

ŌTOROHANGA COLLEGE

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Term Three, Week Ten
Monday 21st September – Friday 25th September 2026



Principal Lyndsay Kurth

Celebrating Our Progress, Looking Ahead With Pride

Kia ora, Nau mai, haere mai, Ni sa bula vinaka, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei.

As Term Three draws to a close, I would like to thank our students, staff, parents and whānau for their continued commitment and support throughout another busy and rewarding term at Ōtorohanga College.

Term Three is always a significant time in the College calendar, particularly for our senior students, who are now approaching the final weeks of their secondary schooling. Our Year 11, 12 and 13 students have been working hard towards their NCEA internal assessments, with many having recently completed their Derived Grade Examinations. We encourage them to use the upcoming break wisely, balancing time to rest and recharge with opportunities to consolidate their learning and prepare for the important weeks ahead.

For our junior students, this term has provided further opportunities to build knowledge, develop skills and strengthen the learning habits that will support their future success. We are proud of the progress our students continue to make and encourage them to reflect on their achievements, recognise areas for growth and approach Term Four with confidence and purpose.

Beyond the classroom, Term Three has been filled with opportunities for students to participate, connect and contribute to College life. From sporting and cultural activities to academic opportunities and community events, these experiences continue to build confidence, resilience, leadership and a strong sense of belonging. Our recent Year 7 and 8 Experience Day, Māori Language Week and preparations for the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival have been wonderful examples of the connections and opportunities that make our College community so special.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff for their ongoing commitment to our students. Alongside the everyday work of teaching and learning, staff have supported Examinations, cultural events, student activities and the many other responsibilities that contribute to a thriving College. Their care, encouragement and commitment make a real difference to the lives of our young people.

As we look towards Term Four, there is still much to look forward to. For our senior students, the focus will increasingly turn to final assessments, External Examinations and preparing for life beyond College. For our junior students, it is an opportunity to finish the year positively, celebrate progress and continue building towards the next stage of their learning journey. We encourage all students to maintain positive attendance, make the most of their learning opportunities and finish the year with pride in their efforts.

At Ōtorohanga College, our vision is Empowering Learners To Succeed. This remains at the heart of everything we do. We want every student to feel known, valued and supported and to leave our College with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take their next steps.

Thank you to our parents and whānau for the ongoing partnership you have with the College. Your encouragement, support and involvement in your child's education are greatly valued. We know that when College and home work together, our young people are better supported to achieve their potential.

I hope all our students, staff and whānau enjoy a safe, restful and well-deserved term break. Take the opportunity to spend time together, recharge and enjoy a change of pace before we return for the final term of the year.

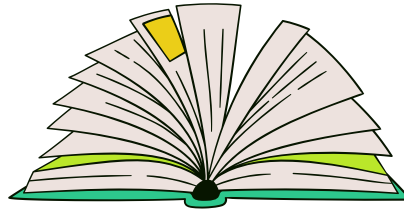
Thank you for your continued support of Ōtorohanga College. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for Term Four and finishing the year together on a positive note.

Ngā mihi nui
Lyndsay Kurth
Principal

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Deputy Principal

Achievement Stoffel Wilken



Assessing, Adapting, Achieving: A Look Back At Term 3

As we reach the end of Term Three, it is wonderful to reflect on what has been an exceptionally busy and productive period for academic achievement across the College. Our students and staff have shown immense dedication, working through significant assessment milestones and laying the groundwork for future success.

Common Assessment Activities And Digital Readiness

Earlier this term, our students undertook the Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) in Reading, Writing and Numeracy to secure their essential NCEA co-requisites. Running three separate assessments required a mammoth effort. Alongside a full cohort in the main Hall, every available space across the College was utilised to ensure the full suite of Special Assessment Condition (SAC) entitlements were honoured. It was fantastic to see the vast majority of these assessments completed digitally; both students and staff are growing increasingly confident with the digital platform, ensuring a smooth and efficient testing environment.

Derived Grade Examinations

Our senior students also completed five days of Derived Grade Examinations. These assessments are a vital stepping stone—they provide students with clear feedback on where they stand, offer a reliable safety net should an unforeseen event prevent them from sitting their end-of-year NCEA exams and supply the achievement data used to calculate academic awards for our upcoming Senior Prizegiving. Seniors are now keeping a close eye on their incoming credits to ensure they remain on track to achieve their NCEA certificates by the end of the year.

Data-Driven Planning For 2027

Behind the scenes, significant time has gone into analysing student achievement data. By examining baseline data from our SMART tools, alongside co-requisite and NCEA attainment figures, we are gaining precise insights into student needs. Based on this analysis, we have begun planning structural changes for 2027 to facilitate targeted teaching, ensuring every student receives tailored support to achieve accelerated growth.

