

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting minutes

Wednesday 24 October 2018, 6.30 pm, school staffroom

Present: Mark Brown, Annette Gittos, Julie Bennett, Lucy Kebell, Kelvin Harper, Victoria Esson, Miriam Swanson, Daniel Petersen, Jasmine Gilbert, Nick Booth (except for item 9, the in-committee part of the meeting) and Jo Gould (minutes).

Apologies: none

1. Karakia

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

The minutes of the 26 September 2018 Board meeting were approved and the action items were discussed and updated.

3. Co-opting Ngati Kotahitanga rep

Daniel has resigned as the Ngati Kotahitanga rep on the Board. Annette and Mark thanked Daniel for all his hard work, and the contributions he has made (and continues to make) to Ngati Kotahitanga and the wider school.

Ngati Kotahitanga has put forward Jasmine Gilbert as the new Ngati Kotahitanga rep for the Board. The Board agreed unanimously that Jasmine be co-opted to the Board until the next Board elections in 2019.

ACTION: Both Miriam and Jasmine to complete the *Change in Membership of Board of Trustees form*, available at www.trustee-election.co.nz/board-resources/election-forms-and-appendices/appendix-2

4. New build and Official School Opening

Plans are well underway for the official opening of the new school building that will take place on 26 October 2018, with formal proceedings followed by a carnival for the children (weather dependent - the carnival may need to be postponed if it is wet). Mark took the Board through the programme for the formal opening, including the pōwhiri (which will follow Te Atiawa kawa, with the hongī taking place once the manuhiri have been welcomed on to the school grounds, before the whaikorero/formal

speeches take place). The Hon Chris Hipkins, the Minister of Education, will be attending, and will cut the ribbon. Kai will be served in the school hall.

In terms of the budget for the opening, funding is coming from various sources and budget lines. For example, FANS will contribute some, and some of the carnival activities (face painting etc) will be funded from the arts budget .

Last year's Year 6 students (now Year 7) who have gone on to SWIS have been invited to attend the opening. Mark will follow up with SWIS to make sure the invites have gone out. The Board also suggested inviting Year 8 students at SWIS who went to Newtown school. Mark undertook to contact SWIS. He noted there were no ex-Newtown Year 7 students at EBIS.

Construction work continues around the school. The caretaker shed is being renovated, and work is underway on the radiator heating system (which need to be drained and replaced with a gas system). The school is still waiting for the bag hooks.

The handrail on the second floor balustrade has been removed in preparation for reinstalling in the new position. Some additional work to the handrail is required.

Planning is underway for an upgrade of the reception area. Paul (the architect) is going to meet with Mark in the next couple of weeks.

There are over 400 faults with the new building that will be fixed over the next year. One of these issues is the heating in the teaching spaces, particularly the breakout areas which can get very warm. With the summer months approaching, the Board asked whether there is a plan for when the classrooms get uncomfortably warm - structured drink breaks, for example.

ACTION: Kelvin and Mark to talk to staff about plans/strategies for when the teaching spaces get too warm, pending the heating issue being fixed.

Mark commented that there had been some delays in getting signage up for the school's gifted Te Reo name, as the flashings on the building need to be repaired first. Three different whakatauki, selected by staff, will also be going up around the school.

5. Property

Pool refurbishment

A meeting was held with key personnel (including Ashby Property Management, who are project managing the upgrade). An estimated timeline has been developed, with construction due to be underway in March 2019. There has been a change to one of the design features, which means the entrance to the pool will need to be where the scooter/bike cage is currently located. The cage will need to be relocated. Written monthly progress updates will be provided to the Council and the Board. Mark reminded the Board of the Ministry directive that none of the operational grant funding can be used on the pool. External funds such as Aquazone's rental can be used on operating costs of the pool.

Market

Mark, Annette, Julie and Trish met with the market organisers on Friday to discuss the ongoing issue of the amount of rubbish left in the school grounds after the Saturday market. The school representatives were clear about their expectations that the school grounds must be left in the same condition as the market organisers found them. They walked around the school grounds, pointed out areas where rubbish was often found on Monday mornings.

