

THORNDON SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING – 28 APRIL 2015 AT 6.00 PM IN THE STAFFROOM

Present: Alistair du Chatenier (Principal), James Turner (Chairperson), Andrew Pennell (Staff Representative), Andrew Hickey, Darren Stafford, Simina Toimata, Victoria Parsons, Davina Parangi-Brown (Deputy Principal), Nicola Ngawati, Jo Cribb

Apologies: Piripi Evans

The meeting started with a karakia. James welcomed everyone and there were introductions for the benefit of Nicola Ngawati who along with Piripi Evans have been co-opted onto the Board as whanau representatives.

Resolution: *“Both Nicola Ngawati and Piripi Evans will share the role of being a co-opted member of the Board of Trustees as a Maori/whanau representative.”*

Moved: Darren Stafford
Seconded: Andrew Hickey

Declaration of Conflict of Interest:

James Turner – consultancy work with tertiary education providers.

Victoria Parsons – has recently taken up a contract with the Ministry of Education but the work does not involve policies which impact on primary schools, nor school funding.

6.10 pm Jo Cribb arrived.

James advised that he and Victoria met with Anna Kominik. She has been invited to attend tonight's Board meeting and was expected to arrive shortly.

Principal's Report:

- Taken as read.
- Alistair reported that there are two Board meetings scheduled for this term.
- He asked the Board's view about whether - “Good to Great”, the action plan that stemmed from our ERO review, needed reviewing. The short answer was, yes. Jo and Alistair will start work on this on Wednesday, 6 May, 12.00-1.00 pm, will look at the actions, the evaluation (traffic lights are a good start but we also need to look e.g. at whether the actions are still appropriate), and how to communicate to parents.
- Roll = 300. It was interesting to note that 26 children had arrived from various overseas countries. Quite a few specifically from India. There was a discussion on ESOL students. It was reiterated that our job is to do all we can to help all our students achieve their potential. It is important to be seen to be adding value to the achievements of our ESOL students, even if in some cases their absolute achievements (eg. at reading and writing) may not be as high as other students initially. The organisation of the school into four syndicates works well. The Year 5/6 cohort is a large group however. Traditionally we lose a few students at the end of Year 6 as they choose to attend other intermediate schools. Held a ballot for three Year 1 students to start in the second new entrant class later in the year. An advertisement has been placed to appoint a new entrant teacher for this class. Alistair spoke about the roll projection paper. Jo wanted to know whether we can control the number of in-zone students we can take eg. by reducing the

- size of the zone and removing from the zone, all areas that are also zoned for other schools (eg. Wadestown, which in fact is the only shared zone area.). Alistair felt he had control of the situation. The Board agreed to keep an eye on the roll situation.
- Complaints – with regards to the complaints about a particular teacher’s teaching style, the situation has been discussed with the teacher concerned and the situation seems to have improved.
 - Accidents – due to the severity of a recent accident where a child fell out of a tree, constraints have been placed on trees that can be climbed where there is a risk of severe injury. The Board was grateful that serious issues have been reported outside of meetings and they hope that this will be continued.
 - Goal Setting Meetings – attendance of meetings was lower than Alistair had hoped. A possible reason behind this for Room 5 could be due to a change of teacher. Nicola reported that there was a discussion about this at the last Maori hui and the consensus was that they found the Goal Setting meetings and 3 Way Conferences less than satisfactory. It was explained that these meetings were aimed to achieve the following: students managing their learning and engaging; and students taking ownership of their learning. After further discussion Davina would look into some further staff development on Goal Setting meetings and Three Way Conferences so that there was a common understanding of the process, expectations and outcomes. This would also be followed up at the next parent forum which would be on Wednesday, 3 June from 6.00-7.30 pm so that parents would be able to find out the theory and intention of the process and understand their role in it. Light refreshments would be included and childcare provided through our After School Care service. The forum would consist of Alistair and Davina talking about the theory of our reporting processes. Parents would be able to have their say, share their stories and experiences. It would also be good to see as many teachers as possible attend.
 - Student Attendance – this data comes out of our student management system and shows that our Pasifika community have had slightly lower attendance rates in Term 1. Alistair wasn’t sure how this compared to other schools. He will continue to keep an eye on it and if patterns appear he will delve into it further.
 - Standardised Testing Results from February 2015 – Target 4 “By the end of 2015, more than 35% of all students will be achieving ‘above’ the appropriate National Standard in Maths. (31.9% in 2014.) (The mechanism we have selected to implement this goal is to identify students who are achieving at a high level in their maths PAT tests (stanine 8 or 9), but who have not achieved a commensurate strategy level (Stage 5 or higher for Year 4, Stage 6 or higher at Year 6, Stage 7 or higher for Year 8). There was concern about the possibility that some children are at stanine 8 or 9 but they may not be working at an appropriately stretching strategy level because there may not be mechanisms to identify exactly where they are if they are a few years ahead of the norm for their age. Alistair and the teaching staff gave some reassurance that this is unlikely and that teachers have a range of tools and resources at their disposal; nevertheless it is important that the school is seen to be responding appropriately to the needs of very high-achieving students. James will write a piece about this target for the newsletter. The other concern over the targets came from the Maori whanau. Nicola reported that at the last whanau hui no one supported Target 2. “By the end of 2015, more than 75% of Maori and Pasifika students will have achieved the appropriate National

- Standard in Maths. (Maori 70% and Pasifika 70.8% in 2014.) The general consensus was that Maori whanau want the same Standards as everyone else. They couldn't understand the differentiated target. It was decided to move the aspirational goal to 85%. Alistair will amend our Charter and resubmit it to the Ministry of Education.
- TIMMS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) – the report arrived today showing the results of the study. It was pleasing to see that New Zealand performed really well in the science component.
 - Te Reo – Davina has found a replacement for Whaea Kahu. His name is Hemi and he will be coming into school later this week. He currently works at several different schools, has a good reputation and approximately 19 years experience.
 - SNUP (School Network Upgrade) – We were selected in 2012 for this upgrade where the Ministry of Education will pay 80% and we contribute 20%. Around the same time, the rebuild came up, so we held off. Now the SNUP contract is due to be closed off. There is minimal cabling involved and the wifi access points will be upgraded. The cabling portion will come out of our 5YA, the Board will have to fund the remainder of the work. This conversation led to discussion about the rebuild, and Alistair explained that the last action on this was when Callum McKenzie (Architect) presented the design concept in Christchurch. The concept was fine but the Ministry of Education's brief, had issues. We have been promised deadlines but nothing has been delivered. Andrew Hickey suggested we write to the Minister of Education. Alistair, Andrew Hickey and Darren will draft a letter together. The Board's preference is to go back to a full rebuild. We have been in limbo for two years. We require certainty in terms of dates. After further discussion the following plan of action is to take place. A letter to Peter Hughes, Secretary for Education to be posted out by next week with the intention of giving him three weeks for reply before writing to the Minister of Education, as the next step. Conversation then turned back to the SNUP where Alistair advised that contractors have been in to tender for the work. Our contribution to the cabling cost should be around \$8,000-\$9,000.

Resolution: *“The Board gives Alistair the authority to in principle, approve a tender to complete the SNUP.”*

*Moved: James Turner
Seconded: Victoria Parsons*

- Server capacity – our current server is running out of capacity and we have been advised to replace it. After looking at the numbers, Darren pointed out that it would certainly be more cost efficient to purchase the unit outright rather than lease a unit as this would cost more over the proposed 36 month term.

Resolution: *“The Board approves the purchase of a new server as outlined in the specifications of the quote supplied by Aiscorp. The unit is to be purchased through a one-off payment.”*

*Moved: James Turner
Seconded: Andrew Hickey*

Fundraising/Fair: Alistair explained that it would be beneficial to have more interaction between the Fair Committee and the Board. It was decided that Victoria would represent

the Board at the next fair meeting, with future Board involvement being determined according to people's availability. The Fair Committee have brought up the subject of sponsorship and we need to decide what constitutes acceptable sponsorship. Andrew Hickey brought up having a Quiz Night this term. A date was agreed for the Quiz Night of Friday, 26 June. Andrew Hickey will organise this, and he will speak with Aaron Bird, a parent at the school, for his help as Quiz Master.

Teacher Exit Interviews: One interview is complete, one more interview set up for Wednesday. Will report back to the Board before the next meeting so it can be discussed at the 23 June meeting.

James wanted to timetable for the next meeting a discussion on engagement with Ian Fitzgerald on Board effectiveness.

Finance:

Taken as read. The 2015 draft budget that was tabled at the last meeting was accepted.

Resolution: *"The Board approves expenditure year-to-date as noted in the finance report."*

Moved: Alistair du Chatenier

Seconded: James Turner

Action Points Reviewed:

- Simina will contact the Year 9 Dean at Wellington Girls College.
- Wellington City Council have been in contact with Alistair.
- James has been in contact with Ian Fitzgerald.
- Target groups have been updated.
- Davina and Victoria have been in contact regarding Special Needs.
- Reporting on financial status to wider community has been done.
- Annual Plan revisions completed.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the 17 February 2015 meeting were accepted as being a true and accurate record.

Moved: Alistair du Chatenier

Seconded: James Turner

Meeting Closed at: 8.20 pm

Date for Next Meeting: 23 June 2015

Signed: _____

James Turner
Chairperson

Date: _____

Action Points:

- Simina will contact the Year 9 Dean at Wellington Girls College.
- Jo and Alistair will meet about the “Good to Great” action plan.
- Parent forum on Goal Setting, 3 Way Conferences reporting scheduled for Wednesday 3 June.
- James to write a piece for the newsletter on Target 4.
- Darren, Alistair and Andrew Hickey draft letter to Peter Hughes.
- Quiz Night scheduled for Friday, 26 June.
- Proposal from Alistair on how to spend \$20,000 will be carried forward.