

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 28 February 2018, 6.15 pm, school staffroom

Present: Mark Brown, Julie Bennett, Lucy Kebbell, Kelvin Harper, Karen O'Leary and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Annette Gittos, Victoria Esson, and Daniel Petersen.

1. Karakia

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

The minutes of the 31 January 2018 Board meeting were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

In terms of the Saturday market item, Mark confirmed that the MOU with the market organisers has been signed, with one amendment (market operator's vehicles can be on site from 4 am, not 5 am as originally drafted, but must use the main entrance at that time, not the Emmett Street side entrance). Expectations were made clear to the organisers that they are responsible for making sure the school is clean once the market operators have moved on.

3. Conflicts of interest

None declared.

4. School Charter 2018-20 and Annual Plan 2018

The Board expressed thanks to Lucy for updating the School Charter to reflect the discussions at the January 2018 Board meeting. The Board adopted the Charter, and noted that the Annual Plan still needs to be finalised following staff input.

5. Finance

Mark advised that he has been working with Jill to prepare for the audit process. It is likely that the asset register will need to be cleaned up, as it has a lot of items with nil value.

ACTION: Julie offered to check in with Victoria to see if she needs any assistance with finalising the 2018 budget.

6. Principal's report

Mark tabled his monthly report to the Board. Items discussed included:

- The enrolment scheme is now operational. Siblings of current students are being catered for.
- Writing and literacy is a major focus for the teachers this year. Nicki will come and talk to the Board at the March meeting about the teacher inquiry process that is underway in this area.
- The New Zealand Education Council is talking to schools using PaCT (including Newtown School), with a focus on how schools can monitor "curriculum expectations" and report the achievement of individual children to their parents/caregivers. Schools will still have targets, even though national standards will not be used in the way they previously have.
- PB4L: clear expectations for students have been set, including a focus on using acceptable language (no swearing), staying in class, and no violence. If a student engages in any of these things, s/he is put straight onto reflection, without any warning. Mark observed that this has already had a positive impact.
- The school is looking at applying to the Ministry of Education for some of the additional funding for an Arabic speaker.
- The Board were supportive of a proposal to send Nicki, Debbie and Alice to a conference in Sydney in March. The conference is on future focussed schooling in an innovative learning environment. Mark indicated that, following the conference, he would expect these teachers to come and talk with the Board about curriculum development.
- Paid Union meetings will be held on 15 March 2018 - the school will be open - two meetings will be held, so staff can be split across these times.
- A teacher only day will be held on the Thursday before Easter, in preparation for the move into the new school building. Children can be supervised at school if necessary.
- The new building is still on track for completion in early May 2018. The design of the junior playground (in front of Whanau Tui) was presented to the Board. Staff have been looking at furniture, and at options to provide quiet, low-stimulus learning spaces for children in the larger open areas.

- The government has signaled a proposal (subject to final approval as part of the Budget process) to provide additional funding to schools that agree not to ask for parental/caregiver donations.
- The government has also announced the establishment of Change Managers to work with the schools and Boards of Trustees to set up the Communities of Learning.
- The Board supported the move towards a “water only” school (although milk is also okay). The school will manage the comms around this.
- Year 6s are on camp next week. The Health and Safety plan for the campe was tabled. Nicki, Wanwan and Laura are the teachers involved.

7. Committee reports

Maori medium

ACTION: Karen to check with Daniel if he still wants to be the Ngati Kotahitanga whanau representative for the Board.

Policy

Nothing to report

Sponsorship

Karen indicated that a new team (including Lucy and Jess Gorman) is being established to look to create sponsorship opportunities for the school. The team will be looking to the school/Board of Trustees for guidance about what the focus of the sponsorship efforts should be.

FANS

Mark is keen to involve FANS in the discussion around options for the opening of the new building. Lucy indicated that she was happy to be involved. Options could include a blessing on the Monday morning (following handing over of the keys from the building contractors), a formal opening, and then a community-focused event. Children who have recently left the school should have the opportunity to visit.

Health and Safety

Julie reported that experts recommend an “off-gassing” process for new school buildings. This involves opening the windows and turning up the heat for a period of time, to help remove any volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other chemicals that are released from new building materials, furnishings etc.

ACTION: Mark to raise the issue of "off-gassing" at the next on-site meeting with the building contractors.

Dyslexia

Board members noted that it is falling on the parents to call the meetings (for both the dyslexia and PB4L working groups), rather than the meetings being school-led.

8. Any other business (including correspondence)


The proposed liquor licence in Newtown that the school made a submission against is not going to proceed.

ACTION: For the March Board meeting, the Board agreed to set aside some time to make decisions on how we are going to celebrate the new school building.

9. In-Committee

The Board moved into committee at 8:00 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board and moved out of committee at 8:08 pm.

Next meeting: 28 March 2018

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