



Newsletter #14 - Te Pānui o te kura o Rāwhiti: 11th September 2025

E ara ake ana i te ūruhi
Rising Above The Ordinary

From The Principal - Te Pū kāea a te Tumuaki

Kia ora koutou e te whanau

Next Friday is my last official day as Foundation Principal of Rāwhiti School and this will be my last ever piece for a school newsletter!

I have been a school principal for 17 years and for the last 10 I have.....on most days...been proud to say “He tumuaki ahau ō te kura tuatahi ō Rāwhiti” – it is who I am. In fact it will be difficult to stop using that phrase, as ‘Review Officer for the Education Review Office’ does not translate anywhere near as well.

What motivated me to become the Foundation Principal of a new school? Looking back, I think it was my underlying passion to make a difference in education. I hadn’t received the best quality experience at either primary or secondary school in North Otago in the 1970’s, and so it seemed logical to enter a profession where I could possibly get an opportunity to make changes that would benefit others. I hope to use that same philosophy in me next role.

Leaving always comes with time for reflection and leaving well, as I have said to our Year 8 students for the past 10 years, takes courage. On reflection, I didn’t anticipate how huge this job would be - and perhaps that was a good thing! However, in saying that, starting a new school has been a life changing experience, and one that very few principals every get the opportunity to do.

The Establishment Board and leaders spent a great deal of time in 2015 creating an inspirational vision for the school – Rising Above The Ordinary – along with very clear beliefs and principles around teaching and learning. Despite many challenges and road blocks along the way, we have continued to passionately drive this vision into everything that we have done. I feel very proud that Rāwhiti is now recognised for its innovation and its achievements.



SEPTEMBER

- 11 Cauty. Winter Tournament
- 12 School Photos
- 16-18 Koru Games
- 17 PTA Juicies fundraiser
- 19 School Assembly 1:30pm
- 20 Last day of Term 3

20 Sept—5 Oct SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

OCTOBER

- 6 First day of Term 4
- 7 New entrant parent morning tea
- 15 Out of zone ballot closes
- 15 & 16 School Production
- 20 BOT meeting
- 22 PTA meeting

Reminder:
School Photos
TOMORROW

Friday 12
September



From The Principal continued ...

Over the past decade we have walked together through a school merger and rebuild, a mosque attack, social distancing, distance learning, bubbles, mask wearing and everything associated with a world wide pandemic. Our learning programmes have been based around annual concepts of substance, significance, and relevance, that help children to make connections and see a real purpose for their learning: Challenge, Power, Play, Identity, Connection, Growing, Belonging, Communication, Kaitiakitanga, Action and Celebration. We have celebrated our learning with art exhibitions, fundraising markets, our very own A&P show, whole school productions, science fairs, movie nights, games nights, and Matariki evenings. We have sung and danced, we have won and we have lost. We have laughed and cried.

We have grown into a school that is strong in its tikanga, a school that truly looks, sounds and feels like a school of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Thank you to you all - to my leadership team, my teachers and support staff, successive Boards, and the most beautiful and enriching tamariki who have let me share this small part of their story.

And now – for all us – things change – life goes on.

I have loved it here - it has been extraordinary!



From The Principal continued ...

Our Board

Like me, our current Board is in its last week of office. I would like to thank Cheryl Lineham, Thomas Parata, Jess Poff and Jody Hohaia O'Sullivan for their service to the school over this past three year term, and also acknowledge Lynette Money and Gareth Frew who stepped into co-opted positions this year.

While some may well be back around the Board table next term, Thomas and Cheryl are not standing for re-election and so their time with us is done.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge **Cheryl** who is stepping down after many years of dedicated service to the Rāwhiti School Board - the last 4 of those as Presiding Member. Cheryl has been a long-serving member of the Board, bringing her deep knowledge, steady leadership, and unwavering passion for ensuring the very best outcomes for the children of the east. She has guided the Board through times of change and growth, always with the wellbeing of tamariki at the heart of every decision. Her skill in governance, her ability to listen carefully, and her strong advocacy for both students and staff have been invaluable. She has consistently gone above and beyond to support the vision of Rāwhiti School and to strengthen the connections between school and community. Her legacy of service and passion for education will continue to have an impact long after her time on the Board.

We also take this opportunity to thank **Thomas**, who was co-opted back onto the Board three years ago to support us with the planning for our new bilingual build. Thomas has provided a unique Māori perspective to Board discussions and decisions, ensuring that tikanga and kaupapa Māori are meaningfully woven into the fabric of our school's future. His insight has challenged our thinking in positive ways and helped us to keep equity, identity, and belonging at the centre of our planning. We are deeply grateful for the knowledge, wisdom, and commitment Thomas has shared with us, and for the enduring contribution he has made to Rāwhiti School and our community.

And, Thank You Susan

At the end of this term we say goodbye and thankyou to one of our long-term teacher aides, Susan Banks, who is moving back up to New Plymouth to be near her family. Susan has given her time, energy, and heart to our tamariki, especially those who find certain aspect of school life a bit more of a struggle. Her gentle manner and steady presence has made a real difference for many students. We will miss her, and wish her all the best for her retirement.



**Ngā mihi nui,
Liz Weir**

A Farewell assembly for
Liz is being held
on **Friday, 19th
September, at
1:30pm**, you are
welcome to join us to
say goodbye.

Strum Strike Blow

Last week our Rāwhiti ukulele players joined over 1000 other students from across Canterbury for the annual Strum, Strike Blow concert. Thanks to our ukulele tutor Kate Husband for getting our students ready for this special performance.





