

Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Monday 20 November 2023, 6.40pm
Library and Zoom



Board members: Nicki Read, Yadana Saw, Joe Winkels (co-chair), Nick Booth (co-chair), Jess Gorman, Trey Tanuvasa, Fatima Osman Amin.

Also present: Steve Kerr (minutes), Leanne Whitfield (kaiako/teacher), Maraea Pukeke-Pine (kaiako/teacher - until 7.20pm), Hilary Lintott (kaiako/teacher - until 8.20pm), Sarah Divers (kaiako/teacher - until 6.55pm), Debbie Purves (kaiako/teacher - until 8.20pm).

Apologies: Naomi Taylor, Shannyn Edmonds.

1. Karakia timatanga

Nick welcomed everyone and confirmed there were no conflicts of interest.

2. Staff Spotlight - Sarah Drivers

Sarah introduced herself and spoke about her background at university and teaching in Auckland. She described her role as Learning Support Coordinator, how she spends her time. She said she likes the variety and she's never bored. She's learning about the community here.

Nicki said Sarah does an amazing job and we're exceptionally lucky to have her. Jess asked, is there anything the board can do to support? Sarah said not really, we just need more money, we're always asking for grants.

Yadana asked whether boards could work together to advocate for more services, for example through the Kahui Ako? Sarah said yes, potentially. Board members discussed the possibility of estimating the mismatch between demand for support versus support available, within Newtown School and across other schools.

3. Achievement report - Māori medium

Maraea presented the Ngati Kotahitanga achievement data report. She began by explaining that Te Waharoa Ararau is used to capture overall teacher judgments (OTJs).

She said that some tamariki are late immersers, so their time in kura and their time in immersion are not the same. She said some of the data shows that there are areas needing further support and areas where we can celebrate progress and achievement.

Reo-ā-waha/oral language

Maraea said that most tamariki had increased their use of reo when having a conversation, and had increased accuracy, fluency, and use of different structures. She said that something to monitor was the 7 tamariki who are 'working towards' the expected level. She said some of those who are 'working towards' are on individual education plans (IEPs) and/or are late immersers. We're very proud of them.

Maraea also spoke about some of the things that she is doing to support tamariki and whānau to maintain language at home. She spoke about Te Ipu Korero and Takina Akina programmes for tamariki who need support.

Tuhituhi/writing

Maraea said that the target for 2023 had been for all tamariki to accelerate and become confident independent writers. She said that 12 tamariki were 'working within or above' the expected level at Manawa Ora, and 6 tamariki were 'working towards' the expected level at Manawa Aki. Five tamariki were 'working towards expected level' at Manawa Taki on a modified programme or IEP.

She spoke about her plan to move tamariki from Manawa Taki to Manawa Ora. Maraea and Suzie got training in Hanganga Reo, the structured literacy programme. She said this had made a huge difference.

Pānui/reading

Maraea said that the target for 2023 had been for all tamariki to gain confidence in reading simple texts and deepen their comprehension and understanding. She said that 13 tamariki were 'working within or above' the expected level at Manawa Ora, and 4 tamariki were 'working towards' the expected level at Manawa Aki. Six tamariki were 'working towards expected level' at Manawa Taki on a modified programme or IEP.

Maraea said that in 2024 there would be a focus on shared reading and guided reading, and looking at new ways to create dialog to increase descriptive analogue.

Pangarau/maths

Maraea said that the target for 2023 had been for all tamariki to build on their understanding of number knowledge and to be able to give a detailed answer in multiple ways. She said that 13 tamariki were 'working within or above' the expected level at Manawa Ora, and 6 tamariki were 'working towards' the expected level at Manawa Aki.

Maraea said that to accelerate learning for years 4 to 7, she had really focused on maths language, asking tamariki to explain how they came up with the answer. She said tamariki really enjoy it. She said the focus next year will be on measurement and geometry.

Maraea said she was really looking forward to having Whaea Venise on board next year. She said that her and Venise had attended a workshop on the redesign of the Marau (Maori medium curriculum) which was really exciting. There will be a different approach to assessment.

