

# CONFIRMED MINUTES

## FACE TO FACE BOARD MEETING

At the **Zoom Board meeting** on **10 Jun 2026** these minutes were **confirmed as presented**.

<b>Name:</b>	New Board of Ko Taku Reo_2026
<b>Date:</b>	Saturday, 16 May 2026
<b>Time:</b>	9:00 am to 5:00 pm (NZST)
<b>Location:</b>	Rydges Wellington Airport, Wellington Airport
<b>Committee Members:</b>	Victoria Manning (Committee Chair), Adrian Easton , Chris Sinclair, Edeh Sullivan, Oliver Ferguson, Patrick Stokell, Amy Geue, Lexus Thompson, Sierra Wetzel
<b>Attendees:</b>	Cindy Cascalheira
<b>Apologies:</b>	Barbara Alaalatoa, Jennifer Smith, Chris France

### 1. Opening Meeting

#### 1.1 Welcome / Karakia

Opened with a longer whakawhanaungatanga session to get to know the new student representatives and for them to get to know the board members.

The Presiding Member reminded everyone of the way she will be facilitating the meeting, including eye breaks and timed breaks throughout the meeting.

#### 1.2 Present

#### 1.3 Apologies

#### 1.4 Approving of past minutes

**Zoom Board meeting 25 Mar 2026**, the minutes were confirmed with the following changes:

*Board secretary to redact commercially sensitive information from the minute prior to public release*



#### Redact commercially sensitive information

Board secretary to redact commercially sensitive information from the minutes prior to public release

**Due Date:** 16 May 2026  
**Owner:** Cindy Cascalheira

#### 1.5 Interests Register

## 1.6 Correspondence

Correspondence was received and taken as read

## 1.7 ECE Trust Board



### ECE Trust Board Representative

Appointment of Amy Geue as board rep on the ECE Trust.

<b>Decision Date:</b>	16 May 2026
<b>Mover:</b>	Victoria Manning
<b>Seconder:</b>	Chris Sinclair
<b>Outcome:</b>	Approved

## 1.8 Code of Conduct

### Number 3 – I actively promote a safe school environment

The Board has a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for school staff, particularly the leadership team, and to ensure the Executive Principal feels safe raising concerns.

Board relationships should remain respectful, honest, and constructive, with members able to appropriately address behaviours and recognise the difference between classroom-level discussions and Board or committee matters.

Discussions should be kind and sensitive while still allowing for difficult conversations when necessary. All Board members are equal, with no hierarchy in meetings, and together hold significant public responsibility.

As a Board responsible for Deaf Education in New Zealand, members share a duty to keep the school safe. The Executive Principal should feel comfortable bringing matters to the Board, and members should respect differing perspectives while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

Board members should speak up respectfully, listen to others, and give and receive feedback in a constructive and considerate way. If behaviour appears inconsistent with the Code of Conduct, members should feel safe to raise concerns appropriately.

Concerns should be considered from multiple perspectives before decisions are made. While disagreement is acceptable, the Board must remain respectful, professional, and able to make decisions even when consensus is not reached. Matters may also be discussed individually with the Presiding Member to determine how best to raise them with the wider Board.

### Number 4 – I am respectful of my fellow Board members and act consistently with the designated or special character of my school

Ko Raku Reo's special character is New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), which is central to both our students and the identity of the school.

The Board follows Deaf-friendly meeting protocols that support accessibility and effective communication, reflecting the unique nature of our school community.

Board members should also recognise that they are visible representatives of the Board within the wider community and are expected to behave appropriately and professionally at all times.

A special character school has a distinctive cultural or philosophical focus within its curriculum, such as Catholic schools or Kura Kaupapa Māori schools, which helps shape the school's identity and approach to education.

## 2. Principals report

### 2.1 Executive Principal - Amy Geue

#### Report

The report was received and taken as read.

The Executive Principal presented her report to the Board in NZSL video format, which was appreciated.

#### Wellington Provision – Linden (pause)

The Board discussed the pausing of the Wellington provision at Linden, including the timing of communications and Board awareness of the matter. Questions were raised about whether this should have been brought to the Board earlier.

It was noted that in February the school was still expecting to fill the teaching role and continue the provision, so there was no update to provide at that stage.

It was clarified that employment and communication matters sit with the LSM, acting on behalf of the Board. The Executive Principal followed the correct process by informing the LSM and Presiding Member, with agreement to communicate first with parents, followed by the wider community. No concerns were raised regarding the process followed.

#### Report Discussions

There has been a significant reduction in stand-down numbers, largely due to all teachers receiving CPI training to support de-escalation during potential crises.

Staff are increasingly identifying the most appropriate person to support students during times of crisis, particularly those with established relationships. CPI training also supports understanding of Deaf-specific body language and includes strategies such as classroom time-out support.

Stand-down decisions are made through consultation. There is also an option of “stand-down to residence,” where students are stood down from school but remain at the residence with support from Deaf staff.

CPI training is ongoing, with trained staff supporting others. Training has also been offered to mainstream partner schools.

#### Meeting with the Minister

The meeting was positive. Discussions included capacity pressures at the South Auckland provision, which is at full capacity.

The ORS model was discussed, with concerns raised about its effectiveness. The review of early intervention AODC services was also discussed. The Minister was thanked for funding the NZSL Bibi project.

#### SAG Meetings

The Ministry of Education is currently reviewing SAG meetings.



#### The Executive Principal report to continue to be provided into NZSL

The board request that the Executive Principals report is supplied in NZSL and loaded onto the school website.

**Due Date:** 30 May 2026

**Owner:** Amy Geue



#### Accept the Executive Principals report

The Executive Principals report has been accepted by all board members

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026

**Mover:** Adrian Easton

**Seconded:** Oliver Ferguson  
**Outcome:** Approved

### 3. Decisions for action

#### 3.1 Gathering of data request needing approval

##### **Staff Information Collection and Accessibility (Interpreters and Accommodations)**

This item was received and taken as read.

The Board agreed that any information collected must comply with the Education Act, Employment Act, Privacy Act, and Human Rights Act. It was determined that email responses would not be appropriate for collecting sensitive information.

Instead, a structured online form will be developed to securely collect staff information. The form should include:

- Updated personal details
- Preferred method of communication (e.g. text or phone call)
- Any reasonable accommodations required to support staff in their role
- An optional question asking whether staff are deaf or hard of hearing

The school must clearly explain why this information is being collected, how it will be used, where it will be stored, and who it may be shared with. Staff must also be informed that providing this information is voluntary. However, the school may be limited in its ability to provide appropriate support if it is unaware of individual support needs.

The Board noted the importance of distinguishing between identifying whether a staff member is deaf or hard of hearing and identifying the accommodations needed to support them in their role. The focus of the form is to ensure appropriate support can be provided.

All information will be securely managed through the HR system to protect privacy. Aggregated data may be shared with the Ministry of Education to support applications for interpreter funding and additional resourcing.

Staff communication, including the form, will be provided in both written format and NZSL translation. It was suggested that the communication be jointly issued by the Executive Principal and Presiding Member.

An assurance statement regarding data storage, privacy, and intended use must be provided to the Board before the forms are released to staff.



#### **Gathering data request**

Approved

- Staff Information Collection

A staff survey will be used to collect relevant information. Participation is voluntary, and staff are encouraged to provide as much information as they are comfortable sharing.

Human Resources must provide assurance to the Board that all data will be managed in accordance with the Privacy Act.

The purpose of the survey must be clearly communicated to staff, including that information is being collected for emergency preparedness and for funding purposes.

It must also be clearly stated how the information will be used and shared. Any reporting will be in aggregated form only (e.g. totals and percentages), and no individual staff members will be identified. All data will remain anonymous and confidential.

The Executive Principal and the Presiding Member will jointly record a video to explain the purpose and importance of the survey. This communication will not be issued by Human Resources.

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026



### **the need for an HR committee**

Discussions around the need for an HR committee

The board decided that this was unnecessary and no need for the board to be involved in HR matters.

Note that the current LSM has full authority over employment related matters

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026

**Mover:** Adrian Easton

**Seconder:** Edeh Sullivan

**Outcome:** Approved

## **3.2 4. New website proposal**

Proposal received and taken as read

Discussions were had around the cost and timeframe of the proposal



### **Request for board funds to support the redesign of the school website**

The Board approved funding for the development of the new school website.

This expenditure is not included in the current budget and will be funded from Board reserves. The Board confirmed approval of this funding, noting that sufficient funds are available to cover the cost.

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026

**Mover:** Chris Sinclair

**Seconder:** Oliver Ferguson

**Outcome:** Approved

## **3.3 Board to meet with Executive team**

- The board would like to write to the executive team to invite them to meet with the board
- The board want the executive team to feel support by the board and let them know we have support
- This will be planned around the August board meeting



### **A letter to the Executive team**

The board to write a letter to the Executive team inviting them to a meet and greet in August when the board meet again face to face

**Due Date:** 25 May 2026

**Owners:** Edeh Sullivan, Victoria Manning

## **3.4 Whanaungatanga community days with the board**

- These events were planned and postponed due to various reasons
- These events will take place later in the term
- the details for these events will be shared with the board, staff, parent community and will be shared on our website, Facebook and through our student management system to all parents

- If there is an event in your area please join in and support the school



### Community whanaungatanga events

Approve the Executive Principal to plan these events

If there is an event in a board members area they will do their best to attend

These need to be planned in conjunction with the Deaf club nights in each area where possible

South Auckland might need their own event to allow those families to attend without having to drive out too far

The school will have

Face to face : Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch

Zoom: for other areas and all parent community

Zoom: youth session led by studnets supported by adults

- Board need to ensure the sessions are well facilitated and that staff, students and the board are protected and kept safe
- The school has a very clear concerns and complaints procedure, these events are not for addressing any specific individual concerns and complaints, the focus will be community engagement

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026

**Mover:** Amy Geue

**Seconder:** Chris Sinclair

**Outcome:** Approved

### 3.5 Deaf leadership programme

The Board previously received the proposal and approved it in principle, subject to funding availability. The Finance Committee has confirmed that funding is available.

