

## **Newtown School Board of Trustees**

### **Meeting minutes**

Wednesday 26 September 2018, 6.30 pm, school staffroom

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Present: Mark Brown, Annette Gittos, Julie Bennett, Lucy Kebbell, Kelvin Harper, Victoria Esson, Miriam Swanson, Trish Tuthill (items 1 - 4), Sally Hunter (items 1 - 5) and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: Daniel Petersen

#### **1. Karakia**

#### **2. Previous Minutes and Actions**

The minutes of the 29 August 2018 Board meeting were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

#### **3. Conflicts of interest**

None declared

#### **4. Health and Safety - school incident reporting**

Trish provided an overview of the GOSH health and safety reporting system, which is now up and running. A Board of Trustees' dashboard will be built in, according to what the Board wants reports on. Staff have been shown how they can use the GOSH system, including entering information about incidents using their phones. Hazards can also be entered - Trish will then be alerted, so she can take action immediately if necessary. Staff were keen to use the system. Alice demonstrated using the system at a staff meeting - it took about a minute to enter the relevant details on her phone.

GOSH reporting - the categories include those hazards that require corrective action - these can be discussed with the caretaker at weekly meetings. Trish summarised the incidents of note ("exceptional incidents") that have been entered into the system for Term 3. The Board indicated that it would be good to have more information about outbreaks of contagious diseases (eg chicken pox, influenza) - what whanau are affected, how many children and staff have been impacted (etc).

The GOSH system does have the ability to select whether the incident was behavioural related (as opposed to accidents, for example). The system is still a work in progress - once it is fully operational, it will be possible to align the two reporting systems.

The Board observed that the success of the GOSH system is reliant on staff members reporting incidents and hazards in a timely manner. The Board asked whether staff are clear about what needs to be reported - for instance, is there a clear flowchart (or similar) to help clarify what needs to be recorded? Kelvin said there has been lots of discussion with staff about what needs to be reported. This includes any incident that results in a child having to go home.

The school is working to get all staff fully trained in First Aid - all whanau now have at least one staff member that has a current first aid certificate.

The H&S committee (Mark, Trish, Kelvin, the caretaker, Julie and any other interested staff) will meet twice a term.

Trish has been talking with the Sustainable Transport Manager at the Wellington City Council about the three-way intersection of Rintoul/Riddiford/Emmett Streets. In consultation with residents, the Council is looking at installing a "school zone" sign on Rintoul Street, which can be turned on and off via a switch in the school office. The Council is also looking at rephrasing the lights to make it safer for the children using this intersection. The Board discussed concerns about the number of vehicles, including buses, that run red lights at this, and other neighbouring, intersections.

**ACTION: Annette to write to the Regional Council to raise concerns about buses running red lights at intersections around the school.**

## **5. Learning difficulties report**

Sally provided an updated version of the report *Newtown School Learning Difficulties Report - Summary of Progress since 2016-2018*. Screening tests (LUCID Rapid) for children that possibly have dyslexic tendencies have been introduced. Additional measures to support a child's learning can then be put in place where tests results indicate that the child has dyslexic tendencies or significant literacy and learning difficulties. Approximately 13% of students at Newtown School have some form of learning or literacy difficulties. Sally observed that it can be difficult to assess students that have English as a second language, given their lack of English vocab and fluency.

Mutukaroa is also useful for picking up potential issues early on, and involving families in their child's learning.

Board members questioned whether there is any information about the effectiveness of the various interventions - in particular, are they making a difference? Does the school have any information about, for example, the effectiveness of one-on-one reading compared with the various software reading packages that are available? Sally responded that a survey was sent to parents around the effectiveness of intervention programmes conducted over the last two years. There wasn't a great response rate, but the results do highlight that the school needs to ensure that parents are aware of the interventions and programmes that their children are involved in.

The Board was interested to know whether the school was capturing the baseline data, and then retesting after interventions have been put in place, to make sure that the interventions are having a positive benefit. It would be good if the school did this analysis, and reported back to the Board. The PaCT is useful in this context, and Sally's report provides anonymised examples of PaCT data to show progress of children that have dyslexic tendencies. Encouraging, the vast majority of students that have been identified as having dyslexic tendencies are tracking to meet expected levels in the curriculum by the end of 2018.

The Board also suggested that the report capture the student's voices - how they have found being involved in the programmes?

The Board asked what support is available in Ngati Kotahitanga - Sally and Mark responded that a Resource Teacher for Māori is based at Newtown School, and regularly spends time in Ngati Kotahitanga. Also, 20 hours of additional teacher support is available to the children in the unit.

The Board acknowledged that the school has come a long way, in terms of its strategy, information and interventions to support children with learning difficulties, and thanked Sally for her efforts.

## **6. Health and Safety**

### *Handrail/balustrade and other issues with the new building*

Following correspondence and discussions with the Ministry of Education, the handrail on the first floor will be adjusted (essentially, it will be lifted up to create a higher barrier). Mark observed that this is a great outcome.

