

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 28 July 2025, 6.40pm
Waitangi

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

Also present: Danielle Te Waiti (deputy principal), Debbie Purves (kaiako), Maraea Pukeke-Pine (kaiako), Sarah Divers (kaiako), Steve Kerr (minutes).

Apologies: Fatima Osman Amin.

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: making a submission against the Regulatory Standards Bill; giving a presentation on whakapapa and matauranga Māori to a professional historians conference; attending performance by Manawa Orchestra including poems written in te reo by our tamariki.

3. 2025 Mid-year achievement report

Danielle said that Newtown School teaches the NZ Curriculum and the Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori (the curriculum guidelines for teaching and learning Te Reo Māori). She said that children need to feel connected and be well before they can learn. She said 2025 is a 'gap year' in terms of curriculum and other changes, and there may be changes coming next year.

Danielle presented the achievement results interpreted through the framework of Te Whare Tapa Whā.

Whenua

Danielle said that 'whenua' is the relationship between tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. She said that tangata tiriti at Newtown School are culturally diverse. About 20% of tamariki at Newtown School have Māori as part of their ethnicity identification.

Maraea presented on te whanaketanga/progression o Ngāti Kotahitanga for mid-2025. She explained the approach to teaching Te Reo Māori me ōna Tikanga in Ngāti Kotahitanga, including Reo Ōkawa and Reo Ōpaki (formal/informal). She said that 70% of tamariki are working within their taumata/level. The other 30% are needing support and acceleration.

She showed the board samples of the tamariki's tuhituhi/writing. 66% of tamariki are working within or toward their taumata/level. Tamariki had also done writing for Kids Write, Matariki poems, and Newtown News.

She said that for pāngarau/maths, content is tailored on real life context and experiences, such as market day. 83% of tamariki are working within or towards their taumata/level.

Maraea said that some of the success for Ngāti Kotahitanga had been kapa haka competitions, kura trips, noho marae and Koroneihana trips, and the Toitū te Tiriti movement. Some of the challenges are te reo Pākehā, co-teaching in two separate spaces, lack of teaching resources, entry criteria, and reo proficiency e.g. for late immersion tamariki.

Taha Tinana

Danielle presented some stats on participating in sports such as cross-country, swimming, EasyMoves Gym, Wheels Day, school sports teams, providing fruit and sandwiches.

Taha Wairua

Danielle said it is hard to get data and stats on connection to cultural and religious identity, values, and beliefs. She presented some of the initiatives that relate to Taha Wairua, such as Roots of Empathy, Newtown's Got Talent, and Garden to Table.

Taha Hinengaro

Danielle said taha hinengaro is about our mind, heart, consciousness, thoughts and feelings, resilience, attention span, and communication. She said that Sparkle Squad and Brave Heart are groups of tamariki who have withdrawn from the class that Mitch works with. She presented term 1 PAT (progressive achievement test) Pānui/Reading Comprehension results for English medium, both for the whole school and for Māori learners in English medium.

She said there is no PAT yet for writing, but presented the overall teacher judgements for writing for mid year for the whole school.

Danielle said that over 50% tamariki are learning English and for some kids this was the first test they had ever done. She said that years three to six sit the PATs. While some kaiako had not given PATs before, there was good training available to kaiako before the

tests. She said she thinks that PATs are a good tool if they are done in an environment where the children feel comfortable, but she acknowledged that teachers have different opinions about them.

She presented the maths PAT results. She said the school had done pretty well in terms of the results, compared with the national results. She said that PAT results are only one of the inputs into the overall teacher judgements for each tamariki.

Rhys said that PAT results are a good tool to shape teaching and learning. Debbie said the school is still using PACT for some subjects, the school uses many tools.

Taha Whānau

Danielle shared some of the initiatives at school that are relevant to Taha Whānau, such as Cards of Awesome Cards.

Danielle said we don't know what change might be coming next year but we think it's important to stay balanced.

Nick said that in the past, learning records had an indication of curriculum level but this year there was nothing - could the school have communicated this change better? Danielle said that it was tricky because we no longer have levels (these have been replaced by years) and the school has not quite figured out how to present achievement for years. She accepted that that could have been communicated better.

Debbie said information on curriculum levels for each child was always something that was meant to accompany the learning conversation. She said that more information is held by the school and is available to whānau. Nick said that the school hadn't communicated that to whānau. Debbie said we could have done better on that.

