

MINUTES: GARSTON SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting: Wednesday, 8th June 2023 at 7p.m.

1. Present: T Naivaluwaqa, M Tayler, A Aldridge, B Evans, K O'Loughlin, B McNabb.

1a. Apologies: Nil.

1b. Declaration of any conflict of interests for the remaining agenda items.

Resolved: Yes / No If no, comments: N/A.

2. **Strategic Report**

Strategic Goal 4.

Garston School's aim is for the Board to plan and coordinate projects that encourage cohesion within the school community.

* Amy Aldridge presented and discussed the following report.

Re: Long term project to landscape the sandpit and swing areas. This will be handled in various stages with priority given to establishing access to the sandpit and providing tables for lunch seating.

This project will involve relandscaping the school grounds between the new classroom and the existing classrooms, including the Sandpit and swing set area. The upgrade of this outdoor space has been brought about due to the disturbance to the area with the placement of the new classroom.

The goals for the upgrade will be:

- To link the new classroom to the existing buildings
- To upgrade playground surrounds, paths and soft-fall under play equipment.
- To provide an improved outdoor space for playing/socialising
- To provide extra seating for students with an eye to increased school roll in coming years
- To create spaces for students to gather in/learn in/engage in creative play.

Key elements of the upgrade:

- The existing sandpit and swingset will remain, however the surrounds for the swingset to contain the softfall will be replaced.
- All large trees will remain in place, and additional plantings of shrubs and small plants will be incorporated.
- Addition of a gazebo with seating as an added point of interest/place to gather.
- Establishment of paths around the area to aid with linking the various features.
- Addition of extra seating for students to eat lunch at and gather at
- Addition of a large outdoor table suitable for approx. 12 pax.

The proposed landscaping plan was presented to the board and school community in April, and feedback was requested. There was minimal feedback received, and the plan has been checked on to ensure that the feedback that was received has been incorporated. No significant changes were required as a result.

The project will require the cooperation of the greater school community through working bees and potentially fundraising, and donations of materials, objects that can be used/repurposed in the project, time, and labour, will be sought. An additional benefit of this project is that it has the potential to improve community engagement and connection with the school and greater school community.

I attended the Garston Home and School AGM and spoke about this project, and the possibility that funds to undertake the improvements may be requested at a later date. Their assistance with engaging the community with the project was also requested and they showed enthusiasm for the potential this project provides.

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Grant applications are to be submitted to aid with funding for this project. Contact has been made with Bunnings Queenstown, and some funding should be able to be provided through this company, primarily in the form of materials and potentially some labour. Details of this are yet to be confirmed.

Other potential funding sources will be Northern Community Partnership Fund, One Foundation, and Community Trust Southland. Work is underway to explore these and other options.

* MOE Property to be contacted about instead of decommissioning and removing the school swimming pool that they would make alterations to the concrete walls to allow for the pool to be converted into a Wicking Garden area instead.

3a. Curriculum

Principal presented a report on the curriculum area of writing around the target area of its surface features (Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar).

Aim: To lift the achievement in writing of all students including those who do not yet meet the expected level.

Cohort: Years 4 - 8.

Background Information

The situation at the start of the year was:

2/3rds of the eighteen students are working either above or at the expected level and 1/3 are working towards the expected level.

Learning to express ideas in writing is a complex task involving the following different aspects: shaping of ideas; structure of a whole text ; organisation of ideas; vocabulary; sentence structure; punctuation; spelling.

Programmes taught during the term.

Lessons deliberately focus on teaching the different language skills associated with the seven aspects above.

Recently the contexts for practising these skills have been imaginative stories and information writing.

Students are individually conferenced by teachers to discuss progress made towards meeting their personal writing goals. They keep note of their goals and are aware of how to develop their writing.

Results

The situation remains the same with 2/3 of eighteen students working either above or at, and 1/3 working towards the expected level.

A standardised E-asTTle assessment tool was used which identified a common weakness in students' ability to link ideas so that their ideas connect well, and they flow logically within texts. Also, another trend showed that frequently used words were very often being misspelt.

Those students who are working towards the expected level have a poor grasp of regular spelling patterns. They are aware of their spelling progress and are challenged to improve it using the Steps Spelling programme.

The principal works with 2 students individually to teach basic spelling patterns through carefully sequenced learning progressions.

Evaluation.

Every effort is being made to motivate all students and promote the enjoyment of writing by engaging them in relevant writing tasks.

After one term the entire cohort has made significant progress in all seven aspects of writing.

Many of the students are now making an effort to proof-read their writing and attempt to make changes to their texts to improve the clarity of their ideas through the use of correct grammar and precise language.

Teachers share examples of excellence with the class to model good aspects of the seven aspects of writing.

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Next Steps

Teachers will need to teach and reinforce the importance of habitual proof-reading in order to improve the overall level of accuracy of written texts intended for publication. As the year progresses students will use the formats for other writing genre (e.g. reporting).

