

PRINCIPAL'S PĀNUI #9

3 SEPTEMBER 2025

THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Yesterday, leaders and teachers from across the Elim schools and our proprietors gathered to begin a review of our Special Character, the very foundation of Elim Christian College.

At the beginning of the day, we reflected on the whakataukī (proverb):

Popoia te kākano kia puāwai | Nurture the seed and it will bloom

It framed our day beautifully. In Matthew 13, Jesus shares a parable of a sower whose seeds fall on different types of soil—some unable to take root, others flourishing in good ground. It's a reminder that the conditions we create matter. Seeds don't grow on their own; they need thoughtful care, fertile soil, and time to flourish.

As we reflected on our shared mission, the metaphor grew richer. Each of our schools across Tāmaki Makaurau is a part of this garden. For over 30 years—since the first Elim school opened in East Auckland—we have been sowing seeds of faith, knowledge, and character into the lives of young people. That legacy was brought to life as we heard from one of the first Christian Living teachers. Their story reminded us just how faithfully this work has been carried forward.

But yesterday wasn't just about looking back. As we reviewed our Special Character together, it became clear that we are also tending the future. The legacy we've inherited is not static—it's alive, and we are its current caretakers. The work of our kaiako and leaders today is shaping the soil in which future seeds will be planted.

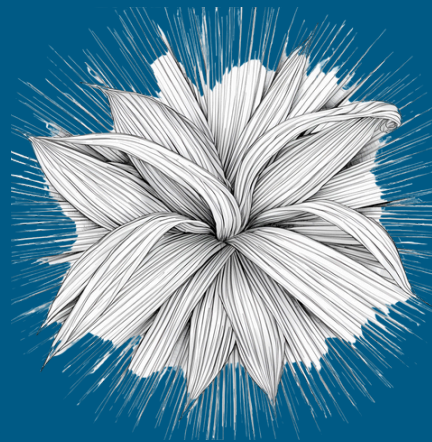
And this is not work we do alone. Just as a thriving garden requires many hands, so too does the nurturing of our schools' Special Character. Education is not something done to someone, but with them. It's a partnership—between teacher and learner, school and whānau, past and future.

So I want to invite you—our wider community—into this journey. Let's continue to tend this garden together with love, wisdom, and shared purpose, trusting that what we plant today will flourish in the lives of our tamariki for generations to come.

BOARD ELECTIONS – VOTE AWAY!

As we reflect on legacy and the shared work of cultivating our school community, it's also timely to remember that shaping the future happens in many ways. One of those is through the Board elections, where we appoint those who will help steward our school's vision and direction.

Voting is now open with both electronic and paper options available. This will close next Friday with the announcement happening just ahead of the term break. If you haven't yet received your voting information, or if you're unsure about the process, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your voice matters, and your vote plays a part in shaping what comes next.



GROWING GREAT LEADERS

At Elim, we believe that shaping the future starts with shaping our culture—and one of the most powerful ways we see that happening is through student leadership. From library monitors to house captains, games leaders to tech helpers, our ākonga step into roles of service and responsibility that help our community thrive.

But perhaps even more powerful is the way leadership often grows naturally, through relationship. In the spirit of tuakana-teina, the reciprocal relationship between older and younger, our students model care, guidance, and learning that goes both ways. It's not unusual to see Takahē students quietly leading the way for younger peers, or to witness moments where younger students, in turn, show insight, courage, or kindness that inspires those around them.

This organic leadership, which stretches across year levels and beyond formal roles, speaks deeply to the kind of community we are building—a place where everyone has something to offer, and where legacy is shaped not only by what we teach, but by how we live and lead together.