# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
# Monday 17 February 2025 from 7:00 pm to 8:21 pm

**Present:** Byron Lynds (Presiding member), Stacey Newlands (Deputy Presiding Member), Ava Szabo (Principal), Rod Webster (via Zoom), Juliette George (staff representative), Rachel Visser (student representative), Jenny Jellicoe, Lillian Pak, Anahera Brown, Michela Homer (staff representative), Hayley Luan (minutes)

The Board welcomed Michela attending her first Board meeting as the Preschool Deputy Principal. The Board members introduced themselves for Michela's benefit.

## Declaration of Interests

Byron is a member of the Trust.

## Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Stacey noted that on the 2nd page under Goal 3, The 3rd sentence of the first paragraph should read "50% of the people at Wā Ora who completed the survey felt…"

**Motion: The minutes of the last Board of Trustees' meeting held on Monday 18 November were accepted as a true and accurate record with the above correction.**

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

## Presiding Member Election

Ava Szabo nominated Byron Lynds for the Board Presiding Member position and Byron accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations so Byron Lynds is duly elected as the Presiding Member for 2025.

Byron nominated Stacey Newlands as the Deputy Presiding Member and Stacey accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations so Stacey Newlands is duly elected as the deputy Presiding Member for 2025.

## Tumuaki/Principal's Report – February 2025

Ava presented the Principal's report which aligns with the Strategic Goals.

*Goal 1: To support each child/ākonga's progress and achievement against the NZ Curriculum and Te Whāriki*

Ava noted the Analysis of Variance will be presented at the next Board meeting in March before being submitted to the MoE. The Annual Plan will also be presented at the March Board meeting after being reviewed by the SLT.

The EOY summary results look good. The detailed report will be included in the Analysis of Variance and presented at the March Board meeting. The reading and writing results for Year 9 and Year 10 ākonga have grown significantly, with the number of ākonga at or above increasing from 51% to 80%. There has been a huge amount of effort put into this area by staff. Tamariki with additional needs have received extra support from Teacher Aides. It has made an enormous difference with Paula working with the High School ākonga on a regular basis. Acknowledgements to the Board for supporting Paula's salary to enable this to happen. It was also noted that a lot of mahi was done by the Kawakawa kaiako led by Hilary. The current programme is tailored to each ākonga's needs and Juliette has been helping to design where the extra support needs to be delivered.

Regarding the NCEA results, these are correct as of 15 Jan 2025. The school is still able to modify and add results until the end of February 2025. Ava noted that there is no NCEA certificate issued to Year 11 students. It is unsure at this stage what will be put in place to substitute the NCEA Level 1 certificate.

There were 5 students who did not gain Level 2 maths certificates last year and 4 of them are not doing maths this year. Plans have been put in place for these students including a senior maths class being provided for them after school. Ewan, the maths teacher, is offering extra support to ensure the students are prepared for the next assessments in May. It was noted that there was a lack of communication from the MoE regarding the reasons why students failed the exams. Rachel raised a question for those who failed maths, did they fail the online exams or the physical exams? Ava noted there were students who did not pass the co-requisite and they were counted as failing the subject, although they passed the external exam. It was noted that the new format for the maths exams is more about literacy not maths. Ewan has mentioned to Ava that the questions could be answered in different ways and it is difficult to know what the questions were asking for. Byron queried whether a reader writer can be available for the exams. Ava noted that on the pilot test for the online exams, ākonga could request a writer for English literacy, however it was the writer who was tested

on their spelling, not the students, which was very quickly noted that it was not workable. Juliette noted that for instance, students with 2 broken arms who cannot physically type, there is a digital platform built in the test called "poly" where you are able to highlight words and have it to read back to you, however this option is not available for reading tests, only for maths and writing tests.

Anahera questioned if there are any early indicators for those who need additional support? Ava noted that many schools have 50% ākonga diagnosed with additional needs. We have 46% ākonga diagnosed with additional needs at present. Juliette noted that there was a group in the Primary that needed extra support. Paula has moved from a Teacher Aide in Kawakawa to a general High School TA as the group of ākonga she has been working with moved up to Tawari. Paula still dominantly works in Kawakawa with a targeted programme and the way she approaches ākonga is impressive. Through the in–class support funding and other MoE funding, we have managed to put in enough support to cover all areas at present. As we are an Area School, we are able to see which ākonga are moving to the High School from Primary and give them the targeted support they need. Ava noted that the funding provided by the MoE is minimal and the Board has to request additional donations from the Trust to cover the TA's pay. Juliette noted there is a programme called SPEC which is a NZQA Level 1 qualification assessing students learning the foundation skills for living. There will potentially be more ākonga enrolling in SPEC in 2025 and a specialist TA will be required to be hired to help ākonga with this. The Board will need to decide if they would like to hire another TA for SPEC after discussions with the High School staff. Kirstie is working in the Primary School in a similar role to Paula's at the High School. Lillian questioned whether there is anything to replace the NCEA Level 1 certificate? Ava noted that we report on the NCEA standards, however the NCEA Level 1 exams have been removed and there is no replacement at present.

