

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 2 November 2016, 6.00 pm, school staffroom

Present: Mark Brown, Annette Gittos, Julie Bennett, Victoria Esson, Lucy Kebbell, Kelvin Harper, Karen O'Leary and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Daniel Petersen

1. Karakia

2. Previous minutes and actions

12 October 2016 minutes were approved with minor amendment (moved ANNETTE/seconded LUCY)

Action items were reviewed and updated as required.

The Board agreed that Karen O'Leary be co-opted to the Newtown School Board of Trustees until the next Board election (moved ANNETTE /seconded LUCY)

ACTION: Kelvin to ensure Karen can access google drive docs.

3. Conflicts of interest

No new conflicts declared.

The Board considered how to manage Kelvin's conflict of interest as a staff member and his relationship with Mark Brown. It was agreed that Kelvin will not take part in any performance management discussions relating to the Principal or a staff member at the same level (or above) as him.

4. Enrolment scheme

The Board discussed the draft material prepared for the consultation with the school community, on both the proposed enrolment scheme and the French language bilingual unit. Issues covered included:

- The Ministry of Education has provided comments on some of the enrolment scheme documents. Some minor modifications to the proposed home zone have been made as a result (taking into account, for instance, the Mt Cook school zone).
- The need to use consistent and correct terminology in the documents (eg parents and whanau caregivers, rather than just “parents”, gender-neutral terms, and no plurals for words in Te Reo).
- The maximum proposed student numbers for the special programmes (Maori immersion - 50 seems about right, and 25 initially for the proposed French language bilingual unit), and the draft priority criteria for entry into the Maori immersion unit.
- Clarification about maximum student numbers and class space numbers that would be funded by the Ministry of Education under an enrolment scheme, as this wasn't clear from the discussion at the last Board meeting.

ACTION: Mark to follow up with the Ministry of Education, seeking clarification about maximum student numbers and class space numbers that would be funded by the Ministry under an enrolment scheme.

- The tight time frame for community consultation (within a four-week period of time), if a scheme is to be in place in time for the beginning of 2017. It is important that the Board clearly communicates with the community about the scheme, and any scope for modifying the scheme based on community feedback - for instance, that the Board is consulting on the boundaries of the home zone, rather than whether or not we put in place a scheme. The Board will also seek views on the proposed French language bilingual unit. The consultation material will need to be communicated using a range of channels (options include email, Facebook, website, paper copies for sending home and that are available at the office, possibly two meetings - one after school, and one in the evening, and a survey using an online survey tool). Additional admin support will be required to manage the consultation process.

ACTION: Annette to finalise a draft of the consultation material, including a covering letter setting out the key proposals in plain language, with appendices detailing the proposed zone (description and map), and the proposed French language bilingual unit, and circulate these to the Board. Mark to work on the detailed map, and will feed through any material to the Ministry.

5. Policy

Lucy is still working on the Policy Framework, but has completed the Policy Map which highlights policies that are missing from google docs, what policies are current, and what policies will likely need to be updated.

6. Principal's report

Mark tabled his report, and the interim national standards achievement and progress report. Issues discussed included:

- The report on the analysis of the interim national standards results (a snapshot as at August 2016). The majority of students are on track to meet the national standards (writing, mathematics and reading). Particular areas of strength were highlighted, especially in reading. There is a gap in writing, although there are some exceedingly talented writers in Newtown school. Mark indicated that the amount of time spent on unsupervised journal writing, compared to structured teaching time, will need to be looked at. A comprehensive breakdown of final achievement data will be available for the Board at the December meeting, including an analysis of the impact of acceleration and targeted programmes.
- The school is in the process of advertising, interviewing and recommending new teaching appointments. Board members observed that cultural and gender diversity across the teaching staff is highly desirable.
- Three staff members are leaving this term - Sarah T, Rachel and Billy. At least one member of the Board will plan to be present at the final assembly on Friday 16 December 2016.
- Staff have identified key priorities for 2017, which include written language, learner support (the new term for special needs), accelerated learning, aspects of teachers teaching together, and delivery of the new Newtown School curriculum. Consultation on the health curriculum needs to take place. Nicki will present on the Newtown School curriculum at the next Board meeting.

7. Draft charter (strategic and annual plan) 2017

Mark reported that the school has a 2015-17 Charter in place, but he signalled that the Board needs to look at this again next year. A survey of the school community (including teachers and students) was undertaken to inform the current Charter, and this may be an approach the Board considers undertaking again in 2017. In addition, there is an annual plan in place.

The Board discussed the following possible priority areas:

- supporting children with learning difficulties or different learning needs (some further work needs to be done to describe this group of students, and actions to address their needs)
- making the Maori immersion unit an integral and active part of the school community
- revamp of PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) and effective approaches to student management
- meeting the needs of students in a holistic way (for example, mentoring, buddying, social work type approach where appropriate)

8. Finance and property

Victoria circulated the Finance and Property Report, dated 2 November 2016. The report noted the expenditure for the month of September 2016 of \$64,934. At 75% of the calendar year, we have spent 66% of budget, and have received 82% of the budgeted income, so the school is in a positive financial position.

Victoria tabled the governance reports for Newtown School dated 31 September 2016 from Education Services.

Other points noted included:

- there is a small increase in FANS balance, up to \$9,180.
- the 2017 budget is in development, and will be presented to the Board at the December meeting.

In terms of the property report, it was noted that:

- drinking fountains are being installed around Whanau Tui and near the swimming pool.
- teachers are considering furniture options for the new school spaces.
- an engineer's report on the pool had been received. Structural issues have been identified with the southern wall, which has stalled the project until term 2 and 3 next year.
- two quotes have been received for the adventure playground. Mark noted that the main issue is that the equipment meets the relevant safety standards (especially rubber matting and drainage) - a safety audit will be part of the process. We need to retain the majority of the existing playground, as to replace it would cost upwards of \$200,000. The Board agreed to go with Numat (moved VICTORIA/seconded KAREN), as the price was more realistic. They can start around 16 December and be finished by Term 1 next year.
- a gardener has been employed on a fixed hourly rate (for the short term), starting immediately.
- there are ongoing issues with children's toilets (they are unhygienic), but solutions are being looked into.

9. New build

Four building companies are scooping the school site for the new build. The Board will have input into the tender process and selection of the successful contractor. The Riddiford Street entrance is being reviewed to ensure it provides for student and community safety.

10. Maori medium

Mark reported that the last whanau hui was well attended, and the whanau affirmed the positive direction of Ngati Kotahitanga. Mark observed that there has been a dramatic increase in level of student achievement in Te Reo.

11. Health and safety

Julie reported that Darrell Smith has agreed to be the parent rep for the health and safety sub-committee. Kelvin volunteered to be the teacher rep.

10. Any other business/correspondence

Update of FANS - picking up some traction. Looking at unpacking the roles and finding more people to be involved. One possible option is for mirror portfolios to be established to help provide parent input into the work of the Board.

There needs to be a mechanism for issues or concerns raised in a FANS meeting to be fed through to the Board. Ideally there should always be a Board rep present - Karen volunteered to attend.

Mark mentioned that a parent of a child that is starting at Newtown School is a professional fundraiser and is keen to be involved in fundraising for the school.

Update on the dyslexia working group - next step is to arrange a meeting with the educational psychologist.

12. In-Committee: Personnel Matters

The Board moved into committee at 9:02 pm, and moved out of committee at 9:19 pm.

Next meeting: 7 December 2016 at 6 pm

 7/Dec 2016

