

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Tues 31 May 2022, 6.30pm
Staff room and Zoom

Present: Haidee Westwater, Jess Gorman (chair), Joe Winkels, Leanne Whitfield (left 9.05pm), Linda Martelletti, Nick Booth, Nicki Read (left 9.05pm), Steve Kerr (minutes), Yadana Saw (arrived 6.50pm, left 8.45pm).

1. Karakia timatanga

2. Conflicts

No conflicts of interest were declared.



3. Previous minutes

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

4. Action items

090	Draft a provisional list of 'principal delegations' for board to discuss without Nicki at the next meeting	Jess	Closed - on today's agenda
089	Follow up with whaea Hine about conservation of carving	Nicki and Joe	Carry forward
088	Write a blurb on themselves for school newsletter	All board members	Closed - complete
087	Ask Melissa whether she would like to be returning officer again	Jess	Carry forward
086	Set up call with Yadana and Nick to discuss funding additional pool costs	Nicki	Closed - complete
085	Come back with any actions we can take to help support staff in terms of leave	Nicki and Leanne	Carry forward
084	Meet to discuss review of the innovative learning environment	Nicki and Haidee	Carry forward
083	Put restorative practice on agenda for a future board meeting	Jess	Closed - added to work plan

082	Talk to Janelle about what might be useful for the board in terms of Te Tiriti training	Joe	Closed - on today's agenda
080	Populate board work plan	All	Closed - complete
079	Find out what particular delegation issues there may be around finance	Nick	Carry forward
072	Work with Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau on approach to engagement between whānau and board for 2022	Joe and Jess	Closed - on today's agenda
071	Review Māori achievement policy	Joe and Jess	Closed - on today's agenda
062	Sign up to NZSTA internal governance evaluation tool	Haidee	Closed- complete

5. Principal's report

Nicki said the report is bigger than usual because we missed a meeting in April. There were some decisions that needed to be approved.

- **MOVED - that Melissa be appointed as Newtown School's executive office holder for IRD**

Motion was seconded and approved.

Nicki said there have been some changes to the staff only days for 2022. The next day will be Monday 1 August. The scheduled September day won't go ahead. We'll communicate this soon so people know for sure.

- **MOVED - that there be a staff only day on Monday 1 August 2022**

Motion was seconded and approved.

Nicki said the school had been given Beginning Principal Wellbeing money of \$12,000. She said the funding is flexible, and she would like to think about how we spend it.

- **ACTION - Nicki - bring plan a plan for spending the \$12,000 Beginning Principal funding to next meeting**

Nicki said the audited accounts are in the shared folder now. There are a couple of things to be aware of. Sixty percent of the operations grant funds salaries. That doesn't fit the Ministry formula, but it is fine. It's what we need for our school. The

recommendation that Nick sign off on credit card expenditure has already been actioned. Nick said that he considered that appropriate controls are in place around payroll transactions. Yadana asked what more the school specifically needed to do regarding payroll controls. Nicki said the main thing was reviewing how reliever hours are verified. This happens every Thursday when Leanne checks.

- **MOVED - that the audited accounts be approved and signed by Jess**

Motion was seconded and approved.

Nicki said that the school is bringing in Helen Walls to run some professional development on explicit and structured literacy. She will start with Harakeke and Tūi and also do some staff-wide PD. It's great to have it underway, Helen is an excellent practitioner

On assessment, Nicki said that the school uses two assessment tools, PACT plus another tool for Ngāti Kotahitanga. A board member commented that there was little information about Ngāti Kotahitanga. Nicki said that because of the small roll it is tricky to report on assessment without identifying individuals. Nick asked that at least we say something about Ngāti Kotahitanga rather than leaving them out. Perhaps could there be a comment about the whole of Ngāti Kotahitanga, rather than breaking down by year group.

- **ACTION - Nicki - ensure make sure Ngāti Kotahitanga progress is included in next principal's report**

Jess asked about the ESOL programme being on pause. Nicki said that unfortunately Sally is our ESOL teacher and she's been called on to do other things, she is helping out all over the place. This will change this term, now we're over the peak of Covid. Haidee said that ESOL support is very important because is for the kids who are most in need. Yadana asked what the plan is for the winter flu season? Nicki school will have to approach it the same way, with SLT stepping in when necessary.

