

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLIMMERTON SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
held on 7pm, Thursday 29 February 2024

PRESENT:

Chris Steffensen, Brendon Cross, Fraser Clark, Simon Peace, Emma Smith, Pete Barton, Aleida van Son and Rebecca Smith.

APOLOGIES:

Hamish Mexted, Leilani Ah Kuoi

ADMINISTRATION

Brendon opened the meeting with a Ruruku and Chris welcomed everyone including a member of the public who was in attendance for the duration of the meeting excluding the In Committee portion.

Chris called for nominations for the role of Presiding Member for 2024. Simon re-confirmed his comment from the end of last year that he was happy to continue in the roll if no other members wished to step into the position. There were no other nominations.

It was moved (Emma, Pete) that Simon Pearce be appointed as board chair/presiding member for 2024.

CARRIED

Principal's General Update

Taken as read.

1 Administration

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting.

It was moved (Simon/Emma) that the minutes of the meeting held Thursday 30 November 2023 be confirmed, as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

It was moved (Simon/Chris) that the minutes of the In-Committee meeting held Thursday 30 November 23 be confirmed, as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

1.2 Board Correspondence

1.2.1 Nil

1.3 Tumauki Growth

1.3.1 Taken as read.

1.3.2 Keith Lambert, Chris's Principal Advisor to date, has retired and Celeste Hastings has stepped in as his replacement. Chris has met with Celest three times already this year and has found her expertise, engagement and network of supporting contacts excellent.

1.3.3 Chris attended the NKPA conference last week the focus of which was strategic planning within the Kāhui Ako cluster of schools - looking at the needs of students and improving teacher pedagogy. Chris commented that every school is dealing with similar issues across these areas.

- 1.3.4 Simon congratulated Chris on what he has included in his professional growth cycle document for the coming year, highlighting the inclusion of coaching of leaders within the school and personal development around communication styles as excellent areas for growth that will be beneficial for Chris but also the wider school.
- 1.3.5 Chris has reflected on his Principal journey to date what has worked, what mistakes have been made and the lesson learnt. Chris commented that with the growth of his relationships with staff and the community he is feeling more settled in his role. The board added to this by pointing out the positive interactions and engagement with both groups throughout the development of the strategic plan.

1.4 Property

- 1.4.1 Taken as read.
- 1.4.2 Chris summarised the plan, as discussed last year, for turfing the grassed areas between the pool and the staffroom and updated the board on the information to hand from the preferred supplier Think Truf following questions raised at the last meeting.
- 1.4.3 The secondary grass space outside the dental clinic was also considered for turf but after further consideration the idea of concreting this space was presented as a more suitable and cost-effective solution. It is proposed that this space will have a basketball hoop, suitable for the younger students, and will be painted to add further vibrance to the play space.
- 1.4.4 Mindful of maximising outdoor space for students now, and into the future as student numbers grow, the board were happy to proceed with the turf project on the basis that the quote is maintained. It is anticipated that the turf project will start in the April holidays and take 3-4 weeks to complete.

1.5 Admin / Policies / Governance

- 1.5.1 The board reviewed its Work Plan for 2024 - an annual agenda of activities that board members can start to prepare for including the upcoming Staff Survey which has been scheduled for May, ideally at the start of Term 2 while staff are in a good position to respond. A survey with a similar format to the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) staff survey will be used this year, and the coming years, to be able to see trends across the data.
- 1.5.2 The following School Docs policies are due for review in Term 1:
 - Board Responsibility - will be reviewed by Simon
 - Te Tiriti o Waitangi - will be reviewed by Fraser
 - Documentation and Self-Review Policy - will be reviewed by Aleida
- 1.5.3 The board reviewed the yearly board assurances and Assurance Statements for Term 1. A 2024 Board Assurance Statements (BAS) table of verification was accepted for use. Board members were asked to select assurances that interested them to action on the boards behalf.
- 1.5.4 As part of the BAS discussion the board raised emergency management - specifically asking if current plans are fit for purpose, if procedures are well known across staff and, if Chris is confident that the school is prepared if disaster struck. Chris commented that in addition to the revision and update of the emergency response plan last year further work is being completed in this area by Jo to simplify the messaging so that staff and students are well versed in emergency procedures. Chris is not ruling out a reunification drill to test and improve our current systems. It was also discussed that the school is a well known community hub and that a plan should be in place should a disaster occur during school

hours. It was recommended that Chris reach out to David Morahan, a school parent and lead for the community hub response to discuss the implications of if this were to happen.