*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.*

Nothing to discuss.

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

Nothing to discuss.

***Personnel***

We are still looking for a Te Reo teacher for the High School. Dannielle has done a great job teaching Te Reo Maori in the Primary classes. Kapa haka began in Term 1 and has been expanded to include both 6-9 to the 9-12 tamariki as a lot of children are interested.

**Motion: That the Principal's Report for February 2025 be accepted.**

***Moved by Lillian; Seconded by Jenny; All in favour motion carried.***

## Strategic Plan

The MoE has given permission for schools to roll over their current Strategic Plan into 2025. Ava noted there is quite a lot of work being done by the MoE as to where the responsibility lies for the Strategic Plan and what should or should not be included.

Ava presented the 2025 Strategic Plan. It contains minor changes from the 2024 Strategic Plan and includes the latest priorities for attendance, reading, writing and maths as required by the MoE. The NELPS (National Education and Learning Priorities) which were previously followed by schools will be removed. It is unsure at this stage what will replace it.

Ava noted the 2025 Strategic Plan will be posted on the school website after approval by the Board. Stacey noted that it would be helpful for the school community to know the Strategic Plan is driven by MoE and the school does not have ability to change this. A generic timeline will also be given to the school community to help parents gain a better understanding of how the Strategic Plan was drafted. Stacey noted this is a good opportunity to communicate with the school community about the Strategic Plan.

Rachael questioned why the Strategic Plan has to include reading, writing, maths and attendance? Ava noted these four aspects are already included in the school Annual Plan and they are the main focus points of MoE for 2025. The Strategic Plan is drafted at a high level and details of the four priorities are reported in the Annual Report. At present, attendance records are reported to MoE on a daily basis. Ava completes a survey twice a term regarding attendance and achievement. It was noted that the school will focus on the MoE priorities along with our own priorities. The approved Strategic Plan will be submitted to the MoE by the end of March. Ava shared the proposed Strategic Plan for 2025 and the link to the MoE website regarding details of what is required to be included in the 2025 Strategic Plan.

The Board will review and approve the updated 2025 Strategic Plan at the March Board meeting.

## School Self Review Plan 2025-2027

Ava presented the Self Review Plan for 2025-2027. It was noted that the interim focus report, community consultations and curriculum reports are reported to the Board on a cycle. The reporting date may be changed due to new teachers beginning or staff shortages. The removal of NELPS may happen in 2026 and it is uncertain at this stage whether they will be replaced. Our Area School policies are held by School Docs with scheduled reviews. All Board members, staff and the school community can make comments on School Docs when policies are due for review. Michela noted that School Docs is trialling policies for ECE centres. It will be helpful for us by engaging School Docs for the Preschool policies also.

Principal PGC is for Pincipal's Professional Growth Cycle. This is managed through Ava's advisor and attested by other Principals.

The exit interview summary will be presented at the March Board meeting.

**Motion: That the school Self Review Plan for 2025-2027 is accepted.**

***Moved by Byron; Seconded by Lillian; All in favour motion carried.***

## Annual Plan Summary from Term 4 2024 and Whānau Survey

Rachel questioned why we were not able to get the E-asttle testing? Ava noted there were many schools who applied but only a few schools were accepted to be a part of the trial.

Ava noted that the whānau survey provides good and useful information which will be discussed in detail at SLT meetings. It was suggested to add a section in the school weekly newsletter for Principal's updates regarding staff news and leaving staff. Jenny noted that it would be good to send out a follow-up email regarding the updates in case people do not read the newsletters. Question raised as to what is the best way to capture most people and how to make sure that reminders are well communicated.

Stacey noted there is a lack of plain language about what the BoT do. It could be good for this information to be included in the BoT section on the school website. The Board/Council meeting minutes will be approved at the following meeting before being posted on the school website. This information could be included in the Board section on the school website so the school community knows when to expect the meeting minutes to be uploaded on the website.

It is good to see people enjoy attending the whānau events. With the digital newsletters, it is easier for the school community to view it on their phone. There are many different streams of communication now: digital website, newsletter, emails and the school app.

School app has a parent portal and a calendar for school events. Reminders are sent out to parents before the events. Jenny recommended sending out an email with the link of blogs if they are important for the parents to read.

Stacey noted it would be good to share with the school community how property projects are prioritised. There may be more communication required in this area. Byron noted he would be able to provide a school property update in the next Board newsletter article.

## 2025 BoT Budgets

Hayley presented the updated 2025 budgets for the Board of Trustees accounts. In terms of teachers' salaries, the beginning teacher has begun her 3rd year, therefore her pay will now be covered by the bulk grant, rather than the teachers' salaries. The new Hard Tech teacher's salary will be covered by the teachers' salaries in 2025 as he is a registered teacher.

