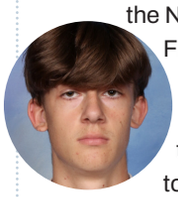
Director of Sport, **Ross Bond**, reports that winter sport has well and truly hit its stride at Rongotai College, with 27 teams competing in College Sport Wellington competitions across rugby, football, basketball, hockey and badminton. We've also had boys representing the College in cross-country and squash, making for another busy and successful term of sport.

Across all codes, our teams have enjoyed their fair share of success, produced some excellent performances, and represented the College with pride and determination.

A huge thank you must go to our coaches, managers, officials and support crews who give up countless hours behind the scenes to ensure our teams are well prepared and ready to compete each week. Quite simply, school sport couldn't happen without you.

Two of the highlights of the term were our traditional fixtures against Wellington College at home and St Patrick's College, Silverstream away. As always, these occasions delivered some memorable moments and showcased the spirit and pride that comes with wearing the Rongotai jersey. While not every result went our way, our boys were competitive and certainly caused the opposition more than a few headaches along the way!





Congratulations to **Marcus Young** (Y12) [right] **Liam Verschoor** (Y13, 2025) [left], on being named in the NZ Men's U19 Floorball team.

Marcus and Liam will travel to Singapore in August to compete in the AOFC Qualification Tournament, where they will be aiming to secure a place at the World Championships in early 2027.

Well done, lads! We wish you every success in Singapore.

There has also been plenty to celebrate on the hockey turf. After the opening round of the SPHL Premier 1 competition, our 1st XI sits comfortably in the top four. **Dylan Anderson** has been in outstanding form and currently sits as the competition's second-highest goal scorer with seven goals.

Our Junior Colts side has been one of the stand-out teams of the season so far, remaining unbeaten with seven wins from seven matches and an impressive goal difference of +33. **Lucas Henwood** leads the league's scoring charts with 16 goals, while **Ravi Ishver** has also been prolific, finding the net nine times.

Congratulations also to Dylan Anderson and **Gabriel Rees**, who will represent Wellington at the National U18 Men's Hockey Championships in Tauranga during the holidays. Adding to the Rongotai connection, Mr **Levi Loudon** will coach the Wellington side.

As we head deeper into the winter months, many of our teams are entering the business end of their seasons and preparing for play-offs. We wish all our teams the very best for the weeks ahead and hope there are plenty more successes still to come.

A Legacy Raised High

In early June, the Rongotai College Old Boys' Association unveiled five new National Football Title banners as part of the RCOBA Banner Project. The banners recognise the College's championship-winning teams of 1974, 1975, 1977, 1979 and 1989, ensuring their achievements are permanently celebrated in the Gymnasium.

It was wonderful to welcome Old Boys and families representing all five title-winning teams back to the College. Their presence highlighted the enduring values of teamwork, dedication and brotherhood that continue to connect generations of Rongotai men.

The Association extends its thanks to the Rongotai BEST Academy, Air Rescue Services Ltd, private contributors, DAC Group, and the Lyall Bay Bowling Club for their support in making the project possible.

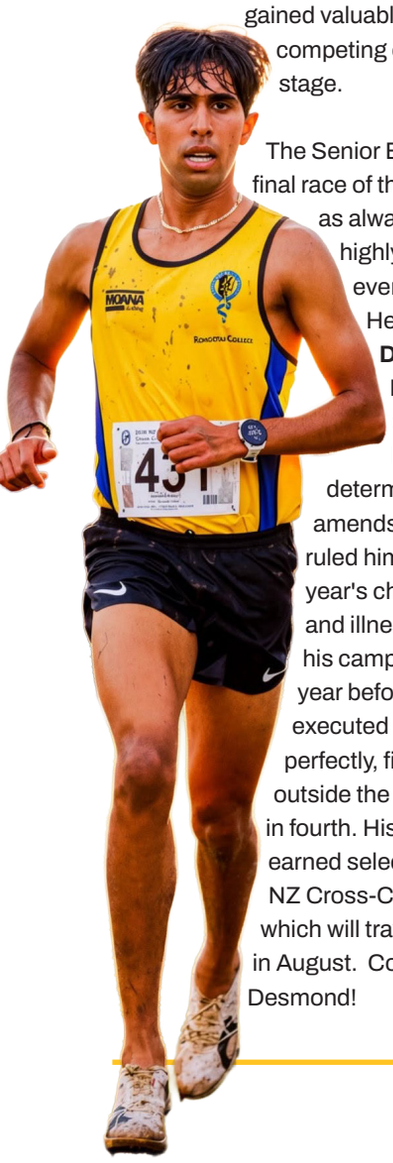
PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

NZSSAA Cross-Country Championships

Over the weekend of 20 - 21 June, Rongotai College competed at the NZSSAA Cross-Country Championships held at Trentham Memorial Park in Upper Hutt. The team was affected by injuries and illness; however, the boys competed strongly on a wet and gusty course, fighting for every place.

