



Newtown School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes



Tuesday 18 Sep 2023, 7.00pm
Library and Zoom

Board members: Fatima Amin Sheikh, Nicki Read, Yadana Saw, Joe Winkels (co-chair, arrived 7.30pm), Nick Booth (co-chair), Naomi Taylor, Trey Tanuvasa.

Also present: Steve Kerr (minutes), Leanne Whitfield (kaiako/teacher).

Apologies: Shannyn Edmonds, Jess Gorman.

1. Karakia timatanga

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

2. Te Tiriti

Nick invited board members to share their experiences of honouring Te Tiriti in their lives. Members shared recent experiences of learning te reo, calling out family members for racist views, thinking of ways to weave mirimiri and rongoa into wellbeing at work, sharing pride in students learning and being able to speak sentences in te reo, celebrating Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, and enjoying their students learning and singing waiata.

3. Tumuaki report

Nicki said there were a couple of items of business.

- **MOTION - Nicki asked permission for Moreen to use the hall to host a private leaving function and get permission to serve alcohol in the hall**

Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

- **MOTION - Nicki asked for agreement to proposed school dates for 2024**

Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Literacy - Leanne said the school is near the end of our structured literacy journey with Helen Walls. She said the work continues on and we'll get feedback from Helen but the funding has run out. She said we have lots of new knowledge. She talked through the Scarborough Reading Ropes model.

Yadana asked what impact increasing use of tablets and technology was having? Nicki said it was definitely having an impact.

Nick asked if there was an opportunity for the board to hear from Helen again on the school's progress with structured literacy. Nicki said yes, definitely, what would you like to hear? Nick said he'd like to hear generally how the professional development work had gone. Yadana said she would like to know what we should look out for, to see the impact of the work that had been done.

Fatima said that she had noticed structured literacy had made a difference for some students but it took some time. She said by now it has made a difference. Fatima asked about how grammar is taught in literacy? She said that second language students sometimes get the tense wrong. She asked when grammar will be introduced? Nicki said grammar is taught from the age of six. The school doesn't use the formal grammar terms but it's integrated into all the learning. Fatima said it might be easier to teach the basics like past, present, future tense.

- **ACTION - Nicki to invite Helen Walls to appear at upcoming meeting to talk about the school's progress with structured literacy**

Other curriculum areas - Nicki said she wanted to note all the other activities that school offers, beyond literacy and numeracy. She said we offer so much to the students. There's a lot of organising and hard work to make those things happen and students get a lot out of it. It's worthy of being noted by the board.

Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori - Leanne said it was a fantastic week, with lots on. Starting with assembly and kapa haka performance, staff social event, and so on. She said 17 staff are learning te reo in their own time, that's incredible.

Samoaan fonu - Nicki said there were a lot of great ideas. One of those was having an afternoon a week for Samoan students to hang out together. We're still working out how to make that happen.

Prayer at cultural events -. Nicki said Trey's comment last meeting had prompted some really good thinking about the issue and what teachers should be doing in certain formal events. She said the Education Act gives us guidelines around 'religious instruction' and the responsibility of Boards and schools. Aspects of faith are important for our school and staff to be aware of in order to be respectful of the different faiths at Newtown School, and to be inclusive. She said our community needs to be aware of what this may

look and sound like at our school e.g. during Eid, Samoan Independence day, Diwali. She said this is an excellent topic to be discussed further at the next board meeting.

Trey said it would be good to define some roles and responsibilities for parent groups and Nicki. There needs to be an understanding of the role of parent groups and the tumuaki. Naomi said that's a great idea. When she and Joe organise a whānau Māori hui there were no guidelines. It would be good to have a way forward. Nick said anything that made it easier for communities to come together and makes all students feel at home would be great.

Trey said there needs to be something in place because there could be parents coming in with all sorts of strong ideas. We need some kind of guideline.

Nick said how would we start it? Maybe Samoan whānau could come together to communicate their aspirations to the principal and the board. We could develop a framework for those kinds of engagements and conversations, sort of similar to the process we've got in the Placemaking/Whakamana Strategy.

Trey asked, how do we make sure our staff and tamariki are aware of the cultural and religious elements of some events like Samoan Language Week? She said there are certain behaviours that showed to me that there needed to be education. Nicki said sometimes we have run workshops on Eid, but that is a lot to put on students. Nick said he had out an ERO doc in the folder about ethnic diversity (*Education For All Our Children: Embracing Diverse Ethnicities*) which is really good.

Moreen - Nicki said there had been a lovely farewell for Moreen. She said there is something amazing about people realising their dreams.

Deputy principal recruitment - Nicki said applications closed today, so she is shortlisting and interviewing soon. She asked for a board member or preferably two to be on the panel. Trey agreed to be on the interview panel.

