

**Minutes for Full Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday 5 May 2026 at 5.30 pm**  
**Held in: Te Puna o Te Pito Mata**  
**Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kawaeranga |**  
**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 **5.34 pm**

**QUORUM: Confirmed**

**1. MIHI WHAKATAU / WELCOME AND KARAKIA**

**1.0** Introduction/whakawhanaungatanga – Led by Lydia Lester

**ADMINISTRATION (5.33 pm)**

**1.1 Present and Apologies**

**Present:** Alia Finn (PM), Michael Hart (Principal), Cindy Dargaville, Ngaio Hodson-Rapana, Lydia Lester, Shannon Paki, Daniel Neufeld, Brooklyn Jiang

**Apologies:** Siobhan Flanigan, Brendon Wilkinson

**In Attendance (Non-Board Members:** Tracey Reed (Minute Secretary), Sharyn Baker (Business Manager)

**Motion:** That speaking rights be granted to the following non-board members in attendance: Sharyn Baker

**Moved:** L Lester. **Seconded** C Dargaville. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

**1.2 Declaration of Interests** – None.

**1.3 Confirmation of Minutes (5.35 pm)**

**Motion:** That the [Draft Minutes of Full Board meeting](#) held on 24 March 2026 are approved, subject to an amendment noting that the minutes of the full Board meeting held on 23 February 2026 were moved by D Neufeld and seconded by L Lester.

**Moved** D Neufeld. **Seconded** N Hodson-Rapana. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

**1.4 Matters Arising (5.37 pm)**

None.

**2. Strategic Reporting and Monitoring (5.38 pm)**

**2.1 Presentation / Curriculum Focus / Reports**

*(attached and taken as read)*

- **Curriculum Achievement Summary** *(no hardcopy provided)*  
[Individual Reports](#) - *(no hardcopies provided)*

The Principal spoke to the 2025 Curriculum Achievement Reports submitted by the Heads of Department (HODs). He noted that most department reports had been received, with the exception of Te Reo Māori and Technology, and that the overall theme was highly positive. The reports reflect an affirmative approach to learning and an upswing in senior student achievement across most areas. A key strength highlighted was the embedding of tikanga and mātauranga Māori coming through strongly at the department level. In terms of challenges, literacy, specifically writing skills, remains a barrier to students achieving merit and excellence endorsements. Departments are actively addressing this by implementing targeted writing frames and consistency frameworks. Engagement and attendance were also reinforced as the primary drivers of success. Several departments are introducing specific plans to lift engagement where students are under-represented, with Health and Art explicitly noting an inquiry into why boys are not taking those subjects as much as expected.

The Board welcomed the clear snapshot provided by the reports, noting the value in seeing the specific highlights, areas for improvement, and shared strategic themes across different courses. The Board also commended the strong community connection shown in the Gateway report, noting the excellent level of local business support for the school's careers program.

**Motion:** That the 2025 Curriculum Achievement Reports are accepted.

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** C Dargaville. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

**Action:** The Board Secretary send letters of gratitude to the Heads of Departments and their teams to thank them for their reporting efforts.

- Te Reo Māori Department Report *(deferred to 9 June Board meeting)*

**2.2 Principal's Report (5.46 pm)**

**2.2.1** [Principal's March Report](#)

**Q & A's** - [Māori taurua support to succeed as Māori \(SP HRT\)](#)

- The Principal spoke to an expanded analysis of NCEA statistical disparities, noting the importance of acknowledging these gaps while focusing on affirmative actions and school values, such as *whakamana* (empowerment), to drive future student success.  
Student retention, keeping students engaged through to Year 13 is a crucial lever for achievement, as those who remain enrolled almost consistently reach their qualification targets.

- D Neufeld expressed that after reviewing the Hunds Foundation entrepreneurship program online, he had reservations regarding the collaborative workload it would require. A concern that committing to the initiative at this stage would create an unsustainable extra strain on teaching staff and departments, particularly given the major national assessment changes already being implemented across the school.
  - The Principal reassured the Board about staff workload. He agreed that the school should avoid initiative overload and confirmed that any involvement with the program would not be an immediate, heavy commitment. Instead, it would be approached as a gradual, long-term pathway, potentially starting with something smaller, like a library makerspace.

