

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Monday 28 November 2022, 6.40pm
Staff room and Zoom

Board members: Jess Gorman (chair), Joe Winkels (arrived 7.00pm), Mika Mardhiah, Mitzi Henderson (arrived 6.54pm), Naomi Taylor, Nick Booth, Nicki Read, Yadana Saw.

Apologies: Fatima Amin Sheikh

Also present: Alysha Stephens (via Zoom), Justine (until 8.45pm), Leanne Whitfield, Lauren Peatfield (until 7.15pm), Debbie Purves, (until 8.45pm), Hilary Lintott (until 8.45pm), Steve Kerr (minutes).

1. Karakia timatanga

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Staff Spotlight: Lauren Peatfield

Lauren gave a presentation on the Peace Crew / Houhou te Rangi initiative which is part of the school's restorative justice initiative. She showed a video of kids talking about their experience and talked about the work she has been doing to ensure restorative justice and Peace Crew become embedded at Newtown School.

Yadana asked whether the Peace Crew were self-selecting? Lauren said we started the year with the teachers choosing, then it evolved so kids have come forward when they see their friends do it. We started with about 25 or 30 and it's growing now. It's been awesome to see the tamariki get into it.

Yadana asked if it was bespoke to our school? Lauren said it's similar to peer mediation but the way it works at Newtown School is unique, with the peace path and the high vis vests etc.

Mika said a few weeks ago there was fighting in Waitangi. Another mum said her son was grabbed. Would the Peace Crew kids try to sort that sort of thing out? Lauren said the kids know if there's any physical contact or swearing they have to get a kaiako involved. The Peace Crew deal with things like name calling or someone breaking a rule in a game. Justine said it's good for teachers to have more eyes and ears out there.



Mitzi asked if there was an element of sharing back to the larger student group about some of the experiences, so more kids can benefit? Lauren said that staff are thinking about doing circle time more often next year. So that's definitely a step for the future.

3. Tumuaki report

Principal appraisal objectives. Nicki said she'd met again with her appraiser Michelle who has interviewed seven staff members and asked them about Nicki's leadership. She said that was a great discussion and she will share some of that with Jess. The next action is that Michelle will summarise the themes from that feedback. Then Nicki will look again at the appraisal goals and think about what evidence she'd expect to see, to demonstrate that she has achieved her goals.

Noho marae. Nicki said she wanted to acknowledge Maraea's phenomenal work that went into the noho. She said it was a privilege to be part of that and go to Maraea's marae.

Achievement data. Nicki said that there's an agenda item later tonight, but she wanted to acknowledge the work of our kaiako in gathering that data. There's a lot of work that goes into it. It's quite a personal and complex part of what we do.

Te Kākano. Nicki said the school is still gathering information about who wants to be involved next year.

Creatives in school. Nicki said the plan is to create a pou in school. She said it's very exciting to see what can be achieved over a term.

Staffing. Nicki said there had been interviews for two teaching positions over the weekend. The new teacher for Waitangi accepted today. Nicki said she was thrilled to go into next year with a full complement. We're waiting to hear back from the second person who we interviewed.

Nicki said she had employed an independent person to do exit interviews with staff who are leaving. She said she wanted an external person to ask questions about the different areas which are listed in the report. She said she will provide those themes to a future meeting.

Teacher graduation. Nicki said that Chris and Trent had completed their two year registration, and Karen was retiring. That was a great achievement.

Pool. Nicki said it's great to have the pool running, She said the school has had a learning curve about using chlorine and she'd found that some teachers know how to teach swimming and some not. She said the school is employing Julia to teach swimming just till the end of the term.

Old Tūi. Nicki said we're just waiting for the code of compliance to be given. The space should be usable this week.

Whakairo. Nicki said the carving had been taken down a few weeks ago and it's being worked on. She said it was very exciting,

Finance. Nicki said the draft budget is in the folder.

4. Achievement report

Debbie and Hillary presented the achievement report. Debbie explained how the PACT (Progress and consistency tool) for reading, writing, and maths worked. She explained how teachers gather information to make assessments against a number of signposts and aspects for each area of learning. She said that sometimes the results can look like a child hasn't made progress but that's because there are a whole lot of measures within each signpost that need to be consolidated and done consistently before they count. She said it's a comprehensive tool and that teachers gather information and make the assessment collaboratively.

The report contained analyses of each whānau, except Ngāti Kotahitanga who have been on noho marae while the analysis was done. For each subject, the report identified trends to 'celebrate', 'monitor', and where there was 'support needed'.

Maths

The school had met its 2022 target for maths. 81 students are working above expected level. 40% year five students were working towards expected level.

Jess asked about the year 5 and 6 students, is this the cohort who have had issues over the last few years? Debbie said yes, and that this year they would be moving from curriculum level 2 to 3 which is a step up and can be a challenge. The report identified actions for 2023 to address areas of concern.

Mika asked if kids were still doing mathematics? Hilary said yes they were, but the school is thinking about how we can use it more effectively.

Mitzi asked if it is the same kids who are in 'needing support' across maths, reading, and writing? Hilary said yes in some cases, we've looked at that. English language learners can sometimes struggle with maths too because there's a lot of vocab in maths. Leanne said kids that are 'working towards' at mid year and still 'working towards' at year end have still made progress. The goal posts to reach that level have shifted between mid year and end of year.