Nick thanked Maraea for the support she'd offered behind the scenes to support the board with Te Tiriti and the transition to the co-chair model.

Trey asked how can we take the good work that Maraea is doing to the Kahui Ako and make sure it's protected? Maraea said that she is part of a Kahui Maori and there are lots of conversations with other schools, especially SWIS and Wellington High School, about the pathway and transitions between schools.

4. Achievement report - English medium

Debbie and Hilary presented the end of year achievement data. Hilary spoke about some of the changes that have worked and had a positive impact on learners. She said that 151 students are English language learners and 113 students are funded for ESOL support.

Debbie presented matched data on the year 6 cohort that the board had asked about at the mid year presentation on achievement. Hilary spoke about some of the students who are in the category of not meeting expectations across multiple curriculum areas. They also have high levels of absence. Trey asked what we do to try and help those students. Debbie said we do a lot to support whanau, we go down and pick students up sometimes, but it's hard. Debbie and Hilary updated on the progress of two anonymous learners who had been discussed at mid year. Debbie said it takes time but it's great to see progress, the change in trajectory.

Yadana asked how we ensure that progress continues when the students leave Newtown School? Hilary said we include that in the transition conversations, especially with SWIS. Jess asked if families see the recommendations for support for those students. Hilary said yes sometimes these are shared and discussed with whānau, but we can't do it for all students.

Debbie gave examples of a couple of signposting that had come out of structured literacy professional learning and development. She said there had been good progress between terms 3 and 4.

Debbie shared the information on next year's year 4s and year 6s. Their diversity is a real strength. She gave details of support programmes that have been running.

Mathematics

Debbie and Hilary said that a 2023 target was for a minimum 85% of students to be 'at or above' the expected rate, and for 70-80% of year 6s to be 'at or above'.

Currently, 81% of all students progress at or above the expected rate, and 59% of year 6s are at or above. They said there is still progress being made, even when students don't reach the 'working at' level.

They said we should celebrate that 100% of year 2s are working within or above the expected level, and we need to monitor the fact that 38% of year 5s are 'working towards' the expected level.

Writing

Debbie and Hilary said that a 2023 target was for a minimum of 70% of all students to be 'at or above' the expected level, and for 70% year 6 students to be working within curriculum level 3.

Currently, 60% of all students progressing 'at or above' the expected rate, this is an increase of 9% from mid year. Also, 58% of year 6s are working within curriculum level 3 or 4, this is an increase of 17% from mid year.

They said we should celebrate that 85% year 4 students are working within curriculum level 2 or 3. Areas where support is needed: 51% year 3s are working at curriculum level 1, and 78% of year 5s are 'working towards' expected curriculum levels. They said that these are both cohorts the school is focusing on.

Reading

Debbie and Hilary said that a 2023 target was for a minimum of 80% of all students to be at or above the expected rate, and for 70% of year 6 students to be meeting expectations.

Currently, 74% of all students are at or above the expected rate, this is an increase of 8% from mid year. Also, 61% of year 6s are meeting expectations, this is a 19% increase from mid year.

They said this is a great achievement for our year 6s, who have been through a lot of change: a new school building, COVID, and so on. Debbie and Hilary said the school is so proud of the year 6s, they're great tamariki, beautiful people.

They said we should celebrate that 81% of year 2s are working at or above the expected level, and 80% of year 4s are at or above the expected level. Areas where support is needed: 40% of year 3s are 'working towards' the expected curriculum level.

Māori and Pasifika students

Hilary said there are a higher percentage of Māori who are working towards expectations compared to the overall school, particularly in maths and writing. Many of these students are receiving targeted support. She said we are committed to continuing to grow our cultural responsiveness to best meet the needs of these learners. Debbie said we know that a lot the learning that needs to happen is on us, not on the tamariki.

Nicki thanked Hilary and Debbie for their work, she said it takes a lot of work to collect and analyse this data.

5. Te Tiriti

Joe invited board members to share anything that they're doing or that they've seen that is relevant to te Tiriti.

