

# Newtown School Board of Trustees

## Meeting Minutes


Weds 24 March 2021, 6:30 pm  
Staff room and Zoom

Present: Haidee Westwater (arrived at 7pm), Jess Gorman (chair), Joe Winkels, Keith Hutton, Mark Brown, Nick Booth, Nicki Read, Steve Kerr (minutes), Yadana Saw. Trent Taylor, Colette de Vera Green, Lauren Peatfield (till 7pm)

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### 1. Karakia timatanga

No conflicts of interest were declared.



### 2. Spotlight on new staff

Trent, Colette, and Lauren introduced themselves. Trent is in his first year of teaching, he completed his Masters last year and loves barbershop quartet and musical theatre. Colette started her teaching in Newtown 20 years ago, and has since taught in France, she loves drama and is enjoying the collaborative environment. Lauren is from originally from Birmingham, she taught in Prague for five years, and loves languages and music.

Mark said you could see why the school hired these talented people. It's important for our people to have passions that they bring to their work. He said that Trent, Colette, and Lauren hadn't been at our school long but he congratulated them on starting really well.

### 3. Previous minutes and actions

#### *Approve minutes*

The chair moved that the minutes of the February meeting be approved as true and accurate. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### *Action items*

022	Circulate proposed 2021 BOT meeting dates	Jess	Open	Done - closed
021	Check in with Melissa to understand the current system for grants and track down the grant resources developed by Jess and Lucy	Joe, Steve	Open	Done - closed

020	Invite new school staff to next BOT meeting	Jess	Open	Done - closed
019	Arrange stand for picnic to recruit caregivers to get involved in school activities	Jess, Yadana	Open	Closed. Picnic was cancelled due to Covid alert but we will keep in mind for the next event.
018	Talk to potential board appointees and refer them to Jess and Yadana	Mark, Keith	Open	Closed - see discussion under principal's report below.
017	Circulate a Doodle poll to see what dates would work for a longer board discussion on strategic plan	Jess	Open	Closed. Strategic Plan to be discussed at today's meeting
016	Circulate notes from Te Tiriti training to BOT	Jess	Open	Nicki to put notes in BOT folder
015	Incorporate gender inclusion into the Annual Plan	Mark	Open	Closed - to be discussed today
014	Think further on gender inclusion at school in light of kapa haka and different cultural views	Joe, Yadana	Open	Carry forward - Joe to report back following discussion at next Ngāti Kotahitanga whanau hui
013	Share ideas for strategic goals in the Annual Plan before it is finalised	All board	Open	Closed - to be discussed today
012	Submit Strategic Plan	Mark	Open	Closed - done
001	Jess to consider including comments about the overall student achievement results in 2020 in Board communications with the wider school	Jess	Open	Carry forward - to be discussed as part of community engagement agenda item
003	Joe to find out the kawa around how Board members (including the Principal) can come and speak at Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau hui	Joe	Open	Carry forward - to be discussed at next Ngāti Kotahitanga whanau hui
005	Haidee to draft a letter from the Board to the Ministry of Education (Paul Reeves) outlining the ongoing concerns with the new building and inviting a representative to attend a meeting to discuss the issues	Haidee	Open	Closed - no longer required
006	Mark to share the learning support procedural guidelines to the Board, once the revision work is complete, before a decision is made about whether a link to them should be included in the learning support policy	Mark or Justine	Open	In progress - Justine doing this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ACTION - progress update to be given at April meeting</b></li> </ul>

008	In consultation with the school community and teachers, develop a communications channel strategy, which clearly sets out what messages or information are going to put on what channels, and when.	Nick, potentially working with Tom Hovey	Open	Carry forward - Further meeting with Tom, Nick, and Mark and leadership team planned for 8 April 2021
010	Yadana to develop an overall strategy/vision for art work commissioned for the school, including conservation and restoration of existing works.	Yadana	Open	Carry forward

## 4. Principal's report

### *ERO evaluation*

We welcomed Andrea, our ERO evaluation partner with a powhiri. Andrea felt very welcome, the presentation from the leadership team went well and gave her context about the school. She's already met with Jess and a group of teachers already. It's been a positive constructive start. Andrea 'gets' the school. We need to give her time to become part of the team with us.

The next steps are that Andrea will review the documentation we've provided her. Then we'll form an evaluation team after Easter, which will include BOT members and school leadership. The team will decide what to evaluate and how to evaluate it.

### *Emergency practice*

Our school is a community emergency hub. The civil defence coordinator came to review our set up. We are a communication link, where civil defence can set themselves up to communicate with the hospital etc in an emergency. We're not a place for people to sleep overnight. Civil defence have a key and can access the school. We would also make our grounds available to organisations that help others if needed.

We would like to test our preparedness of using school as a place to reunite parents and children in an emergency. In our school, the place to do this is our hall. That is the safest place. In an emergency we would make contact with parents by mobile phone test message. We've updated our contact data as much as possible.

