

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Weds 24 Nov 2021, 6.30pm
Staffroom and Zoom

Present: Haidee Westwater, Jess Gorman (chair), Joe Winkels, Keith Hutton, Mark Brown, Nick Booth, Nicki Read, Steve Kerr (minutes), Linda Martelletti, Gregor, Mitsy, Yadana Saw (via Zoom).

1. Karakia timatanga

2. Conflicts

No conflicts of interest were declared.



3. Previous minutes

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

4. Action items

#	Action	Assigned to	Comments
069	Review Māori Educational Success policy	All members	Done
068	Review harassment policy	All members	Done
067	Re-circulate minutes 2 weeks before November meeting	Steve	Done
066	Do homework on Hau Tu before Annual Plan discussion	All members	Done
065	Work out timetable and process for 2022 elections and the appointment of a returning officer	Jess	Agreed to add to future agenda , given change to election timeframes
064	Add discussion on learning support and resourcing to 2022 Annual Plan discussion for November meeting	Jess	On agenda for this meeting
063	Add discussion on 2022 Annual Plan to agenda for November meeting	Jess	On agenda for this meeting

062	Sign up to NZSTA internal governance evaluation tool	Haidee	Carry forward until after a decision has been made about the Hau Tu tool
059	Develop position description for Ngāti Kotahitanga representative	Nick, Jess	Carry forward
058	Talk to potential new board member(s)	Jess	Done
057	Report back on learning spaces review to November board meeting	Mark	On agenda for this meeting
056	Speak to staff about staff representation on the board going forward and new staff rep position description	Keith, Nicki	Done and done. Election process is on track.
037	Provide update on progress with communications channel strategy	Nick	To be folded into annual plan discussion
010	Yadana to develop an overall strategy/vision for artwork commissioned for the school, including conservation and restoration of existing works.	Yadana	Carry forward to next year. Yadana is working with Eve to set up a register of artworks and collating documentation on existing murals

5. Principal's report

Mark said that he was keeping his report short. He said this was a good time to have the annual plan discussion, with a new tumuaki coming in. He said that the roll 30 students down compared to last year. This is caused by lack of migration to Wellington due to Covid. The school is fortunate that we haven't lost any teaching positions as a result.

No teachers needed to be stood down as a result of the new vaccination rules. All our staff are double vaxxed. The school has worked out protocols around parents volunteering on school trips and these are working well. Information is collected by our privacy officer and no one else sees it.

In terms of achievement, the school has a lot to celebrate but there are areas we need to focus on and get better at - in particular, writing.

Mark said the new ERO evaluator and evaluation partner are in place and there is a planning meeting coming up on 1 December.

The pool is nearly ready to open. It has been thoroughly cleaned. Now the pump needs to be checked, and the council needs to sign off the alarm system. Construction work on the old Tui block is scheduled to begin on 6 December and is due to finish at the end of

term 1 2022. We've paid a deposit on the new kitchen for the hall, which should be finished by March 2022.

Mark gave an update on the ILE (innovative learning environment) review. He said that national policy is to build new school buildings according to the innovative/modern learning environment model. The school had a say in the way the new building was designed, for example it chose to maximise the space available for learning rather than having larger staff areas. The school also made some deliberate recruitment decisions and offered professional development to support staff with the move from single cell classes to collaborative learning. This is a big shift. The new approach to teaching began back in 2014 before the new building when classes were still in prefabs. When the new building opened we were ready in terms of teaching style and learning style.

Things have evolved over time and what we have now is different from 2018 when the building opened. Mark said the school is constantly reviewing how things are going. There has been a lot of reflection and analysis by the leadership team in the last three years. We're looking at our curriculum design and teaching practice at the moment. It's a great time to reset with a new principal and a cohort of new staff.

Haidee asked how the school will measure how well the new approach and new space is working? Mark said it was difficult to measure, but student achievement has gone up 25% since 2018. So academically it has been positive. Also, student attendance has increased, though there can be a lot of reasons for this. Mark said we also ask kids to tell us about their experience of learning. So those are three measures.

