

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 25 September 2019, 6.30 pm, school staffroom

Present: Jess Gorman, Nick Booth, Haidee Westwater, Amelia Handscomb, Yadana Saw, Mark Brown, Nicki Read and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Victoria Esson and Louise Conwell.

1. Karakia

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes from the Board meeting held on 28 August 2019 were approved (moved Jess, seconded Nick) and the action items discussed.

3. Conflicts of interest

None declared.

4. Staff representative report

This month three whanau provided updates about what was happening. Whanau highlighted the number of sports the children had been involved in this term, including various sporting activities led by the New Zealand Institute of Sport, a girl's Futsal Tournament, Project Energise, Dance Splash etc.

Mark commented that the Newtown School team that performed in Dance Splash was "in a league of its own". Mark acknowledged FANS support in getting the kapa haka uniforms, which the Dance Splash team wore.



Also highlighted in the whanau reports was the tuakana and teina relationships being developed when members of two different whanau come together on Friday mornings. The same students pair up each week.

Whanau Waitangi reported that they had raised \$2,251 in the recent market day, which will go towards the Year 6 camp next year. These funds will reduce the costs of the camp by about \$35 per student - a great effort.

5. Staff spotlight - PB4L

The staff spotlight this month focused on the Positive Behaviour for Learning – PB4L – programme that the school operates. Mark acknowledged the great work that Louise Conwell does co-ordinating the programme across Newtown School.

Nicki gave the Board a presentation that Louise had put together on *Building a Culture of Positivity at Newtown School*. The presentation covered a brief introduction to PB4L, the school's values (which build the foundation of the PB4L), and the various "tiers" of behaviour that are exhibited by students in all schools: tier 1 (universal, typically about 80% of students will have their needs met by tier 1 interventions), tier 2 (targeted, 15% of students) and tier 3 (intensive, 5% of students). Teams are involved in developing responses to the various tiers of behaviour, including parent reps for tier 1, RTLB for tier 2, and the Ministry of Education for tier 3.

Data is gathered about incidents involving children (including information about who was involved, what happened, where the incident occurred, and the day and time it took place), which is used to inform decisions and improve practice. Patterns are identified, and action is taken. Information is shared among the teaching teams, tier teams and school culture meetings.

PB4L is also about acknowledging positive behaviour, through verbal acknowledgement, cards of awesome, and rewards.

The school's PB4L programme was recently subject to a TFI – Tiered Fidelity Inventory – where an independent assessor looked at the school's PB4L systems. This was a detailed, thorough assessment, and the assessor was very happy with where the school is at.

Louise's presentation highlighted a number of things that are having a positive impact – cards of awesome, 'you make a difference' cards for staff, the student support team (tauirā tautoko) on at lunchtimes, school values, whānau involvement (getting whānau involved early where issues with their children are recurring), acknowledging culture, and increased engagement in sports/PE.

In terms of the future, the focus will be on continuing to build on the strength of the school values, upskilling staff and students on restorative practice, increasing student voice across aspects of school life, and comprehensively inducting new staff around positive behaviour practices.

The Board was impressed with the commitment the school has to making a difference, understanding what is driving the behaviour, and coming to a positive resolution. In response to a question from Nicki about what the Board would like reported going forward, a narrative report each term on behavioural trends and patterns was suggested. The Board also suggested that information about the work the school does to encourage positive behaviour could be shared with parents/caregivers. How this happens could be covered in the work Nick is involved in around consulting the school community on how student achievement is reported.

6. Principal's report

Mark tabled his report. Items discussed included:

- Staffing – the school has received the Ministry's staffing entitlement notice. As a result, two additional staff can be employed next year, allowing four teaching staff for each whānau. Ads for new staff are already in the Education Gazette, with the school looking to make appointments quickly. Nicki, Justine, and Mark have been thinking about the staff composition of each whānau, in discussion with staff. Decisions will be announced to staff by the end of the term.
- School donation scheme - **the Board approved a motion to opt-in to the government's School Donation Scheme** (moved Jess, seconded Yadana). Currently, the school receives around \$6,000 annually in voluntary donations. Under the scheme, the government pays the school \$150 per student, which will amount to around \$57,000 p.a.

ACTION: include an item in the newsletter thanking those who have made voluntary donations to the school, and informing parents and caregivers that the Board has agreed to opt-in to the School Donation Scheme (to take effect next year).

7. Strategic Plan

Next month's Board meeting will focus on drafting the Strategic Plan. The current plan is based on the ERO framework. The Board discussed weaving the four Board values/lens (sustainability, strengthening connection to cultural groups, equity and student agency) into the current plan. Parents have also been invited to contribute comments/ideas.

The Board will develop a new draft strategic plan in the October meeting, then test it with the school community before considering the plan again in the November meeting.

ACTION: Board members are encouraged to look at the existing strategic plan, with the view to identifying what's worth retaining, and what might be reshaped in light of the lens the Board has agreed to operate under, and the Kahu Ako priorities.

8. Policy Report

Amelia summarised the key points from the policy update report that she had previously circulated to the Board.

Amelia mentioned that she is working her way through all the policy documents in the Google Drive. She will circulate to the Board the policies that need to be reviewed, for Board members to provide any comments/suggested changes.

Jess and Mark signed the amended schedule of delegations that was discussed at the last Board meeting.

