

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 27 February 2019, 6.30 pm, school staffroom

Present: Mark Brown (items 1 - 5), Julie Bennett, Lucy Kebbell, Miriam Swanson, Victoria Esson, Jasmine Gilbert, Nicki Read, Debbie Purves (items 1 - 4), and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Annette Gittos

1. Karakia

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

The minutes from the meeting of 30 January 2019 were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

For the action on the Board staff rep - there has been one nomination, who needs to be confirmed by staff (no election is needed).

3. Conflicts of interest

None declared.

4. New Programmes - Time to Thrive

Debbie presented to the Board on *Time to Thrive*, an action project to enhance existing EOTC programmes operating in the school, and introduce new ones. The programme ties in with challenges identified by the Capital COL, and provides opportunities for further enrichment outside of the school's usual programmes - fostering competencies, passions etc.

Children were asked what they were interested in. As a result, a range of programmes have been available, including short films, photography, screen printing, netball, ASB sports, junior scientists, "out



of the box” thinkers, emotional resilience, art projects, getting out into nature and the community, and more. The programmes have been woven throughout Curiosity Monday, Whanau Friday, etc. Close to 150 students are involved (some opt in, some encouraged by teachers) - most of the school will be included by the end of the term. Positive feedback has been received from the children.

The Board was appreciative of all the work and enthusiasm that had gone into developing the programme. They suggested that the programme be given a Te Reo name.

5. Capital Community of Learning - Kāhui Ako

A “super staff hui” was held on Monday (25 February) that involved staff of all the schools in the Capital City Kāhui Ako COL - Mark said it was a very positive meeting. All Newtown school staff (bar one) attended. There was also high engagement from staff across all the schools.

The discussion will inform progress and achievement towards meeting the three challenges that the COL will focus on going forward - cultural responsiveness, wellbeing and hauora of students, and the adaptive knowledge and competencies that students need to develop for the future.

There is a plan for four staff appointments from Term 3 to facilitate the work of Kāhui Ako across the eight schools. These staff members will be released from their schools to do this work. There are also facilitator roles within the schools, to help interpret the challenges within the school environment.

Karen Spencer (Wellington High School) produces a monthly report on the work of Kāhui Ako, which will be included in Mark’s report to the Board. Early childcare centres will also be invited to join the COL, recognising students’ pathways of learning.

Mark noted that the Tomorrow’s Schools taskforce supports the continuation of Kāhui Ako.

6. Police vetting of volunteers

This issue came to light because of the noho marae. The school has been requesting parents attending camp to be vetted. Parents attending the noho were asked to complete the Police vetting form on the Friday before the noho on the following Wednesday, which was insufficient time. The Board needs a policy so it becomes a requirement.

A Board member observed that a Police Vet doesn't fully protect anyone, as there is nothing to say that a person that passes the vet is actually safe. There is also a need to eliminate or reduce the opportunity for possible harm through clear written procedures that are made available to volunteers. There also needs to be enough flexibility if a so parent volunteer pulls out at the last minute, a replacement can be found at short notice. The Board agreed to amend the child protection policy so there is a preference for all parent volunteers to have a Police vet, but if this is not possible (due to unforeseen circumstances, rather than a lack of planning) then it is up to Principal's discretion (eg if the Principal knows the person has an up-to-date vet through their work or another voluntary role). There was a discussion about the approach used at SWIS, where a Police vet form comes with the enrolment pack.

ACTION: policy document to be amended to include preference for volunteers who are involved in overnight stays with school trips to be police vetted, but otherwise the police vets will be at the Principal's discretion (Lucy)

7. School Charter/Strategic Plan

The governance section of the plan needs populating. Ideas discussed included:

- The need for a strong, collaborative and constructive relationship between the Board and Senior management, understanding that we are all heading in the same direction - figuring out who's job is who's, and the Board being clear about the value they can give back to the school. The Board is interested in strengthening these relationships by investing in governance training.
- Treaty training for the Board (perhaps as part of the induction process).
- Induction of new Board members after June elections.
- A newsletter item each Term from the Board. This would facilitate clear messaging to the school community about role of the Board (i.e. it's not a complaints body).
- Positive contact with staff (more visibility from the Board).
- Effective performance management of the Principal.
- Integrate School Docs system for school policies.
- The need to weave Te Ao Māori throughout the document, and the vision statement.

Board members were of the view that the school's vision - love learning, love life - needs reworking, as it's not currently a vision (what are we aspiring to - what drives us). The mission is what you currently do/are - in education, more the "how" part. Nicki indicated that she was doing some work on shaping up the vision, and would come back to the Board with this at a later date.