- **ACTION - Nicki - include a focus on ESOL in the next principal's report**

Nicki said that she had been introduced to Raewyn Watson from Ngaio School who will mentor me as a beginning principal. She said she is also looking for an appraiser, with Celeste. She will be meeting with two or three potential appraisers. Jess said it would be good for members of the board to meet with potential appraisers too.

- **ACTION - Nicki - invite interested BOT members to meet with potential appraisers**

Nicki said that the hall kitchen is now open. There was a great opening event. It's nice to have a successful property project. The current situation with the swimming pool is

covered in the report. In terms of the old Tū upgrade, we've had to pull money from Phase 2 into Phase 1 because of increased construction costs. This was not a surprise, in fact, we're lucky that it's proceeding at all in this climate.

Jess asked about the reference to the playground matting in the report. She asked whether it was because of the recent broken arm? Nicki said no, the matting was due to be replaced anyway because it was getting worn out.

Nicki then introduced the strategy session. She said the current plan is comprehensive but is very big and hard to manage. It's sometimes hard to identify what the important things are. She said she is using the Springboard Trust framework to support our strategic planning. She has pulled out the really key things in the plan onto one page.

Nicki asked board members to identify the key initiatives that are front of mind from the three years the board has been together. Then the board reviewed each level of new strategy documents.

Following the session, Yadana said it was an excellent framework. Jess asked what were the next steps? Nicki said she will bring the plan back to a future meeting for review, but not straight away. Nicki invited all board members to give further feedback in future.

6. Hau Tū

Jess noted that she had circulated the NZSTA/MOE Hau Tū document earlier for members to read. She asked members to begin by sharing their initial reflections, and come to agreement about how we progress this. There are things we're doing already in terms of active partnership, and things we could be doing.

Yadana said there was a lot of process stuff we can advance as a board, which should be low-hanging fruit. She said the board was still in a building stage, we need to work on whakawhanaungatanga and building authentic relationships. We won't answer all the questions straight away. We've got to hang out more in the school community and be there, before we can have strategic conversations.

Nick said it will be a big body of work. He thought the low-hanging fruit, like having policies and plans, is done. But really it's about co-constructing these documents. It feels like at the moment these things have been written without enough of a Māori voice. I agree we need to develop relationships before we progress this. There's will around this table to partner, but we need to make sure there's buy-in.

Linda said she remembered from the session with Janelle that it's important to avoiding seeking input from Māori in a really narrow structured way, like seeking feedback on a draft document.

Joe said we've asked Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau about how they want to be represented on the board, and that the board is open to any arrangement. There is conversation about encouraging more whanau reps to get involved or join the board.

Jess said we need to talk about how to create opportunities that give the opportunity for feedback without becoming burdensome. Hau Tū is about the board itself taking some responsibility for this.

Joe said it's okay to be brave and just make a start, and for that start to be authentic. Looking through the Hau Tū framework was quite confronting in some ways because there were lots of things I couldn't answer. But that's good too, because it's a challenge. It's a relationship and both parties need to make it happen. We have an opportunity to create a legacy for future boards to establish a kawa so that future boards don't have to make this up again. We could offer to come to a wider Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau hui in future.

Haidee said we should think about creating a designated space for that communication to happen. A welcoming physical space where the relationships can be built.

Jess said there are two strands coming out of this. One is whakawhanaungatanga, like creating opportunities for cup of tea conversations to happen that don't have an agenda. The other strand is us getting some facilitation to help us look at the challenging questions so we don't just stand still, so there's some momentum on this when the next board comes in.

Nicki said we should be careful we don't take over the whānau initiative. The beauty and rightness of that meeting was that it was just whānau deciding to do something. We might not want to piggyback on that organic thing.

Linda said we should look for opportunities to get out to meet people outside school, like at rugby or library events, so people aren't always having to come into school.

- **ACTION - Jess and Joe - come back to board with a more tailored proposal for a BOT session with Nathan**
- **ACTION - all members - take note of what events we're at in the community and what opportunities there may be for engagement with whānau Māori and the wider community**
- **ACTION - Nicki - share the slides from Janelle's presentation with board**

7. Comms survey

Nick said that the last survey from August 2020 is in the shared folder together with the results. The key takeaway was that 30% of the community were not confident that the school would tell them information that they need to know about their kids. We think

that's something to work on. Since then, lots of work has been done on learning conversations and learning records.