1.5.5 Fraser updated the board on two outstanding assurances from term 4 last year.

- **Length of School Year** - Fraser was able to assure the board that the school had been open for the statutory number of half-days and hours per day for the current year (2023) and that the dates and number of half-days for instruction for the next year (2024) are reported.
- **Monitoring and Auditing School Bus** - Following an initial review of current policy documents, Fraser reached out to School Docs who confirmed that we should have had different policies and review requirements loaded into our system that reflect that our school bus service is provided by the Ministry. The review that was in our schedule was for a school that provided its own bus. The correct policy has now been loaded into School Docs and that specific review is no longer required. Other policy reviews related to the bus will come up in time that will be related to student behaviour on the bus.

1.5.6 It was recommended that board delegations and sub committees that were established following the appointment of the current board would continue for 2024. Emma to find and share a copy of the sub committee descriptions and delegations for the board to review.

- HR Support - Emma
- Finance Committee - Simon & Fraser
- Health & Safety Committee - Pete & Leilani
- Property Support - Aledia

The board decided to re-visit the decision on the appointment of a deputy presiding member for the next meeting given that the incumbent Hamish was not in attendance.

Simon asked board members to disclose any new conflicts of interest so that they could be recorded on the register.

1.5.7 **Code of Conduct (CoC)**. The board were provided with a copy of the current CoC along with the MoE CoC guidance. The board are to review both documents and suggest any changes via email to the group so a final CoC for 2024 can be signed by all members at the next meeting.

1.5.8 **New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) Events**. Simon encouraged all board members to attend at least one NZSTA event this year either in person, online or via one of the many self-directed course options.

1.5.9 **NZEI Meeting**. NZEI haven given notice to all schools across the country of Union Meetings from 18 March to 5 April. Meeting times are 11.30am - 12.30pm or 1.30 - 2.30pm, plus and ½ hr either side for transport.

- It was unclear if the board could determine which meeting teachers attend but their preferred option, for the least amount of disruption to whanau and staff, is for teachers to attend an afternoon meeting, which will mean school would close for instruction at 1:00pm.
- A resolution by email will be required to confirm that the school will be closed for instruction for the afternoon once the meeting date/time has been confirmed.

1.6 Finance

1.6.1 Taken as read.

1.7 Health & Safety

- 1.7.1 Taken as read.
- 1.7.2 Chris recognised the office staff for their collective efforts following the recent medical incident at school. He commented that the office staff took the right actions at the right time for the right reasons, remained calm throughout, worked very well in unison and provided excellent care and follow up to the student and their family.
- 1.7.3 In light of the above incident, and in consideration of the number of people of all ages that use the school and its facilities on a regular basis, Chris and Pete will work on a proposal for a funded defibrillator for the school.
- 1.7.4 Chris confirmed that staff first aid training is ongoing with rolling certification so we don't have all staff expiring at once. Emma mentioned a Mental Health First Aid programme that she has become aware of and wondered if this could be a useful tool for school, Chris requested more information about this.
- 1.7.5 Following on from the recent Cyber Safety Presentation Chris has been approached by members of the school community about also giving presentations, one parent who works for Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMS) is in a position to do this free of charge in Term 2.

In Committee

8.06pm - The Board resolved that the public be excluded, to protect the privacy of individuals concerned (moved by the Chair).

8.38pm - The Board resumed meeting publicly.

2 Discussion / Decisions Required

2.1 Plimmerton School - Weaving our Narrative

- 2.1.1 Weaving the Narrative - The board congratulated Chris on this piece of work.
- 2.1.2 Patricia Grace has offered her time to support Chris with the final collaboration of the new logo and its key elements. This is a fully considered idea with the full backing of Hongoeka and Ngāti Toa.
- 2.1.3 The new school mascot 'Ray' speaks on everyone's behalf (it's not my way, or your way, it's Ray's way). Ray represents links to our environment and the history of the area, Ray embodies kaitiaki, he is the school identify and lives and breathes the school values.
- 2.1.4 Barbara Smith, current logo's original designer, was invited in to share her thoughts on the new logo. Barbara was very supportive of the new direction and felt a renewed connection to the school through this consultation. Barbara is keen to support the school in creative ways to help bring Ray and elements of the new logo to life.
- 2.1.5 There has been a soft launch of the values, the logo and Ray within school, with more to come as the new identity is shared with the wider school community through branding, merchandise and a re-designed website.

2.2 2024 Budget & CAPEX Plan

- 2.2.1 The board finance committee presented the 2024 Budget. This year's budget is a breakeven budget which means variances and inflation increases will need to be closely monitored, however, the school is in a good position to absorb any minor variances. All in all the board are happy with the final draft operating budget for 2024 and will look to approve the final version at its next meeting.
- 2.2.2 Provision has been made within the 2024 CAPEX plan to revive the front office, that has become tired and uninviting, and the old Dental Clinic which houses the school laundry

facilities, PTA storage and Caroline's musical instruction. The board approved the 2024 CAPEX plan in principle, with closer analysis of these proposed projects once confirmed costs have come in.

