

Minutes for Full Board Meeting
Monday 1 December 2025 at 5.30 pm
Held in: Te Puna o Te Pito Mata
Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kavaeranga |
Thames High School

*Our Mission: Kia mahara o neherā; Kia Waihanga āiane; Hei aratakina ā mua.
To acknowledge our past; To inspire our present; To transform our future world.*

Meeting commenced at **5.37 pm**

QUORUM: Confirmed

1. MIHI WHAKATAU / WELCOME AND KARAKIA

Introduction/whakawhanaungatanga – Led by Brendon Wilkinson

2. ADMINISTRATION (5.38 pm)

2.1 Present and Apologies

Present: Brendon Wilkinson (PM), Michael Hart (Principal), Cindy Dargaville, Alia Finn, Siobhan Flanigan, Ngaio Hodson-Rapana, Lydia Lester, Kathy Ngamane, Wayne Whitney, Daniel Neufeld, Brooklyn Jiang

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Tracey Reed (Minute Secretary)

Non-Board Members: Cheryl Bunker, Sharyn Baker, Lisa Barnett, Martin Rodley, John McKeowen

Motion: That non-board members attending are given speaking rights.

Moved B Wilkinson. **CARRIED.**

2.2 Declaration of Interests

None

5.39 pm – The Presiding Member proposed to move into In-Committee at the start of the meeting to ensure sufficient time for confidential matters that are often delayed or compressed at the end of meetings.

5.41 pm – Before moving into In-Committee, the Board agreed the International Report would be presented first.

3. STRATEGIC REPORTING AND MONITORING (5.41 pm)

3.1 Presentation / Curriculum Focus / Report/s

International Report – International Programme Manager highlighted:

- The report highlighted strong performance in international student recruitment, with 26 students enrolled for the first half of the year, alongside returning students.
- There is significant interest for the July intake, with multiple inquiries already in the pipeline, indicating positive growth.
- The department is seeing increased engagement from European markets, which provides greater certainty for future planning.
- Board members expressed appreciation for the department's efforts, noting the positive impact on student experience and school reputation.

7. PUBLIC-EXCLUDED BUSINESS (PEB) (In-Committee) (5.46 pm)

The Board moves into Public Excluded Business (PEB) (In-Committee)

Motion: That the public be excluded from the following part/s of the proceedings of this meeting, namely agenda item/s from the agenda **7.1, 7.2.1 to 7.2.6** of the agenda. The grounds are that the matter is of a **Personnel nature** and the reason is to protect the privacy of individuals or commercially sensitive information. This motion is proposed to comply with section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and the special requirements when moving to exclude the public.

Moved B Wilkinson. **Seconded** A Finn. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

It was noted that the Board moved out of committee at **6.23 pm** and included the public for the remainder of the meeting, in accordance with the agenda.

2. ADMINISTRATION (6.25 pm) continued

2.3 Confirmation of Minutes

Motion: The minutes of the full Board meeting held on 28 October 2025 are approved.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** D Neufeld. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

2.4 Matters Arising

None

5. BOARD PROCESS AND SELF-REVIEW

5.1 Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Education and Training Act Amendments

- Letter to Minister of Education re T o W obligations
- From the Minister - Update on recent and upcoming legislative changes - School boards, Initial Teacher Education, Teaching Council

Discussion:

- Principal – The recent amendments to the Education and Training Act relating to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. A [Letter to Minister of Education re T o W obligations](#) expressed the Board's commitment, from the previous meeting, to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti and concern regarding proposed legislative changes. The discussion reaffirmed the Board's strategic intent to give effect to Te Tiriti within the school's governance and operations and acknowledged the importance of maintaining this commitment despite changes at the national level.
- M Rodley, TCDC added that a community template was circulating to encourage parents, community members, and local organisations to support principals in upholding Te Tiriti. He shared that he had completed the template and attended the board meeting to demonstrate his support for the school's position.
- During discussion, Board members expressed concern that they had not been consulted before the letter was sent on behalf of the Board. Principal Michael Hart acknowledged this and offered an apology for the lack of prior consultation.

3. STRATEGIC REPORTING AND MONITORING (6.38 pm) continued

3.1 Presentation / Curriculum Focus / Report/s

- [Social Sciences Department Biennial Report](#) - HoD Social Sciences (J Fletcher)
 - The Social Sciences Report was tabled as part of the Principal's set of reports.
 - Discussion focused on curriculum delivery within Social Sciences and alignment with school values.
 - Positive feedback was given on the structured approach and the department's contribution to student learning.
 - No concerns were raised; the Board acknowledged the importance of ongoing review.
- [Library Report](#) – written report only (R Howes)
 - The Principal highlighted the need for a new Library Coordinator role to manage resources and support the development of a future learning hub.
 - Options for implementation were discussed, with **Option A** (advertising for the role in 2026) being the preferred approach.
 - The Board recognised the strategic importance of the library as a central resource for teaching and learning.
- [Sports Report](#) – written report only (T Watts)
 - Discussion on volunteer support and sustainability for sports programmes.
 - The Board considered the idea of incentivising volunteers and coaches, noting the increasing difficulty in securing volunteers.
 - A ballpark figure of \$60K was mentioned about the value of volunteer support for sport.
 - The Board acknowledged the significant contribution of volunteers and the need for recognition.

Motion: That the reports above are accepted.

Moved B Wilkinson. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Action: The Board Secretary send letters of thanks for the reports and for their contributions.

3.2 Principal's Report (6.41 pm)

[Principal's Report](#) – Discussion Q&A's:

- Pastoral summary (Section 4.4)- It was noted that most behaviour issues were minor classroom disruptions and low-level defiance, managed by teachers. Serious incidents, such as verbal abuse, are escalated to kaiāwhina and/or senior leadership and recorded under discipline rather than classroom behaviour. Emphasis was placed on consistent categorisation in KAMAR and maintaining a safe, supportive environment for students and staff.
- [Health Curriculum Consultation Report](#) HoD Health (D Harrison)
An update on the Health Curriculum review and development. The principal highlighted the work undertaken to strengthen the programme, particularly for senior students, ensuring alignment with curriculum requirements and student wellbeing priorities. Collaboration with external partners, including the Tūturu initiative, was acknowledged as supporting a more structured and responsive health education approach. The Board expressed support for continued development to maintain a comprehensive and inclusive health curriculum.
- [Annual Guidance Report](#) (Counsellor)
The Board acknowledged the comprehensive report outlining guidance and counselling services provided throughout the year. Key themes included student wellbeing, connectedness, and collaboration with external agencies to support learners. The Board commended the proactive approach and noted the importance of continuing these initiatives to strengthen pastoral care.
- [Annual Safety Compliance Report](#) (Lab Mgr / HoD Science / HoD Technology)
An annual safety compliance update, confirming that required checks and procedures across science laboratories, and other specialist spaces have been completed. Reports highlighted adherence to health and safety standards, with ventilation identified as a priority for upcoming property planning. It was noted that the Technology area report is still to be completed and will be tabled at a future meeting. The Board noted the importance of maintaining compliance and ensuring safe learning environments for students and staff.

Motion: That the principal's report is accepted, including the associated reports.

Moved M Hart. **Seconded** L Lester. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the off-site learning proposed for Y10-Y13 on Monday 2 February is approved.

Moved A Finn. **Seconded** D Neufeld. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the 2026 school year in 5.2.2 of the principal's report is ratified and that the proposed teacher only day Monday 9 February is approved (subject to ensuring the PLD planned is confirmed).

Moved A Finn. **Seconded** W Whitney. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

3.3 Finance and Audit Report (7.00 pm)

Finance Chair: S Flanigan

- Two grants received from Air New Zealand and the Seagull Centre.
- Recent liquidation of EdPro, the school's previous supplier, and its implications for operations.
- Potential delays in outstanding orders and the need to review alternative suppliers to ensure continuity of resources and services.
- Cost pressures related to insurance, rates, and property maintenance were also highlighted as areas to monitor in the upcoming budget cycle.

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that **3.3.1** Accounts payable for October 2025 paid November 2025 and credit cards and **3.3.2** Term deposits for December 2025 are approved.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** W Whitney. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that **3.3.3** the request for a Grant application for 50 Chromebooks to We Care Trust and NZCT to the value of \$30K is approved.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** K Ngamane. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that **3.3.4** the request for Property Funding to the value of \$62K is approved.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** L Lester. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that **3.3.5** the request for the balance of the 10YPP Property Funding be approved up to 75%, in line with the indicated priorities.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** A Finn. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that **3.3.6** the draft budget for 2026 be approved subject to final approval at the March board hui, with the following limits: that prior to sign off, the budget expenditure is capped at 75% of budgets and budgeted cashflow to 31 March 2026.