Saturday 20 June: The first race of the day saw our Junior Boys compete over 4km. **Harry Barton** led the way for Rongotai, finishing 27th overall. Alongside **Max Baring** and **Oscar Politini**, the three-man team placed eleventh in New Zealand. This was a tremendous effort, particularly given that two of the boys were backing up after playing football earlier that morning.

The Y9 boys, missing half their team due to illness, were next to race. **Tadhg Pierse**, despite being unwell himself, ran strongly to finish 44th in New Zealand. Supported by **JJ Matsuda** and **Leo Mishkin**, the three-man team finished twelfth nationally. As a developing squad, the Year 9 boys gained valuable experience competing on the national stage.



The Senior Boys were the final race of the day and, as always, this was a highly anticipated event. Deputy Head Prefect, **Desmond Reddy** (pictured left)was determined to make amends after injury ruled him out of last year's championships, and illness hampered his campaign the year before. Desmond executed his race plan perfectly, finishing just outside the podium places in fourth. His performance earned selection in the NZ Cross-Country Team, which will travel to Australia in August. Congratulations, Desmond!

(L-R): JJ Matsuda, Leo Mishkin, Tadhg Pierse

(L-R): Max Baring, Freddie Burra

Also competing in the senior team were **Seb Campion** [pictured above] and **Hugo Campion**. Together, the three-man team finished ninth in New Zealand - a superb effort, particularly given that both Seb and Hugo have further years remaining in the senior grade.

Sunday 21 June: The Regional Relays were contested on Sunday morning, with Desmond, Seb, Hugo, Harry and Tadhg all representing various Wellington teams. Congratulations to these boys on earning representative honours.

The Wellington teams performed strongly overall. **Harry Barton** was part of the Wellington Junior Boys A team that claimed gold, while **Desmond Reddy** also struck gold as a member of the Wellington Senior Mixed A team.

Overall, it was a successful weekend, with many Rongotai athletes gaining invaluable experience at the highest school level. As always, it was pleasing to see the boys supporting one another throughout the event. A special mention must go to those squad members who were unable to compete due to injury but still came out to support the team in less-than-ideal conditions.

Congratulations to all athletes who represented Rongotai College with pride and determination. Special thanks must also go to Cross-Country Convenor, Mr **Blair Florence**, whose dedication, organisation and encouragement continue to provide our athletes with outstanding opportunities to compete and succeed at the highest level.

RONGOTAI COLLEGE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

QUIZ *night*

RAFFLES ✶ **LIVE AUCTION**

TUESDAY | 21 JULY | 6 PM

PARROTDOG BREWERY

Email for tickets, $25pp

parents.association@rongotai.school.nz

Create a team of 8-10, or we can place you on a mixed table. Doors open at 6pm, Quiz starts at 6.30pm

PARROTDOG

60-66 Kingsford Smith Street
Lyall Bay

RONGOTAI COLLEGE

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RONGOTAI COLLEGE 1ST XI HOCKEY AND THE RCOBA PRESENT

GOOD SPORTS

CONVERSATIONS ON WELLBEING IN SPORT

Taylor Noble is a New Zealand trained registered sport and performance pyschologist.

James Blackwell is a former NZ rugby union player.

Vijay Vallabh is an old boy and the High-performance Sport NZ Physio provider to Olympians and Paralympians.

WEDNESDAY 19TH AUGUST 2026
7-9PM
VENUE: RONGOTAI COLLEGE,
170 COUTTS STREET

STUDENTS FREE
ADULTS $20
TICKET INFO THROUGH QR CODE

RBA

RONGOTAI COLLEGE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

RONGOTAI COLLEGE 100 1928 - 2028 A Century of Brotherhood