Naomi asked whether we can look at progress over the 7 years that Newtown School has used PACT? She said she'd like to see whether the 74% performing at or above

expected for Māori medium is lower than for English medium. She said it would be good to see if that's changed. Nicki said yes that would be possible to do and it would be interesting.

Writing

Debbie said that writing was a focus area. She said the school is still below where it wants to be. 60% of students are at or above their expected level, versus the target of 80%. She said we plan to reduce the target from 80% to 70% because we think it is more realistic.

Debbie presented on the actions and strategies that the school has put in place to try to address the issues with achievement in writing. She said that diving into the data for individual students we can see the extra measures have accelerated progress, but it doesn't always show in the overall figures.

Jess asked how the parents and caregivers of kids who are not progressing or having trouble will know? That's been a concern of parents sometimes, because the learning records are so positive (which is good). Justine said that mostly it's the home teacher that will communicate that to the family, though she acknowledged that sometimes that hasn't happened.

Mitzi said she was amazed at how much work goes into the assessment. She thought that it would be good to communicate to parents and reassure them that if their child is one of the ones who is having trouble, the teacher will let them know. Parents will be reassured to know how much work goes into this. Justine said that it's also important that parents feel they can raise any concerns they have or if they feel unsure about how things are going, and for them not to feel that they don't need to ask because a teacher hasn't raised something.

Nick said it'd be great to see the trends over time for the school since we've been using PACT. It would be good to see progress rather than just a snapshot.

Debbie said the question of how we value success has been an ongoing conversation , especially on aspects that's not maths, reading, and writing.

Mitzi said she was really pleased to hear how individualised the teaching approach is for kids, because it can seem like the kids are all just in a big room.

Debbie said we're definitely seeing some effects from Covid a few years on.

Reading

Debbie said the school has met its target of 80% at or above the expected level. However, within that, 50% of year fives are not reading at expected level.

Justine said the data includes all students. Some schools excluded kids with ORS funding but we include all kids.

Naomi suggested we change the language on Māori and Pacific achievement as it sounds like the children have a deficit, instead of the issue with institutions. She said the section earlier in the report did not use deficit language.

Joe asked if there had been any positive impact for Maori students in English medium from Te Kākano. Debbie said there were several ways we could look at that by looking at data over time and also through student voice. Justine said that subjectively we've had better engagement from some Māori students this year - an increase in mana and identity and pride. Nicki said it would be really interesting to look at.

Jess said we have a responsibility as a board to make this achievement information exciting and accessible.

Nick said he would be curious to know how well the changes that happened after the mid year report worked. He said he knew a lot of care was taken to make those changes.

Jess asked when we will see the Ngāti Kotahitanga data. Nicki said Maraea will present that at the next meeting.

Joe said that as a parent it would be good to have more information to give context about how the PACT system works. There's really rich information and data that shows the level of work and care that our teachers provide.

Debbie said we're still exploring how we can best use Hero to share more information with parents. That's also why we use student voices in the learning records. Sometimes the student voice doesn't match the data.

5. Previous minutes and action items

Jess asked the members to affirm the minutes for October. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Then Jess ran through the open action items:

118	Arrange a time for Michelle to attend a Board meeting	Nicki	Closed
117	Share bicultural survey with board with a deadline for comments	Nicki	Done
111	Look at how achievement reporting could show progress of learners across sublevels of curriculum, and how overall reporting could	Nicki	Done

	factor in ESOL learners		
107	Prepare draft ILE questionnaire, seeking questions from teachers and leadership, and bring to next meeting	Nicki	In progress - replace with new action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACTION - Leanne/Nicki to report back to next meeting on approach to ILE review
106	Start a google doc for board members to collaborate on an induction document	Jess	Carry forward
103	Invite Yadana to speak to staff on arts strategy	Nicki	In progress - replace with new action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACTION - Yadana and Nicki to meet to discuss art strategy
102	Provide feedback on draft arts strategy	All	Close
100	Look into whether the school could develop a green/natural environment policy	Yadana	Carry forward

6. Portfolio reports

Jess asked whether we should have something on the agenda about co-opting Ngati Kotahitanga members. Naomi said we had three people potentially interested so there needs to be a vote or something. Naomi said it should be finalised by the end of the year in time for the new representatives to start next year.

Jess asked someone to work with her on the co-chair issue

- **ACTION: Naomi will work with Jess on co-chair issue**

Property

Yadana said there was nothing to report. Nicki said all the issues were covered in the principal's report.

Te Tiriti

Naomi said there was nothing to report, but she was looking forward to the session with Nathan tomorrow so there would be a strategy to report on.

Health and safety

Mika and Nick said there had been a health and safety meeting. We talked a lot about the pool and about the 'reverse evacuation'. There's a draft strategy for reverse evacuation that will be socialised with staff. Mika said the swimming pool policy needs to be reviewed.

Community engagement

Nicki said she'd like to speak to someone about the website. Mitzi said she'd love to.

- **ACTION: Nicki and Mitzi to meet to talk about the website**

Joe said he hadn't caught up with Nick yet about the comms survey report. Nick said he will introduce Tom Hovey to Mitzi and Joe to handover that work.

- **ACTION: Nick to introduce Mitzi and Joe to Tom Hovey**

Policies

Joe said there are three this term to review, one of which is the swimming pool policy which is timely.

Next meeting

- Monday 12 December, 6.30pm