

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AQUINAS COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD ON 24th NOVEMBER 2022 AT 5.30 PM IN THE BOARDROOM**

PRESENT: Matt Dalton, Clare Sokimi, Amy Rogers, Ruth Dunne, Rod Way, Karen Guise, Finley Jones, James McNamee (arrived 6.20pm)

IN ATTENDANCE: Susan van Zyl, Kurt Kennedy, Gavin Hesqua, Lorraine Schofield

Matt opened the meeting at 5.43pm with a karakia.

APOLOGIES: Katie Ryall, Kelly Jury, Therese Ford-Cartwright

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - none

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved that: Minutes from the previous meeting held on 29th September 2022 as amended be accepted as a true and correct record. Amy Rogers/Karen Guise

— Change STAR to NZSTA under Board Vacancy discussion.

29th September 2022 meeting action items:

Action Item	Who	Due Date	Completed By
<i>Review PTA constitution before next meeting</i>	<i>RW, MD</i>	<i>Nov. 24</i>	<i>Carried Forward</i>
<i>Ruth to share Suzanne Aubert's constitution</i>	<i>RD</i>	<i>Nov. 24</i>	<i>Carried Forward</i>

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The report was taken as read with the following points highlighted:

- *Matt outlined the recent jump in NCEA achievement rates, a pleasing result that reflects the hard work of students and staff. Endorsement rates are now also looking positive. Speaking as a parent, Amy applauded the week of tutorials offered to students and commended the lengths teachers have gone to for students.*
- *The budget process is behind target. The 2023 budget will be ratified at the first meeting of next year.*
- *Math LOL Katy Thorne has been awarded a secondary teachers' support grant. Proposing to accommodate this with one day off each fortnight.*
- *Mobile Phone Policy: Maintain status quo or switch to phone-free policy for year 7 to 10/11 students. SLT now weighing community feedback. There is a clear community*

mandate for a ban. New policy to be announced next week. Highlights of Board feedback:

- Seems logical to treat senior school differently although some support for extending phone-free policy to Year 11 too. Finley noted that a quarter of Year 11 students are in accelerated classes with Year 12 and 13 students, presenting a double-standard if some students in a class are permitted phones and others are not. Karen said staff are pleased with the community's support for going phone-free.
- *Building Project:* Matt to update the community of building plans in the last school Newsletter and advise that Term 1 will be disruptive.
- *Farewell for Long-Term Staff:* Fr Mark is coming to celebrate the December 6 mass.

Moved that: The Principal's Report be accepted.

Amy Rogers/Claire Sokimi

YEAR 7 & 8 FACULTY REVIEW

Year 7 & 8 Faculty LOL Gavin Hesqua presented. The report was taken as read. Key discussion points were:

- *COVID Impact:* The past two years have focused foremost on student well-being. Online learning became a norm but teachers are now striving for a better balance between that and working on paper (resulting in faculty's recent increased paper costs.)
- *2023 Goal:* Has been to promote engagement in maths and literacy (Craig Render, Minecraft etc.) Frontloaded a Year 7 and Year 8 class to bring students up-to-speed in numeracy — hope to expand that next year. Susan and Katie each took a class once a week but suggest twice a week would be better.
- *Additional Focus:* The team is trying to prepare itself to cater to the learning abilities of the 2023 cohort (quite a few with dyslexia.) Potentially, have greater involvement from Andy Howells. Also structuring student work so that it easily feeds into Graduate Profile progressions. Continued work on Middle School progression from Year 7 to Year 10, focusing first on literacy and numeracy then science. Susan commended Gavin for the amount of work to establish those Year 7 to Year 10 learning connections.
- *Resource Wish-List:* Top request would be to have all Year 7 & 8 classes in the same block. Also mentioned installing more tables outside the block to enable greater indoor/outdoor learning.
- *Challenges:* Year 8 numeracy — 28 percent of students were below expected milestone at the start of the year. All students have since progressed but perhaps not as much as hoped.
- *Year 8 Cohort:* Concerned about some of this group. Planning a programme to support them through Year 9 (literacy and numeracy.) Parents will be encouraged to opt for this extra support but it will likely mean students miss out on some option classes. Exploring how to resource this.
- *Structured Literacy:* Noted that the current Year 7 & 8 cohort have not had the benefits of Structured Literacy teaching, meaning some of them likely lack the foundational skills to meet prerequisites. It will take time for explicit teaching to filter through so are exploring strategies to fill the gaps for affected students.
- Board members commended Gavin and the Year 7 & 8 team.

