

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 18 November 2020, 6:30 pm



Present: Jess Gorman, Nick Booth, Haidee Westwater, Yadana Saw, Joe Winkels, Mark Brown, Nicki Read, Louise Conwell, Justine Henderson (items 1 - 3) and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Victoria Esson

1. **Karakia**
2. **Previous minutes**

The minutes from the meeting held on 21 October 2020 were approved. Action items were discussed and updated.

Jess noted that four people had approached her about the casual vacancy that resulted from Amelia's resignation. In addition, Steve Kerr had offered to take over the role of taking the minutes for the Board when Jo finishes up at the end of the year. Thanks Steve.

3. Staff spotlight: Learning support

Jess welcomed Justine Henderson to the meeting. Justine presented on learning support at Newtown School. Justine explained that inclusive education is not a programme, it's a mind set. It's the way we treat each other, an opportunity to learn together and from one another, and to keep in mind that fair does not always mean equal. It's important to think about the different needs of different students to support inclusion for all.

The learning support system offered at Newtown School aligns with the Ministry's tiered framework which reflects the varying needs of children. Around 80% of children fit within tier 1 (universal learning support, which includes classroom teaching, Positive Behaviour For Learning (PB4L)). 15% children fall within tier 2 (targeted learning support, potentially involving Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour

(RTL), teacher aide (TA) support, reading recovery, MOE specialists and other learning support intervention). 5% of children fit within tier 3 (intensive, individualised learning support: includes Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) students, complex behavioural issues, intensive wraparound service (IWS), and high and complex needs, which involves support from the Ministry and other agencies like Oranga Tamariki). Except for ORS, all learning supports (including RTL) are time-bound. ORS students and students with complex behavioural needs tend to have the largest impact on the school's budget, as the MOE funding typically isn't sufficient to cover their needs.

The Kahui Ako is looking at developing a learning support register, to help identify (in an anonymised way) support needs across the Kahui Ako cohort. The register will track students, their needs and what supports are required.

In terms of what programme supports are available to children who have an identified learning support need, Justine commented that it starts with the child, and identifying what they need for their learning. It also involves looking at the physical environment that best supports the child's learning, and whether TA support could benefit the child's learning. IEP (Individual Education Plan) and Collaborative Plans can be developed to set goals to support the child's learning. Transition Plans can also be developed to support children moving to different whanau or to different schools.

Looking towards next year, Justine highlighted a focus on how students can have more of a voice in their learning, professional development around how to support children who come from traumatic backgrounds, and restorative practice to help children understand the impact their behaviour has on other children and the wider school environment.

In response to a question from the Board, Justine indicated that there is no specific funding or programmes available for gifted and talented students – teachers think about stretch goals for these students through the delivery of the curriculum. On a separate issue, it was noted that there is funding in the school's budget to support TAs working with children who have English as a second language.

4. Bilingual education proposal

The Board discussed a letter received from Ngati Kotahitanga whānau about the proposal to offer bilingual education in Newtown School next year. Concerns were raised in the letter about the lack of consultation and communication with Ngati Kotahitanga whānau about the proposal.

Board members expressed disappointment that they hadn't identified consultation with Ngati Kotahitanga as an issue when the proposal was first discussed. While Board members observed that it is timely that Joe has joined the Board as a representative of Ngati Kotahitanga, they acknowledged that it was the responsibility of all Board members to be aware of these issues. There was a desire from Board members to learn from this experience, particularly in terms of slowing down to carefully consider and listen to a range of views and perspectives. The Board expressed a strong desire to move forward collectively in a way that raises the mana of everyone involved.

The Board observed that it can be difficult to engage kanohi ki te kanohi with Ngati Kotahitanga at their whānau hui as Board members (including the Principal) must first be extended an invitation to attend. This does, in practice, limit opportunities for korero with Ngati Kotahitanga whānau.

ACTION: Joe to find out the kawa around how Board members (including the Principal) can come and speak at Ngati Kotahitanga whānau hui.

ACTION: in consultation with Board members, Jess to respond to the letter from Ngati Kotahitanga whānau and take up the invitation to attend a whānau hui to discuss the bilingual education proposal.

In terms of progress towards establishing a bilingual option next year, Mark commented that interest remains high. A steering group has been established, which includes representation from the Ministry of Education.

5. Strategic plan 2021 - 2024

This item was a heads up that the school's Strategic Plan for the period covering 2021-2024 needs to be provided to the Ministry of Education by March next year. The Board agreed to establish a sub-committee (consisting of Jess, Mark and Nicki) to work on the plan and bring it back to the Board at

a future meeting. Consultation with the school community on the plan will need to happen. An Annual Plan that supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan also needs to be developed.

ACTION: Jess to add the Strategic Plan to the agenda for a future Board meeting.

6. Budget 2021

Mark took the Board through the draft budget, which the Manager at Education Services has gone through. The aim is to have a zero budget, that is, a zero balance after expenses are deducted from income. Mark pointed out that most budget lines represent fixed items of operational expenditure, with little discretionary money available. There are some unfinished projects which have expenditure allocated in the draft budget so they can be completed (for example, sandpit, upgrade of the school hall, stage 2 of the swimming pool: interior fitout, through building and maintenance allocations).

There was a discussion around the level of the school's contingency fund, which currently sits at around \$40,000 and is "never touched". The Board agreed to build the contingency up to \$90,000 over a 5 year period.

ACTION: Mark to upload the draft budget into Google Drive for Board members to have a closer look. Budget to be approved at the next Board meeting.

7. Suggestions for end of year student achievement report to the Board

The Board provided Nicki with some suggestions of issues to cover in the end-of-year student achievement report: successes in the broader curriculum areas, and the school's processes for identifying particular student learning needs (ADHD, dyslexia, etc).

8. Questions and decisions arising from written reports

Principal's report

Mark provided an update on staffing for next year. The resignations of Louise and Matt in whānau Waitangi, plus Janette retiring after 30 years and Ann Mace after 5 years, has left some gaps and resulted in a few changes across the whānau teaching teams. Tui, Hakakeke, and Pohutukawa will have

3 teachers, while Waitangi will have 4 teachers. Ngati Kotahitanga staffing will remain the same. The school is in a position to staff the bilingual unit (Mitch). The Board had received a letter of thanks from Keith and Wanwan for the support the school has given them to share parental leave next year.

Mark invited the Board to attend the special end of year leavers assembly on Tuesday 15 December, where staff that are leaving will be acknowledged.

Property

The Board endorsed the awarding of the contract for the pool refurbishment to Watts and Hughes. A pre-contract meeting has been held to look over the site. Invoices for the project will be passed from the contractor through the project manager to the school for payment. The school will need to issue purchase orders to the Wellington City Council for the funds. School neighbours, i.e. St Anne's school and Sagata Ana childcare, will need to be informed of the project and timing.

ACTION: Yadana and Jess to notify neighbours of the pool refurbishment project.

9. Future agenda items

Possible agenda items for future meetings include: 2021 meeting dates, restorative practice, session with Janelle Riki-Waaka (Janelle is booked to come back to the school on 1 February, so there is the potential for a Board workshop with her, or a session with her and Ngati Kotahitanga whānau), and the Newtown Festival.