The market has been using the school's skip bin - the market needs to contribute to the costs of these bins, or the market vendors need to remove their rubbish. A clause in the new draft agreement provided for the market to pay for 1 bin a week, however, the market owner had come back with only wanting to pay half the cost. The Board's preference is for the skip bins to be locked and the market to remove all rubbish. If the school grounds are left in a mess, the market organisers will be charged \$350 for cleaning. The market had agreed to this. A clause in the new draft agreement includes if they are charged this fee three times in a year, the school will be able to cancel the market operating for one week. The market is seeking this clause to be removed. The Board did not accept this. The toilets need to be cleaned and locked which needs to be clear in the new draft agreement. Any damage to the asphalt will need to be covered by the market. All these items are covered in the draft MOU, which the market organiser has considered and provided feedback on.

The Board asked whether there could be more clarity in the MOU about what our expectations are - defining what litter is, what needs to be removed, how the school should be left after the market vendors have been left, etc. A checklist could be appended to the MOU. Board members emphasised that enforcement of the terms of the MOU is important. Annette requested the draft to be run by her and Julie before being resent to the market.

ACTION: MOU to be finalised with Market organisers along the lines discussed at the meeting.

6. Principal's report

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

- There is potential strike action on 16 November 2018. If this proceeds, the Board resolved to close the school as there would not be sufficient staff to adequately supervise the children.
- Staff recruitment for positions in 2019 is well underway. Allocation of teaching staff across the whanau groups is being finalised, and will be presented to the Board at the November 2018 meeting.
- The Ministry has released a draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan for comment. Annette has drafted a submission, which has been circulated to the Board for comment. The deadline for submission is the end of the month. If Board members have comments on the submission, they will need to get them to Annette by the weekend (27-28 October).

Kelvin presented the report on the end of year literacy data. The feedback received from the Board on the mid-year report had been taken into account in the way the data was presented in this report. A standardised test was used for all children, as a quick and easy way to show progress. Kelvin pointed out that the PaCT tool is still being used for teaching and learning, but a report using the PaCT data won't be available for the Board until March 2019.

The Board found, in general, that the data was presented clearly and was easy to follow. The fact that both reading levels and reading ages was presented was useful, as was highlighting the areas of strength and areas of concern. For the tables of data which are colour coded, a key for the different colours would be helpful.

7. Finance

The September 2018 financial statements were only received by the school today (24 October 2018). Victoria will circulate the key figures from these statements to the Board before the next meeting.

Victoria commented that while the school was tracking well across most budget lines, the painting budget was overspent (budget \$6,000, with expenditure sitting at around \$17,000). A \$30,000 back payment for maintenance would should arrive in the school's account before the end of the financial year which will address this.

Victoria noted that Ellen Coup has completed her mural. As discussed at the last meeting, Waitangi whanau have proposed another mural - this proposal had been circulated to the mural subcommittee for feedback. The comments received have been passed on to Wanwan. The Board agreed to underwrite the costs of the mural, of \$500, but encouraged the children to work with the fundraising subcommittee to secure a grant to cover the costs.

Mark and Victoria are working with Education Services on the 2019 budget. At a meeting with Education Services and the Ministry to discuss the budget preparation, the level of expenditure on learner support was highlighted (the Board tops this up beyond what the Ministry provides). The Board will need to carefully consider this expenditure, along with other items in the budget.

The plan is to have the draft budget with the Board in time for the November meeting. Victoria encouraged Board members to submit questions in writing ahead of the meeting so there is an opportunity to respond.

ACTION: Early in the New Year invite the Learning Support Coordinator to attend a Board meeting to discuss learner support across the school,

8. Committee reports

Maori Medium

Daniel and Jasmine reported that:

- A disco is planned for Ngati Kotahitanga whanau next Wednesday at the school (until about 7 pm). A noho is also planned for the start of next year, as an opportunity for whanau to come together and get to know each other. The unit is also looking at running a camp next year.
- There will be an information evening on Thursday about Te Reo courses for Ngati Kotahitanga whanau and teachers at Newtown School. The classes will probably be run from 4.30 - 7.30 pm at school. There needs to be 20 people interested as a minimum (and up to 25), so this opportunity may be opened up to the wider school community as well.
- Whanau meetings continue to be held on a regular basis. Some families sought clarification about school policies, processes and procedures, for example around Health & Safety and complaints. Lucy pointed out that the relevant policies are available on the school website (for instance, at the bottom of the Board of Trustees page), but they are hard to find. Once all the

policies have been loaded into School Docs it should be easier to locate them. Another issue raised at the whanau meetings is whanau involvement in appointing a kaiako for the unit. Mark offered reassurances that whanau would be involved in the process, to the level that they want to be involved. Finally, some whanau members wanted to know who won the raffles that the school ran in Term 3. This will be covered off in a school newsletter.

