

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday 19 August 2025, 6.40pm
Staff room

Board members: Joe Winkels (co-chair), Nick Booth (co-chair), Naomi Taylor, Jess Gorman, Fatima Osman Amin, Trey Tanuvasa, Sian Smith (Ngāti Kotahitanga rep), Nicki Read (tumuaki), Rhys Muir (kaiako rep).

Also present: Danielle Te Waiti (deputy principal), Steve Kerr (minutes).

1. Karakia timatanga

Joe welcomed everyone. There were no conflicts of interest.

2. Te Tiriti in action

All board members shared examples of honouring Te Tiriti in their lives. These included: Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau speaking at a recent NZEI hui, visiting Te Papa with kaimahi Māori and seeing the 'taonga supermarket', attending the Kāhui Ako kapa haka event, staying true to honouring te Tiriti in the school governance role even in the current political climate, celebrating the publication of a book by a whānau member, showing kids how to be straight up.

3. Tumuaki report

Paid union meeting - Nicki thanked Sian for speaking at the paid union meeting. Rhys said that a lot of what was spoken about at that hui was what Nadia had spoken about at a previous board hui, about upholding Te Tiriti and about having a teacher aide or a teaching assistant in every classroom. That's an aspiration goal but is very achievable in the timeframe proposed. Also pay parity for early childhood education. Naomi said she appreciated what Mark Potter had to say, he had a lot of fight.

Rhys said the board could make a choice to put up a sign to support NZEI's Kimi Haeata campaign.

Joe asked whether there was a collective view across the Kāhui on these issues? Nicki said there might be, but she couldn't say for sure and she would ask other principals. Naomi asked if the board could speak to other boards about it. Sian said we could host a

wānanga. Jess said that we could use the school social to engage the community about it.

September board meeting - Nicki suggested that we should have a September board meeting to welcome the new board and handover. She said that waiting till October would be too long. However it would be hard to find a suitable time for a meeting between the date that the election results come in and the school holidays.

Te Haruru o Te Kāhui Tonga - Maraea and Lily did a phenomenal job of organising the Kāhui Ako kapa haka event. Teachers and principals were buzzing over the purpose and the occasion. We'd like to do it again yearly or 2 years. Joe said there was a similar kōrero and buzz at SWIS.

Website - Nicki said the website survey has gone out and we're still on track.

Staff - Nicki said the school is currently halfway through conversations with kaiako. She said they are quite positive conversations about how things are working for kaiako and where they want to be, how they perceive their work environment, cultural dimensions, how they know they're successful in their work. Naomi asked whether Nicki used Te Whare Tapa Whā in the pathway conversations with kaiako. Nicki said the conversations could cover a lot of ground and issues that people are carrying.

Roll numbers - Nicki said roll numbers are holding steady while other school rolls are falling. Nick asked if there had been a spike in tamariki leaving this year. Nicki said not really, but we keep an eye on the reasons that whānau leave.

Achievement - Nicki thanked the board for their engagement and questions at the July meeting. She said there had been some really good reflections coming out of it. She said the conversation reflected the fact that the board had come along on the journey with the school leadership over the years and allowed them to try new things like reporting on achievement against Te Whare Tapa Whā.

Joe said the board felt privileged to see the achievement reporting, and asked whether the material is shared more widely with kaimahi and whānau. Nicki said sometimes it's shared with kaimahi. She said she was not sure yet what the best way to share the thinking behind the achievement reporting with the whānau.

Jess said that there were two things that might help maintain the approach under the new board. Firstly, the board being involved in setting the strategy. Secondly, the board getting to understand its own role, particularly around achievement. But if the board only looked at achievement without the strategy it would be missing a lot.

Property - Nicki said the drainage procurement had been signed. Progress on the playground is slow but we keep collecting funds.

Finance - Nicki said she had put some funds in a three month term deposit to earn some interest. She said the school is playing with bank staffing. The budget is running close to planned.