Amelia and Jess had met to discuss any learning arising from the complaint from a parent about children's involvement in advocacy/political campaigns. They concluded that the issue was not one of governance, but one that should be addressed by the school as it concerned a one-off decision by a small number of teachers.

ACTION: Jess to send an email to the parent who had raised concerns about the Facebook post with photos of children wearing badges in support of pay parity for school principals.

9. Community engagement

Nick summarised the key points from the community engagement update report that he had previously circulated to the Board.

Jess and Nick attended the Ngati Kotahitanga whanau hui on 25 September. They presented the draft role description for ex officio Ngati Kotahitanga Board position, and invited the whanau to consider the proposal.

Mark, Nick and Tom Hovey have met to discuss the workshop on school communication. The workshops will provide an opportunity for around 14-16 representatives from the school community to discuss what an ideal model for communication might look like, and to highlight current pressure points. As the participants need to be representative of the diverse Newtown School community, the school will choose a representative cross-section to attend. Invites will go out in the first week of Term 4. The Board, and others interested in this issue, will be able to participate, perhaps by contributing via a survey and by testing the ideas that come out of the workshop.

ACTION: Nick to include an item in the school newsletter next term about the work looking at school communications.

FANS – the core group that has been involved in FANS have agreed to dissolve FANS. The Board recognised that there is an opportunity for new group to be established by parents, but this needs to come from the community. A possible option is for a new group to organise itself around particular events, for example the food fair or school disco.

ACTION: Jess to talk to Trish about removing information about FANS from the school website, and discontinuing the FANS email address.

ACTION: Amelia and Jess, with Nick, to communicate to the wider school community the dissolution of FANS, and highlight opportunities for parents to become involved in other ways (for example, by helping out with particular school events (disco, food fair, etc)).

10. Property report

Yadana summarised the key points from the property update report that she had previously circulated to the Board.

Pool – Yadana and Mark have met with the WCC. The Council is committed to seeing the project succeed, but don't want to release the funding for Stage 1 unless there is a plan in place for all stages of the project.

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to the Newtown School pool refurbishment project. The Board further supported the development of a detailed scoping and funding plan for stages 2 and 3 of the project (estimated to cost around \$200,000) (moved Yadana, seconded Jess).

The resource consent pre-application process would highlight what needs to happen, and in what order. This can inform the development of the plan for staging the refurbishment project.

The Board discussed possible funding options, including community trusts, gambling trusts, and sponsorship.

ACTION: Yadana and Mark to work on the detailed plan for the school pool refurbishment project.

Ten year property plan – Mark, Trish, Nicki and Yadana met with consultants appointed by the Ministry to oversee the draft Ten year property plan, plus Kevin (MOE property adviser). The consultants need certain information from the school before the plan can be finalised and presented to the Board for approval.

Yadana mentioned that there is an additional \$200,000 of Ministry funding for Newtown School under the accelerated modernisation scheme. The scheme is for projects to develop/improve learning spaces.

11. Health and safety report

Haidee summarised the key points from the health and safety update report that she had previously circulated to the Board.

The Board discussed road safety around the school and wider community. The previous Board had lobbied the Council about this in the past. They were responsive about phasing the traffic lights in the vicinity of the school.

ACTION: Yadana will try to find out who in Council has responsibility for road safety, so the Board can make contact to raise concerns.

Both parents and the school are responsible for educating children around being safe crossing roads. Next term the inquiry topic is survival, so there is some scope within that to discuss road safety. It may

also be worth raising the issue with the Kāhui Ako, as road safety is likely to affect all schools in the area. The option of school walking buses were also discussed.

ACTION: Nick to raise the issue of road safety around schools with the Kāhui Ako, and include something in the newsletter about parents who might be interested in organising a school walking bus.

School lockdowns – Mark mentioned that a staged practice of the lockdown process would be undertaken in Term 4.

12. Finance report

Victoria had circulated the finance report, summarising the August 2019 and Year To Date expenditure and income. Some areas are underspent, whereas others are overspent, with the end result largely balanced against the budget.

The report notes a FANS fundraising balance of \$15,443. The Board decided these funds should be split, with some going towards more kapa haka uniforms, a seed fund (\$5,000) for any parent group that may be established to support the school, and the remaining funds going towards the pool refurbishment project.

ACTION: Nicki and Mark to find out how many more kapa haka uniforms are needed, how much this will cost, and progress the order.

Mark pointed out that expenditure over \$10,000 has to come to the Board for approval.

Mark and Victoria had met with Education Services, and as a result of the discussion are confident that monthly financial reports will be received in a timely manner in future.

Costs have been incurred for the pool project. Even if the project doesn't proceed, these costs would be considered as part of the close down of the project, which the Council would cover.

13. Future agenda items

Possible items for discussion at future meetings include:

- Adopting a set of kawa for the Board meetings
- Strategic plan (October meeting)

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- Staff spotlight on the arts (Gabrielle)
 - Budget

ACTION: Nick and Jess to meet with Trish about Google Docs and Board member access.

ACTION: Board members to circulate reports with proposed actions ahead of the meetings, so that the issues can be dealt with quickly.

14. In-Committee

The Board moved into committee at 9.40 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board moved out of committee at 9:55 pm.

Next meeting date

23 October 2019 at 6.30 pm.