### 2.2.2 [Principal's May Report](#)

(attached and taken as read)

[-International Homestay Systems and Regulatory Compliance](#)

[-Term 1 2026 School Counsellor Report](#)

- The Principal spoke to an adjustment in data tracking within the May report, noting that he had modified the methodology to count students with multiple ethnicities across all relevant categories, aligning with the Ministry of Education's attendance reporting practices. This dual-counting approach did not drastically alter the overall statistical picture, as it slightly widened the achievement gap in one area while marginally narrowing it in another. These findings reinforce that the underlying causes of achievement disparities are highly complex and cannot be fully defined by a single demographic descriptor.
  - C Dargaville noted the importance of prioritising Māori data to avoid masking the equity gap, emphasising that regular monitoring will keep the Board focused on implementing targeted tactics to support these taura (students).
- S Paki queried the percentage of Māori versus non-Māori students on the school roll.
  - The Principal noted that approximately 45% of students identify as Māori, representing a near even split of 155 Māori students and 175 European students. He highlighted a significant success in student retention, noting that the proportion of Māori students staying through to Year 13 was highest, to the point where they represented the majority of that senior cohort. While operational funding has shifted to the equity index (EQI) system, the school continues to receive targeted Ministry funding for Māori language instruction levels. This funding has successfully supported the growth and integration of *Te Ao Haka* as a valued, timetabled curriculum subject with significantly increased enrolment.
- The Student Representative suggested an addition to the Year 8 transition program, noting from his own experience with school engagement visits that it would be highly valuable to have recent alumni (current Year 9 students) return to their former primary schools to answer questions and help with any anxieties Year 8 students might have about moving to high school.
  - The Principal confirmed that having Year 9 students visit Year 8 cohorts is a key focus of the current transition strategy. The enrolment plan also includes developing opportunities for future student-led school tours during daily school time, allowing prospective families to see the school running smoothly under the guidance of trained, confident young people.

**Motion:** That the Board receives the Tumuaki/Principal's Reports (March / May 2026)

**Moved** M Hart. **Seconded** B Jiang. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

### 2.3 Finance and Audit Report (6.09 pm)

[Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting](#) held on 28 April 2026 are approved at the Finance Committee meeting.

- The Business Manager spoke to the financial report, noting a variance where the quote for the Chromebooks came in at \$58,000 against a capital budget of \$52,000.

**Motion:** That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that the Term deposits for May 2026 are approved.

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

**Motion:** That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Finance Committee that the accounts payable and credit cards for March 2026 paid April 2026 are approved.

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour. CARRIED**

### Discussion: (6.12 pm)

- Honoraria and expenses proposal
  - [Governance Board Meeting Policy 2026 - Board Payments \(No:17\)](#)
- The Presiding Member initiated a discussion regarding board honoraria and expenses, highlighting the extra time and energy spent by members on committees and special meetings. The current policy stipulates payment for up to 10 meetings per year due to tax implications. It was noted that anything paid over the threshold requires individual tax returns and is subject to a 33% tax rate. The board discussed paying special meetings as board meetings, which would require a policy rewrite and increase school expenditure. Alternative options, such as allocating petrol vouchers for special meetings, were also raised.
- Members shared varying perspectives: one member noted they do not serve for the money and suggested establishing an account to donate payments back, while another expressed a preference not to alter existing policies or adjust for taxes for only a few extra meetings. The Business Manager advised that all board fees derive from the school's operational funds and any increase in governance spending impacts funding available elsewhere, such as for Chromebooks. Following a brief round of feedback, the board agreed with the majority to leave the current policy on the table, with the understanding that the conversation could be revisited if the matter arises again in the future.

- Board bank account (6.23 pm)  
- [MOE Operational Resourcing and Funding - Bank accounts](#)

**Discussion** around the administration of Ministry of Education operational funding and school bank accounts. The board's annual governance budget is \$22,000, which covers fees, training, and strategic expenses. The Business Manager clarified that all funds received by the school automatically become state and board monies that must remain within the legal entity's central account structures and be fully audited. Independent, physical bank accounts cannot be established for separate groups, such as a traditional PTA or a dedicated board savings account. Funds can be internally tagged within specific budget lines to track targeted projects or member donations. Members were reminded that any departmental overspends must be balanced across the wider operational budget, which is directly tied to student enrolment numbers.