Parent connections events - Nicki said she'd held a second F@NS hui and given parents a list of potential jobs that they could do. She said sometimes she struggled to find time to do the comms and convene the group. Joe asked if the school could offer parents a koha for their effort, like a supermarket voucher. Naomi asked if there were any jobs that would be suitable for tuakana in the school as well.

Cultural events - Nicki said that recently it was Cook Island language week and Indian independence celebration. She said that the children are proud and senior students are leading these celebrations.

Island Bay School - Nicki said that Island Bay School is looking to change to a full primary and to keep their Year 7 and 8s. They have written to the co-chairs to consult with us because it might have a ripple effect on our school. The letter gives Island Bay School's reasons for wanting to change. Nick said that it may impact the roll at SWIS because Island Bay School is a big contributor to SWIS. Jess said she hoped that the proposal wouldn't result in a delay to Ministry investment in SWIS.

- **ACTION - Nick and Joe to draft a response to the letter from Island Bay School**

Board election - Joe said Sarah had done a fantastic job running the election. He said the communication with candidates had been great and there had been a lot to navigate with the new platform and the change to the staggered cycle.

Homelessness - A board member commented on the recent coverage of homelessness in Newtown. Nicki said we have some regulars. Khan the caretaker checks in on them at 7am and asks them to move on. She said that generally people are respectful, but we do need to be mindful that things can occur on the street and children need to know how to keep safe. Naomi suggested that we have a wānanga about how we look after the community. Trey said we need to teach the children to have compassion and show aroha but stay safe at the same time. Sian said that children also need to know if they see anything concerning, they should tell someone.

4. Preparation for incoming board

Joe said he wanted the board to think about the process winding up and the new board coming in. He shared some reflections about his experience of the period after the last election and asked board members to share their ideas about how to approach the transition.

Sian said that the Māori caucus had thought about this kaupapa, and how to approach it in the context of te Tiriti in action and co-governance, and how to hand this on. She talked about the pūrākau in te ao Māori of Te Kore, Te Pō and Te Mārama, and how it can be deeply relevant in many areas of life. She said that the pūrākau might help us as a board think about the process of the new board coming in. For example at the moment there's a lot of uncertainty because we don't know who the new board will be, so it's like Te Kore/the void. She said that every iwi has a different kōrero about the creation. She encouraged board members to reflect on the pūrākau and how it might help with the handover to the new board and also how it might apply in their portfolio.

Trey said she really liked the approach and that it's important to have a cultural view of this. Fatima said she could relate because there are ideas about moving from darkness to light in other cultures. Jess said he could recognise a lot of her experiences over the last six years in the approach and that it's good for us to think about the perspectives of the new board members coming in.

Trey asked what it would look like when we come together for the new board? Sian said it could be as simple as playing the video clip about the creation pūrākau, and then have a space that represented Te Kore, Te Po, and Te Ao Marama that could help people identify where they're at.

Nick shared a document he had prepared that captured some of the things he had learned over the years and things for the new board to think about.

Joe confirmed with board members that the next meeting would be on 7 October 2025, and that would be the last hui of this board and the first hui of the new board.

Danielle said she'd like to have some tikanga around the new board being welcomed, with wāhine speaking first and whakatau Māori like our tamariki do every morning. And shared kai. That would give the new members the chance to share their dreams and aspirations and fears. The current board will have a chance to speak about the things that they'd really like to see carried on through the new board, and how they have found the experience personally.

Jess said that that approach sounded much better than when she started on the board, because that had been quite abrupt. Trey asked what the business of the first hui would be? Nick said it would probably be whakawhanaungatanga mostly. Some of us won't be board members any more so we won't be able to make decisions.

Trey said she'd like to take a bit more time to make sure the process runs well, that we use the pūrākau properly, and that Nicki is supported.

- **ACTION - Joe to convene a hui to wānanga on how the handover hui on 7 October 2025 should run**

5. Previous minutes and action items

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as true and correct.

8. Closing karakia

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.