WAKA KOTAHI COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER

TERM 1 WEEK 3 2026

ISSUE 9 JAN 26

PRINCIPAL'S COMMENT

WAKA KOTAHI COLLEGE

Kia ora whānau,

There is a real sense of momentum and calm across our school community at the start of this term. Students are back in classrooms, routines are settling, and conversations across our communities are beginning to take shape.

Over the holidays, our school leaders have been reflecting on what it means to be a Waka Kotahi community. We have asked the question what does it mean, and what does it look like, when we are at our best as a school community? This work is not about adding more programmes or initiatives. It is about being clear about our shared purpose, our values, and the way we work together so that our students are supported to learn and grow in ways that matter to them and their whānau.

Our term plans include a commitment to provide clear, consistent and meaningful information to our community. We want to be easier to work with, more responsive, and more authentic. Authentic learning communities are a powerful way to support student engagement and achievement, and we want our school to be a place where students can see themselves, their families and their communities in our work. We want our staff and our students to see our wider community as part of our learning environment, not something that happens after the bell rings or on weekends.

This weekend, I also had the opportunity to speak with our senior students about what it means to be a student at our school. My intent was for them to think about what they want their time here to be like, and what they want to be remembered for when they look back on their time at Waka Kotahi. Together, we are building something specific and meaningful, and our students need to be part of that conversation from the beginning.

Ka mihi nui, Ma Te Kotahitanga

Mr Jason Ngaheke-Ngatai

DID YOU KNOW?

Wed 28 October is Interdisciplinary Learning Day. Students will be working across a range of subjects on a theme that is relevant to our community. This year the theme is 'Kia Ora Kaitiakitanga'. Students will be exploring what it means to be a kaitiaki in their school community and in our Tauranga and Bay of Plenty region. Students will be working with local kaitiaki and organisations to explore how they can be kaitiaki in their own lives. Our community will have a chance to see the learning at the Waka Kotahi Kaitiaki Market and Live Auction the following Friday afternoon, 30 October from 2pm-4pm.

COMING UP

SMART Assessment Tool Information

Welcome to the new assessment tool that we are using this year. It is called SMART and it stands for Standardised Measurement & Reporting Tool. Assessment tool is a tool that we use to measure student learning and progress. Standardised means that everyone is using the same tool. Measurement means that we are able to see if students are making progress.

The following image has some additional information about what SMART is and why we are using it.

The last slide is presented in a slideshow form as follows:

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

YUMMY STICKERS FOR SPORTS GEAR

STICKERS FOR SPORTS GEAR

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS 14TH MAY 2PM-6PM

Kia ora whānau,

We are conducting Terms Breaks to raise funds for our students. We are selling Yummy Sticks for $2.

BOXING INVITE

REVENGE OF THE AMAZONS

SENIOR GEOGRAPHY TRIP

WAKATO UNI DAY

SCHOOL WIDE

DRIVER COACH

HOST FAMILIES WANTED

Head Students & Sports Honours Board: Community Support to help preserve our history

Our Head Students and Sports Honours Board are being refurbished and need your support to help preserve our school's history.

Our Head Students Board recognises the generosity and commitment of our senior students who wear the Head Student and Prefects Blazers - special pieces that will be passed down to future students. Our Sports Honours Board celebrates the achievements of our students in sport, including those who represent Bay of Plenty and Waka Kotahi colours at the highest level.

Over time, both boards have become worn and need restoration to ensure they can continue to honour our students for years to come.

Head Honours Boards: If you or your child/ren/grandchildren/family member served as a Head Student, Prefect, Sports Captain or Sports Honours Board recipient, we invite you to contribute to the restoration. Any amount, big or small, helps ensure this history is preserved for future students.

Please contact Mr Ngaheke-Ngatai (Principal) or Mr Tapsell (Deputy Principal) if you have any questions or would like to discuss how you can support this initiative.

Donations can be made via the school office or through the school bank account:

- Bank: 02-0824-0107-00-000
- Reference: Your surname + HB (for Head Boards) or SB (for Sports Boards)

Thank you for your generosity in helping us keep our school's history alive for generations to come.

PARENT CORNER

SCHOOL BRIDGE APP: Stay connected. Stay informed. Keep it simple

Getting started is easy:

STEP 1 – Download the SchoolBridge App from the App Store or Google Play and open it on your phone.

STEP 2 – Tap "Sign Up" and enter your email address and mobile number. We'll send you a verification code to confirm it's you.

STEP 3 – Choose your child's school from the list and enter the school code provided by your child's teacher or school. Once you are in, you can add other children from your family at any time.

The app will then ask you to allow notifications – we recommend you do this so you don't miss anything important.

Your newsletter can also be found in the app under "Feed"