

## **Newtown School Board of Trustees**

### **Meeting minutes**

Wednesday 27 June 2018, 6.30 pm, school staffroom

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Present: Annette Gittos; Mark Brown; Lucy Kebbell; Kelvin Harper; Julie Bennett; Victoria Esson; Daniel Petersen; Jude Ball (items 1 - 3); Nicki Read; and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: none

#### **1. Previous Minutes and Actions**

The minutes of the 30 May 2018 Board meeting were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

#### **2. Teacher Inquiry Process**

Nicki tabled a report on the work she has been leading over the last six months on the teacher inquiry process, curriculum design and curriculum content. The overall purpose of the work is to sharpen teaching practice at Newtown School. Nicki observed that:

- There is a collective focus on direction, and a deepening of thinking about “how we can do it better”. There is cohesion within and across whanau, with Nicki commenting that teachers are being stronger, braver and more robust about what they are teaching. Teachers have a “critical friend” - a staff member from outside of the whanau that they can have robust but challenging discussions with about the individual teacher’s teaching practice. Encourages lots of reflection.

- They are trying a new teacher inquiry and appraisal model, which came out of the ERO review. Teachers are focusing on an aspect of writing practice, and focussing on how that works for one child over a short period of time. The purpose is to identify teacher actions that have the most positive impact on learning. Staff have been positive about this process, and have valued the time they have given it.
- An analysis of teachers' reflections have fed into next steps.
- New models of whanau leadership has allowed all teachers to develop their leadership skills, and reduced burn-out (which happened with the previous model of one whanau leader).
- ELA trained teacher aides have increased confidence in programme content, and all teacher aides have an hour of PD each fortnight.
- There have been less negative behavioural incidents - pre-empting and coming alongside before behaviour becomes an issue has been an effective approach.
- The Leaders of Learning team have been asking helpful questions that challenge thinking about the curriculum.
- There has been a focus on developing Te Reo in teaching staff and students. Two recently-appointed teachers have strengths in Te Reo. Taiaha and kapa haka continue, with confidence and participation increasing. The Board asked whether taiaha could be offered to the girls. There was also a suggestion that students be given the opportunity to learn about local iwi and local history.

**ACTION: Daniel to have a talk to Susie about options that girls may be interested in - poi, karakia etc.**

### **3. WCC submission - Newtown Transport Corridor**

Jude Ball provided an update about the WCC consultation on the Newtown Transport Corridor. The Council wants to know what local people value about their community, how they get around etc. It's important that the school contributes to the conversation - in particular, the school has a role to advocate for the children and safe commuting options.

Jude commented that there has been some media coverage about "chaos at school gates". The general feeling is that it's not safe for children to travel to school by themselves.

A meeting of parents was held, and from the discussion Jude pulled the ideas together into a submission that was circulated in the school newsletter. The submission supports the project as a whole (to improve cycling infrastructure, thinking about sustainability, healthy transport options, safety). "Hotspots" were identified, where safety is an issue and designated crossings are required.

Feedback on the draft submission was invited. So far around 8 or 9 emails have been received with constructive suggestions for things to include. Jude will reflect these in the submission.

The Board was very supportive of the submission, and thanked Jude for her work on the issue. Jude will finalise the submission, and circulate it to the Board for approval.

### **4. Māori medium**

Daniel reported on the recent hui for whanau of Ngati Kotahitanga. The blessing of the new building was discussed. Fraesar has volunteered to be the whaikōrero for the occasion. Daniel indicated that his

taiaha class, which practices on Thursday afternoons, has offered to help will help move resources into new school building on 5 July.

The Board discussed the Māori name that had recently been gifted to the school from Te Ati Awa - Te Kura o Ngā Puna Waiora. This name is similar to the name of the hospital (Ngā Puna Waiora). The name relates to the two stream beds that flow beneath both the hospital and the school. Daniel indicated that the whanau of Ngati Kotahitanga really like the name.

There was some discussion about whether another name had been gifted to the school by local iwi some years ago. Mark commented that they have been unable to discover any other name - Hine has been associated with the school for 30 years and is not aware of any earlier name that was gifted.

Some Board members were concerned that the name creates an association with the hospital when the school doesn't have a relationship with it (for instance, children of hospital staff are unable to attend the school unless they also live within the school zone). The naming committee in the iwi wouldn't have been aware of the zoning issue. Daniel pointed out that the name relates to geographical features of the area, not the hospital itself.

The Board agreed that the school should use the name Te Kura o Ngā Puna Waiora.