FTTE is allocated by the MoE based on the student roll and is balanced out by the end of each year. The school has to request Trust donations to cover 2 extra teachers' pay and the Primary Assistant Teachers, plus the top up of the Teacher Aide salary. Rātā class teacher's salary will also be covered by the Trust in 2025. Byron noted that the school was understaffed in 2024, so does that make any difference? Hayley noted that she moved the teachers' pay around so all the allocated FTTE has been used up.

The property minor maintenance budget has been increased in 2025 to cover the rising costs. The cashflow looks healthy for the Board of Trustees. The Trust donation will be requested in November as per previous years.

Rachel questioned why Rātā teachers salary has to be covered by the Trust donations. Hayley noted that a certain FTTE is allocated to the school for a certain number of teachers based on the school student roll. As the High School has a higher teacher to students' ratio, there are 2 extra staff the school must fund through the Trust donations. The allocated FTTE only allows one teacher for each Primary class and this teacher will be an extra teacher in Rātā to work alongside Robyn in 2025 whilst she completes her Montessori training. The Rātā class teacher is on a fixed term contract for 2025, therefore salary is to be covered by the Trust for 2025.

In terms of the annual 2024 accounts, a trust donation of $300k was requested from the Trust compared to the budgeted $500k. The unfavourable variance of the office salaries was due to the current Financial Administrator retiring and the new incumbent coming in for training. The teachers' salaries grant is less than 2023 due to the teachers back pay being processed in 2023. The major maintenance spending was for the exterior wall painting which was scheduled for 2023 but took place in January 2024. The activities surplus was due to money being transferred to 2025 Odyssey and the funded Primary and High School sports being coded in this account.

Byron noted that after the end of year adjustments, some of the figures will be changed for the 2024 annual accounts.

**Motion: That the updated 2025 BoT budget be accepted.**

***Moved by Byron; Seconded by Stacey; All in favour motion carried.***

## In-committee Meeting

*In-committee Meeting from 8:12 pm to 8:14 pm*

**Motion: That the public be excluded from the following part/s of the proceedings of this meeting namely for agenda items under In-Committee. Minutes are kept in the PEB minute book.**

The meeting reopened at 8:14 pm.

## Other Business

When marking attendance, it has been requested to use code Q (Board approved absence) for students when only one area e.g. Primary or the High School is open and one area is closed. Byron approved the request on behalf of the Board that code Q can be used. Ava noted that exam leave is only available for secondary schools not area schools at present. Last year, all ākonga who were on exam leave were coded as justified and reported as on leave. Ava will get in touch with the MoE to rectify this issue.

Hayley presented the returning officer appointment form from Schooled (formerly CES) for the 2025 triennial Board election. They are the only accredited provider for the online Board election platform. If the Board would like to appoint Schooled as the returning officer for 2025 elections, Schooled would charge the same amount as the 2024 election funding and the Board would get to keep the remaining election funding for 2025. It was noted that the last Board election was held on the Schooled online platform and it worked really well.

**Motion: That Schooled is appointed as the 2025 Board election returning officer.**

***Moved by Lillian; Seconded by Byron; All in favour motion carried.***

## Odyssey Paperwork Update

Ava noted that the 2025 Odyssey is happening towards the end of Term 1. On the positive side, there are more ākonga available to attend Odyssey this year. Tanya is still working with providers to complete all the paperwork. In the usual process, there should be an allowance for 2 Board meetings for the detailed SASS forms to be approved, however there is only one Board meeting remaining before Odyssey takes place at the end of March. Ava noted that detailed SASS forms will be sent out around two weeks prior to the March Board meeting. It would be good for Board members to email any questions to Ava or Tanya before the Board meeting in March so the Board has enough time to go through the forms and have them fully approved at the Board meeting in March.

## Administration

### Correspondence

The correspondence was noted.

## Agenda Items Next Meeting

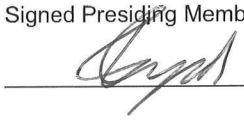
- 2025 Strategic Plan
- Exit interview summary
- Analysis of Variance
- Annual Plan
- Allocating the newsletter article

- Approval of 2025 Odyssey

*The meeting closed at 8.21 pm.*

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday 17 March 2025 in the Tawari classroom at the High School

Signed Presiding Member, Wā Ora Montessori School



Date

17/3/25

| Action | Personnel | Due |
|---|---|---|
| Ava to share the 2025 Strategic Plan with the Board | Ava | Before the next Board meeting in March |
| Hayley to send the returning officer appointment form to Schooled for the 2025 Board election | Hayley | By the end of February 2025 |
| Hayley to ask Ashleigh to post a descriptive paragraph in the BoT section on the school website so it is easier for people to know what does the BoT do | Hayley | By the next Board meeting in March |
| Tanya to send through Odyssey SASS forms 2 weeks before the next Board meeting in March. | Tanya | 2 weeks before the next Board meeting in March |
| Ava to contact the MoE to rectify the study leave for the area school | Ava | By the Board meeting in June |

**2025 Council/BOT Meetings**

**7.00pm at Wā Ora Montessori School – Tawari 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)