Moved S Flanigan. **Seconded** C Dargaville. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

Action: Principal follow up with Business Manager on an allowance for replacement of plants and related maintenance within the property and R&M (Repairs and Maintenance) budget.

3.4 Property (7.18 pm)

Property Chair: D Neufeld

- It was clarified that Property Committee minutes are approved within the committee.
- The need for improved record-keeping for property projects and clear references for 5YA priorities.
- Property related documents and minutes are stored in the property folder for board access.
- Ventilation upgrades remain a high priority and may require significant funding allocation.

Motion: That the Board accepts the recommendation of the Property Committee to approve **3.4.1** the use of the school hall by Thames Bridge Club on 6–8 January 2026.

Moved D Neufeld. **Seconded** W Whitney. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

3.5 Other Community Reports (7.22 pm)

3.5.1 Staff Health & Safety – a meeting was held on the 30 October 2025.

3.5.2 TAMSO – Whaea Kathy

Discussion focused on budget allocation for TAMSO initiatives:

- Approximately \$5K attached to student leadership development.
- Funding for carving project (stage 1 estimated \$30K; overall allocation \$50-\$60K under capital budget).
- Timeline: carving project likely to start June 2026; narrative development underway.
- Suggestion included seeking external sponsorship (local businesses – A Finn suggested A&G Price)
- Aligning TAMSO initiatives with cultural responsiveness and long-term strategic goals.

3.6 EOTC / Overnight Trip: Approvals (7.32 pm)

EOTC Board Liaison: W Whitney

EOTC Trips

The Board EOTC liaison confirmed that all Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) trips for the upcoming period have been reviewed and approved. Ongoing communication with Deputy Principal (G Wright) ensures compliance with school policy and Ministry guidelines.

Motion: The board gives initial approval for the overnight trip(s) with the understanding that the remaining steps for EOTC will be followed delegating authority to W Whitney, Board EOTC liaison to approve and report to the Board.

Moved W Whitney. **Seconded** B Wilkinson. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

(7.33 pm) Motion: That the meeting be extended by up to 30 minutes to allow for the completion of urgent business.

Moved B Wilkinson. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

4. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION AND DECISION-MAKING (7.35 pm)

4.1 Key Issue Exploration / Consultation (e.g. Initiatives, Curriculum Development, Property Planning etc)

4.1.1 Library Review

[Future Direction of the Library / Innovation & Resource Hub](#)

The Board discussed the Library Review and considered three options for future development. The board agreed to proceed with **Option A**: to advertise for a Library & Resource Hub Coordinator role in 2026 to manage resources and support the creation of a future learning hub. It was noted that progress will be reviewed at the end of Term 1, incorporating student and whānau voice via a Google Form survey.

Motion: That the Board endorse the phased redevelopment of the Library commencing in 2026, adopting Phase 1 (Strengthened Library and Resource Hub) as the immediate direction, with Phase 2 (Integrated Innovation & Resource Hub) noted as the future development pathway; and that the Board approve the revised Library/Innovation Hub Coordinator role at 27.5 hours per week (8.15am–2.15pm, term time only) for implementation in 2026.

Further, the Board agrees to proceed with **Option A**: to advertise for a Library & Resource Hub Coordinator role in 2026 to manage resources and support the creation of a future learning hub. It was noted that a student voice meeting was held, the student representative said he was unable to join with exam commitment and thought it would be a good idea to gather senior student voice.

Moved L Lester. **Seconded** W Whitney. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

4.1.2 Strategic Planning (7.50 pm)

[MoE Waikato Strategic and Annual Planning](#) (Leadership Advisor)

The principal highlighted the need to formally extend the school's strategic planning through 2026 to ensure continuity and alignment with long-term goals. The plan must remain adaptable to curriculum changes, wellbeing initiatives, and community engagement priorities. The discussion also covered the importance of clear timelines, consultation processes, and measurable outcomes to maintain accountability and track progress effectively.

Motion: *(as recommended by MoE, p. 3) – as decided at 15 Oct meeting.*

That the strategic intents and priorities of the strategic plan for 2024 to 2025 be extended to the end of 2026.

Moved M Hart. **Seconded** W Whitney. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

4.1.3 Alternative Education (7.51 pm)

Board paper: [Te Ara Whakamana – Pathway to Empowerment](#)

The Board acknowledged the complexity and layered nature of the Te Ara Whakamana initiative, noting its alignment with the school's commitment to providing inclusive pathways for students who require additional support. The Principal highlighted recent correspondence and explained that the programme aims to strengthen engagement and wellbeing for learners outside traditional settings. The importance of maintaining strategic intent and ensuring resources are allocated effectively to sustain the initiative.

Motion: That the Board ratify the 2026 Te Ara Whakamana Coordinator position and authorise recruitment.

Moved M Hart. **Seconded** L Lester. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

4.1.4 Non-Enrolled Student Re-engagement partnership (7.54 pm)

Board briefing: [2026 Pathways Re-Engagement Programme – Whakapiki Maūri](#)

Principal highlighted the complexity and layered nature of the 2026 Pathways Re-Engagement Programme initiative, explaining its purpose as a pathway to empower students who require alternative education options. Recent correspondence and the importance of maintaining strategic intent and allocating resources effectively to support the programme.

Board members expressed general support for the kaupapa, with some discussion around consultation and clarity of roles, before agreeing to proceed with formal approval.

Motion: That the Board supports the implementation of the Whakapiki Maūri and endorses the Memorandum of Understanding between Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga and Ngāti Maru Rūnanga, including the provisions for Section 53 enrolment, information sharing, pastoral support, and monitoring as outlined within the MoU.

Moved M Hart. **Seconded** S Flanigan. All in favour. **CARRIED.**

4.2 Policy Review Schedule (7.59 pm)

- [Term 4 2025 Policies](#) for Review (closes 19 December 2025)

- [Term 4 Assurances](#)

The Principal mentioned the complexity of current policy frameworks in SchoolDocs and raised the idea of simplifying policies to make them high-level rather than overly procedural. This was discussed as a consideration for future reviews, but no formal decision was made.

The Term 4 2025 Policies and Assurances are to be ratified at the February Board meeting.

5. BOARD PROCESS AND SELF-REVIEW – continued (8.00 pm)

5.2 Self-Evaluation / Reflection

A NZSBA (New Zealand School Boards' Association) meeting self-review is a process for a school board to evaluate its own performance.

- [Board culture](#) (reference)

- [NZSBA Board Meeting Self Evaluation \(now a Google Form\)](#)

The board reflected on governance processes and the importance of consultation. Concerns were raised about decisions being made without full board input, particularly regarding a recent letter sent to the Ministry of Education about Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments. The principal acknowledged this and agreed to ensure better consultation in future. Members discussed the need to maintain political neutrality while still advocating for educational values. The board reaffirmed its strategic intent and agreed that clearer processes for board endorsement are required.

5.3 Planning for next meeting / Agenda items (8.02 pm)

[Setting dates for 2026 – proposal](#) [Reference - MoE guidance](#)

- o Status quo – with or without change of day (Monday to TBC?)
- o Week 3 / Week 8 model – 8 meetings in term time, day TBC
- o Other topics for next meeting

Setting dates for 2026 – proposal deferred to February 2026 meeting.

Staff Well-being Survey Proposal – A. Finn suggested running a new staff well-being survey, noting the last one was completed in late 2023. The provider *Building Matters* (Jenny Grey) was mentioned, with an estimated cost of around \$2,500. Questions were raised about confidentiality, how results would be shared, and the appropriate level of detail. As more clarity was needed on the survey's purpose, process, and reporting expectations, the board agreed that A. Finn would bring a full proposal back for proper consideration at the February meeting.

Action: Full proposal from A. Finn (including provider details, cost, and reporting format) to be tabled at the February 2026 board meeting.

6. CORRESPONDENCE and OTHER BUSINESS (8.04 pm)

6.1 Inwards

6.1.2 Inwards

- [Open letter Kāhui Ako / Thames Principals to Minister](#)
- [Board correspondence ToW Communications - Motion for discussion](#)
- [From the Minister - Update on recent and upcoming legislative changes - School boards, Initial Teacher Education, Teaching Council](#)
- [Acknowledgement letter - Harry \(David\) Harrison](#)
- [Jacob Rush - Re:Student & Alumni Proposal Report to THS](#)

6.1.3 Outwards

- [Letter to Minister of Education re T o W obligations](#)
- [Hon. Scott Simpson](#)

Motion: That the 6.1.2 Inwards correspondence is accepted and the 6.1.3 Outwards correspondence is approved.

Moved by: B Wilkinson. All in favour. **CARRIED**

Action: The Board Secretary to check the Board Induction pack Board email address and arrange for the Board email address board@thameshigh.school.nz to be disestablished.

Full Board Meeting closed at **8.05 pm**

Brendon Wilkinson
Presiding Member

Date: _____