

# **Newtown School Board of Trustees**

## **Meeting Minutes**



Weds 25 August 2021, 7:00 pm  
Zoom

Present: Haidee Westwater, Joe Winkels, Justine Henderson, Keith Hutton, Mark Brown, Nick Booth (chair), Steve Kerr (minutes), Yadana Saw.  
Apologies: Jess Gorman

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### **1. Karakia timatanga**

### **2. Conflicts**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### **3. Previous minutes**

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

### **4. Principal's report**

Mark thanked all the parents for the amazing efforts and making the most of a difficult situation during this lockdown. He welcomed Keith back to the school for this board meeting.

Mark said that ERO has approved the evaluation focus and a follow-up meeting is planned for 27 August. He said that the school can do some planning for the evaluation this year, even before the new principal is appointed. The school is working with Waikato University on the evaluation.

Mark said that the school is looking at its staffing structures and taking proactive steps to look at staffing gaps and needs across the school. Lots of parents want their kids to be in bilingual classes next year which is fantastic so the planning will address that.

In terms of student achievement work, we are only halfway through the year but there are already some important results and some areas that the school can work on.

In terms of property, the roof is on the swimming pool and the walls are going up. The old Tui project is going slower. Mark said it has been very difficult just to get builders on site.

On Covid, Mark said that parents should have gotten all the communications on Covid by now. He said the school has tried to learn from last year and is holding back on giving out devices. Two whānau don't have email addresses but they have access to the internet. The school did a welfare visit with one whānau and got them support.

Nick asked whether there was anything the board could do to assist the school with its planning for the next Covid alert level. Mark said that the school has basically got things in hand. It is waiting for new orders from the Ministry of Health which will include schools. Protocols might be different from last time - size of bubbles, mask wearing, etc

Yadana asked how staff are doing and what processes are in place to support staff who are struggling. Mark said the school has a good handle on all its staff and generally they're in good shape and quite upbeat. Justine said the school has included the TAs in the whānau catch-ups this time, so they're fully included. At level 3, we'll rotate staff around on different days and bubbles will be in different physical places in the school

Nick asked whether the school would support staff to get their vaccinations. Mark said absolutely, we're encouraging staff to do it and giving them time.

Joe asked whether the school will be used again for Covid testing? Mark said no it won't be used this time.

Nick asked how the school was finding the take up of home learning this week? Mark said he was still gauging that. He said the school has taken a slightly different approach this time. It's making activities available, but if parents can't participate that's okay. This approach was based on feedback last time. The school will be making phone contact with any whānau whose kids are not joining in the whānau chats and who may be finding it hard to join in.

Mark asked board members how they felt about this approach. Yadana said that she found it a relief when the message came out straight away that the school was very chill about home learning, compared to other schools. Nick said he felt the same way, the focus on wellbeing was really good. Haidee said that learning and wellbeing go together, they're not separate things. Justine said she had joined quite a few whānau hui and the kids are presenting as happy and interested, it's a good vibe.

## **5. Defining success at school**

Mark said that defining what success means needs to be a conversation with whānau and with teachers too. The school won't ever waterdown academic learning, but we need to take a more holistic approach to measuring success, including our responsiveness to Te Tiriti.

Nick asked board members what their thoughts were on how they want to see success measured, before we survey the school community?

Haidee said she was interested in hearing from teaching staff about what tools are used at the moment. She would be interested in how we might measure engagement with Te Ao Māori, arts, etc.

Mark said the school uses NZCER tools around learning. We focus on three key areas: reading, writing, and numeracy. The focus on those three areas is still a hangover from national standards. We could evaluate other things biannually. There are NZCER tools to measure science and phys ed at years 4, 6, and 8.

Justine said there is work to do on what tools are available to measure those areas, and how well they capture the learning. The tools before before national standards were introduced were quite 'checkbox'.

Nick said the board is keen to ensure that kids whose achievement is outside those three areas is recognised and celebrated. Mark said he agreed. It would also be good to get a cultural lens on what success means, and also what our tamariki think success means.

Nick said in terms of progressing the survey, we should take this up in a separate smaller meeting as per the existing action item.

Justine shared the Ministry of Education document *Success for All*.

## **6. Staff rep position**

Nick said that Keith, who is the staff rep, is on leave for the rest of the year. Thanks Keith for your excellent work in that position. Keith has asked to take a leave of absence from the board until early next year. If we grant that leave, that means we won't have a staff rep. However, the board can't co-opt a staff member to the rep position, they must be elected. NZSTA has confirmed this. We can invite staff to attend and give them speaking rights, but they couldn't vote.

Nick said that he therefore recommended that we don't grant a leave of absence to Keith. This is because the board really values the input of the staff rep on the board. It's critical, all the more so because we're appointing a new principal over the next few months. If Keith decides he wants to continue as rep, he'll have to find a way to make that work. He could resign, but it would take some time to elect a new member - that process would take us through to November.

Keith said he would go back to the staff and talk to them to see what they'd like. I'm open either way. We have a better understanding of the rules now than when I first arranged to take leave.

Nick thanked Keith and said he hoped Keith took it as a compliment that the board was denying his leave request.

- **MOVED - That the board should deny Keith's request for a leave of absence from the board. Seconded and passed.**
- **ACTION - Keith will speak to staff about representation on the board going forward**

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

### *Health and Safety*

Haidee apologised for not having finished the report. She said that Mark's report covered the key issues. She asked for an update on the review on learning spaces at a future meeting.

- **ACTION - school management to report back on learning spaces review to September board meeting**

### *Policy and Ngāti Kotahitanga*

Joe also apologised for not having completed his reports. They will be in the folder by the end of the week. We had some feedback from one of the policies that was due for review.

Joe said there had been some good outcomes from the Ngāti Kotahitanga wānanga. Whānau would love the board and senior leadership to attend whānua hui at least twice a year, at the beginning and towards the end of the year. This would help with whakawhānaugatanga and putting names to faces. There is also an open door policy for ad hoc attendance on particular issues. Whānau also agreed to a 12 to 18 month term for the whānau member board rep. We'll check in towards the end of each year to see if anyone else is keen for the role. Fundraising for the noho marae is going really well but there is still lots to do.

### *Property*

Yadana said that a group of parents are keen to do a quiz night to fundraise for the school pool. She proposed 28 October as the best date for a quiz night. The parents also had some other ideas about fundraising and getting builders in for quotes for the work. She had looked into setting up a Givealittle page for pool fundraising but decided it was not a good option for tax reasons.

## *Finance*

Nick said the June and July reports are in the shared drive.

Total expenditure for the month to 30 June was \$97,134. Total expenditure for the month to 31 July 2021 was \$85,728. As at 31 July the school had a year to date surplus of \$324,800 (budgeted income against budgeted expenditure). We're tracking along fine.

Nick said that he Mark had met recently to run through the documents from Education Services. The school is pretty much on track with the budgeted expectations. There are a few increases in expenses that are being managed and will be taken into account in next year's budget. The school has been reviewing financials in line with the requirements of our policies and ERO documents. We welcome ERO's oversight.

Mark signalled to the board that it's time to start thinking about future projects.

Mark sought a decision from the board that the school should continue with the parent donation scheme in 2022. The board agreed.

- **MOVED - That the school should continue in MOE school donations scheme for 2022. Seconded and passed**

Mark said he had been contacted by the school's auditors, BDO, about renewing their contract.

- **MOVED - That the school should renew its contract with BDO. Seconded and passed.**

## **8. Staff feedback**

Justine said that things are going along pretty well within staff. There has been an awareness of the need to check in with people to make sure they're okay. Staff are exploring UVR options and upskilling staff in RTL. They're aiming to do more on the next teacher training day.

## **9. AOB**

Nick said that the board would like to acknowledge the teachers for their hard work swinging back into remote learning. Thank you.

He said the principal appointment process is going well. Shortlisting is well underway. Helena and Jess are making plans to ensure that recruitment complies with Covid rules.

## 10. Action points

#	Action	Assigned to	Update
055	Circulate Health and Safety and Work Act guidelines	Haidee	Carry forward
054	Draft community principal recruitment question for maths night and set up QR code link to surveymonkey	Tom Hovey	Done
053	Draft principal recruitment questions for follow up surveymonkey	Keith, Joe	Done
052	Check availability of 23 June staff meeting slot to discuss principal recruitment	Keith	Done
051	Ask Melissa to set up a confidential folder and email list for principal recruitment and refresh content of website	Jess	Done
050	Think about potential principal recruitment advisors and make contact with them before 7 July	Haidee, Yadana, Nick, Keith	Done
049	Ask Hine for ideas for principal recruitment advisors with experience of the immersion curriculum before 7 July	Joe	Done
048	Contact three potential consultants, working from STA list before 7 July	Jess	Done
047	Track budget for principal recruitment process	Haidee	Carry forward
046	Liaise with Nicki about plans for Mark's farewell	Nick, Yadana	Carry forward
045	Agree future arrangements for staff board rep with staff team	Keith	Carry forward
044	Prepare response to traffic consultation - with other board members	Jess	Done
043	Prepare comms for newsletter and create a Givealittle page for pool fundraising before 9 July	Jess, Yadana	Done
042	Put parent in touch with Mark to talk about planting programme	Nick	Done
041	Provide update on progress of plans for hall	Mark, Yadana	Carry forward. One quote has been received and another is one its way
040	Put item in newsletter seeking help to get quotes for Stage 2 of pool	Yadana	Done

039	Meet with Andrea (ERO) to discuss potential evaluation focus and next steps	Mark	Done
038	Circulate STA News article on maths curriculum	Mark	Close
037	Provide update on progress with communications channel strategy	Nick	Carry forward
036	Speak to Primary Sport Wellington about gender inclusion at cross country and swimming events (with Haidee if possible)	Keith	Done. The rules are that non binary kids can choose which gender to participate with, but they have to stay with that gender all year. There will still be boys and girls races.
035	Meet with Jono at Wellington College on how transgender kids participate at kapa haka competitions	Haidee	Close
034	Update on gender inclusion terminology	Haidee	Done. This has now been picked up by staff. Linda, Nicki, and Alice Cooke are working with Inside Out.
033	Report back on draft achievement survey questions	Nick	Carry forward
031	Report to future meeting on the progress of the review of the modern learning environment	Mark	Carry forward
030	Identify a school partner (teacher) to support artwork strategy work (see action 010)	Mark	Done. Julia is the designated person and conservation is shared between Sarah and Collette.
027	Meet to do further work on the achievement survey	Nick, Mark, Nicki	Carry forward
024	Clarify what the requirements are under the Health and Safety at Work Act to coordinate with agencies who use school premises	Haidee	Done. Confirmed that the requirement just need to be covered in the agreement that organisations that use school premises sign when they first engage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>ACTION - Mark to confirm that all organisations that use school premises have signed up to health &amp; safety</b></li> </ul>

			<b>requirements and that school has up-to-date contact details</b>
022	Email comms again seeking additional board members, Yadana to assist in drafting message	Jess, Yadana	Carry forward
010	Yadana to develop an overall strategy/vision for artwork commissioned for the school, including conservation and restoration of existing works.	Yadana	Carry forward

## **11. Karakia whakamutunga**

The meeting closed at 8.32pm

**Next board meeting: 6.30pm 15 September 2021**

Rest of year:

- Wednesday 20 October
- Wednesday 17 November
- Wednesday 8 December