Forward Planning And Staff Development

To support these initiatives, the College has actively secured a range of Ministry-provided Professional Learning and Development (PLD) opportunities for staff for 2027. Simultaneously, our teachers have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to prepare for the upcoming curriculum changes—mapping out new standards and proactively developing unit plans, weekly schedules and daily lessons well in advance.

It has been a term defined by hard work, preparation and focus. Thank you to our teachers for their endless dedication and to our students for their ongoing commitment to their learning. We wish everyone in our College community a safe, relaxing and well-deserved term break!



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Deputy Principal



Hauora Whāea Jane Keir

Kia Ora Koutou

As we come to the end of the Term, I encourage our students, staff and whānau to take time over the break to rest, reconnect and recharge. Thank you for the care, support and positive relationships that contribute to our College wellbeing. My door is always open should anyone have a query or concern about their child. Please connect with the College Office to make an appointment.

Next Term free breakfast will be provided in the Board Room from 8.15 to 8.45 each morning for any student who has missed breakfast. It is always good to start the day full and we know sometimes our teens rush out the door in the morning without eating. This is part of our Hauora plan to remove barriers and increase student positive success at College.

Five Ways to Wellbeing



The 5 Ways to Wellbeing encourage habits that help us feel happier, healthier, more connected and ready to learn. Small actions every day can make a big difference to our wellbeing. When we Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give, we create a College where everyone feels valued, supported and able to flourish.

Currently we are focussing on Be Active. This means finding ways to move your body and enjoy being physically active each day. It could be walking, playing sport, dancing, gardening, stretching, or simply getting outside for some fresh air. Being active can boost your energy, improve your mood, reduce stress and help you feel more connected to others. You do not have to be an athlete—every bit of movement counts. Find something you enjoy, make it part of your day and encourage others to join you.

Attendance Reminder

We are committed to supporting your child to attend College. If you are having difficulty getting your child to College, you can ask for support by contacting the College Office to:

1. Connect with your child's Empower Whakamana teacher
2. Connect with your child's Dean
3. Make an appointment with the DP Hauora

We can work with you to develop a support plan that addresses any barriers to regular attendance. More information on attendance, including your rights and responsibilities as parents and caregivers, is available on the Ministry of Education's website <https://www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/managing-students/student-attendance-guide-schools-and-kura>

Please note, our database sends out standard absence letters at 5, 10 and 15 days absence. This is part of the Ministry of Education's Attendance Process and is a required standard procedure. If you have already explained your child's absences to our office please do not reply to these notifications.

Nga mihi nui
Jane Keir

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Health And PE

HEALTH AND PE FACULTY

Move your body, strengthen your mind, nurture your wellbeing.

Another action-packed term has come to an end for Health And Physical Education as we transitioned from the winter months and those freezing cold mornings in the Gym to the mixed bag of weather that spring always seems to bring.

The end of the term has seen us wrap up fitness testing across Physical Education, Junior Fitness, Athlete Development and Health classes. It has been fantastic to see students challenging themselves, pushing for personal bests and comparing their results with where they started earlier in the year.

Our Term Three Beep Test produced some outstanding performances with a number of students achieving impressive results and showing just how much their fitness has developed. The highlight result being Quentin Cashell scoring a massive 14.3.

The Athlete Development Programme also finished the term with the Spartan Fitness Challenge. This was a brutal physical challenge designed to test fitness, strength, endurance and most importantly determination. This included 15 physical challenges beginning with a 2km stopbank run and finishing with a 60 metre bear crawl. Congratulations to our top three finishers:

1st – Alex Davey – 41:21

2nd – Luke Lamborn – 43:21

3rd – Lindsay Millar – 45:10

An awesome effort from everyone who took on the challenge and a great way to finish another term of training in ADP.



Our Level 1 Health students completed their Derived Grade Examination on Wednesday. This provided students with a valuable opportunity to experience exam conditions and become familiar with the style of questioning they can expect as they continue their preparation into Term Four. Well done to everyone who approached the exam positively and gave it their best effort.

The Faculty also had a blast recently hosting our Year 7 and 8 students for Experience Day. It was fantastic to meet some of our future students, get them active and see some of the tremendous sporting talent coming through. We certainly look forward to seeing many of these faces again at Ōtorohanga College in the future.



There was also plenty happening during Te Wiki o te Reo Māori, with Whaea Lacosta leading Ki o Rahi at lunchtime with support from the rest of the PE team. It was awesome to see students getting involved, having fun and celebrating te reo Māori and tikanga through movement and physical activity.

Looking ahead to Term Four, our practical PE programme moves into summer sports with Ki o Rahi, softball and cricket taking centre stage. In Junior Health our focus shifts to Drug Education as we continue to develop the knowledge and skills students need to make positive decisions for their hauora.

It has been another huge term and we are incredibly proud of the effort, participation and enthusiasm shown by our students.

We wish everyone a safe and fantastic holiday. Enjoy the break, recharge the batteries and we look forward to seeing everyone back and ready to go for an exciting Term Four.



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Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival

Maniapoto Secondary School Cultural Festival

Celebrating Our Culture, Our Pride

Ōtorohanga College was proud to host the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival 2026, bringing together kura from across the region for a day of celebration, connection and cultural pride. The Festival provided a special opportunity for rangatahi to come together and celebrate culture, identity, language, traditions and whanaungatanga, while strengthening the connections between our schools and the wider Maniapoto community.

We were privileged to welcome the following kura:

- Pio Pio College
- Te Wharekura o Maniapoto
- Te Wharekura o Ngā Purapura o te Aroha
- Taumarunui College
- Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Taumarunui

Throughout the day, students had the opportunity to share their cultural knowledge, traditions, music, waiata, kapa haka, dance and performances. Each kura brought its own unique identity and energy to the festival, creating an atmosphere filled with pride, passion and celebration.

The performances showcased the incredible talent and dedication of our rangatahi, who proudly represented their kura, whānau and communities. It was inspiring to see students supporting one another, encouraging each other and celebrating the strengths and achievements of the different groups.

The Festival was about more than just performance. It was an opportunity for our young people to stand proudly in their identity, share what is important to them and learn from others. It reminded us of the importance of te reo Māori, tikanga, whakapapa and cultural traditions and the responsibility we all have to keep these taonga alive and pass them on to future generations.

There was a wonderful sense of whanaungatanga throughout the day, with students, kaiako, whānau and supporters coming together to create a positive and welcoming environment. The encouragement from the audience added to the atmosphere, with plenty of cheering, singing and support for each kura as they took to the stage.

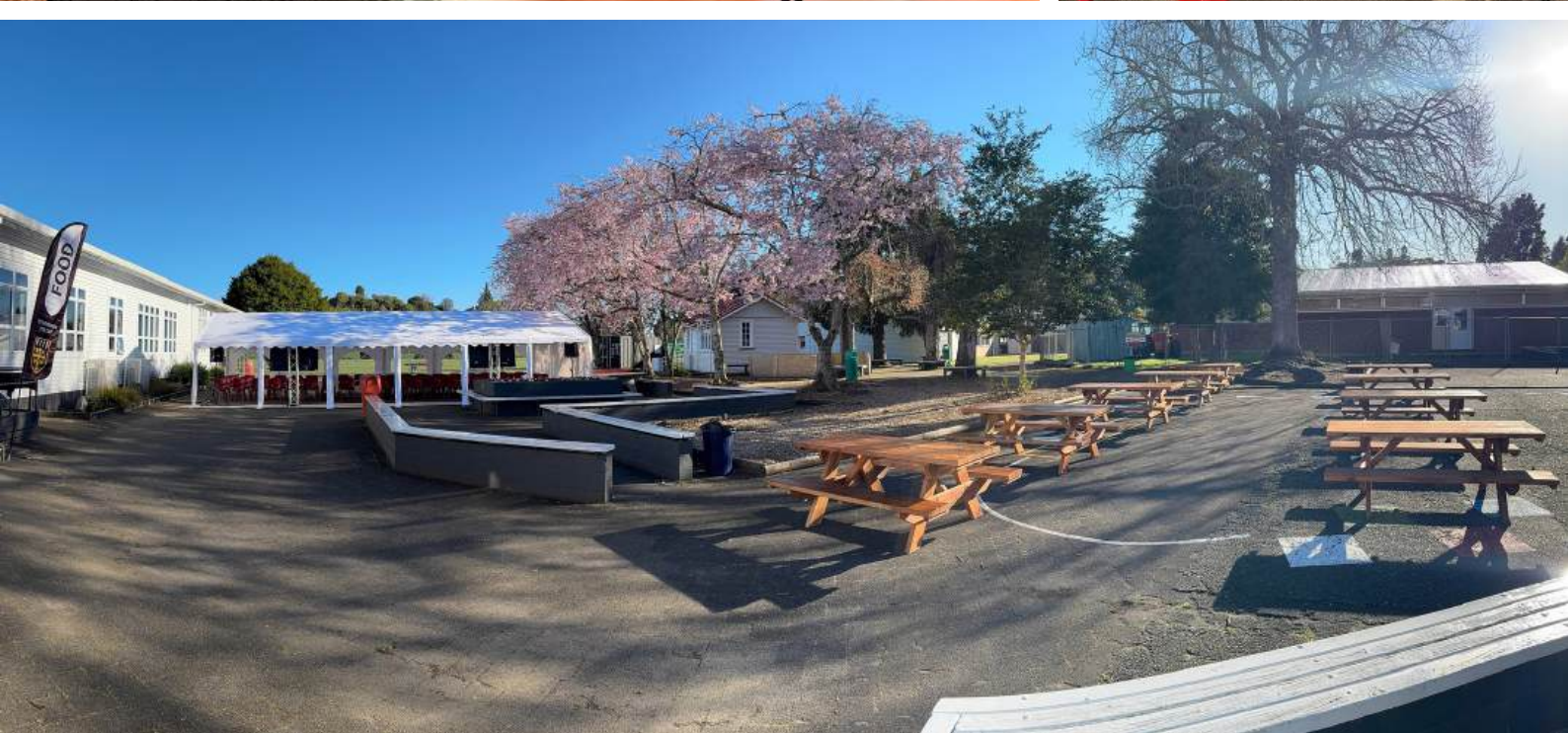
Ōtorohanga College would like to extend a heartfelt ngā mihi nui to all the participating kura, students, staff, whānau, judges, volunteers and supporters who helped make the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival 2026 such a memorable and successful celebration.

A special thank you goes to the students and staff who worked behind the scenes to prepare the venue, organise performances, support visiting kura and ensure the day ran smoothly. Your mahi, commitment and willingness to contribute made a significant difference.

Most importantly, we celebrate the rangatahi who stood proudly before us and shared their culture with confidence and pride. Their passion and dedication are a reminder of the strength of our young people and the importance of providing opportunities for them to celebrate who they are and where they come from.

The Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival 2026 was a true celebration of our people, our cultures and our shared connections. We look forward to continuing to strengthen these relationships and creating more opportunities for our rangatahi to come together, learn from one another and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of our region.





Kapa Haka

Kapa Haka – Standing Strong In Our Identity

This year, Ōtorohanga College was proud to host the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival. Now in its 44th year, this special kaupapa brings secondary schools from across Maniapoto together to celebrate kapa haka, te ao Māori, whānau and our rangatahi. Each year the Festival moves to another Maniapoto kura and we were honoured to carry the kaupapa this year.

Ngā Tamariki Toa, our rōpū of 22 rangatahi, represented our kura with pride. For many, the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival was their first experience performing on stage, making their achievement even more special. Throughout the year they have grown in confidence, strengthened their connections and learnt the value of commitment, teamwork and standing together as a rōpū.

We are incredibly grateful to our tutors, Te Miri and Leighjyn Tamaki, both former Ōtorohanga College students, who returned to their kura to share their knowledge, experience and passion for kapa haka. Their dedication, guidance and belief in our rangatahi have been an important part of their journey.

A special thank you also goes to Reopiki, whose mahi and support alongside our tutors and rangatahi has been invaluable. We also acknowledge the many staff, whānau, supporters and helpers behind the scenes who gave their time, prepared kai, helped with organisation, costumes and logistics, supported practices and encouraged our rangatahi along the way. While not everyone was seen on the stage, their contribution helped make the journey possible.

The Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival has been about much more than the performance. It has given our rangatahi an opportunity to connect with their identity, whakapapa, culture and each other, while creating friendships, memories and experiences they can carry with them.

We are incredibly proud of the mahi, courage and commitment shown by our 22 rangatahi. Their journey is a reminder of what can happen when young people are given the opportunity, support and space to stand proudly in their culture.

It was a privilege to host The Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival and to see Ngā Tamariki Toa stand proudly for Ōtorohanga College, our whānau and our iwi. We now hand the kaupapa on to Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Taumarunui, who will be the next hosts of this 44-year Maniapoto tradition.

Ngā Tamariki Toa — 22 rangatahi, one rōpū, one kaupapa. Ngaa Mihi Mahana



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Pasifika

Pasifika – Connected By The Ocean, United By Culture

This year, our kura had the awesome opportunity to host the Maniapoto Secondary Schools Cultural Festival and we were really honoured to be part of such a special day.

Our Pasifika group was proud to take part and share the different cultures represented within our group. With five different Pacific cultures coming together, our members had the opportunity to showcase their own traditions, dances, music and cultural identity.

Although we come from different cultures, we have grown together as one Pasifika family. We have learned to appreciate and respect the differences that make each of our cultures unique, while also recognising the connections that bring us together.

Our performances were not only a celebration of who we are today, but also a way of honouring our ancestors. We carry their stories, traditions and teachings with us and through our performances, we hope to keep those cultural connections alive for future generations.

It was a proud moment for our group to stand together, represent our different cultures and share them with our wider community. Five cultures, one Pasifika family – connected through culture, respect, pride and the legacy of those who came before us.

Our ancestors gave us a gift – our language, our culture, our stories and our identity. It is now our responsibility to carry that gift forward.

We remember. We learn. We respect. We celebrate – and together, we carry our cultures forward.



Key Dates

Friday 25th September
Monday 12th October

End of Term Three
Term Four Starts

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