Emerging review for October - Nicki said she would like to have a discussion about inclusion and diversity in our school. We are hearing racist and homophobic language in our school. It's very grieving and reflects what's happening in the wider community. We need to acknowledge that and help our students and do something about it. We are taking it really seriously and we want to take some clear action.

Trey shared an experience that she'd had at a previous school in Porirua where the students had contributed positive language and that had been plastered around the school and that had changed behaviour.

4. Newsletter

Nick said that he and Nicki would like different members to contribute content to the newsletter, and share it around the board. Content would be due on the Wednesday before the Friday every two weeks.

- **ACTION - Naomi to write content for the next newsletter on the co-chair issue**
- **ACTION - Yadana to write content for the October newsletter on the Whakamana/Placemaking strategy**

5. Karakia

Nick said it would be great to use the new karakia from the Ministry of Education's Te Ahu o te Reo Māori programme at board meetings. Everyone agreed this was a great idea.

6. Co-chair

Naomi said the tangata whenua caucus had nominated Joe and he'd thought about it and accepted the role. She said the caucus is really looking forward to working in a partnership model. The caucus will figure out how to support Joe in the role.

Nick said that's great news.

Joe said he thought it was a fantastic milestone on the board's journey to make this move. He said he was honoured to take the role.

- **MOTION - Naomi moved that Joe be appointed co-chair**

Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

Nicki said it was important that we work out the processes and policies for how co-chairing will work, in time for future boards.

7. Strategic plan process

Nicki and Leanne invited board members to contribute their thoughts on the question: 'What do we do well that has a positive impact on our learners?'

Then they invited the board members to identify which of the draft strategic initiatives were most important to them.

8. Te Tiriti Strategy

Naomi said that so far two board members had given feedback. She said they'd like comments by the end of the week. Next she said they'd like to hear from kaimahi.

Nicki said how would you like to hear from kaimahi? Nathan is running a session tomorrow, could we include the Tiriti strategy in that? Naomi said yes that would be great.

Joe said next steps would be to develop an action plan to give effect to the strategy, and this would be reviewed periodically.

Naomi asked if it would be possible to ask the community a question about the Tiriti strategy, as part of the strategic plan consultation? Nicki said yes, and the board discussed how that question might be framed.

Naomi said she and Joe had had a good hui with the senior leadership team recently. They had reviewed the school's Māori educational success policy and it was quite light.

- **ACTION - Nicki, Joe, and Naomi to talk about reviewing the Maori education success policy**

Joe said that Ngāti Kotahitanga whānau had started to talk about recruitment.

9. Portfolio reports

Policies - Nick said there had been some feedback on structured literacy, and on inclusive learning.

Community engagement - Joe said nothing to report at this stage. He said he was keen to collaborate if anyone else wanted to.

Health and safety - Nick said there hadn't been a meeting, Nicki said there were two outstanding issues, the reverse evacuation and the use of balls and bikes in the playground.

Finance - Nick said Jess had completed the board finance reports for June, July, and August and stored them in the September meeting folder. The accountant's reports which they are drawn from are stored in the folders of the months which they relate to. Nick said he had been to the meeting with the accountant and everything is fine.

- **Trey and Fatima agreed to take on the community engagement portfolio**
- **Yadana agreed to take on the health and safety portfolio**

- **ACTION - Lisa and Shannyn to consider taking on a portfolio**

10. Previous minutes

Approved as true and correct.

#	Action	Assigned to	Status
152	Allocate policies for review between all members to review before end of term	Nick	Close (done)
151	Provide feedback on the Tiriti strategy	All	Carry forward
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
149	Māori caucus will report back to next meeting with the co-chair	Māori caucus	Close (done)
148	Form a subcommittee to consider the bee proposal	Nicki, Joe, Yadana	Carry forward (change to develop proposal)
147	Check whether the recent legislative change relating to health and safety is relevant to school	Nick	Close (done)
146	Draft a piece for the school newsletter which covers the move to co-chair	Jess	Close (switched to new action for Naomi)
141	Consider fundraising options for cyclone at future meeting	Nick	Carry forward

11. Agenda items for future meetings

- Theme discussion on diversity and inclusion

They asked whether there will be a blessing or any kind of ceremony for the first co-chair meeting. Naomi said yes, that's a great idea.

- **ACTION - Nicki to let mana whenua know that we've moved to co-chair and to seek advice on tikanga of blessing the beginning of the co-chair model**

12. Any other business

Yadana said the Newtown Berhampore parking changes are being consulted on. She said they're good changes.

Joe said it would be good for the board to shout morning tea for the staff again soon.

13. Closing karakia

Meeting closed

Future meetings

- Thursday 19 October 2023
- Monday 20 November 2023
- Monday 11 December 2023