**ACTION: Mark to report back to the Board in due course about plans for launching and using the Te Reo name for the school - Te Kura o Ngā Puna Waiora.**

Lucy commented that it was great to have some new parents from Ngati Kotahitanga come to the last FANS meeting. The concerns raised by the parents, including that they didn't have a welcome pack or induction to Ngati Kotahitanga, they didn't know about whanau hui, or that Daniel is the Ngati

Kotahitanga rep on the Board, and that there was a lack of information about Ngati Kotahitanga on the school website, had been fed back to the school.

Mark indicated that the school does have a welcome pack in Te Reo, that was developed about three years ago, which he is trying to locate. This would form a basis for additional information to be included on the school website.

The Board asked that they be kept up-to-date about Ngati Kotahitanga whanau hui - when they are coming up, who attended, what was discussed, any issues arising and how those issues are being addressed.

**ACTION - Mark to invite Fraesar to attend a Board meeting to provide an update about Ngati Kotahitanga.**

**ACTION - School website to be updated to include more information about Ngati Kotahitanga.**

**ACTION - Board to be kept informed about Ngati Kotahitanga whanau hui.**

## **5. PaCT report**

The report on mid-year PaCT results is in draft, but will be finalised in time for the July Board meeting. Annette asked for the report to include a summary of key findings (school-wide and within each whanau - highlighting areas of particular strength, or weakness). The Board also wants to see information about the particular areas the school is targeting for improvement, and any progress in these areas since last year.

**ACTION: Report on mid-year PaCT results to be circulated to the Board in time for the July meeting.**

## **6. Annual Plan**

Annual plan, which had been circulated to Board members, was approved unanimously by the Board.

It's a living document, so can be updated to address emerging issues.

## **7. New school building**

Mark observed that there is a lot of work to be completed on the new building before the completion date of 5 July 2018. Naylor Love has confirmed at recent site meetings that they will be ready to hand the building over by that date. They are in "defect improvement mode" - putting right some of the issues that have been identified. Asphaltting will take place Tuesday and Wednesday next week (3-4 July). The gas is not yet connected, so the "off gassing" will have to take place during the school holidays.

From the first Monday of school holidays, the prefabs will be removed. The school needs to be out of the prefabs by 3 pm 6 July. The sites will be cleared and secured with new fencing. One tree by the bike cage will need to be removed to enable the prefabs to be removed. Stage 2 completed by 27 August.

Photos had been circulated to Board members of the handrails attached to the balustrades on the second story of the new school building, which have been identified as a health and safety issue (as a child could potentially climb these and risk falling). These concerns have been raised with the project team, who responded that they are required by the building code. Julie has looked into the issue, and is of the view that the building code has been misinterpreted. Julie has pointed the issue out to the Council - an inspector will be on site on 28 June, and during the last week of term as we need a certificate of

public use (CPU) from the Council. If the Council does approve the handrail, then the contractor won't take them down. The school can, however, remove the handrails from the access ways but will have to cover the costs of this work. Julie recommended that the handrails are removed before the second story is occupied.

Official opening - the Ministry of Education is suggesting week 9 or 10 of next term for the official opening.

#### **8. Communications Strategy/Plan**

The current Communications Plan, from 2016/17, needs refreshing. Mark and Trish are working on these. Lucy indicated that she is happy to be involved.

**ACTION: Mark to come back to the Board in July with a refreshed comms plan and strategy.**

#### **9. Principal's report**

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

- Mark reported on a successful recruitment round (these decisions have already been announced to the school community) - Julia Harris will replace Rebecca. Julia is the Junior School Leader at Mt Cook school, where she has been for the past 10 years. Louise Cornwell will be Laura's replacement - Louise comes from Houghton Valley school and starts in week 3 of next term. Toby will job share with Melaina Meyers (formerly from Clyde Quay School) for the rest of the year. Mitch Jordan (formally from Owhiro Bay School) will fill the roll growth position in Whanau Tui for the remainder of this year. Ann Kendall will replace Tim while he is on leave for Terms 3 and 4.

- Swimming pool - the funding application is now part of the WCC ten year plan. Two councillors are concerned that the school will be getting around \$430,000 when the school hasn't done a substantial fundraising effort (this is because the school didn't think it needed to, as we thought we had the Council funding). Our local councillor is supporting our school. The decision on the funding is due by the end July. The school may also have to looking into alternative funding also (prices continue to increase significantly).
- Communities of Learning (COL) - the change manager has worked with the schools on the vision and purposes of the COL, and the areas in which the COL will collaborate. The next step is to appoint a Lead Principal for the COL - the appointments process requires the formation of an Appointments Committee comprising of principals and Board representatives. A meeting is scheduled for 2 July 2018 to finalise the appointments committee. If a principal intends to apply for the lead role, s/he will not be eligible to be appointed to the committee. Mark indicated that he is not interested in applying to the lead role, but would be interested in co-sharing the position. After some discussion, the Board agreed to the following motion: The Board agrees that a Board representative and its principal will attend the meeting on 2nd July to finalise the composition and membership of an Appointments Committee to undertake the appointments process. The Board understands that the principal will not be eligible to be part of the Appointments Committee and that the Board representative will be confirmed as part of the Appointments Committee at this meeting, since they will be the continuing employer if their principal is appointed to the lead role.
- Potential strike on afternoon of 15 August 2018 - if the strike goes ahead, the Board agreed that the school will close at 12.30 pm (all teachers are union members, so there will be insufficient teaching staff to supervise students). Parents will need to be notified as soon as any strike action has been announced.



## **10. Committee reports**

### *Finance*

The Board noted the expenditure for the month of May 2018 of \$74,091. Year-to-date (YTD) expenditure is \$370,955 against a budget of \$880,913, a positive variance of \$583,222. Items highlighted included administration (\$112,147, or 81% of budget), property maintenance (\$48,942, 25% representing some deferred expenditure related to the new build), depreciation (\$37,554, 41%) and learning resources (\$172,312, 38%).

YTD income is \$372,974 against budget of \$797,152.

Overall there is a positive variance of \$85,780 due to increased grant allocation.

The actual available funds (i.e. In the bank) at 30 April 2018 \$431,055 – against budgeted amount of \$72,530 due to capital allocation for furniture and fittings.

FANS monies: Current balance of \$608.00 – the fee for the mural has been incorrectly deducted from the FANS account. A journal entry will need to be made to correct this.

The Board noted that signatories for the school bank account need to be changed to reflect the new administration structure. The Board resolved that the signatories be Jill Forbes, Mark Brown, Melissa Kooiman and Patricia Tuthill and that all other signatories are to be removed (approved unanimously).

Mural update: Ellen Coupe has estimated \$4000 - \$4,500 for the proposed mural. The design has yet to be submitted.

Lighting for the new mural, at a cost of around \$2,000, can be covered by furniture and fittings budget.

Victoria indicated that depreciation will need to increase next year, and that there was a note from the auditors about the need to increase the budget for next year.

#### *Policy*

Lucy reported that Kelvin has identified a service - SchoolDocs - that produces school policies, which can be customised for the school. The cost is around \$1,500 p.a. Board members were encouraged to look at the SchoolDocs website. While it might involve quite a lot of work initially, it will make it easier to locate policies (which is currently a problem for Newtown school) and keep them up-to-date.

**ACTION: Discuss the option of SchoolDocs at the next Board meeting.**

#### *Health and Safety*

Julie tabled a report for the Board's consideration. She raised concerns about the Board not having sufficient assurances that the health and safety policies that are in place are being effectively implemented. While the GOSH system, discussed at last month's Board meeting, would address a number of issues, it could take some time until it is up and running, and the Board needs some other reporting and assurance mechanisms in the meantime.

In particular, Julie recommended that:

- The Board receive monthly statistics about the number and type of incidents that have been reported.
- The hazard register, currently located in Google Docs, is shared with all staff, and that Trish should take a look at the register once a week. Any hazards identified during the hazard audit of the new building should be included in the hazard register.
- "Off gassing" of the new building take place during the first week of the school holidays. This involves turning the heaters on (so that the inside temperature reaches between 20 - 22

degrees) and opening the windows. Julie pointed out that monitoring of VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) started on 20 June, and that levels exceed the guidelines, but that it is still a building site.

- Risk management plans are in place for ORS children and children with severe behaviours.
- Going forward, there should be a focus on the health and safety of staff, and personal development of staff in health and safety.

#### *Dyslexia*

A meeting of the dyslexia working group has taken place. A report is being prepared for the Board that will summarise the actions and strategies that have been put in place over the last 18 months.

#### *Property*

During the July school holidays the matting in the play area will be fixed, and a new slide installed.


#### **12. Any other business/correspondence**

None

#### **13. In-Committee**

No in-committee session this meeting.

Next meeting: 25 July 2018

 25/7/2018