Nick said that he, Nicki and Tom Hovey had met to discuss the next survey. They think that running a survey after the mid-year learning records, towards the end of term, would be the best timing. They have started to develop the survey for this year, focussing on confidence. They have also discussed the idea of every teacher reflecting on how connected each family is with school and how confident they are in communicating with the school. Tom will come back soon with his thoughts. There will also be some questions on Covid.

- **ACTION - all BOT members - take a look at the survey material in the shared folder and provide feedback by next meeting**

Nicki said we need to find a way to reach whānau who don't do surveys, for example using whakamōhio or talking to whānau at the green line. Nick agreed, he said that we need to take a multi-faceted approach, we know that a survey won't reach everyone.

8. Elections

Jess asked the meeting to agree that the next election should be held on 7 September 2022. The meeting agreed unanimously.

9. Written reports

Property

Yadana said she had filed her written report in the shared folder. Work is going on to seek grant funding for the swimming pool heat pump. Fire and Emergency NZ and the Ministry of Education are working to agree arrangements for fire monitoring. This needs to be agreed before compliance and occupancy can be approved.

She recommended that the board think carefully about how future stages of pool build are managed. Having an external project manager may not be the best way.

She said the new hall kitchen is awesome. Thanks to St Thomas for accelerating that work. She said that next we need to look at the hall toilets which are tired and old.

Yadana said she will circulate the draft arts strategy to the next meeting. The draft strategy was prepared by Amelia some time ago. Julia will seek views on art strategy from teaching staff.

- **ACTION - Yadana - circulate draft arts strategy prior to June BOT meeting**

Yadana also said that the Ministry has issued a new strategy on how environmental impact and sustainable building, construction and remediation will be a priority in their school property portfolio management. Further guidance will follow in June.

Nick asked whether the school should think about having a policy for its green environment, board building on the success of the last two planting days.

- **ACTION - Yadana - look into whether into what the school could develop a green/natural environment policy**

Policies

Joe said there were two policies for review this month. He said the School Docs system has improved a lot recently. This will allow Nicki to add some of the tasks into her report, for example confirming that the school holds a current police vet on all teaching staff.

Ngāti Kotahitanga

Joe said the Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau-led 'Māori super hui' was a great success. The purpose was whakawhanaungatanga (making connections) between Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau and Māori whānau from wider the kura. There was a great turn out, kai and new connections.

Joe said he had been catching up with Nathan and Janelle from Riki Consultancy to discuss providing the board with some guidance in developing its strategic vision and engagement strategy. There is a proposal in the shared folder for the board's consideration.

Joe said that he had put a whānau-led proposal to create a māra kai (food garden) in the folder. It would be located on the front and back decks of Ngāti Kotahitanga. Nick and Jess said that the board fully supports the initiative and commits to supporting it, for example by supporting with seeking grant funding, etc.

Finance

Nick said there are financial reports in the folder for both March and April.

We had a deficit of \$16,989 against income for March. Our income against budgeted expenditure for the year to date at the end of March showed a \$85,273 surplus.

We had a deficit of \$99,602 against income for April. Our income against budgeted expenditure for the year to date at the end of April showed a \$101,254 surplus.

Things are running smoothly and no issues have been raised by Education Services. Nick and Nicki have a meeting in June with Education Services to go over the budget before bringing it back to the board for the mid-year review.

Health and safety

Haidee said there is no health and safety report this month. She said that school should think about whether staff representation on the H&S committee is broad enough. At the moment it consists of Nicki and Leanne who are both senior staff. It would be good to have a less senior staff rep too. Nick agreed and said the board is responsible for making the H&S representative role attractive to another staff member, and could help with this.

10. Delegation of authority to principal (without Nicki)

Nicki and Leanne left for this agenda item.

Karakia whakamutunga

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Dates of future meetings

Monday 20 June 2022

Monday 25 July 2022

Tuesday 23 August 2022

Monday 19 September 2022

Monday 17 October 2022

Monday 21 November 2022

Monday 12 or 19 December 2022