Policy

Lucy reported that she will pick up the School Docs work after the official school opening.

Fundraising

The school is waiting to hear back on two grant applications, one for the mural and the other for a new basketball hoop for the school.

Health and Safety

Julie reported that the Health and Safety subcommittee is due to meet. She is aware of two incidents this month, one involving a child leaving the school grounds plus another child fracturing their arm.

9. In-Committee

The Board moved into committee at 7:47 pm to discuss personnel and other matters. The Board and moved out of committee at 7:56 pm. The Board again moved into committee at 9.23 pm, and moved out of committee at 9.34 pm.

10. Strategic Planning

The Board is required to prepare a four year strategic plan, which replaces the charter. There is no specific structure for the plan, but typically it would include the school's vision, goal setting, strategy, and a SWOT analysis (covering internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as its external opportunities and threats) or environmental scan, and KPIs.

The Board discussed a range of possible ideas and issues for the strategic plan, including:

- considering what the future workforce might look like - what are we preparing our children for in the future, given the impact of technology developments and automation on occupations?
- the importance of laying solid foundations with soft skills that children will need to succeed.
- wellbeing - Newtown school has a critical role in fostering a sense of wellbeing in our students. Children need to feel connected, and the conditions need to be present to enable all children to participate. Whanau and families need to be thriving - what's the school's role in this? Staff wellbeing also needs to be carefully considered.
- the impact of bullying on students' wellbeing - what are our children experiencing? How is whanau involved in addressing bullying, what's working and what's not?
- cultural connectedness - how is a child connected to their culture? Consider knowledge of their culture, pride in their culture, the ability to speak and understand their own language - these are all important.
- inclusive and accessible education. Is the curricula being delivered in an accessible and inclusive way, and what support is the school providing - do we know how effective the support and interventions are, and their impact on the learning?
- how the environment, including the new school building and modern learning environments, is impacting on a child's learning.
- the school needs to pay close attention to the scaffolding around the learning. Relationships that happen in schools, between students, and between parents, staff, students/teachers, are all crucial - how do we create an environment where all the adults in a child's life are consistent, warm, containing, and care about the child? It's important to focus on the school culture - empathy and positive behaviour, play and problem solving, safe and supportive, modeling positive behaviour - these all grow emotional competence. The [incredible years pyramid](#) is a useful model.
- providing an environment that demonstrates and models how to "be in the world", and be successful in the world (however they define that) - children need to know what personal qualities will be important as they grow up.
- "being there" with and for the child, to gain the respect of the child, and be connected with the child.
- recognising the fact that New Zealand is changing. There's a lot more poverty, and families are struggling. School needs to be safe place where someone has the children's back, and they can thrive.
- the importance of a child fitting in with other kids, socially and emotionally, as well as academically.
- managing/addressing anxiety that some children suffer.

- supporting children on “how to learn”, not what to learn.
- a school that embraces the whole curriculum, and reports this to families.
- principles of the Treaty - partnership, protection and participation - integrated in everything the school does.
- celebrating the whole child, and the diversity of the learning community.
- maintaining a great reputation, and an immersion class in a mainstream environment.
- an environment where learning is important and fun. Teaching with the children, not to them.
- celebrating the success of the children and the staff.
- a safe place.
- the role of teachers is changing - what tools do they, and the children, need?
- a school that is aware of our “current state” - what we are good at, and what we need to change.
- Embedding the Newtown curriculum.

The Board also asked what tools could we look at, and what data do we need to unpack issues (etc). For instance, a wellbeing survey was conducted in the past, and can be done again. We could also look deeper at bullying. The data shows more bullying at lower ages - is it being normalised (seen by children as being normal) in later years?

Next steps - the Board needs to decide on the process for developing the strategic plan - to crystallise ideas, unpack the environmental impacts, and decide what input is needed from the community (survey monkey, written comments, hui, conversations, school gate survey - perhaps at the beginning of the year when people are feeling fresher. The school needs to consult on the health curriculum next year, so we could combine this with the consultation on the strategic plan). The school already has a summary charter document. A lot of work was done for this, and the development of our Newtown curriculum, both of which are useful as a starting point. There is a 1 March 2019 deadline to get the strategy to the Ministry. It was agreed to use the existing documentation to submit to meet the MOE deadline and the substantive consultation early next year. The school’s strategic plan can then be updated to incorporate this as a living document.

Next meetings: 28 November 2018 and 19 December 2018

AFly 28.11.2018