

Houghton Valley School Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday 12 June 2023

Meeting opened: 7:00pm

Present: Seb Bishop (Presiding Member), Bret McKenzie, Jesse Pirini, Ana Tovey (parent representatives), John Wootton (Acting Principal), Stephanie Bosch (staff representative), Miriam Gaynor (Deputy Principal and SENCo, for Item 1), Emily Faith (secretary)

Apologies: Mike Brough

Welcome, opening karakia, school vision.

Conflicts of interest: Nil

Last month's minutes: Approved.

1. Mid-year data report and Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCo) update

Miriam presented on the mid-year data results, which has been collated and moderated over the last week. She explained some of the limitations of the data (eg some children have not been at school for six months). Mid-year assessment is often more conservative which can result in improved year-end results. The assessment shows where the child sits within the curriculum level. The levels span several years, so students in different year groups can each be achieving at the same curriculum level. Assessment is carried out using Progress Achievement Tools (PaCT) for reading, writing, and maths. This helps ensure that teacher judgements are consistent; Miriam noted that the moderation went really smoothly.

A particular HVS target this year was writing for year 5-6s: the aim is to have 92% achieving at expected level (or above) by the end of year. We have 93% (across whole school) achieving at expected level; this was 90% in 2022. Teachers have found that handwriting still needs to be practised; looking at ways of celebrating writing, eg at school hui.

This is the first time that our writing data has been higher than reading data at mid-year. 91% are achieving at or beyond, compared to 90% at mid-year 2022. HVS's structured literary programme is developing confident writers, which also improves reading. Additional staff professional development in literacy has been useful too.

Maths was our highest area with 97% achieving at or above the expected level. Teaching maths has been a focus for staff development over the last few years. Maths curriculum is practised every day in the classroom. Years 1-4 have a special programme, SPRING into Maths.

Māori students' achievement does not mirror the whole school data. These are students who we are tracking, and who are receiving targeted support in different forms (this may include more time with teacher; teacher aides; SPRING into Maths; assistance with behavioural support; involvement of outside agencies). Miriam explained the tiered approach to supporting students (Tier 2 has further support, Tier 3 is more intensive) who are achieving below the expected level in one or more areas.

Overall, Miriam expects to see the data set improve by the end of the year.

For those children who are achieving above the expected area, extension is an area where we are looking to challenge and push our children and our teachers. The board asked Miriam what we can do to support this work further. Would be great to have some more experts in, so there is not further pressure on teachers: for example, having artist Kate Te Ao in school, and having John teaching ukelele, have both been great ways of extending students' interests.

The board thanked Miriam for her excellent presentation.

2. Principal's report

John noted that finances are tracking well; we are almost at mid-year and are underspent in almost all areas so are likely to come out even by the end of the year. We have received some unbudgeted income from two different areas (our portion of a payment from Kāhui Ako, and the T G McCarthy Trust).

The building work is also progressing well and the new roof should be on by the start of Term 3, which will help with preventing the leaks we had after the heavy rain event recently. The builders are doing a great job but the noise has been significant and disruptive for the junior classes especially in the last couple of days. The project contingency fund is also reducing. (When this is used up, we will need to have further discussions with the Ministry of Education, as the contingency is direct funding from the Ministry.)

On the charter and strategic plan review, John emphasised that he thought the existing plan is good, and is also embedded/visible/living at HVS.

On staffing, interviews for the second fixed-term Term 3 position is likely to be held in the next week.

There will be a fire drill before the end of the term. John will also circulate a survey to the board on Health and Physical Education, before putting this in the school newsletter next week.

John noted the Term Two Assurance Schedule (this is a reminder that goes to all principals of compliances that need to be in place). John also noted the SchoolDocs policy portal and discussed the different ways of reviewing policies (such as going to the whole board, or a subcommittee). The suite of EOTC policies is up for review, and we have a noho marae for senior students coming up at the end of November.

Action: Before next meeting, all board members to go into the SchoolDocs portal, add comments on the EOTC policies, and discuss at the next meeting.

3. Policy Assurance Schedule and Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) policy review

As discussed above.

4. Comms update

Ana has been working on an audit of the information provided to new whānau, with the aim of refreshing this material.

5. Three-year Strategic Plan: Planning and community engagement

Seb described a four-step plan to review the strategic plan. The aim is to collect and collate feedback in Term 3, and then formalise the updates and communicate this to the community in Term 4.

The board agreed to focus on this at the July 2023 board meeting.

6. School Fair: Saturday 28 October 2023

Agreed to host a tombola/raffle-type activity, where the board can chat and interact with the school community. The board agreed to suggest this to Home & School.

7. Board comms for next newsletter

Thanks to John, for doing a great job during the term; acknowledge the work of staff; and acknowledge the way that staff and students are managing the impact of the ongoing property work.

8. Other business


Steph gave her apologies for the Term 3 board meetings while she is on leave.

The board agreed to host morning tea for staff at 11am on Wednesday 28 June 2023.

John thanked board members for their support during the term.

Closing karakia.

Meeting closed: 8.50pm


Sus Bowler
24/2/23