Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Monday 20 October 2025 from 7 pm to 8:30 pm

Present: Byron Lynds (Presiding Member), Stacey Newlands (Deputy Presiding Member), Ava Szabo (Principal), Juliette George (Staff Representative), Rod Webster, Rhiannon Jarvis, Sadie Taylor (Student Representative), Jenny Jellicoe, Maryann Robertson, Lucy Bayliss (staff representative), Tara Israelson, Hayley Luan (minutes)

Apologies: Allie Ganapathy

The meeting began with a karakia.

Welcome to the new Board members

Byron welcomed the new Board members on behalf of the Board. Board members introduced themselves around the table.

Sub-committee Vacancies

Byron noted that a couple of the sub-committees require new members due to the change of Board members. Jenny and Rod volunteered to be on the disciplinary sub-committee with Stacey. Byron will ask Allie whether she wants to be on the finance sub-committee when she attends the Board meeting in November. The staff exit-interview sub-committee has only one member at present and it would be good to have another member. The staff exit interview sub-committee's responsibility is to interview staff who are leaving to gain feedback on what they think about the school, good or bad. It assists the Board to reflect on how things are going from a staff perspective and what the Board can do to support current staff. Stacey noted there are good materials inherited from Ike and Anahera who were on this sub-committee previously. Byron noted that it is a conflict of interest for Board staff representatives to be on this sub-committee. Maryann volunteered to join Stacy on the staff exit interview sub-committee. The community engagement sub-committee was established together with the strategic plan sub-committee, however it has not been active. This sub-committee is therefore dissolved. Maryann volunteered to join the strategic plan sub-committee. Tara noted that it would be good for someone with a Montessori background to join the school strategic plan sub-committee. Byron noted the strategic plan sub-committees have to report to the Board before publishing the new strategic plan and the Board will make the final decision as a whole. Tara volunteered to join the Preschool policy sub-committee. Stacey noted that the Preschool Collective Agreement sub-committee does not actually capture what the Board has agreed. It was noted a separate sub-committee is to be set up regarding Preschool future development. Stacey and Rod volunteered to join this newly created sub-committee. The non-preference criteria sub-committee has completed the required work and updated the school non-preference criteria. This sub-committee is therefore dissolved.

Declaration of Interests

Byron is a member of the Trust.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Juliette noted in the 5th paragraph of the 1st Goal under the Principal's report, the FTTE for the learning support co-ordinator should be 0.36 FTTE for 9 hours.

The first sentence of the 3rd paragraph in the same section should read "Kawakawa results have dropped this year. It has been noticeable that not having SJ in this space has made a difference". Stacey noted in the same paragraph, the time for lateness is to be corrected. From 2026, Students are marked as unexplained absence if they arrive after 9:10 am. Ava will check with the High School.

Motion: The minutes of the last Board of Trustees' meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025 were accepted as a true and accurate record with the above corrections.

Moved by Stacey/ Seconded by Rhiannon/ Carried unanimously with no abstentions or nays.

Matters Arising

The EOTC sub-committee is currently checking Board members' availability to attend an online Board EOTC training session. The Board agreed that it would be very helpful if Tanya is available to join the session as an EOTC expert to answer any questions the Board members may have.

The Kawakawa service camp returned to the same site as for this year's Odyssey. The students performed maintenance around the camp site. It was noted that students also helped plant trees along the Hutt River previously and they are excited to see the plants have grown very well.

There will be 2 Teacher Only Days for 2026 - unsure when to have them to best benefit the launch of the new curriculum.

Goal 2: To ensure we build, develop and practice an authentic Montessori programme and approach throughout the school aligned with MJ2EX and the Wā Ora Montessori essential elements.

The new curriculum will be looked at and linked to Montessori philosophy.

Goal 3: To establish, maintain and improve equitable learning outcomes as Tiriti partners, recognising the importance of partnership with Māori in education.

It was noted the parade during Maori Language Week went very well. The 6-9 kapa haka group and all 9-12 students attended the parade as a school group.

Writing Report

Ava presented the Writing Report for 2025. The report gave an update on Preschool priority learners and showed how we are supporting those learners. It also included the information on how we prepare our 5 year olds to transition to Primary School. Ava noted it is important for the school to work with those children who are just below the standard to assist them in moving them to be at standard. There are only a couple of children identified as priority learners in one class.

The writing report answers the questions: how do the children or the school know if they are progressing? How do the teachers report feedback? How do we talk about this? How do we continue to do it? It was noted that tracking documentation plays an important role in reflecting children's progress.

The next step is about the systems and processes and how they are used to target the priority learners. The understanding of what we do and how we do it are important. It is important to see how teachers guide the children to engage in writing.

Tara noted in Preschool, teachers liaise with Juliette to assist those who are identified priority learners at 5 years old. Juliette noted they are often not priority writers as they are normally only just below the standard. They are also in Year 1 and have not had a chance to practice their writing yet. Ava noted it is very beneficial to know those children before they come into the Primary. Juliette noted that the transition data goes with the students from the Preschool to the Primary, then to Kawakawa and Tawari.

Rod noted there are positive results for Kawakawa ākonga, and it is great to see that they are progressing. Juliette noted the Board also funds the Teacher Aides who assist ākonga with their writing. Acknowledgement to the Board for the funding as that has made a huge difference.

Motion: That the Principal's Report for October 2025 and the Writing Report be accepted.

Moved by Rod; Seconded by Juliette; All in favour motion carried.

EOTC Proposal Form

Byron noted the EOTC proposal forms are to provide information to the Board to ensure a brief understanding of the camps. More information regarding risks is then included in the SASS form, which will be presented at the following meeting.

Year 4 Sleepover EOTC Proposal Form

Maryanne questioned regarding overnight camps, if there are any situations where a teacher/parent helper stays with a student in a room alone by themselves? Ava noted that there may be a situation for a teacher to provide first aid to a student for a short period of time, otherwise there is no situation where a teacher would stay with a student in a room behind closed doors for a long period of time.

Tawari Camp EOTC Proposal Form

Stacey questioned how close the camp is to the river? Tara noted that it depends on where they camp. Ava noted that previously there was quite a long walk to the river from the campsite. Stacey noted that there is a high teacher/student ratio for this camp. It will be helpful to know the managing staff as that may affect the group dynamics. Maryanne questioned what if the trains are cancelled? Ava noted that the train will be replaced by buses in that case. If all the buses are cancelled, the camp will have to be cancelled as well.

The correspondence was noted.

Ava sent through the attendance report from the MoE. Ava noted that medical leave is recorded as an absence. Rhiannon questioned how we are doing compared to other schools in relation to attendance? Ava noted that she had conversations with another Principal who noted they have many students on holiday during school terms which has a large impact on their attendance. Ava noted what is really worrying is the chronic absences. There are a couple of ākonga who are only at school for 50% of the time and they are the ones that require our focus. She does not want them to get missed where the focus has been put onto the medical leave or other reasons for absence.

Byron received notifications from NZEI and PPTA for a strike day on 23rd October 2025. The Board is responsible to make a decision on whether to close the school on that day. Ava noted that almost all of our Area School teachers are in the union and it would be very hard to open the school for instruction with minimal staff. The Preschool will open as normal on that day.

Motion: That the Board endorse the Area School to be closed for instruction on Thursday 23rd October 2025.

Moved by Byron; Seconded by Maryanne; All in favour motion carried.

The meeting closed at 8:30 pm.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday 17th November 2025 in the Tāwari classroom at the High School.

Signed Presiding Member, Wā Ora Montessori School

Date 2/12/25

Action	Personnel	Due
Rod to seek clarification about Te Ati Awa MOU and a modest annual budget for place-based learning with Dannielle	Rod	By the next Board meeting in November
Ava to talk with Rod regarding the workshop on TOD 10th November 2025	Ava and Rod	By the TOD on 10th November

2025 Council/BOT Meetings

7.00pm at Wā Ora Montessori School – Tāwari Classroom

January – No meeting
Monday 17 February 2025 (Week 3, Term 1)
Monday 17 March 2025 (Week 7, Term 1)
April – No meeting
Monday 19 May 2025 (Week 4, Term 2)
Monday 16 June 2025 (Week 8, Term 2)
July-No meeting
Monday 18 August 2025 (Week 6, Term 3)
Monday 15 September 2025 (Week 10, Term 3)
Monday 20 October 2025 (Week 3, Term 4)
Monday 17 November 2025 (Week 7, Term 4)