Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Monday 18 November 2024 from 9:30 pm to 10:07 pm

Present: Byron Lynds (Presiding member), Stacey Newlands (Deputy Presiding Member), Ava Szabo (Principal), Rod Webster (via Zoom), Juliette George (staff representative), Jenny Jellicoe (via zoom), Lillian Pak, Anahera Brown, Anna McLean (staff representative), Hayley Luan (minutes)

Apologies: Rachel Visser (student representative)

Declaration of Interests

Byron is a member of the Trust.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes

Motion: The minutes of the last Board of Trustees' meeting held on Monday 21 October were accepted as a true and accurate record.

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

Matters Arising

Following Stacey's questions regarding the rates Wā Ora pays, Hayley has checked the school rates invoices and we currently only pay for waste water. There are no rates charged for school blocks/buildings, which is in line with the description of school rates on the Ministry of Education website.

Living Wage School Pledge

Ava presented the living wage school pledge. We declare ourselves as part of the living wage schools campaign and we call on the central government to support us with the necessary funding to ensure all our staff are paid at least at the living wage. We pay all staff at least the living wage at Wā Ora and we have been doing it for a number of years now. Lillian noted that the pledge is for schools to put pressure on the central government for extra funding regarding the living wage. Ava noted the MoE does not fund for living wage and we pay our staff the living wage rate from the operational funding with the school Trust donations.

Ava will sign the living wage school pledge and share it with the Board.

Tumuaki/Principal's Report – November 2024

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 presented the Reading Report. Stacey acknowledged it is a comprehensive report. Regarding Kawakawa ākonga presenting with literacy needs, is there anything the Board can do or needs to do to support the students? Ava noted the Board currently funds a full time Teacher Aide for Kawakawa ākonga. Next year, some of the Teacher Aide's support will move to Tawari ākonga along with students with special needs. It has been beneficial having that programme embedded this year. Next year, the timetable will be changed to provide more consistency. It will be ideal for ākonga to master literacy skills before they move up to the College. The students' academic results have increased enormously along with their engagement. Hannah, the Librarian, has bought different books for the Kawakawa and Tawari library which brings more interests for the students. Ākonga feel more equipped to transition from Kawakawa to Tawari.

Ava presented the Health and PE Report and noted that there was no health report for Tawari last year due to staff shortages. Different aspects have been applied for different age groups. Schools are required to have a health and sexuality programme for Year 10s. It was noted that the programme meets the students where they are at and we follow them. It is more about consent, relationships, wellbeing and mental health. Ava noted that there have been changes to the Health and Sexuality curriculum in relation to gender.

Anahera questioned if there were considerations about the need for more indoor space? Ava noted that the ceiling netting in T2 has allowed the space to be used more often however others need to use the space as well. If we had an outdoor space available, that would relieve the pressure of requiring more indoor space.

Ava noted a new sexuality curriculum has been introduced. The ERO research team has sent out surveys to the Board, SLT, teachers, parents and students. The draft report will be shared with schools once ready. It will be possible at a later stage for schools to opt out from part or all of the new sexuality 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.

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.

Ava presented the Māori consultation survey. Engagement was low and only a few people completed the survey. Results will be taken to whānau hui to discuss whether we should engage our kaiako or tamariki more in this space. 50% of people who completed the survey felt it is good to be Māori; others noted there is a lack of a relationship with kaiako. Teaching and learning relationships really need to be built up.

Anahera questioned when the survey was sent out last time and whether there was a big difference with the responses. It was noted that the last Māori consultation survey was completed around two years ago and the survey was only for the parents. There may need to be an easier way to engage younger tamariki as they need assistance from adults to complete the survey. What is the next step after the survey? Rod suggested having face to face conversations which is far more valuable than meeting online.

Ava will bring this feedback to the whānau hui at the beginning of 2025.

Personnel

Anna moves into the Primary Deputy Principal role from Term 1 2025.

There are 2 interviews arranged for the HIgh School Maths teacher role and one interview for the Hard Tech teacher role at the High School.

The Language teacher role has been advertised (preferably Te Reo). The position will need to be filled for the Primary for 2025, however the incumbent does not have to be a trained teacher but someone who has qualifications in Te Reo Māori.

The 6-9 classes will be quite big with close to 40 students in each classroom by the end of 2024. Carol will remain in Puriri as a permanent teacher from 2025. The Primary is now fully staffed. Robyn in Rātā will begin her Montessori training from 2025. Acknowledgements to the Board for funding Tania's salary for 2025.

Regarding the incident causing a head injury that happened in Kawakawa, it was a fall and parents were onsite when the incident occurred. The head injury was later diagnosed at the hospital.

Motion: That the Principal's Report for November 2024 be accepted.

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

Kawakawa Community Building Camp at Kaitoke

Byron questioned if parents will be asked to donate towards this camp? It was noted that the camp is curriculum related therefore parents will be asked to pay donations.

Ava noted that approximately only 75% of donations have been collected for the 9-12 camp in 2024. There are a large number of parents who have not paid for the camp. The school has to cover the deficit with operational grant funding which would otherwise be used for staffing and learning resources. Byron suggested sending out the donation requests earlier and asking for 50% donations in advance. It was noted that going forward, if a certain level of donations are not collected, school camps may have to be cancelled.

Motion: That the Kawakawa community building camp at Kaitoke is approved to proceed.

Moved by Anna; Seconded by Lillian; All in favour motion carried.

Waitangi Trip for Year 12s in 2025

It was noted that the trip will cost $855 per student and the amount must be paid in advance before the trip or students are unable to attend.