- 2.2.3 The addition of grounds painting has been added to the budget since the issuing of the board report. The state of the current line marking around the school is dire. The cost for re-painting these and adding new elements that are vibrant, promote play and can be integrated into learning opportunities outside the classroom has been put into the 2024 budget. The school will review what has and hasn't work at other schools in the areas and will also seek ideas from our students as to what they might like to see illustrated in their playground.
- 2.2.4 The idea of renewable energy was raised for the school. The board are happy to look at this but not at the expense of other initiatives given the heavy capital outlay that would be required.

2.3 2024 Donations Letter

- 2.3.1 The board discussed the 2024 donations letter, which has been drafted to include and explain this year's increased donation amount and collection process. The board were happy with the letter but requested some minor changes be made to the wording to clarify a couple of points. It was decided that the final draft letter will be sent to Emma and Simon for final approval before being sent out to school whanau at the end of next week.

3 Current Strategic Plan / NELPS / Annual Goals

3.1 Update of action taken to date

- 3.1.1 Taken as read.
- 3.1.2 The final 2024/2025 Strategic Plan is ready to be sent to the Ministry for the 1st March 2024 deadline, with the Strategic Plan Implementation Plan to follow on 31st March 2024.
- 3.1.3 There was, however, one missing element the whakataukī. Hamish is preparing a new whakataukī that unifies everything and weaves through the strategic plan. Chris will review the final version with Patricia Grace at their planned meeting on Tuesday. Chris had already secured an extension with the Ministry while this important step is completed.
- 3.1.4 The Strategic Plan (without the Implementation Plan) will be sent out to the school community via Hero along with the board's letter, prepared by Hamish late last year, which explains the process the board went through for the Strategic Plan development. A copy of the Strategic Plan will also be uploaded to the website.

3.2 Update on development of Local Curriculum

- 3.2.1 Chris has been working with staff to unpack what the Strategic Plan looks like in practice across the syndicates/year groups.
- 3.2.2 Behind the scenes, in response to the Strategic Plan and to support the local curriculum, teaching staff undertook an exercise to understand what teaching looks like at our school, how they can improve the art and practice of teaching (pedagogy) and engage in deliberate acts of teaching. From this exercise Plimmerton PROC (Purpose, Relevance, Ownership and Connections) emerged. This was further refined, Connections became whakawhanaungatanga, which is about the establishment of relationships, relating well to others and forming partnerships, whakawhanaungatanga in turn became Plus. Plimmerton PRO+ was established.
- 3.2.3 The first area of focus for PRO+ (deliberate acts of teaching) is writing. Writing had the lowest level of achievement data so becomes our priority.

3.2.4 Initial actions are to ensure that students understand the reasons for writing (i.e. to persuade, inform or entertain) and to ensure that the school is providing a consistent approach to writing across the syndicates. The introduction of the Communication Whānau, what that looks like in practice for a Yr1 student vs a Yr8 student, how it has been implemented, and the response from students and feedback from teachers will be reported back to the board in Term 2.

4 Review

4.1 Agenda items for next meeting

- 4.1.1 Review exit interview process - not discussed at February meeting
- 4.1.2 Religious Education policy review to be completed with comments circulated to the board before the end of the year - not discussed at February meeting
- 4.1.3 2024 Budget Approval
- 4.1.4 2024 CAPEX Plan - review of pricing/quotes for refurbishment projects
- 4.1.5 Board Assurance Statements
- 4.1.6 Board Code of Conduct
- 4.1.7 Cell phone Policy / 100 Days

4.2 Preparation (action points) for next meeting, or prior to.

- 4.2.1 (school) Finalise Budget & CAPEX Plan
- 4.2.2 (board) Code of Conduct - Board to review and approve current or amended version
- 4.2.3 (school) Staff Survey for Term 1 - Draft Survey Plan and Questions
- 4.2.4 (school) Emergency Planning / Community Hub - Meeting with community leaders
- 4.2.5 (board) Emma to forward links for Mental Health First Aid programmes
- 4.2.6 (board) Pete to look at options for a funded defibrillator

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

Meeting Dates for 2024

- Term 1, week 10: 4 April
- Term 2, week 3: 16 May
- Term 2, week 8: 20 June
- Term 3, week 3: 8 August
- Term 3, week 8: 12 September
- Term 4, week 3: 31 October
- Term 4, week 8: 5 December