

**THORNDON SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING – 5 AUGUST 2014 AT 6.00 PM IN THE STAFFROOM**

**Present:** Alistair du Chatenier (Principal), James Turner (Chairperson), Jo Cribb, Andrew Hickey, Darren Stafford, Simina Toimata, Victoria Parsons, Andrew Pennell (Staff Rep)

The meeting started with a karakia.

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest:**

James Turner – consultancy work with tertiary education providers.

**Principal's Report:**

- Taken as read.
- Roll = 300, this includes two short term international students.
- Mid Year Reports were distributed at the end of Term 2. Comments from parents on the removal of the dials included: some parents thought the dials gave greater precision.
- Complaints – there was one complaint at the end of last term from the parents of a girl in Room 7. There was an incident at after school care where inappropriate sexualised language was used. Alistair spoke to all parents concerned.

*6.09 pm – Victoria Parsons arrived.*

- Community – Pasifika meeting held in July. Simina reported that the focus of the meeting is to get parents more involved. They will be organising an event eg. Sports. More parents attended this meeting, there was a turnout of seven compared to the three who turned up to the previous meeting. Alistair commented that it was Cook Islands Language Week and a parent, Tapaeru Herrmann, was working with a group of students. They will perform at assembly on Thursday. Michel Tuffery, another parent, has also been involved. Alistair mentioned that he attended the “Carrying the Tapa Conference” during the school holidays. The emphasis was on getting to know your Pasifika students better. He has already begun some work on this. There will be an Asian Community meeting on 21 August. Alistair asked if anyone from the Board wanted to attend. Darren notified the meeting that he would be attending. Alistair reported that the Asian community survey was not well subscribed. Toa has still to organise a meeting with Ben Ngaia from the Port Nicholson Trust to continue exploring our relationship with Mana Whenua.
- Property – Carol Weston is due to arrive at 6.30 pm to report on the hall strengthening. Alistair updated everyone on the rebuild. A new master plan is in the pipeline, the architects have met Ministry of Education staff and now they are working on further costings. Kevin Curran from the Ministry of Education Property Division has been in contact with Alistair with regard to a proposed land swap with the City Council. In exchange for a turning point at the end of Turnbull Street, we will be given the road area between the school and the Kimi Ora field.

- Finance – Still working on the application for a Credit Card/Debit Card. ASB require a resolution from the Board as to the limit of the card. This will be discussed further during the Finance Report.
- Personnel – Anne Munro was appointed as a Year 1 classroom teacher, she started this position at the beginning of this term. There are seven children in the class.

*6.16 pm – James Turner arrived.*

- Principal Appraisal – As part of Alistair’s appraisal, he will be surveying teaching staff. Jo asked whether he required any Board input. He replied that was not a requirement at this stage.
- Professional Development – Alistair is participating in a CORE course on MLE (Modern Learning Environments). Davina is currently participating in a CORE course on MLP (Modern Learning Practice).

### **Maths Assessment:**

Two papers were presented, one was Alistair’s commentary, and the second was data. Overall results of AsTTle mid year testing were generally good. Years 4, 5 and 7 are tracking well. Year 6 holding its own. The Year 8’s are currently of concern. Even so, they are still performing at a level that equates to the AsTTle norms for medium to high decile schools. The fact that boys out-performed girls for all cohorts is of concern. We are currently targeting the achievement of Maori students in maths. There is a maths review currently being run. We plan to organise someone of expertise to come in and observe teaching practices.

*6.25 pm – Simina Toimata left.*

It is thought that having an outside eye on our practice would be useful. Some of the Board members thought it could be a good idea to have Davina Parangi-Brown and Junior Togia, who are both currently heading the maths area, to visit and observe some other schools.

*6.30 pm – Carol Weston arrived.*

The Board asked the question whether all teachers feel confident in teaching maths. The Year 7 cohort seem to be doing well. They are well ahead as a year group and have been for some years. A question was raised about the impact on the aggregate results of students who are new to the school (have transferred in from other schools) and what their ability in maths is. Are they coming in already at a lower level than expected? Alistair mentioned that the 2013 aggregate data had just come in. He thinks that we are more rigorous than other schools in our assessment. James will write a paragraph for the newsletter about the maths assessment analysis.

### **Hall Strengthening:**

Carol started by mentioning her liaison with the Emergency Management Office with regard to Civil Defence. She reminded the Board that our school is a Civil Defence Area. She provided the Board with a draft report on the hall strengthening and went through it. Basically, a few years ago the school had a report done by Aurecon who said the structure was at 30% of code. We then had a structural engineer look at the building and he

assessed it at 34%. Since the costings were done, it is important to note that the price of steel has gone up so the \$99,000 quoted for this item (out of the total quote of \$140,000) in the draft costings will increase. But, there are other parts of the quote that should come down in price, eg. the preliminary and general/margin. Also, the money allocated as contingency may or may not be needed. Hawkins will do the building consent as well as project manage the job so this should not be a separate costing. Carol will get updated costings. She explained that the IL3 code category refers to a building that houses more than 250 people. This would be the correct code for the hall, which on occasions (though rarely) caters for this many people. It means that it would bring the building up to 67% which is a very good number to aim for. But in effect, the Board can be confident that after strengthening has been completed, it will be at 86% or the equivalent of IL2 because, most of the time, there will be less than 250 people occupying the building at any one time. The work is scheduled to be done in January 2015.

**Resolution:** *“The Board agrees, in principle, for Carol Weston to negotiate the price of the hall strengthening project with Hawkins, up to the value of \$150,000.”*

*Moved: James Turner*

*Seconded: Jo Cribb*

**Property:**

Alistair reported on the rebuild. We are entitled to 13 classrooms and a separate hall area (eg. as well as the existing school hall), which is the equivalent of 2.5 classrooms, eg. it could be used as a music room, a multipurpose room, and an extension to the library. There needs to be an open forum on the rebuild. It would need to be kept separate from the MLE open forum. There was discussion about a visit to Amesbury School in Churton Park where some Board members spoke to the Principal, Lesley Murrhiy. It was suggested that she be invited to our open forum as part of a panel of experts on MLE. It would also be good if she was able to bring one of her Board members who is also a parent of one or more children at the school. Alistair has had contact with someone from the Ministry of Education who is an architect by trade, he is sure he would be more than happy to come along as a panel member to discuss acoustics, etc (which is likely to be a concern of some parents given assumptions about disruptive noise levels in open plan areas). Alistair will contact Lesley and organise a suitable date for this open forum. It is anticipated the forum will be this term. Generally the teaching staff are on board with the concept of MLE, but they need more information. Older staff members are likely to think of MLE as a better version of the team teaching environment they would have been involved with many years ago. Alistair mentioned Rob Giller is heading MLE at the Ministry of Education.

**Fair:**

Carol mentioned that the fair is coming along nicely. There will be 65 new stallholders this year as several stallholders have chosen not to reapply for their spots this year. This should bring a new variety of stalls to the fair this year.

*7.30 pm – Carol Weston left.*

**Finance:**

Taken as read. Darren explained that the bottom line number in the forecast is without the fair money of \$45,000 and without the grant from the City Council. He wanted to

flag that the expenditure budgets showed some individual budgets up, others down, but overall the picture is positive and in-line with expectations – the principle the Board wished to adopt was that Alistair could handle spending decisions (up to his delegated authority, and did not need to ask approval from the Board for these if it means overspending a particular budget line, provided the overall expenditure remained within budget). There was a discussion on how much the credit card limit should be and who it should be delegated to. It was finally decided that the limit should be set at \$1,500. Lastly, Darren mentioned potentially applying for a grant from the Lotteries Commission, with the Board’s approval.

**Resolution:** *“The Board approves that a credit card for school expenditure should be available to the limit of \$1,500.00 (one thousand, five hundred dollars only), and it should be in the name of Alistair du Chatenier.”*

*Moved: James Turner  
Seconded: Darren Stafford*

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

*Moved: Alistair du Chatenier  
Seconded: Andrew Pennell*

**Resolution:** *“The Board approves any application for funding through the Lotteries Commission that Darren Stafford deems we may be eligible for.”*

*Moved: Andrew Hickey  
Seconded: Alistair du Chatenier*

### **Land Swap:**

Further to Alistair’s report on property, below is the resolution for the land swap.

**Resolution:** *“The Thorndon School Board of Trustees give their approval for the Ministry of Education to negotiate a swap of land with the Wellington City Council. We approve Thorndon School providing land for a turning space at the end of Turnbull Street in exchange for the land at the end of Turnbull Street that is currently enclosed by a boom across the road, i.e. the area of Turnbull Street north of 17 Turnbull Street.”*

*Moved: James Turner  
Seconded: Andrew Hickey*

### **Work Plan:**

Cyclical charter review. We will need to look at a different section at each meeting. Alistair was asked to provide a list of all the policy reviews at the end of his Principal’s Report for each Board meeting, so they can be ticked off if compliant. At some stage we will need to review the whole charter.

### **Open Forum:**

James thanked Alistair for his excellent handling and presenting at the first open forum. He thought there was a good turnout of parents. The feedback received from parents did not include anything concerning about bullying. It was great that parents shared their positive experiences. This shows that the forum was definitely worthwhile.

**Good to Great Action Plan:**

The Board felt that this response to the ERO Report needed reformatting when it is presented to the parent and wider community. Needed to reference key points from ERO and map them back. They thought that the document could be structured better and then presented to parents so that it has the most reassuring impact for them.

**Other Matters Arising:**

The newsletter is due to go out on Thursday. Some parents have requested notes from the Open Forum. Victoria was happy to condense these notes and have them available to share with the parent community.

Alistair mentioned that Jennifer Muth, Senior Advisor with the Ministry of Education contacted him and came in to see him. Towards the end of the meeting she admitted that the reason for her visit was because she had heard we'd had an open forum about our ERO Review. She was concerned that there were issues with our review until Alistair explained the reasoning behind these forums.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the 17 June 2014 meeting were accepted as being a true and accurate record.

*Moved: James Turner  
Seconded: Victoria Parsons*

**Meeting Closed at: 8.07 pm**

**Date for Next Meeting: 16 September 2014**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**James Turner**  
**Chairperson**

**Action Points:**

- Toa to organise a meeting with Ben Ngaia from the Port Nicholson Trust to continue exploring our relationship with Mana Whenua.
- Circulate minutes and have them verified via email so progress can be made on the land swap, and ASB credit card facility.
- James to write a piece for the newsletter.
- Alistair to organise date for open forum on MLE, and invite expert panel to attend.
- Alistair to add list of policy reviews at the end of his Board Report.
- Victoria to compact notes from open forum for publication to parents.