

**Newtown School Board of Trustees**

**Meeting minutes**

Wednesday 28 March 2018, 6.15 pm, school staffroom

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Present: Annette Gittos, Mark Brown, Julie Bennett, Lucy Kebbell, Kelvin Harper, Victoria Esson, Nicki Read (items 1 - 4), Sally Hunter (items 1 - 4), Jess Gorman (items 4 -8) and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Karen O'Leary and Daniel Petersen.

**1. Previous Minutes and Actions**

The minutes of the 28 February 2018 Board meeting were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

**2. Conflicts of interest**

None declared.

**3. Literacy Focus presentation**

Nicki updated the Board on the work she has been leading on writing and literacy at Newtown School. It's all about sharpening the teaching practice across the school.

The work started with asking the teaching staff lots of questions. For example, the school has seen transformative results in maths, but not so much in literacy and writing. What's the difference in the school's delivery of maths and can any of this be applied to literacy? How are teachers assessing literacy, - is this the right way to assess the subject? Are teachers actually applying the best practice? What stops learners from loving writing? What is the impact on literacy of English being a second language for so many students? What more can be done? As a result of this discussion, teachers were challenged to try something different in their approach to teaching literacy.

The next phase of the work was the teachers inquiry process - Nicki has observed all staff across the school delivering the literacy curriculum. This resulted in discussion with individual staff members around what is going well, and what can be tried that is a bit different. The different approach is then

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tried with one child initially, to observe the impact of the different approach, before applying it more broadly across the class.

Nicki observed that purpose and pace are both important. Why do we “do” writing, and for what purpose? And how to we maintain the children’s motivation, and keep the pace right so that ideas can flow, even when time runs out?

The Board was very supportive of the work that has been undertaken, and invited Nicki to come back in Term 2 to provide a further update.

#### **4. Inclusive practices**

Sally provided an overview of the 2017 inclusive practices survey. Students, staff and the school community were surveyed. Sally observed that there was a low response rate from the school community to the online survey - less than 50 - which means that the results are unlikely to be representative.

The survey results do, however, indicate that progress has been made since the last survey was conducted in 2014, especially in the areas of including all learners, inclusive enrollment procedures, and inclusive leadership. The results also identify areas to focus on, including better identifying student strengths and cultural responsiveness.

Sally discussed with the Board the range of measures that have been implemented since the 2014 survey, and next steps to address the areas of focus highlighted by the survey results.

Board members commented that it was difficult to see the results in the graphs that were presented (as they were blurry), and the differences in results across the three groups that were surveyed were not possible to determine.

**ACTION: Sally to see if the results of the inclusive practices survey can be presented in a more legible form, and which show any differences in responses across the three groups that were surveyed.**

## **5. School mural project**

Jess and Victoria provided an update on the school mural project. A FANS subcommittee identified three sites around the school to focus on for the first tranche of murals. A call for proposals was circulated through a number of channels, with four proposals received. The subcommittee was unanimous in agreeing that the proposal from Michel Tuffery and Charles Williams was the preferred option.

The Board had previously agreed to underwrite the mural project, up to the cost of \$15,000. The preferred proposal comes at a cost of \$10,000 (excluding GST) for the commission. The school would need to provide the materials, scaffolding etc, which would be an additional cost. The artists indicated that they would involve children in the process. The aim for the mural to be completed in time for the new school opening.

The Board approved the proposal to engage Michel Tuffery and Charles Williams to complete the mural.

Jess indicated that she is applying for a grant to cover the costs of the preferred option. The application is due on Friday. The Board discussed who in the local community could be approached to support the grant application. Jess also needs a copy of the school's financial accounts and a bank account deposit form to accompany the application.

Victoria also mentioned that she is going to explore a "boosted" campaign (which is similar to Give a Little, but for art projects).

## **6. Finance**

### *Budget 2018*

Victoria clarified that a draft budget was circulated in December with an invitation for Board members to provide her with any comments. The budget now has to be loaded into the system. Some reforecasting will need to be completed in June to account for some unexpected expenditure items.

Last year's accounts have been provided to the auditor. The school will need to prepare an annual report.

The Board noted expenditure for the month of February 2018 of \$66,846. Victoria pointed out that the school is carrying slight deficit for the month, and the year to date, due to a timing variance in the receipt of the operating grant.

The working capital balance is looking healthy, which will cover furniture etc for the new build.

There was some discussion about the FANS balance.

**ACTION: Mark to ensure that money coming in and going out of the FANS account is coded correctly.**

#### *Financial delegations*

The financial delegations need to be approved on an annual basis.

**ACTION: Victoria to circulate the financial delegations for the Board's approval.**

## **7. Principal's report**

Mark tabled his monthly report to the Board. Items discussed included:

- There has been a strong growth in junior school numbers. Mark anticipates that two additional teachers in whanau Tui will be required.
- Whanau organisation - Kelvin provided an update. Leadership roles - communication, learner achievement (assessment) and learning (curriculum delivery) - are being shared across the whanau teachers. There are also a number of "action teams" across the school programme (including curriculum design, cultural responsiveness, arts, enviro crew, digital technology, and sports).
- Teacher only day (Thursday before Easter) - will be used to affirm key messages for the transition to the new building, and planning for the move after Queen's Birthday weekend.
- Ethnic groups - Mark provided some breakdowns of the student numbers according to their ethnicities. Asian and African communities are growing, similar in size now to Maori and Pacific communities. Pakeha is still largest group. Around 100 students have English as a second language (there is some additional teacher aide support funding from MOE - around \$60,000) - which raises issues of how the school communicates with families in this group.
- RTLB referrals - the delays in getting support for some children at risk is frustrating.

- Swimming pool - meeting with WCC has been planned, on 11 April 2018, to get the project moving forward.
- Craig from School Branding Matters has visited the school to discuss options for displaying the school values.
- Reporting to parents in 2018 - with the National Standards having been disestablished, the school will now report twice yearly on children's progress and achievement against the New Zealand curriculum. The school will still use PACT, but will be referring to expectations in relation to the levels/progressions in the New Zealand curriculum.
- New school build - the new building schedule has a completion date of 31 May 2018. Planning to move in after Queen's Birthday weekend. The old boiler room will be converted into the caretakers shed. The car park will be done in July, and the junior playground will be built after 1 June (will be fenced off). Prefabs will then be removed (except two that will remain) over a period of about a month. There will be a period of at least three weeks for the furniture to "off-gas". The kapa haka uniforms will be available in time for the opening.
- A blessing will happen on 1 June at dawn, before the school occupies the building, with an official opening being held at a later date. The Ministry of Education is aware of opening.

## **8. Committee reports**

### *Health and Safety*

Waiting for Trish to become more settled, and Melissa on board, before holding a meeting of the Health and Safety subcommittee.

### *Dyslexia*

Mark indicated that subcommittee members should expect an invite.

### *Property*

The playground matting needs fixing. Mark is chasing this up (the matting is still under guarantee).

## **9. In-Committee**

The Board moved into committee at 9:11 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board and moved out of committee at 9:30 pm.

Next meeting: 2 May 2018