## 2.4 Property (6.34 pm)

[Minutes of the Property Committee meeting](#) held on 28 April 2026 is approved at the Property Committee meeting.

Business Manager

- Status of the school heating system, and that a burnt-out port on the boiler is currently being repaired. These repairs will improve the system's efficiency and restore sufficient heating throughout the school.
- Parts have been ordered for the ventilation system; an arrival date is pending supplier confirmation.
- Maintenance work on the library toilets commences on 6 May. During this time, students use the hall toilets and is being managed.

**Motion:** That the Board accepts the recommendation from the Property Committee that the [Property Report April 2026](#) is accepted.

**Moved** D Neufeld. **Seconded** L Lester. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

## 2.5 Other Reports (6.39 pm)

**2.5.1 Staff Health & Safety** - [Minutes of the Staff Health & Safety meeting](#) held on Wednesday 18 March 2026

**Motion:** That the staff Health & Safety Report is accepted.

**Moved** D Neufeld. **Seconded** M Hart. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

## 2.5.2 TAMS0 (6.42 pm)

TAMS0 Liaison: Shannon Paki

- Next TAMS0 Hui proposed date is Thursday 14 May 2026 (6.30 – 8.00 pm)

The Presiding Member asked for clarification on whether TAMS0 was originally set up to support whānau. TAMS0 liaison, S Paki confirmed that based on discussions with Matua Wati, TAMS0 has a strategic focus. It was noted that if TAMS0 becomes a whānau-led group, they would not be involved in choosing the Manukura.

## 2.6 EOTC / Overnight Trip/s: Approvals (6.45 pm)

[EOTC](#) Trips

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

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

## 3. Strategic Discussion and Decision-Making (6.48 pm)

Strategic: Policy, Performance, Planning / Goals / Assurance

### 3.1 Annual Implementation Plan

[2026 Thames High School Annual Implementation Plan - FINAL](#) as submitted to MoE & Information and comment as needed  
The Principal advised that the actions in the draft 2026 AIP have been simplified since it was first presented to the Board earlier this year. The main adjustment is that the baseline data has been extended from Years 9 and 10 to now include Year 11 reading, writing, and mathematics, which is reported on in the Principal's May Report. The Annual Plan Report on the previous AIP will be submitted to the Ministry of Education and shared with the community at the end of May.

**Motion:** The Board accepts the 2026 final Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) as submitted to MoE.

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

### 3.2 Policy Review Schedule (6.51 pm)

**3.2.1 Term 1 2026 Policies** for Review (closed 2 April 2026)

**USERNAME:** thameshigh **PASSWORD:** sealey

- [Alcohol, Drugs, and Other Harmful Substances](#)
- [Sun Protection](#)
- [Digital Technology & Online Safety](#)
- [Cellphones and Other Personal Devices](#)
- [Safety & Welfare for students on Work Experience](#)
- [Firearms](#)
- [THS Firearms](#)

The Student Representative talked about the Cellphone & Devices policy. He mentioned the use of headphones, clarifying that his comments regarding costs referred explicitly to ADHD and anxiety diagnosis costs rather than the physical cost of headphones, noting that those students who need to use headphones the most face these financial barriers.

The Business Manager confirmed that the library & resource manager has recently purchased headphones. The Principal advised that there is the "cellphones & personal devices" as opposed to the devices that plug into computers. Things covered by the Smartphone are covered by the legislation and the school is required to have a policy that reflects that legislation. Teachers discretion is mentioned in the policy but is limited. The Science department uses it as a timing device as there is not enough timing devices in the Science department. Our policy needs to meet the requirements of the law and that phones are kept in the students bags.

The Staff Representative advised the Board that much less management time is spent dedicated to repeatedly asking students to "put your phone away". The Student Representative advised that there is no wording in the policy of the "teachers discretion". The Principal advised that the wording "discretion" is in the legislation. Student representatives point, is that personal devices like iphones, ipods are different from headphones therefore having a different way to listen to your learning without speakers. The Principal advised the current policy is covered by learning devices are accepted (Point 8).