Mark said that the school knows there is a group of children in the 'moderate needs' category that we should be doing better for. This could be through the overall programme design or through individual programmes.

Haidee said it would be good to see how parent's voices will be heard in the discussion about the modern learning environment, that's something that may have been missing. Parents need to know there's a place to be heard. Mark said he absolutely agreed. It's vital that our teachers pay attention to what parents are saying, and that teachers have the capability to hear what's being said and the questions being asked.

6. Annual plan

Nicki introduced the annual plan discussion. She said the strategy is a really big document that runs for three years. This discussion is the board's chance to focus on how the school can make the strategic plan real over the next year.

The meeting split into two groups then reported back. The issues discussed included:

- Embedding the relationship with Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau. Making it more of a regular relationship and not just engaging when something happens.

- Parent engagement. How can the school and board engage the whole school community. This has dropped off a bit over the last couple of years, partly because of Covid. This needs to be parent-led.
- Consultation with whānau from all communities to foster and hear all community voices and better understand those dynamics in those communities.
- The need for better representation on the board from all school communities.
- Seeking feedback more actively on the modern learning environment model.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Measuring and communicating student achievement.
- Making sure the new space in front of the library is used well for community engagement, as a drop-in space.

7. Student achievement

Nicki spoke to the student achievement report in the folder. She said the key points were that the maths results are looking pretty healthy, and that writing is the key area for next year. In next year's year 6, for example, there is a large cohort still at level 2 for writing. This is a focus group for the school. There is a similar literacy-related issue with reading. Nicki said the school will focus on trying different approaches for writing and literacy.

Mark said that he would also expect to see more of a stretch of achievement in the results, with some kids potentially stretching into level 5.

Jess asked whether there had been any Covid effect? Nicki said that there hadn't been an impact, probably because the school didn't shut down for very long this year - just five weeks.

Joe asked about results for year 7 and 8 students. Nicki said she would add these to the folder. These results are measured under a different framework called Te Waharoa Ararau (TWA).

Nick asked whether Nicki had any comments on the impact of Reo Rua on kids being out of school. Nicki said the school can see the difference qualitatively in how the kids see Te Reo and how they see themselves. Reo Rua is still in the forming stage so we haven't measured it, but we'll focus on this next year.

8. Budget

Nick said the October report is in the shared drive. Total expenditure for the month to 31 October was \$62,706. As at 30 September 2021 the school had a year to date surplus of \$373,351 (budgeted income against budgeted expenditure). Finances are running close to 83% for the year so the budget is tracking well.

The new budget is coming in December. The school's 2021 accounts will be finalised in January (the school's financial year ends on 31 December).

Nick said that Education Services have strongly encouraged the school to grow its available funds. That advice is based on their benchmarks. He said the school already has fairly strong available funds. They have also advised us to keep an eye on our teacher aid costs.

9. Questions and decisions arising from written reports

Health and Safety

Haidee said the key points are included in the principal's report.

Policy and Ngāti Kotahitanga

Joe said we had one response on the Māori educational success policy, which has been added to the folder. Joe said there is a lot in the response for the board to consider in terms of how the policy specifically reflects our school and Ngāti Kotahitanga. There is were to the board about how to respond and how to demonstrate our commitment.

Jess asked Joe what he thought we should do next. Joe said we should talk to Ngāti Kotahitanga and also whānau outside Ngāti Kotahitanga to hear their views.

- **ACTION - Joe and Jess to meet to develop a response to to feedback on Maori achievement policy**

Joe said the last Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau hui for the year is next Thursday. He said if any board members want to attend they should let Maraea know.

10. Karakia whakamutunga

The main meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Public-excluded discussion

At 8.57pm the board met to discuss a complaint received relating to the school's management of student bullying allegations. The discussion was held 'in committee' (that is, the public were excluded) to protect the personal privacy of the individuals involved.

The board came out of committee at 9.32 pm.

Next board meeting: 6.30pm Wednesday 8 December