

## End of Year Leaders Prize Giving Speech by Luke Dymond - Head Student

Ladies and gentlemen, students, teachers, parents, and honoured guests, I am humbled, and it is with a sense of nostalgia that I stand before you today. As we gather here for this special occasion, we are not just celebrating the achievements of our school year; we are commemorating a journey that has spanned over a decade for many of us. This school has been our second home, our sanctuary of knowledge, and a place where friendships were forged, lessons were learned, and unforgettable memories were created. Today, we not only honour our academic successes but also the enduring bonds we have formed with our classmates, teachers, and all those who have supported us throughout our educational voyage. So, let us come together to acknowledge the past, celebrate the present, and look forward to the bright futures that await us all. Thank you for joining us on this special day.

As of now, I've been in this school for 11 years from Year 2 in D3 back in 2012 and now I'm standing here as an 18 year old Year 13 student, which is quite surreal to me so I thought now would be a good time to share a few key moments in my high school life that I feel matter the most to me:

An unforgettable episode during my time at school was my second academy trip to Piha in 2021. The backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic added a unique twist to the experience. After my first day of surfing competition, our plans took an unexpected turn when it was announced that Auckland was going into lockdown.

Pandemonium ensued as the entire academy rushed onto the bus, desperately trying to make it back home before the midnight lockdown deadline to avoid being stranded in Auckland. However, our already unfortunate circumstances took a turn for the worse when, just ten minutes outside Raglan, the bus tyres suddenly burst, leaving us stranded at 1 a.m. in the middle of nowhere.

In a stroke of good fortune, a Raglan shuttle miraculously came to our rescue, picking us up and helping us reach safety, while Dean and Larry had to go back at 4am in an attempt to save the poor bus.



My Year 12 camp was an unforgettable chapter in my school life. The memory of Ollie Greetis and I being catapulted out of a raft amidst a cascading waterfall still makes me chuckle, and that was merely the inception of our adventure. Despite not being able to do the Tongariro crossing as planned, due to bad weather I feel that didn't matter because the true essence of that trip lay in the profound camaraderie I experienced with my fellow Year 12 students and teachers. It was a remarkably close-knit group, and I believe this sense of togetherness is something truly exceptional at Raglan Area School, which we might occasionally overlook or take for granted.

Something I learned from these two experiences was that you see the true colours of people and community in the midst of a bad situation. I don't think these trips would've necessarily been as memorable if everything went smoothly and I don't think the relationships I made or strengthened would've happened. So if there's something to take away from those stories it's that sometimes it's crucial to find the silver lining in situations as you may never take away those great memories if you don't look for the good.

Lastly, serving as the Head Boy at our school stands as a pivotal moment in my life. Initially, I grappled with the weight of the new responsibilities that came with this role, as I had never held such a significant position before. However, as the year unfolded, I've come to appreciate this role immensely. I firmly stand by the belief that delivering the ANZAC speech was one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life. The privilege of addressing veterans, paying homage to their sacrifices, and expressing my gratitude was an unforgettable and cherished opportunity.

But above all, the privilege of representing each one of you has been a profound honour. Despite my inevitable stumbles and missteps along the way, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support I have received from you all.

I would also like to show my respect for all the teachers that have helped me along the way through my school life. Particularly to all those here but also to the ones who have come and gone from this school and have taught me at some point in time. Because by no means am I a perfect student I am a terrible procrastinator yet I somehow manage to rush my work at the same time it's a strange duality. But I would like to give a special thanks to Dean and Larry who have guided me through many of the ups and downs of my school life. I would also like to thank the rest of Year 13 students who've often been great friends to me through much of my schooling and for some of them my whole school life. Lastly I would also like to thank the other members of our school including the office staff and caretakers who have come and gone over the years. Or our teacher



aids like Deilyn, Rangi and Lance just to name a few who have offered an unique insight that sometimes teachers didn't have

Just before I finish I would like to offer a small bit of advice. To those staying savour the moment... school only happens once and no matter how much you may hate or love it, it'll be gone soon and I think it will be a part of your life you will fondly remember. To those leaving don't change and be yourself you guys are all awesome people.

He urunga,he uranga panekeneke (A human pillow is a slipper pillow) rely upon yourself