The trip has been scheduled for February 2024 to coincide with Waitangi Day celebrations based on 12 students. The flight tickets have been booked so if not all 12 students attend, others will be welcome to attend, including staff.

Question regarding what that might look like at Waitangi? Ava noted that teachers and ākonga will walk to Waitangi park from their accommodation. Teachers will monitor swimming and no vaping/smoking is allowed. If students are required to be sent home, Tanya will discuss with Ava how serious the issue is. Tanya is the teacher in charge and other staff will be confirmed soon. The proper adult to student ratio will be maintained. Students will be camping at the Waitangi Holiday Park in a cabin and tents. Gear will be checked before they leave for the trip.

Motion: That the Waitangi trip for Year 12s in 2025 is approved to proceed.

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

SENCO Report

Juliette acknowledged the seven Teacher Aides for their mahi and flexibility to work at Wā Ora. These adults are working with the most challenging students (behaviour) or students who have medical needs.

The formal diagnosis sheet contains data between 2021 to 2024. 45% of school students have received a formal diagnosis and the number continues to grow. A lot of children enrolling in the Area School this year have high needs.

30% of students in Primary have additional needs and the corresponding number at the High School is 47%. We are grateful that Paula has been supporting ākonga with extra needs in the High School.

Juliette noted that a formal diagnosis is required for her to apply for SAC. Juliette starts an IEP application for the 6-9s and 9-12s, so there is a good paper trail to identify those students with higher needs. The applications are either approved or require further evidence e.g. comprehension listening skills or hand writing samples etc. This year, the MoE has trialled a notification process whereby Juliette can lodge the students requiring additional support on the NZQA website and have it approved online. There are still applications that are declined, but the majority of ākonga are accepted. In 2025, Juliette will have to return to the formal gateway application process for the current Year 11s. For any new Year 11s who are already in the system, they will be rolled over automatically year on year and benefit from the extra support. Juliette is pleased about the notification system and the formal comprehensive application through gateway is still available.

There has been a move towards digital examination for external exams. A digital system called Poli highlights and reads text to students via headphones. Ākonga are able to use a device to type in the writing for the exams. Ava was advised by Taita College that they will be moving to digital exams next year. They have hundreds of chrome books and are happy to lend them to our students to use during exams. There is no additional help from the MoE with increased diagnoses. It is very difficult to get funding from the Ministry and the approved funding is minimal.

SPEC is a programme Juliette has been trialling this year. It is an NZQA equivalent qualification containing 11 modules for thousands of hours. Students on this programme learn general life skills over 3 years. Juliette has been working with one student on this programme with all sorts of activities e.g. going online to purchase within a budget; caring for animals; keeping safe at home; looking for other people who have similar disabilities etc. At the end of the programme, ākonga receive NZ qualification level 1 and they can opt to go to Wel Tech for Level 2. The programme requires a one on one teacher's report. Ava noted that not every student can get NCEA levels and other pathways will have to be sought for those students.

Juliette acknowledged all the reading mums for assisting the students with their reading. The progress and consistency that the students have received from the reading mums is amazing.

Rani will be funded by the Board to provide group music therapy with ākonga in 2025.

Draft 2025 BoT Budget

The Board of Trustees will require $500k Trust donations in 2025 to cover extra staffing and Tania's salary. From previous experiences, less Trust donations will be requested at the end of the year compared to the budget. The BoT cash flow looks healthy. The teachers will receive more non-contact hours which are funded by the MoE with no financial impacts to the school.

Byron noted the financial sub-committee has reviewed the BoT draft budget. He also reminded members that the school Trust funds the BoT and the Council for staffing, Montessori training and new building projects. It is forecasted that the Trust will have $1m in the bank account by the end of 2025 with the money being used for future building projects and to cover extra staffing in the BoT.

Motion: That the draft 2025 BoT budget be accepted.

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

BoT Financials

Hayley presented the BoT financials.

The Board will request $300k donations from the Trust to cover extra staffing. The unfavourable variance for the repair and maintenance spending was for the exterior painting in January which was budgeted for 2024. There have been quite a few minor maintenance jobs across the school and the budget will be increased for 2025. FTTE will be balanced out in early 2025.

Ava updated the Board regarding the Trust donation collected. Generally speaking, unpaid donations are for the same whānau with children in different classes or split families. There will be more discussions regarding attendance dues in 2025.

Motion: That the November 2024 Board financial report be accepted.

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

Administration

Correspondence

The correspondence was noted.

The Board dinner is scheduled for 9th December at 6:30 pm at K Sing restaurant.

The meeting closed at 10:07 pm.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday 17 February 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 present feedback and results of the Māori whānau and ākonga surveys at the whānau hui at the beginning of 2025	Ava	The first whānau hui in 2025
Hayley to send out a calendar invite to all Board members for the Board dinner	Hayley	By the end of November

2024 Council/BOT Meetings

7.00pm at Wā Ora Montessori School – Tawari Classroom

January – No meeting
Monday 19th February 2024 (Week 4, Term 1)
Monday 18th March 2024 (Week 8, Term 1)
April – PD Session - TBC
Monday 20th May 2024 (Week 4, Term 2)
Monday 17th June 2024 (Week 8, Term 2)
July – PD Session – TBC
Monday 19th August 2024 (Week 5, Term 3)
Monday 16th September 2024 (Week 9, Term 3)
Monday 21st October 2024 (Week 2, Term 4)
Monday 18th November 2024 (Week 6, Term 4)