Nicki said the co-governance celebration was really great, it felt really good and like it should be normal. She said she had been in touch with Nathan and Janelle and others and they were quietly joyous.

Nick said that it was important to acknowledge and remember the Maori voices who stood up and made co-governance happen in the school. Those who were brave and don't normally have a big voice in the school and who stood up and made it happen.

Fatima said she had learned mihi and pepeha on a staff only day with Whaea Hine. She said it reminded her of how people introduce themselves in the Middle East, linking back to their family members and their tribe.

Joe thanked Trey and Naomi for suggesting that we celebrate the move to co-governance. Sometimes you're involved in something and you forget you need to pause and celebrate the progress. He said it's important to record the progress for future boards and others.

Trey said she wanted to give a shout out to Sarah. She said she wanted to tautoko her mahi for all the students of Newtown. She's awesome, she's doing good work. Trey said she said she loved the co-governance celebration last week.

Yadana said that she had found that being involved in governance outside education, she found that it was done in really different ways. She had connected with someone on a governance course recently who is on the board of a kura in Rotorua that also has an immersion class.

6. Refresher on the role of the board

Nick said that he and Joe had been on an NZSTA course on effective meetings recently that was really good. He reminded members to have a look at the updated code of conduct for board members, and also the induction documentation.

Joe said it would be good at the beginning of the year to remind all members of the code of conduct, delegations, and the board's kawa - to bring together the key points at the beginning of the year to make sure it's all fit for purpose.

7. Tumuaki report

Nicki said she'd like to acknowledge again the work that Hilary, Debbie and Maraea had put into the achievement reporting.

Decisions - Nicki said that the board needed to accept Sarah Ramsay's resignation. She also said that Mitchell Brennan is seeking leave. He's a new incoming teacher next year. He's highly apologetic but it's a short period and it is an important opportunity for him. She recommended that the board approve.

- **MOTION: that the board accept Sarah Ramsay's resignation**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

- **MOTION: that the board approve Mitchell Brennan's leave**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

School year dates - Leanne said that her and Nicki had revisited school dates for 2024 and they now think that ending on Monday 16 December 2024 would be best.

- **MOTION: that the final day of the 2024 school year be Monday 16 December**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Leadership development - Nicki said she had recently given a presentation on her experience as a Beginning Principal. For the first two years as a principal she is a 'Beginning Principal'. She acknowledged the support of Celeste Hastings over that time. She said that five other principals had endorsed her as part of her professional growth cycle endorsement. Nick congratulated Nicki on the endorsements.

Property - Nicki said the air quality report was fine, which is good news. She said the arrangements with the pool are working really well.

Nicki said she has been discussing with Maraea and Venise about the signage for the whānau spaces, to remove the “Te Whānau o...” part. This would communicate that the names are for the spaces, not the groups of people. Nicki said she has requested a quote from the original artist to re-do the signage.

Health and safety - Nicki assured the board that the school has checked its health and safety kits. Joe asked whether the health and safety incidents were minor, medium, or major. Nicki said they were all minor and if there were any major incidents she lets the board co-chairs know.

Finance - Jess said the September and October finance reports are in the folder. She said things are generally on track but there are more items of significance than usual. Jess said she had contacted Nicki to ask whether there were things we didn't have budget lines for that we should have budget lines for. Jess said Nicki had said that this is a time of year when parts of the budget are exhausted and it's normal to have to move money around.

Nicki said one of the items of significance was capital expenditure, but that includes pump track and asphaltting, and there is money for those costs. She said that insurance costs have increased significantly, and that Manisha is going to go back and query that. Nicki said a number of the other items of significance are linked to teacher support.

Budget preparation for 2024 - Nicki said she had budgeted for a full level of support staff next year, but we won't begin the year with all those staff. She said she had been conservative with income, but realistic with expenditure - so the budget shows a projected deficit but we probably will not go into deficit.