Another suggestion was around strengthening the school's relationship with SWIS, to emphasise effective transitions from Newtown school to intermediate. This could come under the section on effective teaching.

For the section on positive school culture, the Board questioned whether the resource on a bully-free school was reflected in the text. The first half of this section was good, but then it discusses matters that the Board didn't think are directly related to school culture (attendance, school transitions, etc). The Board suggested cutting this section back to half a dozen or so key areas of focus, that can be reported on regularly.

ACTION: Nicki to incorporate these ideas into the governance section of the Strategic Plan and come back to the Board with updated documents.

8. Principal's report

Mark's report was tabled. Items discussed included:

- The reference in the report to reducing the incidence of reporting incidents - to be clear, the Board doesn't want to reduce the reporting, just the incidents.
- The number of incidents that have occurred, and number of visits to the medical room, should be reported to the Board.
- A Report on PB4L would be helpful - specific numbers/information around this (for instance, for Tier 1 children - commentary on the work that is being done to support these children, etc).
Nicki said she will have a think about what would be useful, and the frequency of this reporting.

ACTION: Provide PB4L reports regularly to the Board (Nicki to report back on the frequency and content of those reports)

9. Committee reports

Health and Safety

Jasmine reported that 22 incidents had been recorded for February, including two broken arms, plus another broken limb that happened outside of school hours. The number of visits to the medical room hadn't been provided. An incident involving a child being locked in the toilet not recorded as an incident. Mark indicated that locksmiths have come and had a look at the locks. Incidents with tines being pushed down the slide had also not reported.

The Board was keen for all incidents to be reported - staff need to be reminded to use GOSH to do this. Staff also need to be aware that if they are told about an incident, they need to record it in GOSH so it can be dealt with, even though they may not have seen the incident themselves.

Jasmine had received correspondence from a parent that raised several concerns about the toilets - no soap or toilet paper, used sanitary pad on floor (which a child was told to pick up and put in the bin). Also children being told that certain toilets are reserved for teachers.

ACTION: Jasmine to raise these concerns with Mark at H&S committee meeting on Friday.

Policy

Policy has taken a back seat while we switch over to School Docs. An operational person needs to work alongside Trish to support her to complete a questionnaire, which will help get the School Docs system up and running.

ACTION: Lucy to get Nicki a copy of the School Docs questionnaire.

Finance

Victoria reported that there was no finance report this month as she wasn't given the correct financial information.

ACTION: Victoria to circulate a summary of the financial information after she has received it.

Property

Mark's report provided an update on key property issues. It's not clear what is happening with old whanau Tui block - does the school have funding for this, but the project hasn't yet started?

The pool project needs oversight while Mark is away on sabbatical next term - Julie offered to help Nicki keep the project on track.

Fundraising

The Board discussed the lack of quotes for astroturf for the area next to the senior playground. As an alternative, it would be useful if quotes could be obtained for leveling, drainage and re-sowing grass near the senior playground, so it can be used as a sports field. These can then be used to apply for funding this project.

ACTION: explore the option of obtaining quotes to level, install drainage and re-sow grass in the area near the senior playground.

If there are things that the school would like to apply for funding for, there is a Google form that teachers can fill out. Three quotes need to be attached to the form.

ACTION: Nicki to remind staff about the form that is used to request funding for school projects.

Lucy mentioned that Jess still plans to check if the grant approved for Ellen Coup's mural could be reapplied to another mural.

10. Any other business

Correspondence

Correspondence was received from a concerned parent about homeless persons sleeping in school grounds, and toilet doors left open. These have been addressed, but are ongoing issues.

Board elections

The Board discussed options for getting parents interested in standing for the BOT elections in June 2019:

- include an item in each newsletter about the elections.
- advertise the information evening at Wellington High school on 1 April at 6 pm, and other locations (**Miriam to action**).
- Encourage interested parents to come to a Board meeting.

Here is the timeline of key events for the election (from <https://www.trustee-election.co.nz/>):

EVENT	DATE
Select Returning Officer by	Wednesday 1 May 2019
Close Main Roll	Noon Wednesday 8 May 2019
Call for Nominations by	Friday 10th May 2019
Close Supplementary roll	Noon, Wednesday 22 May 2019
Nominations Close	Noon Friday 24 May 2019
Voting Papers Sent by	Wednesday 29 May 2019
Election Day (voting closes)	Noon Friday 7 June 2019
Count Votes	Thursday 13 June 2019
Board Takes Office	Friday 14 June 2019

11. In-Committee

The Board moved into committee at 9.34 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board moved out of committee at 9:40 pm.

Next meeting: 27 March 2019



