

Minutes of Board meeting – Raphael House Rudolf Steiner School

Monday 27 March 2023

Upper School staff room

Attendance

Christine Nicholls (proprietors' representative), Karyn Gray (Principal), Andrea Wakelin (parent representative), Kyle Gibson (Chair), Frankie Rae (student representative), Janet Molloy (proprietors' representative), Tim Angus (staff representative), Matthias Vest (parent representative).

Apology: Karen Thrumble

Karakia/Verse & Welcome

New member Matthias Vest was welcomed to the Board.

Election of Chair

Karyn called for nominations for the Chair of the Board.
Christine nominated Kyle Gibson. Karyn seconded the nomination.
As there were no other nominations, Karyn put the motion.
Kyle Gibson was elected unopposed.

Election of Deputy Chair

Karyn called for nominations for the Deputy Chair of the Board.
Janet nominated Andrea Wakelin. Christine seconded the nomination.
As there were no other nominations, Karyn put the motion.
Andrea Wakelin was elected unopposed.

Kyle assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Principal's Report

Members discussed the report as follows:

- More pastoral care is needed to support teachers and students as the number of neuro-diverse students in the school continues to increase. No funding is available for these students and small classroom sizes have exacerbated the issue.
- Options discussed were:
 - Tightening up special character criteria during the enrolment process
 - Aiming for a limit of 30 students per class (funding is based on a ratio of one teacher to 29 students).
 - Employing one LSA between two classes.
- A larger footprint for the class five and six classrooms will be helpful for teachers and students.
- The school has received a number of enquiries from international fee-paying families. The level of interest is positive for the school, but it is struggling to find homestay families.

Strategic Planning and Review

Members discussed the *Strategic Plan Action Plans Progress Report* for March 2023. Most action plans are well underway, with some complete. The new strategic plan work is scheduled to begin in Term 2.

Action: At the Board meeting on 15 May the Board will spend a significant portion of the meeting discussing how to approach strategic planning, including ways to engage the school community.

Policy Review

Members discussed the Privacy and Official Information Request policies. They agreed to further review the policies and ensure they contain the right measures regarding sharing photos of Raphael House children outside of the school community. Parent feedback would be taken into account. Members will also assess the level of protection for school data provided by Hero software.

Action: Karyn will check the privacy and security standards provided by Hero software, including checking where the data is stored.

Kindergarten MOU

Members debated the merits of a non-legally binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the three parties, versus a legal agreement.

- Members agreed to remove paragraph 12.9.3 from the MoU. They recognised that neither the Board nor Steiner Education Aotearoa New Zealand (SEANZ) were governing bodies of the Wellington Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Trust (WRSKT). Neither could advise WRSKT on whether funding from gaming trusts was appropriate but they could offer a recommendation.
- Members agreed to remove section 12.2.5 from the MoU and remove any other references to specific funding or payment amounts.
- Members agreed to commission Upper Hutt Law to convert the MoU to a legal agreement. They further agreed to divide the legal costs of this work, estimated at \$10,000, between the Board and the Proprietors' Trust, conditional on the agreement of the Trust.

Moved by A Wakelin. Seconded by K Gibson.

The motion was agreed unanimously.

Actions:

Andrea agreed to:

- Rename the MoU file as a final draft.
- Remove any reference to funding amounts and other payment amounts in the MoU.
- Consult Andy Bowley, a representative of the WRSKT.
- Commission Upper Hutt Law to change the MoU into a full legal agreement, with a request that the agreement is drafted giving equal consideration to the benefit of all parties.

Christine agreed to report back on whether the Proprietors' Trust was willing to share the cost of the legal work.

Proprietor's Trust (the Trust) update

Christine provided an update:

- Sarah Sun and Louise Baldock were exploring the best way to structure the loan for the new building Tirohanga Nui. Loan payments will move from interest only to principal and interest.
- The Trust is working with Brett Whincup, Property Coordinator. It will be ensuring he has the autonomy to make purchases while remaining within budget limits.
- The Trust is working through requests for financial assistance received via the Financial Hardship Assistance Fund. The names of families receiving assistance are being forwarded to Karyn so she can manage their non-financial contributions.
- The Trust is working towards completing a lease agreement and MoU with the Wellington Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Trust. Legal advice is being sought on whether a more formal legal agreement than an MoU might be prudent. The lease agreement needs to be clear on expenses to be covered by the landlord versus the lessee.
- A wider conversation between the Board and the Trust is needed on declining school enrolment numbers and where the Trust's focus should lie. The school will be financially stretched if the falling roll continues and this will impact teachers.
- The next meeting of the Trust is on 4 April. Karyn will attend, along with Trust employees Gita Pillai and Brett Whincup.

Student Update

Frankie provided an update as follows:

- End of term assessments are almost due. Students are feeling the strain with many assessments running into each other, making the workload difficult to manage.
- Numbers attending lunchtime clubs are low as students tend to use lunch times for relaxing. Student leaders are encouraging students to attend.
- Some students will attend an upcoming World Vision event.

Tim advised that with the last block of lessons before term-end shorter by three days, a decision had been made to extend assessment deadlines until the first week of Term 2.

PTFA Update

Karyn provided an update:

Remaining proceeds from the 2022 school fair will be used for a set of signs to name each school building. The signs will be attached on hooks so they are able to be swapped-out for school fair signs.

Sports Funding

Members discussed financial support for the school hockey teams and the importance of ensuring sports funding was equitable across all school sports.

Going forward the school's sports funding would be assessed year by year based on need and would depend on the level of support from students. Karyn agreed future funding requirements would be added to the 2023 budget for Board approval.

Actions:

Members agreed to support two school hockey teams to attend the hockey tournament this year. They agreed to consider support for other sports teams on a year-to-year basis.

Moved by K Gray. Seconded by A Wakelin.

K Gibson declared a conflict of interest and took no part in voting on the matter.

February Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting on 20 February 2023 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Moved by K Gibson. Seconded by K Gray.

In Committee Business

The Board agreed to move into Committee.

The Board came out of committee.

Communication Points

Communication points for the Board's report are as follows:

- Welcome to new Board member Matthias Vest
- Kyle Gibson has been re-elected as Chair
- The Board is pleased to see the return of festivals after COVID restrictions.

Action: Karyn will liaise with her team to get this written and added to the Bush Telegraph this week.


General business

Other actions:

- K Gibson will email the Board an invitation for a Sunday afternoon social get-together.
- A note will be added to the beginning of the agenda for each meeting going forward to remind members to declare conflicts of interest.

Closing & Karakia

The meeting closed at 8.12 pm.


These minutes were approved correct at the May 22 meeting
Deputy chair Presiding Member Kyle Gibson 