

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday 18 October 2022, 6.40pm
Staff room and Zoom

Board members:

Fatima Amin Sheikh, Jess Gorman (chair), Joe Winkels, Mika Mardhiah, Mitzi Henderson, Naomi Taylor, Nick Booth, Nicki Read, Yadana Saw.

Also present:

Ali Zainal Abidin, Alysha Stephens (via Zoom until 7.50pm), Leanne Whitfield, Linda Martelletti, Karen Fredrickson (until 7.20pm), Steve Kerr (minutes).

1. Karakia timatanga

No conflicts of interest were declared. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Co-option of additional trustees

Jess said that at the last meeting we agreed she would invite Mitzi and Yadana to see if they'd like to join the board as co-opted members. They're both here tonight and keen.

- **MOVED - Jess moved that the board co-opt Mitzi and Yadana to the board. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

3. Pool opening

Karen Fredrickson said that her mother taught at Newtown School for 33 years. To begin with, the pool was uncovered. It needed a fence. When she was growing up, Karen was involved with fundraising to raise money for the fencing and the roof and the heating over many years. Housie brought in a lot of funds. The roof was designed to capture heat from the sun so it was warm enough to swim, even before the heating was put in.

Karen said the school had invited lots of people who have been involved over the years to the pool party on Thursday. Fundraisers, caretakers, teachers, etc. She said she had learned so much about the history of the school in the process of researching the pool. Lots of the former teachers still meet up. She said that these things are really important to capture, especially as history is becoming part of the curriculum. Then Karen ran through the run sheet for the opening and the party.

Nicki said it was important to acknowledge all the things that Karen had discovered and the importance of learning and holding on to the history of the place. Mika said it would be a good idea to write down some of the stories so they're not lost.

Nick said perhaps Yadana should speak at the opening because she did so much work to make the pool happen. Mitzi asked whether there was anyone to take photos. Yadana said she would ask Stan to take photos.

The board thanked Karen for her amazing work on the pool opening.

4. Tumuaki report

Nicki said there was quite a lot to cover this month and she'd do her best to cover the main things.

Leave approvals

Nicki said that Mitch is seeking leave without pay from the Kāhui Ako element of her role to complete her dissertation. There will be minimal impact on the school. She said Alice V would like to extend her parental leave from the end of term 1 2023 to the end of the year. She's loving being a mum, she's keen to help in Te Kāhano. Nicki said Alice Cooke has been on parental leave this year and is requesting flexible arrangements so she'll return at 0.6 FTE on a temporary basis. She said Juliette is also requesting flexible work so she can train to do reading recovery, she'd like to reduce her hours to allow for that. Lastly, Nicki said that Annabel is requesting to work at 0.4 FTE next year. She's currently doing some work at Karori West School. She was due to come back in term 3, but she's asked for term 4 off.

Nicki recommended that the school accept all these arrangements.

Nick said it's great we're being flexible for these teachers. Jess said she was also supportive of Nicki's approach.

Joe asked if there were any operational impacts when staff go down to 0.6 or 0.4 FTE. Nicki said yes it can be a bit of a jigsaw but we want to make it work to be family friendly. It is something that happens at schools.

Mitzi asked if there was a flexible working policy to make sure all requests are treated fairly? Nicki said she'd been following the Ministry guidance so far. A lot more people want to come back on flexible terms following parental leave.

Return to work programmes

Nicki said that Moreen and Hillary are both working with occupational therapists to return to work. It's a slow process. They're still having headaches and need to rest a lot. She

said the school has employed staff to cover Hillary in Waitangi. She said the school has made some changes to where football games happen as a consequence of the injuries.

Term dates

Leanne said the school has worked out its 2023 term dates, taking into account the Ministry requirement of a minimum of 386 half days.

The recommended dates for 2023 are Wednesday 1st February to Wednesday 20th December.

The recommended Staff Only days are 30 and 31st January, 6th April, 21st August, 24th October.