**Motion:** That the Term 1 2026 Policies are ratified by the Board except the [Cellphones and Other Personal Devices](#) to allow the Student Representative time to submit his reviews and bring this back to the Board.

**Moved** B Jiang. **Seconded** N Hodson-Rapana. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

**Amendment Note:** These minutes were approved subject to a correction clarifying that Brooklyn Jiang's comments on costs referred explicitly to ADHD and anxiety diagnosis costs, not the physical cost of headphones.

#### 4. Board Process and Self-Review (7.06 pm)

Strategic: Governance Capability / Continuous Improvement

##### 4.1. [School Board Administration Support](#)

- [Board Administration Support \(Tiered, Meeting-Based Model\)](#)
- [Letter of Resignation as Minute Secretary](#)
- Vacancy

(7.24 pm)

**Motion:** That the meeting be extended by up to 30 minutes to allow for the completion of urgent business.

**Moved** A Finn. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

##### Discussion:

- Shannon expressed preference for Option C, noting the need is there and it provides a time saving. Shannon added that TAMSOS's preference would be to include a note taker and keep everything consistent.
- A question was asked regarding the total cost and additional cost.
- The Principal clarified that the total cost is the amount for the role, and the additional cost is the difference between what is currently being spent and what is extra.
- Cindy spoke in support of Option C.
- Lydia spoke in support of Option A.
- Ngaio spoke in support of the majority vote.
- The **majority** of the Board indicated preference for Option C.

**Motion:** The Board approves the establishment of a casual Board Administration support role and adopt **Option C** noting that this represents extra expenditure beyond current provision with remuneration set on \$35-\$40 per hour plus 15% loading and provision for additional hours, as required.

**Moved** C Dargaville. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour.** The Principal **abstained** from this motion and stepped out for the vote

##### Following Motion:

- The Principal noted that there is a lot of pressure on the deficit. If there is an external initiative coming into the school having been paid for, savings are made elsewhere.

The Presiding Member thanked the Board Secretary for her assistance and work in the space as minute taker for the Board.

**Motion:** That the letter of resignation as board minute taker is accepted.

**Moved** N Hodson-Rapana. **Seconded** D Neufeld. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

#### 4.2 Casual Vacancy Update (Timeline)

##### Discussion in PEB In-committee.

[Guide to Board Structure](#)

- [Casual Vacancy Flowchart Timeline](#) (Selection or By-Election)

- [Proposed overview of commitment of Board member](#)

- Casual vacancy – **three** candidates' statements

#### 4.3 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Members' Conference 17 – 19 July 2026 (7.40 pm)

Venue: Aotea Centre, Auckland

- [About the NZSBA Conference](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Programme](#)
- [Guest Speakers](#)
- Board Professional Development budget for 2026 is **\$4K**.

Expressions of Interest from Board Members to attend the 2026 NZSBA Conference are: **Shannon Paki** and Student Representative **Brooklyn Jiang**.

#### 5. Correspondence and Other Business (7.41 pm)

##### 5.1 Inwards / Outwards Correspondence

###### 5.1.1 Inwards

- [Notification of an Education Review Office \(ERO\) Hauhake Phase Evaluation for THS \(1.1.1\)](#)
- [Special Issue Ministry Bulletin for School Leaders – He Pitopito Kōrero](#)
- [Hon Erica Stanford dated 2 Apr 26](#)
- [Inward - 2025 ASH Y10 Snapshot Survey - Results](#)
- [SPAM Email - Board members be aware!](#)

###### 5.1.2 Outwards – None

**Motion:** The Inwards correspondence is accepted

**Moved** L Lester. **Seconded** B Jiang. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

#### 6. Public-Excluded Business (In-Committee) (7.41 pm)

##### 6.1 Confirmation of In-Committee Minutes

##### 6.2 Matters Arising

##### 6.3 Outcome of employment matter

##### 6.4 Board Member Casual vacancy

##### 6.5 Leave applications (Staff members)

**Motion:** That the public be excluded from the following parts/s of the proceedings of this meeting 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** L Lester. **Seconded** B Jiang. **All in favour. CARRIED.**

Full Board Meeting closed at **8.14 pm**

Alia Finn

**Presiding Member** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_