The project will commence in September 2026.

In Year 1, Stephanie Cawthorn will lead and facilitate the programme. In Year 2, with her support, the programme will be delivered internally by the school.

An initial cohort of approximately 12–15 staff will participate, who will then act as facilitators for the Year 2 programme.

At the conclusion of the programme, Ko Taku Reo will retain ownership and delivery capability of the programme

The initiative provides an opportunity to develop current and emerging Deaf leaders within the school.



### Deaf leadership programme

The board approve the Deaf leadership programme in full

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026

**Mover:** Victoria Manning

**Seconder:** Chris Sinclair

**Outcome:** Approved

## 4. Action updates

### 4.1 Action List

Due Date	Action Title	Owner(s)
30 Jan 2026	Constitution change discussions to take place <b>Status:</b> In Progress	Victoria Manning
27 Feb 2026	Review delegations <b>Status:</b> On Hold	Cindy Cascalheira

## 5. Updates

### 5.1 MoE Resourcing Notice Report May 2026

Report received and taken as read

- Report against the resourcing notice



#### Approved the MoE report against the Resourcing notice

The board approve the MoE report against the Resourcing Notice  
This will be submitted to the MoE

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026  
**Mover:** Oliver Ferguson  
**Seconder:** Adrian Easton  
**Outcome:** Approved

### 5.2 Finance and Property

The financial position is currently positive.

The Executive Principal will prepare a wish list of priorities for consideration. The Finance Committee will review these items and allocate funding as appropriate.

The Board noted the importance of maintaining a contingency fund; however, the current level is considered high relative to the size of the enrolled school and should be reviewed and reduced over time.

Financial delegations were also identified as overly restrictive and require review.

#### Matai house ownership

- The school are working with the MoE to ensure that ownership of Matai house remains with the MoE
- Matai house is the wharekai to the marae but more importantly a learning space for all our Deaf and Heard of Hearing students



#### Board do not agree to the purchase of Matai house

The board agree to the school requesting that the MoE maintain ownership of Matai House as a learning space for Deaf and Heard of Hearing students

**Decision Date:** 16 May 2026  
**Mover:** Victoria Manning  
**Seconder:** Adrian Easton  
**Outcome:** Approved

### 5.3 U-Grading for Ko Taku Reo

- The MoE have agreed to a meeting to discuss what's happened in the past and how we got to where we are today. The plan will be to look at what options there might be for the school going forward
- Board agreed the Executive Principal, Board Representative (ES), Presiding Member, LSM and board secretary will attend the meeting with the MoE

### 5.4 NZSBA - Govt Hub

The webinars and training on Govt Hub is not accessible through NZSL

This needs to be addressed directly with Govt Hub

## 6. Policy review

### 6.1 Appointments Policy

The Board noted that policies must include the LSM.

A board member may request a policy review at any time; however, the Board must be informed of the policy to be reviewed and the rationale for the review. The LSM must approve any review request, and the LSM's decision is final.

SchoolDocs manages the school's policy framework, ensuring legal compliance and updating policies in response to changes in legislation. The framework provides legal assurance and support for the school.

While the school may propose policy changes when necessary, changes should be made with caution, and the SchoolDocs framework should generally be relied upon unless there is a significant issue requiring intervention.

## 7. Delegation Schedule

### 7.1 Schedule of delegations for board review

The school's delegations framework is complex and requires review following the establishment of the Board and a permanent Executive Principal.

The Board is responsible for setting the financial direction of the school. Once approved, the Executive Principal is responsible for implementing this within the strategic plan.

Current financial delegations are considered overly restrictive. While the Head of Finance and Corporate Services provides advice, the Executive Principal should hold decision-making authority within the agreed financial direction set by the Board.

The delegations framework should be revised to provide greater flexibility for operational financial decisions while maintaining appropriate Board oversight.



#### **Executive Principal to review all delegations**

Executive principal to review delegations and bring a proposal for approval to the board

**Due Date:** 14 Aug 2026

**Owner:** Amy Geue

## 8. Reports / Updates taken as read

### 8.1 School area reports

Report received and taken as read

### 8.2 Modern data platform - FYI

Report received and taken as read

### 8.3 Board Assurance Statements

Report received and taken as read

### 8.4 Board approved EOTC

## 9. Close Meeting

### 9.1 Close the meeting

**Next meeting:** Face to Face Wellington Provision vistic - 15 May 2026, 9:00 am

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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