Nicki said the budget is just for the board to have a look at this meeting. She said she will ask you to approve it at the December meeting. She said she had asked Manisha from Education Services whether this was a reasonable budget to present and Manisha said it was. She asked the board to review the draft budget and ask her any questions.

Nicki said she would like to recommend that we pay the board secretary.

- **MOTION: agreed to pay the board secretary in 2024**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Staffing 2024 - Nicki said that the full-time Ministry staffing entitlement allocated to Newtown School is 17 curriculum teachers and 2 management, based on a roll of 368 students.

Nicki recommended that the board partly fund an additional position for 2024, to give a total of 18 curriculum teachers. She said that this would really help with English Language learners, for example. It would lower ratios across the board. She said it

would help ensure strong and close relationships with all tamariki. She said that we know this works for our learners, who respond to 'know me, see me, I belong.'

Nicki proposed that the school select a staff member who has the lowest salary, then use a proportion of ESOL funding and rest from Bulk Grant and reserves to pay their salary. She recommended that the board look at the guidance on the Ministry of Education website on board-funded positions.

Nick asked whether this was sustainable in the long term? Nicki said yes it was. She said the need for board funding wouldn't be there forever. The situation would continue to change, for example through roll growth of the expanded Ngāti Kotahitanga.

Yadana said that, looking at the makeup of the kura next year, this makes sense. She said that if the board doesn't spend this money, there is a risk in terms of student achievement. Trey said she fully supported the proposal.

- **MOTION: to agree in principle that the board fund an additional teaching position in 2024, subject to the approval of the budget at the December meeting**

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Nicki said that Education Services had presented to some principals about how schools can put funds aside in term deposits when they know it's not being used for a period of time.

- **ACTION - Jess and Nicki to develop a proposal to enable school to move funds into term deposits, and bring proposal back to the board to approve**

8. Portfolio reports

Nick said that he and Trey thought it would be good to have clearer delegations for portfolio roles and subcommittees. Trey said that for community engagement for example, this could involve transparency around communications with Nicki, and engagement with parents, coordinating parents to form subcommittees to do events, and so on. She said it might be a bit late for this year, but we could start it for next year. Fatima said we could celebrate events for all the diverse communities, Muslim New Years, Eid, and so on.

Policy - Nick said he'd send the email to the community with the policies that need to be updated.

Te Tiriti - Joe said the 100 day plan for the te Tiriti strategy is underway. He said that he and Naomi had met with Nathan last week. Nathan had given some awesome feedback and he's really encouraged to see the path this board is on.

9. Newsletter

Joe said let's do a piece about last Thursday and celebrate the school going into co-governance, what it means, FAQs. Jess suggested we do that at the start of the year, once her and Naomi have documented the process. Board members agreed to just write a piece on the celebration event for now.

Joe suggested doing a newsletter piece about how the pool is being used.

10. Previous minutes

The minutes of the October meeting were approved as true and correct.

#	Action	Assigned to	Update
165	Prepare summary of each board portfolio and add to induction document	Joe	Close - done
164	Let Nick know if you want to join a subgroup to review feedback on policies.	All	Close - done
163	Provide updated photo and blurb for website	All	Close - done
162	Prepare a newsletter item on co-governance	Joe and Nick	Close - done
161	Explore how we might connect families to families to promote inclusion	Nicki	Close - subgroup formed
160	Consider board responsibility to address racism for strategic plan (structural racism, engagement with wider communities e.g. meet with imam)	All	Carry forward for future discussion on strategic plan
159	Invite Sarah Divers to future meeting for 'staff spotlight'	Nicki	Close - done
157	Consider taking on a board portfolio	Lisa, Shannyn	Close - Shannyn has joined Te Tiriti subgroup
150	Develop and document the process for co-chairing, including how this works together with the Ngāti Kotahitanga co-option model	Naomi, Jess	Carry forward
148	Develop the bee proposal	Nicki, Joe, Yadana	Close - in progress
141	Consider fundraising options for cyclone at future meeting	Nick	Carry forward

11. Closing karakia

Meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Future meetings

- Monday 11 December 2023