A health and safety policy for the balustrade and handrail has been developed and circulated to the Board. The policy outlines a number of control measures to reduce the risks associated with the handrail.

A number of issues remain with the new building that are being addressed (including fencing off the front entry, external bells, heating).

#### **7. Board acknowledgement for the work of all the staff**

The Board wants to acknowledge the efforts of staff over the year, particularly given the challenges of working near a construction site, managing with the reduced space available as a result of the building project, and shifting the school into the new building. The Board will shout morning tea at the beginning of Term 4 and board members who are able to attend.

**ACTION: Mark to arrange for the morning tea early in Term 4.**

#### **8. New build and Official School Opening**

The official opening of the new school build will take place on 26 October 2018, with formal proceedings followed by a carnival to showcase the children. A list of invitees has been developed. Parents and caregivers will be invited to attend, in the newsletter that is due to go out on Friday.

#### **9. Principal's report**

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

- Swimming pool - a funding agreement with the Wellington City Council needs to be signed by the Board. This sets out conditions, including a timeframe for the work to be completed. Ashbys are project managing the project, which is being paid for out of the grant. The development of a schedule of maintenance for the pool (over a ten-year period) is part of the conditions. Ongoing maintenance costs need to be generated by the school (MOE doesn't fund maintenance of school pools or school halls). The timeframe is a risk - the work needs to be completed by June 2019. Completion is dependent on the WCC consent process, engineering, structures/materials ordered from overseas etc. A detailed plan needs to be developed, and work on this is underway. The Board asked what's the risk and potential consequences if the project runs overtime - this needs to be clarified, particularly if the funding is at risk. The school also needs to complete a consent form with the Ministry for the pool upgrade, as the pool becomes a MoE

asset. Mark asked the Chair to sign the document from the Council to enable the funding process to proceed, which was done at the meeting.

- On 25 October, Kathryn Burkett (a leading trauma expert) is working with staff from 3.30 pm - 5 pm. Board members are invited.
- Upskilling staff on Te Reo - staff are self-assessing, and offered opportunities to upskill in their knowledge of Te Reo. Mark included a link in his report for further information.
- Acknowledgment of those involved in the fundraising quiz night, school production, and the Year 5 and 6 girls champion netball team.
- Market - there are ongoing issues with cleanliness. While the school has started charging the market organisers for the time spent on cleaning the mess left behind, the fact that the school is left in such a condition is a concern. It was agreed that the future billing of the market for cleaning by the school needs to reflect actual cost and include management time. Victoria noted the rental contribution the Market makes to the operational budget which was significant. It was important to work with the Market to achieve the desired outcome. If the market did not respond positively and leave the school in a clean condition after the market on Saturdays, the Market would be not be allowed to hold the Market the following week. Ultimately if the Market continued to not comply, then the arrangement would be cancelled. Mark is meeting with the Market organisers on Friday, and will reiterate that they need to leave the school in the same condition as they found it and the consequences if the situation continued.

#### **10. Communications Strategy/Plan**

Lucy will update the communications strategy/plan to reflect comments she received from Board members on the draft strategy. The strategy/plan will be a living document, which can be updated as required.

#### **11. Finance**

The Board noted expenditure for the month of August 2018 of \$83,647. The year-to-date expenditure was \$664,388, against a (year end) budget of \$895,913. Year-to-date income was \$583,480, against a (year end) budget of \$805,152. Still in a positive variance, but the margin is decreasing.

The FANS balance is \$13,584.

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Education Services is supporting the school in budgeting for the 2019 year. The aim is for a zero budget so that the school does not eat into cash reserves. There will be a need for increased depreciation due to the recent injection of capital purchases. There is a suggestion that the school sets aside a separate account and funnels funds into it to build up a cash reserve to replace significant capital items. A draft budget with the Board by the November meeting.

Mark and Annette had met with representatives from the Ministry of Education to discuss some concerns about the school's finances. In particular, the percentage of the school's operational grant that is spent on personnel. This can be reviewed and will be closely monitored, with any risks managed (for example, through short term or casual contracts for learning support, in case the child that has the extra support leaves the school). MoE also pointed out that the funding injection for furniture and fittings can't be used for operational costs of running the school, but Victoria pointed out that the school doesn't do this.

Victoria noted that Ellen Coup is underway with her mural. Waitangi whanau have proposed another mural - students have come up with the concept and a place, and have approached an artist to co-create the mural. The proposal has been circulated to the mural subcommittee for feedback.

## **12. Committee reports**

### *Fundraising*

The Board resolved to make a request to the Lion Foundation for \$4,650 for the costs of a mural by Ellen Coup.

Lucy reported that she has sent in the application to fund a new basketball hoop.

## **13. Any other business (including correspondence)**

Correspondence had been received from parents around new building issues and specific behavioural incidents involving students.

## **14. In-Committee**

The Board moved into committee at 8:35 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board and moved out of committee at 8:46 pm.

Next meeting: 24 October 2018