Mark said that the school has never tested its reunification system in practice. SWIS did a test liek this recently. He asked BOT members who are parents of children at SWIS how they found that test process. BOT members said the SWIS process was good. It was a good way to flush out problems with the system. Some parents didn't get the alert or got it late. It was a useful exercise.

Mark said the school will do more work to fine tune its process for reuniting caregivers and children in an emergency. We need to look at how to take account of speakers of



different languages, and how parents might give permission for someone else to pick up their kids.

#### *Additional BOT members*

Mark and Keith had an action from the last meeting to recommend candidates to be appointed to vacant board positions. This is difficult. Ideally we want people to put their hands up for this, not to shoulder tap people.

BOT members said perhaps we should take a different approach and just ask again for volunteers. We could say explicitly we are interested in hearing from members from new communities. We could emphasise that we're interested in people who haven't done it before. It's a great way to learn about the school.

- **ACTION - Jess to send out comms again seeking additional board members, Yadana to assist to comms**

## **5. Staff rep update**

Keith spoke to his written report. Staff reported lots of great experiences so far this year. One of the highlights is the amount of learning that has happened outside the classroom, for example the number of kids who had never been snorkeling before who had that experience.

We are lucky to have masters students with us at the moment. It's a good programme, they get a really deep experience of the school, they ask all the right questions. It's great for our teaching practice to have them with us.

The teaching teams are coming together and gelling. The kids' voices are so important for our programmes at this stage - it's vital to get their engagement and pull them in.

There is great feedback from the bilingual Reo Rua classes. There is a waiting list of kids who want in. We're making sure that tamariki in Reo Rua are not missing out on anything in their other classes.

Nicki said that in future it'd be great to share some of the stories from Reo Rua of the positive impact on kids in terms of their identity and kids getting a strong voice in their whanau. A board member asked whether there is more we could do to help parents. Mark said that there are a number of 'positive challenges' arising from the success of Reo Rua. We've committed to review how bilingual education is going by the end of term 2. We need to start planning for next year in term 3. We'll need to consider how we support whanau as part of that. It's a great challenge to have.

## **6. Strategy and Annual Plan workshop**

Mark, Nicki, Mitch, Justine, and Claire from Waikato University met recently to begin to refresh the strategy. Mark said the school has moved on lightyears from when the current strategy was originally drafted. The draft updated strategy is aligned with the changes to the Education Act and the National Education and Learning Priorities.

He said that we have kept the same structure and format for the strategy document. We've kept the same six main headings: Learners at our Heart and Success for all, Quality Teachers, Our People, Leadership, Governance. Under each heading, the sections Hauora, Cultural Identity, Learning Capability, are priorities from the Kāhui Ako community of learning. The Annual plan describes what the school is going to do this year (beyond BAU) to enact the strategy.

The board discussed whether the goals in the strategy were enough of a stretch for the school. The board discussed the meaning and implications of some of the language used, e.g. 'peaceful'. The board discussed the meaning of the 'Cultural Identity' heading and how it might be understood. A board member suggested the strategy needed more focus on environmental sustainability. The board discussed whether the strategy fully reflects the diversity of our community. Giving children language around their culture can be very powerful.

- **ACTION - Board to discuss strategy further at next meeting, including sustainability**

## **7. Meeting dates**

The proposed meeting dates for 2021 were approved. The July meeting will be on the 28th.

## **8. Questions and decisions arising from written reports**

### *Health and safety*

The report was taken as read. Haidee said that Mark has restated his commitment to carrying out the learning space review.

- **ACTION - Haidee to clarify what the requirements are under the Health and Safety at Work Act to coordinate with agencies who use school premises**

### *Finance*

Nick said that expenditure to the end of Feb was on track at about 17% of annual spend. He asked for clarification of the unbudgeted capital expenditure of \$12,866. Mark explained that this was for purchasing Chromebooks. Nick said the finances are in order, and repeated that the board must support the pool work.

A board member moved that the financial report is accurate. The motion was seconded and passed.

Nick added that he had attended a Kāhui Ako meeting that Mitch spoke at. He said that Mitch spoke really well and it made him proud for the school.

#### *Policies*

No written report.

- **ACTION - Joe to speak to Amelia to clarify the process for notifying people about policies that need review**

#### *Community engagement*

The report was taken as read. Nick said his focus was on drafting the questions we want to include in the survey to whanau about achievement and what success looks like.

- **ACTION - all board members to provide feedback to Nick on the draft achievement survey questions**
- **ACTION - Nick, Mark, and Nicki to meet to work on the achievement survey further**

#### *Other discussion*

Newtown fair

- **ACTION- Yadana to check with Maraea about coordinating parking and tables for Newtown fair**

#### *E tu Kahikatea mural*

A ceremony to open the Ngāti Kotahitanga mural is scheduled for 6am on 16 April 2021. Board members are invited. There will be an all school celebration later that day too with an assembly and hākari.

## **9. Karakia whakamutunga**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm