Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Monday 18th March 2026 from 7.00 pm to 8.43 pm

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

Apologies: Allie Ganapathy, Jo Dyer

Guests: Tanya Laybourn (High School DP), Sarah Sue (school parent)

Hui commenced with a karakia.

Declaration of Interests: No interests declared

Acceptance of Previous Minutes

There were no questions or comments.

Motion: The minutes of the last Board of Trustees' meeting held on Monday 18th February, 2026 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by Ava/ Seconded by Lucy/ Carried unanimously with no abstentions or nays.

Presiding Member Updates

No updates.

Principals Report

Preschool roll is currently sitting at 94 and we recently had quite a successful Open Day and Pre-Enrolment Evening with more than 30 attendees.

Health and Safety – there was a near miss in the caretaker's shed between the 6-9 toilets and Totara classroom, where something fell on a tool that was still hot and it caught fire. Fortunately smoke was discovered before a full fire was able to take hold. The fire brigade was phoned straight away. Before the fire brigade arrived the fire was extinguished with an onsite fire extinguisher, however the fire brigade will always turn up if it is a school environment to ensure the fire is completely out. Remedies have been taken to prevent this happening again - a fire alarm has been installed in the shed and any flammable items have been removed from the shed and placed in a safer environment.

ERO - they have been onsite to complete the audit. At present, we are yet to receive the report. Anna will be able to present on this at the next hui in May. ERO are changing their approach to reporting from April 2026. Our ERO audit was done in March, therefore we still come under the

old system. The work done before ERO arrived was valuable as we were well prepared and able to demonstrate compliance.

The High School ākonga are doing well with their beekeeping, with 60 kilos of honey harvested. We can't sell it yet, but the ākonga are working through the process to register as a business. It may be available to be sold in time for the whole school gala in November or Kawakawa Christmas Market in December.

Motion: that the Principal's Report be accepted. All in favour; motion carried.

NCEA Report

Tanya asked the Board if this is the type of information that they want because it is a long report to write and compile. She wants to ensure it is valuable. Feedback was that both the summary and the detail are very valuable and appreciated.

Tanya noted we sit well against national averages and within our equity index. In addition, our Montessori approach has characteristics which are not able to be tested by NCEA standards. Like the rest of the school, in the High School we allow ākonga to pursue their interests, so they are able to take a wide range of subjects. In Art, we provide a variety of mixed media so there is the capacity to do photography, painting and other art subjects. There are many ways that allow ākonga to show self-expression and we have some talented kids in this space.

Stacey asked how the ongoing approach is going to nudge this part of the school towards a deeper Montessori approach. Tanya noted that Preschool and Primary school kaiako are guided by the materials whereas there are no materials in a High School setting so it is purely the Philosophy that guides the approach and this requires interpretation. We are the only New Zealand Montessori school that does NCEA so it is hard to compare with other schools. There were many adolescent schools that went to Congress, including Australia, but they are not an exact comparison. We do engage and collaborate with schools in Australia, however they are quite small and usually private schools.

Everything that comes before in our kura contributes to the results in the High School. Akonga arrive at the senior school in Year 11 and a lot of credit has to go towards the previous teachers because they work really hard at making sure the ākonga are well rounded. Tanya noted she is proud of our NCEA results and she reiterated that the boost program really helped whereby we really target individuals. Kaiako met with the students and helped them to understand and unpack to work out what they need to do to be able to pass and get good results. This is supported by Board-funded Teacher Aides. High School kaiako have the opportunity to assist ākonga who need help to get ready for Co-Requisites. Comment made that the Hospitality students doing an external catering subject is a good idea and Tanya noted that they were even able to take on a few jobs last year. The kitchen space is incredible.

Motion: that the NCEA Report be accepted. All in favour; motion carried.

EOTC

Final EOTC documentation for Odyssey provided for one of the external activity providers. An additional activity was added for the last day, however it is not high risk and there are no concerns.

Tanya also discussed that staff are completing outside provider training relating to water activity.

The Health and Safety policy and the Safety Management Plan will now be presented at the next meeting as they are not quite complete. A subcommittee will be formed to take on any further responsibilities.

Tanya left the hui.

BoT Financial Updates

Currently some 9-12 Camp payments are still outstanding, but most people tend to pay, which is important for these experiences to be able to be offered.

Motion: That the February Board financials are accepted.

Moved by Stacey; Seconded by Ava; All in favour motion carried.

Updating Delegations and Sub-Committees

Property Committee: Rhiannon noted interest in this committee as she knows different contractors and could offer expertise in this area.

Finance Committee: Sarah Sue was present at the meeting as she has shown interest in taking on the Treasurer role now that Byron has resigned. Roles and responsibilities of the committee were discussed. The role focuses around reviewing the management accounts and having an overview of the school's financial direction. Every three years we increase the Preschool fees and consider the Area School donations. The role is quite a big responsibility and it is important to check and know things are going well.

Preschool Collective Agreement Bargaining: the CA is currently up for renewal and another meeting is being held on Friday. Byron noted he is okay to continue on the committee, however will get Jenny to report back to the Board on any further developments. Both Lilian and Byron are no longer on the Board, therefore someone else will need to step onto the committee. Going forward it would be good to have people who are existing that will be there for any further negotiations. Maryann noted she may be interested, however she does have children in the Preschool at present and is also on the Disciplinary Committee.

Parent Survey

Going forward, Ava noted that we are looking to do this differently to encourage engagement as it is possible people get survey fatigue. Surveys can prompt polarised responses, where people either have something good to say or something bad to say and we don't really get the middle ground. This year Ava would like to invite people to meet face-to-face at a couple of evening sessions for a focused discussion. At present, there are lots of conversations around transitions, so it would be nice to get some really rich whānau voice in that area. What people say will make a difference and we can move forward with the feedback.

The blogs and the newsletter information is really valued as a different communication method. This and email are the main ways of getting information out. The school Facebook page is also quite popular.

Key feedback for the Board is that people were looking for the minutes, although they are put up on our website.

Other feedback related to what subjects the school is able to offer, and the change to the time of the year for the 9-12 camp which has happened as a result of moving site location for the camp.

Administration

Correspondence

No correspondence to note.

Other Business

No other business.

Agenda for next meeting

- Items will be sent out for the next agenda as per the Self-Review Plan.

The meeting closed at 8.43 pm.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 20th May 2026 in the Tāwari classroom at the High School.

Signed Presiding Member, Wā Ora Montessori School

Date 20/5/26

Action	Personnel	Due

2026 Council/BOT Meetings

7.00pm at Wā Ora Montessori School – Tāwari Classroom

January – No meeting

Wednesday 18 February 2026 (Week 3, Term 1)

Wednesday 18 March 2026 (Week 7, Term 1)

April – No meeting

Wednesday 20 May 2026 (Week 5, Term 2)

Wednesday 17 June 2026 (Week 9, Term 2)

July-No meeting

Wednesday 19 August 2026 (Week 5, Term 3)

Wednesday 16 September 2026 (Week 9, Term 3)

Wednesday 21 October 2026 (Week 2, Term 4)

Wednesday 18 November 2026 (Week 6, Term 4)