

Draft Newtown School Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday 25 November 2024, 6.15pm
Library



Board members: Joe Winkels (co-chair), Nick Booth (co-chair), Nicki Read (tumuaki), Naomi Taylor, Trey Tanuvasa, Jess Gorman, Katy Te Amo, Fatima Osman Amin,

Also present: Danielle Te Whaiti (Deputy Principal), Debbie Purves (kaiako), Steve Kerr (minutes), Maraea Pukeke-Pine (kaiako), Venise Clark (kaiako), Megan Journee kaiako), Mary Bluck (kaiako).

1. Karakia timatanga

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

2. Te Tiriti in action

All board members shared examples of honouring Te Tiriti in their lives. These included: the experience of participating in the hīkoi mō te Tiriti and the response in Newtown, the invigorating sense of kotahitanga, remembering attending previous hīkoi for the foreshore and seabed at a time when that was not supported by the school, emotional responses to the hīkoi, pride that the school gave tamariki the choice to participate, the influence that Newtown School had on some other local schools, answering questions about the hīkoi in the community.

3. Kāhui Ako within school leads sharing

Mary and Megan spoke about the areas they've been working on during the year as part of the Kāhui Ako. The Kāhui Ako includes nine local primaries, one intermediate, and one high school, plus many early childhood centres.

Mary began by talking about positive play and learning through play in the kura. She found that Mondays and Fridays are the days when students need the most support. New and one-off activities are popular. She had observed that students respond positively to kaiako joining in and that friendships extend beyond whānau groups. However joining in play can be a real challenge for some students.

Mary spoke about what the school had done in response to what she'd seen, for example taking rugby balls to Mercy Park, lunchtime swimming, drums, bikes on certain

days, coding, Kids Write, and extra teachers for supervision on Mondays and Fridays. For next steps, Mary would like to look at what other schools are doing, especially in terms of inclusion with neurodiverse children, asking kids to take photos at play ('photovoice') to see what they're interested in and what patterns emerge. She said had started to see a difference, and there's more positive changes.

Katy asked if kaiako observed which students are most likely to mediate in conflict or look after other children who are lonely. Mary said that kaiako know which children are the most likely to do those things.

Joe thanked Mary for her work and passion. He asked Mary how her mahi might help to shape what happens with the playground. Mary said yes the 'photovoice' exercise with ipads might help shape the future of the playground.

Megan said her project was on staff and student regulation. Her project questions were how can we ensure our staff and our students are regulated and ready for learning? What whole class, small group, and individual practices can be used for all our ākonga to succeed? She said that relationships and connection are the key to positive engagement and educational success.

Megan had made observations in term 1, and then in term 2 she had studied a handbook on trauma-informed teaching. In term 3 she developed a regulation framework with everyday strategies and the kinds of activities that staff and students are regularly doing. Term 4 ran sessions by Helen Williams on the wheel of wellbeing for teacher wellbeing, presented to senior leadership team and ran a staff hui to try activities, getting feedback from staff and developing resources for kaiako. Megan then explained the different activities that each whānau are doing to enact the activities, such as breathing activities and circle time. She said she had been speaking with Venise about developing te reo Māori resources.

Trey asked whether there were any challenges with this work, where the board could support? Megan said it's important to work out where to put the most effort to make a difference. Nick said it would be good to think about how these activities could relate the health and safety work. He thanked Megan for her work on this.

4. Achievement data reporting

Ngāti Kotahitanga

Maraea said it was the first time that Ngāti Kotahitanga had reported with a comparison between the mid and end of year. She said the roll has grown from 18 to 30 tamariki during the year. She said there are two classes: for tau (years) 1 to 3 and for tau (years) 4 to 8.

Reo-ā-Waha (oral language) - Maraea said that the target for 2024 was to move 14 tamariki towards the expected level. She said that the target at mid year was to move 13 tamariki from Manawa Taki (modified programme) towards the expected level. Four tamariki have shifted from Manawa Taki to Manawa Āki. Two have shifted from Manawa Taki to Manawa Ora (working at expected level).

She said that something to celebrate was that 13 tamariki are working at the expected level (Manawa Ora). She said that most tamariki in tau 0-3 are attempting or speaking te reo Māori, even though most have come with little or no reo. She said that tau 4-8 tamariki use pepeha and whakatauki, correct pronunciation and vowel blends. She said there was a lot of focus on parents and language planning at home.

Tuhituhi (writing) - Maraea said that at mid year 11 tamariki in Manawa Taki (modified programme). At the end of the year, two have moved into Manawa Āki (working towards expected level). She said there are a lot of tamariki who are late immersers, and others who are on learning plans. She said there has been a lot of focus on professional development for structured literacy. She said the new PD programme, Rangaranga Reo ā-Tā, has been really successful and comes from a real whakaaro Maori perspective.

Pānui (reading) - Maraea said that four tamaiti have shown a massive shift since mid year to work at expected level. She said she will continue with the structured literacy programme.

Pāngarau (maths) - Maraea said that four tamariki at mid year working in Manawa Taki (modified programme) and at the end of year while they have not moved into Manawa Taki they have made incremental progress.

She celebrated that tamariki are learning new maths language and learning new problem solving. For tau 4-8, tamariki have been practising their basic maths facts, focusing on context such as market day, noho marae fundraising, etc.

Aspirations for 2024 - Maraea said that growing Ngāti Kotahitanga has been the highlight of the year. She said the support from the board and the senior leadership is amazing. It's been a wavy journey this year. There has been a massive increase in younger tamariki, while older tamariki are choosing to stay. She said we need to think about the future. We have more expressions of interest coming in, we can expect more new entrants. She said resourcing is a real need, we need kaiāwhina (support staff) with reo and kaiako taura (student teachers), and even another kaiako.

Katy asked how many year 6s are staying on? Venise said three are staying and three are going, so there will be three year 7s in Ngāti Kotahitanga next year. Katy asked what the plan was for getting relievers. Danielle said at the moment we use whaea Sally and Lauren is in the mix as well. She said she was trying to have Lauren work alongside Maraea so the tamariki get to know her.

Jess asked whether there was an opportunity to offer more support to the tamariki who are still working towards expected levels? Maraea said there are no early intervention resources for Māori medium, similar to reading recovery. She said that her and Venise do the best they can, but we rely a lot on parents and what happens at home. Venise said that with language revitalization a lot depends on what happens at home: 'ko te kāinga te kura matua'.

Trey said thank you so much. She said she was bilingual too, and she agreed that what happens at home is critical. Repetition is important. She said there will be challenges but she knew that Maraea and Venise will have it covered.

Nicki thanked Maraea and Venise for their immense work with our tamariki. Katy thanked whaea Maraea and Venise for the blood sweat and tears they put in. She asked the board to support the noho marae next year when there will be a lot of need for other grants too.

English medium

Debbie presented on whole English medium school achievement for maths, reading, and writing, comparing mid year and end of year. She said that so far this year the school has had 112 new students. Forty-eight of those are not new entrants, and most have come in from whānau who have come in to work for the hospital and speak a language other than English.

Debbie spoke about year 6s who are a target cohort. She said that at mid year 2024, 32.4% of Year 6 ākonga were working at or above the expected curriculum level for maths. At the end of the year, this had increased by 27.1 percentage points to 59.5%. She said that for writing, 59.4% of students are at or above the expected level at the end of the year.

Debbie said that for the year 4 target cohort, 80.2% are achieving at level 2 or above for reading at the end of year. For writing 66% of year 4s are at level 2 or above at the end of the year.

Debbie said that across all English medium ākonga, 73.4% are working at or above the expected level for reading at the end of the year. For writing, 59.4% are working at or above the expected level at the end of the year.

For ākonga Māori in English Medium, Debbie said that 58.8% were working at or above the expected level at mid year for reading. At the end of the year that had increased to 62.5%. At the end of the year, 50% are working at or above the expected level in writing, and 67.5% in maths.

For Pasifika ākonga in English medium, Debbie said that 62.9% were working within the expected level for reading at the end of the year. She said that at the end of year, 48.6%

are working within the expected level for writing and 71.5% are at or above the expected level in maths.

Naomi asked what interventions have worked for the target cohorts? Megan said that having support staff made a big difference. She said that tamariki loved free writing, and that has really helped the tamariki engage.

Nick asked whether Debbie had thought about pulling out anonymous case studies of progress as had been done in the past. Debbie said she thought about doing that again, but the new way of presenting achievement data is much better at showing the progress than previous presentations.

Naomi said the teachers must all be tired after the hard mahi to achieve the improvement for students. Nicki acknowledged the work that Debbie does to pull the data together, it is so much work.

5. Tumuaki report

Nicki recommended two staff only days for 2025, for June and October. She said the proposed dates are tagged on to long weekends and align with other schools.

- **MOVED - that staff only days for 2025 take place in June and October, tagged to long weekends**

Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

Draft ERO report - Nicki said the draft ERO report is in the drive. It's been through a couple of iterations and peer review and feels like it reflects the school. She said we have a couple of weeks to make any comments back to ERO. Nick and Joe said they thought it was a positive report.

BOT meeting frequency - Nicki said that in 2025 we could move to board meetings 6 weekly instead of monthly. That would give board members more opportunity to get things done in between meetings. Nick said that sounded fine as long as there is a mechanism to deliberate and make decisions in between meetings. Nicki said we could trial the new approach for six months.

- **ACTION - Nick and Joe to circulate BOT hui dates for 2025**

Principal appraisal - Nicki said she wanted to inform the board that the appraisal process is happening. Only the co-chairs need to review the report. She said she intends to continue to work with Celeste next year.

Learning support - Nicki gave a huge 'thank you' to Sarah for the immense mahi she does on learning support.

Sports - Nicki said she had asked Rhys, Mitchell and Cole for a summary of all the sports that we've offered this year (included in the report) and it's incredible how much there is. Again, that's immense mahi and huge success for our students.

Budget - Nicki said she had prepared and reviewed the draft 2025 budget together with Melissa, Jess, and Maneesha. She said she wanted to make a few comments before the board approved it. She said the relievers budget has been huge, but that the school had been reimbursed for some costs. She said the draft budget provided for increased costs for most usual things like audit etc. She said she was considering increasing the hall hire fees and also for the market to increase revenue. She said there will be board elections next year so that's budgeted for. She said the school hasn't signed a new contract with Programme Maintenance and instead is going to manage that itself as part of cyclical maintenance. The draft budget is a 'worst case' budget. Things will change.

- **MOVED - Nick moved that the board accept the budget as a draft**

Seconded and passed unanimously.

Cyclical maintenance - Nicki said the ten year plan has been developed and Nick and Joe were involved in that process. She said she would like to repaint the interior of the hall, and we have a good quote.

- **MOVED - Nicki moved that the board approve the cyclical maintenance plan to go to MOE**
- **MOVED - Nicki moved that the board approve expenditure for painting the interior of the hall**
- **MOVED - Nicki moved that the board approve expenditure for repairing the asphalt**

Motions seconded and passed unanimously.

Te Tipu - Danielle said the school has a plan to introduce Te Tipu, which will be the next stage on from Te Kākano. This will mean that every child in the school will be delivered a bilingual lesson once a fortnight. This will allow Mitch to support classroom teachers to support their reo practice. There will be an expectation that kaiako will use classroom release time to 'fatten' their reo, even when the Te Tipu team is not there.

There are some challenges to work through, like whether every whānau group will need their own resources. We acknowledge that the Te Tipu kaiako group are not Māori. She said that Nathan Riki is coming in to advise on the kawa of that group to make sure that it is done right. It means that whānau will not have to choose to send their tamariki to Te Kākano, it will be something that is gifted to all tamariki.

Trey asked what the overall idea or outcome of the programme. Danielle said that it follows from the aspirations and kōrero from Te Wharepōuri (tipuna of Te Ātiawa), for what he wanted to see in the future for the people living on this whenua.

Jess said that means that students who are currently in Te Kākano will only learn once a fortnight instead of once a week. Danielle said that's right, but that's where the responsibility of all the kaiako comes in. Mitch may also pick up some tamariki who are hungry for some extension. The idea is that it will be seamless, rather than a separate programme.

Katy asked whether this would be a pilot, and how will we check in as a board to know how it will work. She also said it would be good to have a talk about the long-term thinking for Te Tipu in five or ten years. Danielle said yes there's a lot of kōrero to be had.

6. Community engagement report

Fatima said that there was some misunderstanding about cultural competency at Newtown School. She said that her and Trey wanted to set a policy for cultural competency. She said they had started to consult with the teachers, the students, and the community.

Trey said she had reviewed the school policy for community engagement, which acknowledges that we are a diverse community, but she thinks that there needs to be more on cultural competency. Trey shared the next steps for 2025: community consultation, staff consultation, student voice, survey, and then meet with Nicki, to put a policy in place for all of us.

7. Portfolio reports

Health and safety - Nick said there had been a meeting, There was a reunification planned for Friday this week. There would be additional comms planned to let whānau know.

Māori caucus - Naomi said she'd included some statements from the Education and Training Act 2020 about the board's responsibility under Te Tiriti. She recommended that the board fund kaiako to do the mana whenua tour led by Huia Puketapu as a professional development.

She recommended that the board write and thank staff for the work they did to support the hīkoi and for upholding the school's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. She recommended that the board write a submission on the Treaty Principles Bill, and support a submission writing session/party for the school community.

The board agreed to all the recommendations.

- **ACTION - Naomi to draft letter to the staff to thank them for work to support the hīkoi**

Katy said that so far there hadn't been any interest yet for someone to fill Shannyn's vacant position on the board. She said she has been thinking about how to set up regular conversations to improve the flow of messages from the whānau to the board and the other way.

8. Playground updates

Joe said that he's just recently learned the process that the school will have to go through to build a new playground. For example, having to procure through the all-of-government process, making sure there is good drainage engineering, and so on. He said we need to understand the process from the Ministry's perspective. Then we need to ensure that we have the right person acting as project manager. That person will need strong professional skills.

Joe said that we're going to get a scope of the repairs work required to fix the playground. This could be done through a working bee.

9. Previous minutes and action items

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as true and correct.

Action items will be updated via email.

10. Closing karakia

Meeting closed at 10.15 pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 9 Dec 2024