Year 8 Maths Success

This term we have had 40 Year 8 students taking part in a Maths programme trial run by the Ministry of Education.

Over the past few weeks there has been a nationwide competition and our 40 students answered 12,242 questions. This places Rāwhiti School in second place overall, out of all the other schools on the programme.

*Ānō me he whare pūngāwerewere.
Behold, it is like the web of a spider*

School Production

Our studios are busy preparing their costumes, dances and items for our upcoming school production.

Make sure to mark the dates in your calendar! Tickets will be on sale from the beginning of Term 4. \$5 each.

ICAS results

Congratulations to the following students on their success in the recent ICAS examinations.

DigiTech

Credit - Maya Y3, Ted Y5, Amrin Y7, Will Y8
Merit - Ihaia Y7
Distinction - Jeremiah Y7, Niko Y7, Travis Y8

English

Credit - Ted Y5, Oliver Y6, Jeremiah Y7, Eliza Y8
Merit - Tawera Y4, Amrin Y7, Ihaia Y7
Distinction - Johanna Y3, Mattis Y6, Travis Y8

Science

Credit - Maya Y3, Amrin Y7, Jeremiah Y7

Maths - results not yet available



Senior Ski Trip

It was a fabulous day up at Mt Hutt for our Year 7 & 8 students for the annual ski trip. Students had a lesson, either learning skiing or snowboarding with the remainder of the day an opportunity to practise their new skills on the slopes.



Bandquest

Congratulations to our Rāwhiti band (Daimhin, Mayan, Mira, Ihaia and Maddie) who performed at the Rockshop Bandquest, alongside other primary and intermediate students at the Town Hall.



Year 4 Eastern Cluster Have a go Day

Last week our Year 4 students went to Rāwhiti Domain for the Eastern Community Sport and Recreation Inc Have a go afternoon.

The students joined with other local schools to have a taster of what Winter Sport could look like for them next year, trying many of the winter sport options, such as Ki-o-rahi, netball, touch, football, Capture the Flag and the community gardens.



Karawhiua!

Wacky Hair fun(d) raiser

A massive thank you from Te Reo o Rāwhiti, our student council for supporting our fun(d)raiser for Child Cancer NZ. It was awesome to see all the creative, wacky, bright and colourful hair and wigs around school. Your gold-coin contributions raised over \$300 for this worthy cause.



What's happening in the Juniors ...

Over the past few weeks in Papatūānuku, we have been busy preparing for the school production by creating kites for our special Kite Day scene. First, we planned and built the frames, then carefully cut fabric and cardboard to cover them. The best part came next: going wild with paint, glitter, cellophane, streamers, and wool to decorate! We can't wait to share our colourful creations with you all at the production.



In Rongo-mā-tāne we have been learning about important places and events in New Brighton. We took a trip around New Brighton and visited some of the places that we had learned about! We visited Thompson Park, walked past the beach, visited the Pier, and also had some time in the library. Now, we are using everything we have learned to create our production piece — and we can't wait for you to see it!



Talent Quest

The 2025 Talent quest was filled with fun entries and great acts. All of the fun filled acts were over 4 days, Monday 1st, Tuesday 2nd, Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th. The talent shows were running on 2nd breaks. Many students showed their amazing talents like their voices, dances and instrumental music. We had 3 age categories, year 1-3, year 4-6 and year 7-8, and we got a range of ages participating. For our amazing contestants we still had our prize winners for each category. For the 1-3's was Shayla, for the year 4-6's was Izzy, and for year 7-8's was The Lunatics / Zita, Eliza, Daisy, Mali, Pip and Tui. The prizes were tickets to the esteemed Ninja Valley. Overall the Talent quest went pretty well, and hopefully makes a return next year!

Paige & Eliza



PTA News



Welcome to the PTA corner, here we'll post any pānui (notices) and let you know how you can join, get in touch or help out.

Nau mai haere mai, welcome to any new members and friends of the Rāwhiti PTA! Anyone wishing to join or just curious, please come along to our **next PTA hui** for some kai and kōrero on **Wednesday 22nd October, 7pm** in the staff room, all welcome.



Riddle What do you call flowers who are great friends...?

Spring has arrived and with it the opportunity to celebrate the end of another rewarding school term! So please come join us beneath our fabulous new Rāwhiti School gazebo for a **Juicies fundraising event**.



2:45 – 3:15pm next Wednesday 17th
in front of the school buildings.
\$2 each, cash sales only.

A special thanks to our amazing Rāwhiti community and generous sponsors for your support in making this purchase possible. A huge thanks also to Chris Carey Smith from our PTA committee for designing and arranging the gazebo.

Any questions, suggestions or feedback for the PTA, we'd love to hear your whakaaro (thoughts)! So please email us at pta@rawhiti.school.nz. Our Executive Team members are Co-Chairs Brooke Frew and Bonne Beconsall, Treasurer Geoff Walker and Secretary Jess Brown. A copy of the PTA constitution and previous meeting minutes can be found at <https://www.rawhiti.school.nz/pta>

(ndle answer – best buds)

Kōhanga—Spring Learning Journey

The Te Ara Tūhura Leaders of Learning, in collaboration with students put together a range of activities for students to complete over the September holidays. The activities are based around Kōanga | Spring. You can find the activities on our [Kōhanga - Spring Site](#). In order to continue to focus on our strategic goal of increasing literacy by harnessing the power of the blogs, **Te Ara Tūhura students who blog more than three times over the holidays will be eligible for a certificate.**

Book Character Dress-Up