The teaching of phonics in Year 1 - 3 through the Better Start Literacy incentive will support the learning of those students who struggle to consolidate their knowledge of letter/sound associations. This in turn will give those students the spelling tools they need to allow them to write words and enable them to join with other students to learn the other writing skills. This will build confidence, motivation and accelerate their overall writing progress.

A report will be presented to the Board later in the year to compare progress and achievement in the same seven areas and genre.

Curriculum Area: Health & P.E.

Garston School students are working hard throughout the term to complete the national Matariki Dance Challenge. All children are learning the dance steps through three video tutorials. These have been purchased from NZ Dance Challenge Ltd and came highly recommended by our friends at Active Southland.

The dance tells the story of Matariki, and the music encompasses Te Reo Maori words with a blend of traditional and modern movements. By mid-July we need to film a video of the dance routine and include an introduction to our rural environment and school. We hope to work with Josh Dunn on some drone footage to accompany the introduction to the video.

Participating in the dance challenge involves sharing our school's video with other schools and the community who will also be taking part in the competition. However, the primary objective of the challenge is to encourage student engagement and physical activity within the program. Currently the seniors have been learning the steps and practising once a week for 30 minutes but since the challenge is quite difficult, we may need to increase the rehearsals and use rainy lunchtimes and PE lessons to get up to standard! Children can also access the videos from home, should they wish to dance after school hours.

4b. Documentation and Self Review

The principal assured the Board on the following:

Digital Technology and Cybersafety	That the Digital Technology and Cybersafety policies and procedures are being implemented correctly and the school holds copies of signed digital use agreements for all staff and is updating those for students, as required.
Computer Security and Cybersecurity	That computer security and cybersecurity systems are reviewed and up to date.
Student Attendance	That student absences are correctly recorded, monitored, and followed up.
Child Protection	That the Child Protection policy is in use, being implemented correctly, and is publicly available.
Abuse Recognition and Reporting	That staff are engaged with the Abuse Recognition and Reporting policy, including indicators of abuse and procedures for reporting abuse.
Evacuation	That staff and students have completed trial evacuations each term.
Expenditure	That a board member has checked the processes and authorisations used to make payments to staff members, particularly the payments made to the principal, anyone related to the principal, and others in the school with payroll responsibilities.
Monitoring and Auditing School Bus	That the school compliance checklist has been attested to, requirements have been met, and those involved with the school bus are following appropriate policies and procedures. This to be completed in June and December.

* All Board members were contacted to review The Education (Physical Restraint) Rules 2023 which came into on 7th February, 2023. This replaces The Education (Physical Restraints) Rules 2017. Board members confirmed that no changes would be required and therefore it was ratified. **B McNabb/K O'Loughlin.**

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* Accompanying booklet Aramai He Tetekura: A guide to understanding distress and minimizing the use of physical restraint was issued by the MOE and is available for Board members to view.

* The Education Outside the Classroom policies have come up for review as part of our School Docs triennial cycle of review. Log on to <https://garston.schooldocs.co.nz/1893.htm> to review them. Please call the school office for the password.

4c. Employment/Personnel

* **Principal outlined 4 P.L.D. initiatives undertaken since March.**

Sarah Willmot

* The Across School Teacher (Diana McGlade) visited our school and led a workshop with the Room 1 - 3 teacher. She explained the use of the Better Start Literacy learning programme and its reading resources and in particular their scope and sequence.

*** Communication Skills Training**

Duncan Ashford delivered a communication skills training workshop to our 3 teachers. Duncan works with the government, law firms, councils, and companies to unpack how we are able to recognise our own and other people's communication styles then change ours to meet those of others. The 3 strongest strategies for influencing positive discussions and relationships were the use of: reasoning, vested interest and forming coalitions.

*** Maths.**

On 17th May, Averill Lee, a MOE maths facilitator, visited to model approaches to teaching strategies for all levels and in multi-level classes in the main learning areas of: additive strategies; - equations & symbols.

Our school is part of a maths P.L.D. initiative which involves the principal in workshops after which she then relays information to other teachers to assist with maths programmes. The achievement of all students in the two areas noted above has been assessed by teachers to gain base-line data and this will be reassessed later in the year. This information will be forwarded to the MOE to provide a snapshot of student progress and achievement across the country. It is factored in when deciding priorities for developing future programmes.

*** Health/Wellbeing and Technology: Cyber Safety.**

* Staff met with John Parsons to discuss teaching children how to: use ICT safely at school and home; protecting their online identity; develop a strong sense of self-worth; prevent online grooming and cyber bullying; communicate with adults about any concerns; recognise the negative impact of social media on children's developing brain, self-esteem, body.

Staff also attended class lessons and the parent evening. Future contact can be made with John if required.

4d. Finance

* The accounts for payment and Finance Report were discussed and accepted. B McNabb/T Naivaluwaqa.

- * Board secretary and principal met with Hannah Levy from MOE on 9th May. Discussions took place around:
 - Reasons for Auditor's (Crowe) delays in finalising the annual accounts. Suggested that we ask them for a timeframe for completing them.
 - Adjustment to draft budget (2023) to include depreciation. It's important to include it even it turns the result into a loss. Since it's a non-cash item we'd effectively still be making a cash surplus.
 - Hannah is confident that if we stay on budget we will continue to improve the good progress being made to increase our cashflow/reserves. However she predicts that based on the 2022 figures our school will continue to be identified as a 'going concern'.