- **MOTION - to approve term dates for 2023. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Bicultural discussions

Nicki said that Mary from ERO has shared a draft profile report of the school. Currently we're surveying whānau to review how Te Kākano is working. She said at the moment the school is planning to keep the same model next year, but it will be adapted if necessary, based on the results of the survey.

Jess asked whether there was an opportunity to think about how Te Kākano and Ngāti Kotahitanga relate to one another as part of the review, for example creating a pathway for kids to move from Te Kākano to Ngāti Kotahitanga? Naomi said that could be a good idea. She said we could have a kōrero about how we asked the question. Would you like to move into an immersion setting?

Joe agreed and said it would be good to engage with whānau Māori in the wider school too, as some might be ready. Naomi said we'd like to grow Ngāti Kotahitanga but we need to have a discussion about resourcing and the size of the room, etc. Naomi said it would be great to create that pathway, we want to grow and lots of people want to take up the opportunity.

Mika said it would be good to limit surveys to one per term. Mitzi asked whether we get a good response rate from surveys? Nick said we got 80 responses to the comms survey, it varies, but we know we don't reach everyone. Mitzi said she could give some advice on how to get a good survey response.

- **ACTION - Nicki to share bicultural survey with board with a deadline for comments**

Property

Nicki said the old Tūi space is nearly ready, the council is doing a code of compliance check tomorrow afternoon. It will be a community space and administration hub.

Nick asked whether the space will have a name. Nicki said yes it needs a name, it's a really important space especially for starting families. She said she was open to suggestions on how to name places. Naomi asked how other spaces were named. Nicki said other names used by the school were possibly not given enough thought. The whānau names of Waitangi, Harakeke, etc were not gifted to us. Mika said how about the kids come up with names and put them in a jar and the teachers draw them out?

Nicki said she is meeting with the Ministry property people this week about the next stage of redevelopment, which includes the staff room.

Health and safety

Nick said the Health and Safety committee had met. It discussed the fact the fire safety procedures had been well drilled. It changed the spaces that balls are kicked around, given the concussions. It also talked about the pool, and making sure there were safety policies and that the policies are well socialised before the pool is opened. Leanne said the pool safety policies were up for review this term anyway.

Mika said that sometimes kids are leaving the school out the Emmett Street gate during the day. Nicki said she would look into that.

Finance

Nicki said there are two finance reports in the shared drive to review this meeting, for August and September.

Nick said our income against budgeted expenditure for the year to date at the end of September showed a \$166,095 surplus. He said we've got quite a lot of cash on hand because we drew down funding early this year. Expenditure is tracking well and it'll all be spent by the end of year. Nick said a draft budget will come to the board before the end of the year, to be approved early next year. There is an interim audit in November.

Jess said she wanted to acknowledge Melissa for having worked over the school holidays to make sure we met the audit requirements of one of our grants.

Community engagement

Nicki said the results of the comms survey have just come back in, we haven't really reviewed it yet. She said Tom will present on it next meeting.

Staff event

Linda said that in the past the board had contributed to the end of year staff event. Jess said the board would love to do that again, and would like to increase its contribution to reflect cost of living increases.

5. Collaborative practice / Innovative Learning Environments

Leanne said the school had started on some beginning actions to look at collaborative practice. The school ran an activity at a staff meeting where everyone contributed to a Google doc about how staff understand Innovative Learning Environments. She said the survey has given us a really good steer on what to work on in teacher only days coming up, especially with new staff coming on board.

Leanne said she had identified some misconceptions among staff about the purpose of ILE, and some different ideas about ways we can use break out spaces. She and Nicki are planning more reflection and work on this for staff only days.

Nicki said she had learned about the importance of discussing ILE during induction of new staff and parents.

6. Previous minutes and action items

Jess asked the members to affirm the minutes for August and September. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Jess said the board would defer reviewing the actions from the August meeting to the next meeting.

Then Jess ran through the open action items:

Confirm future meeting dates with all board members	Jess	Close
Come back to the next meeting with more information on co-chairing	Jess	Close
Contact Yadana and Mitzi to see if they are interested in being co-opted onto the board	Jess	Close
Share info on EQI number system	Nicki	Close - in folder
Look at how achievement reporting could show progress of learners across sublevels of curriculum, and how overall reporting could factor in ESOL learners	Nicki	Carry forward - discuss at next meeting
Schedule a meet the candidates afternoon tea after voting papers go out and invite all candidates	Nicki	Close
Provide short video to Melissa to upload	All candidates	Close
Send out engagement survey	Nick	Close

Prepare draft ILE questionnaire, seeking questions from teachers and leadership, and bring to future meeting	Nicki	Carry forward
Start a google doc for board members to collaborate on an induction document	Jess	Carry forward
Invite Yadana to speak to staff on arts strategy	Nicki	Carry forward
Provide feedback on draft arts strategy	All	Carry forward
Look into whether into what the school could develop a green/natural environment policy	Yadana	Carry forward

7. Staffing

Nicki shared a confidential paper on staffing for 2023. She said it had been a busy time interviewing new staff and rejigging to take account of staff who are leaving, and so on. She explained to the board how the school leadership has made its decisions about which teachers teach in each whānau, based on their strengths and experience, and the size and learning needs of different year cohorts.

She said the school tries to make sure there are experienced people in all spaces and people who understand collaborative practice in all spaces. It's complex and takes a lot of thinking and conversation.

Joe asked how successful the recruitment round was. Nicki said it was good. She said that last year we had a lot of starting teachers so this time we looked for experience to give stability. Joe noticed that none of the new teachers are blokes.

Nick asked whether there is an exit interview for staff leaving. Nicki said yes, she was getting someone independent to do those. The interviewer will ask about each staff member's experience of ILE.

Nick said it would be good to know if there's anything the board can do to help retention.

Nick asked how the ratios compare to this year? Leanne said they're actually lower than the Ministry guidelines.

8. BOT roles

Jess said the board wanted to support new board members to have the space to come up to speed. She said that Yadana is available to support Naomi on property, and Nick is available to support Mika on Health and Safety. She said that NZSTA (New Zealand School Trustees Association) provides good training for new trustees.

Jess invited the board members to reflect and share how they are feeling about the allocation of roles. She said the discussion at last month's meeting might have been quite full on for people. She said the board could take a two person per role approach, and that there will also be new members coming from Ngāti Kotahitanga.

Mitzi asked what kind of role she might take on. Jess said she knew that Mitzi was strong on community engagement and induction. Joe said he would welcome Mitzi's support in that role.

9. Co-chair

Jess said she'd sent an email to the board after she'd spoken to NZSTA about co-chairing options. She said that it is possible to have co-chairs, but there still must be a presiding officer, and a written memorandum of understanding about how responsibilities would be delegated to the co-chairs. She said it would take some to consult with the school community, principal, etc on this.

She suggested that the board could extend her as chair until the end of year, and use that time to agree arrangements for next year, once the new Ngāti Kotahitanga board members are on board. She suggested the board could set up a subcommittee to deal with this.

Naomi said she'd suggested co-chairing as a way to start the conversation about how we honour Te Tiriti in the school. She asked, how do we hui and wānanga and make sure we have the conversations about this? The conversation is just as important as leaping to having a co-chair arrangement.

Public-excluded discussion

At 8.37pm the board met so that Nicki could provide an update on the principal appraisal process and presented her principal appraisal objectives for 2022/23.

- **ACTION: Nicki to arrange a time for Michelle to attend a Board meeting**

The board discussed the appropriate grading for administrative support at the school and agreed with Nicki's proposal for regrading.

Discussion of these matters was held 'in committee' (that is, the public were excluded). The board came out of committee at 8.50pm.

Future meetings

- Monday 28 November, 6.30pm
- Monday 12 December, 6.30pm