

Board Update: Headlines from May 2023 Meeting

A full copy of the minutes of this meeting are available from the Main Office.

This was our 3rd meeting for the new school year and having had a meeting break over April (due to school Holidays) we had a full agenda. A bit like our first meeting of the year we had on top of the usual items, some meaty reports from a few departments to get through as well as some Policies and Procedures that needed reviewing. We had in attendance all the SLT as well as Toby Burge arriving at the appropriate time to present his report.

This meeting was the first in my time on the Board where we had members of the public attend and the first one that we have had to extend over 2 sessions. Both “firsts” were due to the perception of a group of concerned parents/public that the school has behavioural problems that we are not dealing with. Being aware of their viewpoint, after receiving a couple of emails, we had added to our Agenda an “In-Committee” session to allow the SLT to freely speak (with actual event details). We also invited Jenni Williams (one of those who had followed process and emailed me and had offered to be an advocate for the group) to speak on behalf of the group so that we had information from their perspective prior to “In-Committee”. The summary is:

- We started the evening welcoming the group to our meeting and invited Jenni to speak. Jenni covered off issues, many that the group had provided alongside some with personal involvement. She also identified some initial ideas on how the community can help based on the principle the “It takes a village to raise a child/children”.
- After thanking Jenni, we went into our “In-Committee” session and had some fruitful discussions with the SLT. While I can’t discuss the actual discussions had, I can say that in Part 2 of our meeting (the following Wednesday), following the receipt of more information from Jenni, we have established a Sub-committee of 2 Board members and 2 SLT to review the information provided, any feedback from the “to be held public meeting” and consider what, if any changes are required to any processes or practices.
- After coming out of committee we then reviewed some reports, firstly on student achievements for Year 9 and 10 and then a couple of usual ones:
 - Toby Burge produced and presented to us the “asTTle* 2023 – Reading and School-wide Literacy Strategies” report to advise us on where our students are with their reading skills.
 - HOD Brent Oliédam produced, and Louise Pryor presented to us the Maths Department report using asTTle* analysing Maths knowledge and skills.

Both reports gave us a snapshot of where our Year 9 and 10’s are in these subject areas as a lead into the start of NCEA in Year 11 (More detail provided in minutes). The usual intent behind the testing is for the teaching staff to have an idea of where the students in Year 9 and 10 are regarding their literacy and numeracy skills so that the teaching can target any weaknesses so that the student can have the best opportunity to pass NCEA 1 and/or 2. This report is also being used to consider when the students would be best placed to sit the new Level 1 literacy and numeracy (co-requisite) assessments (should we decide to enter our students for this option).

It was again brought up that while the aSTtle testing system has its limitations, it is still the best option available for the Year 9 & 10 students. We found this year that by moving to doing the aSTtle testing on paper rather than through digital we had a far better uptake of students completing the test, and therefore enriching the data. With the move towards more digital completion of testing we need to look further into this outcome in terms of what changes might need to be made improve digital assessment practices and ourcomes.

Thank you to both Toby and Louise (and Brent) for compiling and presenting this data, thus keeping the Board informed of their continued desire to “create learning success for every student”.

- We started our second meeting reviewing and approving the following policies and procedures. Most of our policies are on a 3-year review cycle, These are the ones that needed looking at:
 - Curriculum Delivery
 - Careers
 - Education Outside the Classroom
 - ESOL/NESB Students
 - Gifted and Talented Students
 - Code of Conduct (Staff)
 - Payment for Student Activities (Procedure)
 - International Fee-Paying students
 - International Students Annual Review and 2024 fee setting report was tabled and approved.
- Just prior to starting our second meeting we all went across to the site of the new multi-sports turf construction. It was great to see something now being formed, after our lengthy process to get it across the board and then the weather delays. The update we received is that due to the delays getting the roof structure started the fencing and turf construction will occur in July and August, respectively, due to the contracted parties having moved to other projects while they waited. It will certainly be nice to see a finished project in the not too distant future.
- We had a discussion around a new policy we need to implement “Reducing student distress and use of physical restraint” discussing policy, processes, and paperwork. We also identified who within the school (over and above SLT and teaching staff) should also attend the mandatory training and be authorised to use physical restraint as a last resort, as per MOE Rules and Guidelines.
- Wayne Carter, our DP in charge of EOTC (Education outside the Classroom) took us through the detailed process, procedures and paperwork that needs to be submitted by anyone running an event captured by the EOTC rules. This was timely following the recent incident in caves up North. Wayne walked us though a recent example (following the caving incident)

where an EOTC event was facing weather issues and how the process worked in practice. We were comforted and satisfied with the effort that has gone into creating our EOTC process.

- It was confirmed that Grassroots Trust approved \$20,000 towards some of the sports projects that were applied for. This now allows the Board internal sports funding round to review applications. We continue to be very grateful for the support of Grassroots Trust Ltd.
- Having discussed in previous meetings that we wanted to co-opt a Māori board member; we spent time reviewing the CV's that 3 interested parties had provided. Not only was it great to see that we had 3 people who were interested, but the quality of the CV's certainly gave us food for thought. In the end it came down to what offerings, in addition to a Māori perspective the candidates would provide the Board. I am therefore pleased to announce that Adan Te Huia has accepted the co-opted position and we all look forward to meeting him at our next meeting.
- With the need to have a Strategic Plan designed to replace our Charter (part of the educational changes happening now), we also set up a sub committee to start this process so that we have one in place for 2024. This will also be made up of 2 Board members and 2 SLT.
- We received a very informative Health Centre report for its activities in Term 1.
- We concluded our meetings with the Principal's report, Financial report, Property report and Health and Safety report. It was highlighted that it is getting difficult for Go Bus to find school bus drivers, and the school is always on the look out for cleaners. If one of these roles might suit you, please make an enquiry to the school.

Our next meeting will be held Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 5.30pm in the Staff Room. As is usual the meetings are open to all so if you are interested in what we get up to, do come along and see and hear what we do; you are most welcome.

Craig Yarndley

Chairperson

*(This is an assessment tool, developed to assess students' achievement and progress in reading, mathematics, writing, and in pānui, pāngarau, and tuhituhi. The reading and mathematics assessments have been developed primarily for students in years 5–10)