* Draft budget. Some changes to be made prior to the Board accepting it.

(cont.)

* The 2022 draft annual audit document from O'Connor Richmond were approved by phone/email to be forwarded to the auditor. The Garston School Board of Trustees approved the draft accounts from O'Conner Richmond for forwarding to our auditor at Crowe. B McNabb/B Evans.

4e. Property/Asset Protection

- The Property Report was presented.
- New Classroom Block update. Final compliance has just been issued by the Southland District Council meaning we now have full use of the building.
- Visit from Asbestos Consultant: Spent the day surveying and sampling for asbestos containing products. Some positive samples were found however they are considered safe as long as they are not disturbed.
- MOE is planning refurbishment which will include updating carpets, lighting, ceiling linings and electrical sockets as part of Small and Rural Schools Upgrade so classrooms have been surveyed. Work should start in November, 2023.
- Our school exploited the opportunity to raise funds of \$1800 GST inclusive by planting 80 native shrubs to cover the field drain for the new sewerage system. This had to be done immediately so that final consent for the new build could be issued.

4f. Health & Safety

- Injury/Incident Report: For the period 16 March - 15 May.

	Staff	Students	Other	Total
Number of minor injuries/incidents requiring on site treatment only		1		1
Number of injuries/incidents resulting in GP or other medical visits				
Number of serious harm injuries (reported to OSH)				
Comments on serious harm injuries:				
Signed: _____				
Dated: _____				

- An Earthquake Drill was successfully taken on Monday, 8th May when children practised inside safety measures and discussed reasons for procedures such as roll calling and protecting their bodies from injury.
- Cross-country RAM signed off.

4g. Legal Compliance

- The school roll at the date of the meeting was 32 and made up of 13 (Year 0-3) and 19 (Year 4-8) students.

5. School Bus

- **Kingston to Queenstown School Bus.** A parent has asked if the school would sign off so that her child could ride on the bus. As this service is not part of the Dome Network which Garston School is part of, we cannot do this. However MOE Transport and GoBus Queenstown were contacted and they stated that the child is not eligible to use the bus and the parent was informed of our decision.

6. Events/Special Topics

- * Board By-Election: Ben Evans was the only nomination and duly appointed as parent representative on the Garston Board of Trustees.
- * The cross-country event planned for 24/26 May was cancelled due to staff contacting COVID and then inclement weather conditions.

7. Home and School

Fundraising:

- Thanks to the Home & School for providing \$4121 which heavily subsidised the swimming costs for the new programme that was held at Mossburn Pool.
- The Pie Initiative was well supported and this year was easier to coordinate than last year.
- Nicole Mackie successfully secured \$1000 from catering for the Mossburn Lions Club dinner which is to be put towards swimming costs.
- BBQ to be run at the cross-country. Cancelled.

Parent Evening:

- Coordinated a Rotary Club funded initiative to provide cyber safety workshops delivered by John Parsons to Garston School students and any interested parents and community members. Video links will also be made available to parents to support information provided in these sessions.

Future Planning:

- Principal stated that a request had already been made for assistance to provide some wharehau kitchen appliances and possibly a contribution towards skiing. No details had yet been decided.

8. In committee

- Meeting went to In Committee to confirm the minutes of the previous In-Committee meeting on Wednesday, 15 March 2023.

9. Administration Matters.

9a. General Education/Board Updates.

- Nil

9b. The minutes from the previous meetings held on Wednesday, 15th March 2023 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of that meeting. B McNabb/T Naivaluwaqa.

9c. Matters arising: Nil.

10. Correspondence

MoE:

- Additional Relief Teacher funding x 2.
- Pay Equity settlements.
- Muazam Akthar (MOE Delivery Manager) report on new build and driveway replacement.
- Resourcing - Bank Staffing balance for 2022/23
 - Unconfirmed staffing entitlement.
- School Property. New Project manager Panel.
- Direct Resourcing - Quarterly Bus grant.
 - Quarterly Operations Grant.
- Jan Tinetti - Attendance (funding, measuring attendance).
- Confirmed staffing entitlement for 2023.

NZSTA:

- STA News Issue 326 (March, 2023).
 - Your first 6 months (as a BOT member).
 - Sick Leave.
 - Physical Restraint.
- STA News Issue 327 (April, 2023).
 - Strategic Planning and Reporting.
 - Privacy Breaches.
- Sector Up-date: Physical Restraint Rules.
- Board Task Checklist.

(cont.)

CROWE:

- Advice of late completion of annual accounts.

CES:

- School Liaison Officer, School Board elections.

Logic Group:

- Approval of new ceiling panel layout as part of the Small and Rural Schools upgrade.

9. **Meeting Closure**

7a. Time, date, preparation for next meeting

7b. Group evaluation of meeting

Meeting closed at 9:20pm.

Signed:

Presiding Officer

Garston School Board of Trustees.

Date: