

# Minutes for Full Board Meeting Monday 25 August 2025 at 5.30 pm Held in: Te Puna o Te Pito Mata

**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 **5.45 pm**

## 1. MIHI WHAKATAU / WELCOME AND KARAKIA

Introduction/whakawhanaugatanga – Led by Presiding Member

## 2. ADMINISTRATION

Strategic: [Governance](#) – Effective Stewardship

### 2.1 Present and Apologies

**Members:** Brendon Wilkinson (Presiding Member), Michael Hart (Tumuaki), Alia Finn, Siobhan Flanigan, Ngaio Hodson-Rapana, Roanne Mitchell-Te Teira, Kathy Ngamane, Wayne Whitney, Kiryn Curnow, Palary Rous

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Tracey Reed (Minute Secretary)

**Non-Board Members:** Chris Ashforth, Michelle Tupper, Michele Scoggins, Pauline Managh, Lisa Barnett, John McKeowen, Brooklyn Jiang

- The Presiding Member acknowledged the current board members for their contributions and commitment during the three years in term.
- On behalf of the board, the Presiding Member expressed sincere thanks to the Principal for the significant responsibilities carried in support of staff, students, and the wider community. The Principal is the cornerstone that holds the school together.

**2.2 Declaration of Interests:** None

### 2.3 Confirmation of Minutes

[Minutes of Full Board meeting 28 July 2025](#)

**Motion:** That the minutes of the full board meeting held on the 28 July 2025 are **accepted**.

**Moved** Presiding Member. All in favour. Carried.

### 2.4 Matters Arising (5.47 pm)

The Board discussed an action from the previous meeting regarding the School's Behaviour Policy and associated flowcharts, which were sent to W Whitney.

- **Principal's Email:** Included [School Behavioural Guidelines](#) (also referenced under item 3.4.2 Outward Correspondence).
- **Supporting Documents and Links:**
  - [February 2025 principal's report](#) (electronic copy only)
  - Policy - [Behaviour management](#)
  - Website guidance - [Positive Behaviour](#) (electronic copy only)
  - [MoE guidelines](#) (electronic copy only)

#### Discussion:

The Principal provided the updated behaviour policy and related flowcharts as requested. The board discussed where incidents involving racism might fit within the framework. It was noted that placement depends on context and severity; while some situations are managed at Tier 1 by staff, others may require escalation. The Principal clarified that the flowchart does not list every possible behaviour and that a more detailed document outlining example behaviours and response levels was provided to the Board but not included in the printed pack.

It was mentioned the shift from a behaviour-based tier model to a new layer of support approach, focusing on where incidents occur rather than categorising strictly by behaviour type. The Principal presented data about 1984 recorded incidents in KAMAR relating to attendance, classroom, and discipline, noting 1,080 classroom and discipline matters, 7 of which involved discriminatory themes. The board acknowledged that incident coding may not always be fully accurate and that not all behaviours are recorded, meaning the actual number of incidents may be higher.

It was noted that in the updated behaviour classification document, racism is captured under "discriminatory and/or abusive language" and, where relevant, can also be considered harassment. The board agreed on the need for clearer guidance and increased education for staff and students regarding harassment and discrimination appropriate escalation of such incidents.

### 3. STRATEGIC REPORTING AND MONITORING

#### 3.1 Presentation / Curriculum Focus

##### 3.1.1 [Learning Support Department Board Report](#) – SENCO (M Tupper) (5.58 pm)

Highlights of the Report / Discussion:

- Currently 140 students require varying levels of support (down from 217 last year), grouped by neurodiverse needs, mental-emotional support, and behaviour-related challenges.
- Key statistics: 2 formally identified gifted students (13 pending), 7 diagnosed with ADHD (likely more undiagnosed), 30–40 students with dyslexia supported via school-based screening, and 71 students across Year 9–13 with Special Assessment Conditions (SAC).
- Focus is on supporting students without formal diagnoses and aligning Year 9–10 SAC applications with NZQA requirements.
- Growing literacy and numeracy gaps among incoming students are being addressed through accelerated literacy programmes and targeted numeracy support.
- Inconsistent attendance remains a barrier to progress; missed sessions increase anxiety and reduce continuity in learning support.
- Teacher aides face challenges in providing individualised support due to competing priorities, highlighting the need for additional staffing and dedicated support spaces.
- Evidence shows structured, focused interventions significantly improve student outcomes and positively influence peers.
- Technological tools (e.g., C-Pens) assist students with dyslexia; three purchased.
- Loss of two literacy and numeracy Kāhui Ako teachers in 2026 will impact teaching capacity; complete relief from teaching duties is not feasible.
- SENCO role is well-resourced compared to other schools, but increased student needs have expanded workload over five years.
- Secondary schools face limited government funding; budget adjustments may be required to support teacher aide hours versus external services.
- Careful planning is ongoing to balance funding with rising demands of students with additional needs.

The Presiding Member thanked SENCO for her report.

##### 3.1.2 [Science Department Biennial Report](#) - HoD Science (M Scoggins) (6.30 pm)

Highlights of the Report / Discussion:

- The Science Department prioritises both academic achievement and student engagement.
- Senior students consistently achieve above national standards in Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Te Reo Māori.
- Level 1 students are currently completing internal assessments only to reduce exam-related anxiety; this year no subject endorsements will be available.
- Junior students often arrive with limited prior science experience, requiring additional support to reach Year 11 readiness.
- Current teaching hours: Year 9, 3 hours/week, Year 10, 4 hours/week; additional Year 9 lessons would support literacy and numeracy integration.
- Attendance issues, due to external exams, sports, and other activities, disrupt course continuity and learning progression.
- Staffing concerns: one teacher leaving this year (25% of department), potential further loss could change staffing by 50%, impacting course delivery.
- Heating and cooling in classrooms is inconsistent: boilers underperform in winter (rooms as low as 12–13°C), and classrooms become excessively hot in summer. Current temporary measures (fans) are insufficient. Recommendation to explore long-term solutions for consistent heating and cooling, potentially using solar or other energy efficient options.

The Presiding Member acknowledged the challenges around heating and the ongoing issues and thanked the HoD of Science for their report.

**Motion:** That the Board **accepts** the **3.1.1** Learner Support Report and **3.1.2** Science Department Biennial Report.

**Moved** R Mitchell-Te Teira, **seconded** S Flanigan. All in favour. Carried.

#### 3.2 Key Area Deep Dive (e.g. Wellbeing, Achievement) (6.30 pm)

##### [DRAFT- THS International Department Strategic Plan \(2025-2030\)](#)- International Programme Manager (P Managh) (6.42 pm)

Presentation of the IDSP / Discussion:

###### **International Programme Strategic Plan – Board Discussion Summary**

- This is the first comprehensive International Department Strategic Plan developed in the past two years, intended as a basis for ongoing annual review and improvement.
- Current state: Student enrolments peaked in 2019 (pre-COVID), dropped during COVID, and are gradually increasing in 2025, including short-term Japanese high school experiences.
- Key markets: Germany and Japan are the primary focus for international student recruitment; Southeast Asian and other European students are smaller groups, often living with family in Thames.
- Vision and goals:
  - Sustainable growth targeted to 2030, aiming for ~30 FTE international students.
  - Emphasis on academic, cultural, and outdoor education experiences.
  - Revenue generation supports the school's staffing and programmes.

- Key priorities:
  - Market focus and product differentiation to highlight unique offerings, including "Wild Kiwi Fridays" and outdoor education experiences.
  - Operational excellence via software systems (e.g., East School) and homestay management.
  - Marketing improvements, including multilingual website and video storytelling.
  - Risk management to address homestay shortages, competition, and diverse student needs (learning difficulties, school avoidance).
- Programme benefits:
  - International students help maintain viability of smaller subjects (e.g., music, arts, technology) and contribute financially to staff positions.
  - Provides domestic students with opportunities to participate in international exchange programmes.
- Opportunities identified:
  - Alumni engagement, regional school partnerships, and community-based experiences (e.g., Kiwi care, farming, environmental projects).
  - Expansion of programme experiences with tiered pricing (platinum, gold, silver options).
- Marketing strategy:
  - Strengthen relationships with international agents and showcase student experiences.
  - Use student testimonials and video diaries to promote the school abroad.
- Next steps:
  - Board endorsement of the strategic plan.
  - Annual review of the plan to track growth and revenue outcomes.
  - Continue relationship building with agents and explore additional programme opportunities for students (e.g. Hilliary Outdoor pursuits / Manaia diving)

The Presiding Member thanked the International Programme Manager for her report.

**Motion:** That the Board **accepts** the Draft – THS International Department Strategic Plan (2025 – 2030)  
**Moved** R Mitchell-Te Teira, **seconded** S Flanigan. All in favour. Carried.

### 3.3 Principal's Report (incl. AIP & Strategic Goals progress) (7.13 pm)

- [Principal's Report](#)
- [Pastoral Report 2025](#)
- [24-7 Report Term 2 2025](#)

Board member questioned the attendance figures.

#### The Principal highlighted:

- Significant ongoing issues with student attendance, exacerbated by high sickness rates across both students and staff.
- Current data indicates approximately 20–25% of students fall below 70% attendance (chronic absenteeism).
- Year 13 attendance is particularly low, averaging around two-thirds presence, based on half-day attendance, not in-class engagement.
- Concern raised over students marked present but not attending class ("Q" codes – out of class approved learning like trips), a deeper analysis of this is required.
- The Ministry's new attendance system provides comparative insights, showing these patterns are consistent nationally.
- Board discussed the importance of stronger whānau engagement and a shared sense of responsibility to improve attendance.
- The school is currently down approximately 0.6–0.7 FTE due to loss of Kāhui Ako staffing allocations.
- This shortfall creates significant staffing pressures and directly affects the ability to replace upcoming vacancies.
- Recruitment for new roles are on hold until the Ministry confirms guaranteed staffing entitlements in September.
- Two current roles for a maths and science teacher, had been advertised and filled as permanent full-time positions, but any future appointments will be challenging due to funding uncertainty.
- There is also ongoing uncertainty regarding Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) roles, which are guaranteed for one more year under current contracts.
- The Board was advised that staffing pressures will remain an issue until there is clearer Ministry guidance on Kāhui Ako resourcing and LSC allocations.

**Motion:** That the Principal's Report is **accepted**.  
**Moved** M Hart, **seconded** K Curnow. All in favour. Carried.

**(7.30 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.

### 3.4 Finance and Audit Report (7.32 pm)

3.4.1 [Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting](#) held on the 28 July 25  
(attached and taken read)

**Motion:** The Board accepts Finance Committee's recommendation to **approve** the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 28 July 2025 and to **accept** the August [Financial Report](#).

**Moved** S Flanigan, **seconded** R Mitchell-Te Teira. All in favour. Carried.

The Finance Committee recommends to the Board to approve:

3.4.2 Accounts payable for July 2025 paid August 2025.

3.4.3 Term deposits for August 2025.

3.4.4 The purchase of a 2022 Toyota Hiace 10-seater van to replace the existing school van, which required significant repairs. A suitable vehicle was located at the local Ford dealership for \$49,990, including a \$2,000 trade-in for the old van and an additional \$1,000 discount negotiated. The van has 50,000km on the odometer, is in excellent condition, and meets the school's operational needs. That the Business Manager finalise the transaction.

3.4.5 SUE Reports 2016/2018 destruction of these records based on the school's retention policy.

3.4.6 Grant application for replacement bins to the value of \$2K.

**Motion:** The Board accepts the Finance Committee's recommendation to **approve** that 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 3.4.6.

**Moved** S Flanigan, **seconded** R Mitchell-Te Teira. All in favour. Carried.

### 3.5 Property Report (7.36 pm)

3.5.1 [Property Committee minutes meeting](#) held on the 18 Aug 25  
(attached and taken read)

**Motion:** The Board accepts the recommendation from the Property Committee that the Board **approve** the Minutes of the Property Committee meeting held on the 18 August 2025 and to **accept** the [August Property Report](#).

**Moved** B Wilkinson, **seconded** S Flanigan. All in favour. Carried.

The Property Committee presented updates on current and planned projects.

- A key focus was on heating and cooling solutions for classrooms. The board discussed:

- o Ongoing issues with inadequate heating during winter and extreme heat in summer.
- o A review of options for heat pump installations and the need to ensure sufficient electrical capacity to support them.
- o Consideration of a new transformer upgrade, estimated at approximately \$300,000, to meet long-term energy needs.

- A report on the school's sprinkler system upgrade was tabled, noting significant cost implications.

- Ventilation improvements in specialist areas, particularly labs, and the need for a possible air extraction system.

- The board acknowledged that funding these projects will require strategic financial planning, including

- The Property Committee exploring leasing options, capital funding, and potential property sales to offset costs.

3.5.2 **Salto Locks:** The Property Committee recommended proceeding with the installation of the Salto locks.

- The board discussed the available quotes and accepted the Property Committee's recommendation to move forward with the project.
- It was noted that the funding for the locks is already allocated and does not impact other property priorities.

**Motion:** That the Board **accepted** the Property Committee's recommendation to **proceed** with the Salto locks project.

**Moved** B Wilkinson, **seconded** R Mitchell-Te Teira. All in favour. Carried.

3.5.3 **Basket "Meet the Candidates" Event:**

- The board confirmed that the school facilities would be utilised to host the "Meet the Candidates" event for the upcoming elections.
- There were no objections raised, and the use of the space was agreed upon to support community engagement.

**Motion:** That the Board accepted the Property Committee's recommendation and **approve** the use of Thames High School facilities for The Basket Meet the Candidates event on the 14 September 2025.

**Moved** B Wilkinson, **seconded** K Ngamane. All in favour. Carried.

### 3.6 Other Committee Reports (7.47 pm)

3.6.1 **Staff Health & Safety** – a meeting on the 15 August 2025 did not meet a quorum. Another meeting to be scheduled.

3.6.2 **TAMSO**

K Ngamane reported to the Board on the TAMSO hui held on the 11 August 2025.

#### Carving Project & Quote:

- The board discussed commissioning carver Mike Matchitt for the carving project related to the school's cultural spaces. Mike has provided an initial quote of \$18,300 + GST for the Waharoa (gateway) area and two pou (carved posts).
  - This cost covers labour only; the school will need to source the wood separately.
- Further work inside the wharehau will require an onsite assessment to determine the number of internal carvings, painting, staining, and oiling required.

**Action:** Mike Matchitt will be invited to meet with Mātua Wati and the student leaders to discuss design concepts, material sourcing, and ensure alignment with tikanga Māori and the school's cultural vision.

### **Manukura Role:**

A working group has been established to draft a role description, selection process, and criteria for a Manukura position (a leadership role focused on Māori engagement and representation).

### **Cultural Capabilities Framework:**

TAMSO reviewed the current cultural capabilities self-assessment. Paperwork is to be circulated to gather feedback on where the school stands in terms of cultural responsiveness. Responses are expected to be discussed at the next TAMSO meeting.

### **3.6 EOTC / Overnight Trip: Approvals (7.56 pm)**

There were no EOTC trips to be approved.

## **4. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION and DECISION-MAKING (7.57 pm)**

Strategic: Policy, Performance, Planning

### **4.1 Key Issue Exploration Consultation**

(e.g. Initiatives, Curriculum Development, Property Planning, etc.)

- [NCEA Discussion - Proposal to Replace NCEA/Curriculum](#)
- [NCEA Changes Consultation - Easy Read FINAL](#)
- [NCEA Discussion Summary for Parents](#)
- **PPTA analysis / considerations**  
<https://www.ppta.org.nz/news-and-media/ncea-replacement-proposals>
- Ref: <https://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea>  
- has lots of resources, including videos.
- [NCEA CHANGES - Open Letter from Principals](#)

The Principal highlighted:

- The Board were updated on the Ministry of Education's proposed NCEA changes and their potential impact on Thames High School.
- A six-week consultation period has been announced, closing **16 September 2025**. Board members were encouraged to review information and consider making submissions individually or on behalf of the Board.
- A letter drafted by a group of principals (mainly from higher EQI socioeconomic schools). While the letter is short and focused, it raises concerns about the risks of proposed changes, particularly for schools like Thames High School.
- The proposed reforms may reduce flexibility in courses and pathways, potentially disadvantaging schools with diverse learners and limited resources.
- While the reforms are being marketed as improvements to high-end qualifications, they could widen existing educational disparities if not carefully managed.
- Thames High values the current flexibility within NCEA for supporting a wide range of learning needs; there is a risk this could be lost under the proposed model.
- Concern about the speed of implementation. Unlike when NCEA was first introduced, which involved years of trialing and transition, the new system is being fast-tracked within three years, creating uncertainty for students and staff.
- Teachers remain unsure about exam requirements for upcoming cohorts, adding to workload and anxiety.
- The Principal advised the board to stay informed, share the PPTA's balanced discussion paper, and consider providing feedback during the consultation period.

**Action:** Board members to review provided NCEA documents and decide whether to make an official board submission before the **16 September deadline**.

**4.2 Policy Review Schedule** – working document in progress.

## **5. BOARD PROCESS and SELF-REVIEW (8.05 pm)**

Strategic: Governance Capability / Continuous Improvement

### **5.1 Self-Evaluation / Reflection** – None

### **5.2 Board Election update**

- Proposal for meeting the board candidates – it was suggested that the old and new board meet.
- Student Representative update – The Returning Officer advised the Board that there are three candidates. Voting date is Tuesday 9 September and the Student Board Representative takes office on Tuesday 16 September.

### **5.3 Planning for next meeting / Agenda Items** – None

**6. CORRESPONDENCE and OTHER BUSINESS** (8.06 pm)

**6.1 Inwards / Outwards Correspondence**

**6.1.2 Inwards**

- [CRM - Resignation letter \(rec'd 28-7-25\)](#)
- [GRN - Resignation email \(rec'd 1 -8-25\)](#)

**6.1.3 Outwards**

- [CRM - Acceptance of resignation - dated 29-7-25](#)
- [GRN - Acceptance of resignation letter dated 1-8-25](#)
- [Principal email - School Behavioural Guidelines](#) (Also included in **2.4**)

Links: [February 2025 principal's report](#)  
Policy - [Behaviour management](#)  
Website guidance - [positive behaviour](#)  
[MoE guidelines](#)

**Motion:** The **6.1.2** Inwards correspondence is accepted, and the **6.1.3** Outwards correspondence is approved.

**Moved** B Wilkinson, **seconded** A Finn. All in favour. Carried.

**6.2 Open Forum / General Business (AOB)** (8.07 pm)

S Flanigan email Board members with proposed dates for Board farewell dinner.

**7. PUBLIC-EXCLUDED / IN-COMMITTEE BUSINESS** (8.08 pm)

**7.1 Personnel / Student / Legal Matters**

**Motion:** That the Board go 'into committee' under section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

**Reason:** to discuss matters relating to staff members and students and matters of a commercially sensitive nature, this being necessary to protect the privacy of the individuals under Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982.

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

Meeting closed at **8.16 pm**

Brendon Wilkinson  
**Presiding Member**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_