Jess said that in the past the board had set targets for achievement, and had sometimes identified particular year cohorts that needed additional support. Danielle said that that will be tricky now that there's been a change to the parameters of the achievement levels. She said that it might be easier over time in future with PATs, but we will need to find a bridge to show progress over this time of change.

Nick said the Whare Tapa Whā model was a really rich way to show what the school was doing and what tamariki had achieved.

Trey said that since she had been on the board she could see the school community including the kaiako do all the taha really well, and the challenge is to reflect that in the way that we assess achievement. She thanked the staff for their great work.

Joe said that this will be the last time this board received achievement data. He said it was really important to show other kinds of achievement beyond the curriculum. He said he supported continuing to reflect those elements of achievement and learning,

regardless of what government policy dictates. It's really important to paint that picture. Jess said that that had also been a big learning for the board, that the school can focus on both sides at once.

4. Tumuaki report

Literacy - Nicki said Jenny is continuing to work with some whānau in our school. She said the school had started day 1 of literacy PD with Louise Dempsey. The last kaiako who haven't already done structured literacy PD are now doing it. She said that's an impressive effort from our staff.

Whakamōhio - Nicki said that teachers had chase down some parents to make sure they got the time to sit down and talk.

Garden to Table - Nicki said Tania runs an amazing programme, we're so lucky to have her. She works in multiple spaces in our school. She enables things to happen on our land, garden, and school. It really lights up parents when we talk to them about it.

Kapa Haka Kāhui event - Nicki said this is long overdue and we're really excited about that happening. Lily and Maraea are making it happen.

Logo and website - Nicki said we'd finished on good terms with the first company but we're no longer working with them because it made sense to bring it all into one place and work with Hemisphere + Big River Creative. Currently there's a short survey to whānau about how they use the website.

Attendance - Nicki said a couple of tamariki had been referred to the truancy service. She said the school is meeting with a social worker now to try and find a way to engage them. He was very cool.

Property - Nicki said the school is reviewing the current cyclical maintenance plan to see if the suggested amounts are correct.

Playground - Nicki said we had a site visit with a firm from Whanganui called Playground Centre. They asked us about our story and our people. They suggested a phased approach to the playground. Nicki said that there had been anonymous donations from people who've heard we're planning to upgrade.

Finance - Nicki said that she'd been through the budget with Education Services and made some adjustments and so now we're in a positive position. She said the finances are in good shape.

Health and Safety - Nicki said the committee met last week and there was nothing too big to report.

F@NS - Nicki will call the second hui of F@NS soon and try to keep the momentum. She said there is a lot that parents could be doing, for example the 'Stop and Drop' in the morning could be run by parents.

5. Portfolio updates, delegations, playground

Community engagement - Trey asked all the board members to revisit the questions that her and Fatima circulated at the last meeting. She said she would like to see this board find a way to carry over its policy and vision for cultural competency and Te Tiriti to the new board.

- **ACTION - Nick/Joe to add to agenda for future hui - how to carry over its policy and vision for cultural competency and Te Tiriti to the new board**

Ngāti Kotahitanga - Sian said that in week 8 the Ngāti Kotahitanga seniors will be going to Koroneihana in Ngāruawāhia. It's being paid for by the Methodist sponsorship, mihi to the parents who raised the funding. She said that tamariki in ahi kaa will stay at kura and have a planned trip on that Friday with Whaea Susie. She said there's a raffle to fundraise for next year's noho marae which might be at Waikawa in Te Tau Ihu. Lastly, Sian said that Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau want to reiterate their support for keeping Whaea Hine as a resource teacher Māori.

6. BOT election and comms plan

Nick said the school had officially agreed to move to a staggered election cycle and Sarah has agreed to be the electoral officer. Nick encouraged the board to spread the word and get people to come forward to join the board. The deadline for nominations is 6 August 2025.

7. Previous minutes and action items

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

#	Action	Assigned to	Update
218	Nick/Joe to talk to Mitch about having a presence at the Matariki breakfast to let whānau know that the board election is coming up	Nick/Joe	Closed - done
217	Nicki to estimate additional costs running elections if school moves to 18 month election cycle	Nicki	Closed - done
216	Nick/Joe to invite Maneesha to attend	Nick/Joe	Closed - done

	and present to the new board		
215	Respond to the questions in the community engagement doc	All board members	Carry forward
211	Take the decision re: Paul's offer to donate container artwork through the Whakamana strategy and checklist	Naomi and Nicki	Carry forward
178	Look into what can be done to support Palestinian whānau	Naomi and Fatima	Carry forward
173	Write up notes of how they see their portfolio responsibilities	All	Closed - done

8. Closing karakia

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.