FINANCE AND PROPERTY REPORT

The report was taken as read with the following points highlighted by the Chair:

- *2023 Budget: Process is running behind schedule but plan to give Carmen additional support. Expect to have first draft before school ends after which the Finance & Property Committee will work to have it ready for Board ratification at the first 2023 meeting.*
- *Electricity Cost Increase: Given the forecast hike in Aquinas' electricity costs, solar is now being explored to weigh its merits. Some businesses are using solar power and it seems to make economic sense. It could be an innovative idea for the education sector and, as such, could garner financial support from TECT and the likes for stewardship in natural resource protection. Worth exploring.*

Moved that: *The Finance & Property Report be accepted.*

Matt Dalton/Rod Way

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

The minutes of the committee's last meeting were taken as read.

Policy 3.6 Protected Disclosures:

Retire policy and fold into Policy 3.1 Concerns and Complaints. Revisit at the next meeting.

Policy 5.3 Surrender and Retention:

Tweaked to make reference to correct legislation and personnel.

Moved that: *Updated Policy 5.3 Surrender and Retention is ratified*

Clare Sokimi/Rod Way

Policy 5.12 Child Protection:

Moved that: *Updated Policy 5.3 Child Protection is ratified*

Amy Rogers/Matt Dalton

Flow Chart of Action (Policy 5.12 Child Protection):

Moved that: *Updated Flow Chart of Action is ratified*

Amy Rogers/Matt Dalton

Policy 3.1 (Concerns and Complaints):

Still requires adjustments. A draft policy and potentially a Term of Reference to be presented at the next Board meeting. Proposing to next year introduce a standing Concerns & Complaints Committee to support the principal on a case-by-case basis for incidents that go beyond a preliminary assessment. The panel would be mobilised as needed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Moved that: *That the Inward and Outward Correspondence are accepted.*

Matt Dalton/Clare Sokimi

NZ Catholic (Secondary) Principals Conference:

Matt will be attending. Noted there has been a lot of push-back from the conservative right over the Aroha and Diversity in Catholic Schools: Document produced by NZ Bishops. There is a petition to rescind it.

GENERAL BUSINESS

2022 Attendance Report:

Unsurprisingly, report shows a significant decrease in physical attendance at school this year (pandemic, ongoing illness absence.) Noted that 586 of the school's 740 students have had at least one period or Tutor class coded E (explained but unjustified.) This could be leaving school early for a long weekend, family event or simply the student slept in. The significance is that it is in addition to the large amount of justified medical absences. In addition, 195 students were classified as G for taking holidays during termtime. Matt plans to address this alarming statistic in the upcoming newsletter. Lastly, 17 students have had at least one period this year classified as truant (a low number that reflects our community.)

Moved that: *The Board will accept the 2022 Attendance Report.*

Matt Dalton/Rod Way

Staff Well-Being Survey Data and Strategies:

Seventy of Aquinas' 84 staff members responded to the survey, providing SLT with great confidence in the data set which is now being analysed. Overall, responses are positive. Interesting feedback on consultation, with some taking the view that consultation should be used to make the decision, not inform it. Workload is the overarching issue raised and an area of concern. A reasonable proportion of respondees believe they are on the path to burnout. Need to unpack this more. Universal support for the Family Day. Will analyse further to form recommendations.

New Era Contract:

- *Jobs are being completed although there are a lot of student and staff drop-ins. Access/passwords are the top student issue. Acknowledgement that Abi is still learning. Noted that no outside contractors were needed this year because of New Era.*
- *Aquinas Development Plan: Currently running behind schedule but New Era aims to start process before year's end. Will initially focus on the school's future needs. Discussion on need for a cyclical buying programme and use/cost of Family Zone.*
- *New Era's Cyber Security Strategy: Kurt to investigate and report back on New Era's threat surveillance and N4L's standard security statistics/system.*

Working Alone Procedure:

Matt has established a procedure to safeguard staff members working onsite alone. Primarily in response to upcoming scenario where Property Assistant Glenn Evans will be working while Property Manager Jason Yorke is on annual leave. Outlined new procedure and invited Board feedback. If supported, new system will be shared with staff at the start of 2023. Has already been put into place with Glenn. Discussion on use of alarm system to notify principal/deputy of staff member's arrival/departure from school.

CES Board Election Feedback:

In light of poor voter turn-out for the recent BOT election, CES was approached for statistics on how many Aquinas parents/caregivers received and/or opened their nomination emails. CES responded that this data has been deleted and, as such, no information is available. Viewing this as an unsatisfactory response, Board members felt CES should not be used again for future elections.

Musical Production Proposal:

*Although traditionally a biannual event, there has been little staff appetite to do a big musical. Noted that these productions are wonderful but take a huge toll on staff wellbeing. Instead, Matt proposed supporting a proposal by Drama Teacher Gillian Oosthuizen to stage a production of *Pride & Prejudice* at the Tauranga Musical Theatre in June. A good interim step, it would give the school's student actors an opportunity to showcase their talents. At just \$11,200, the event could be funded without ticket revenue.*

The Board approved the idea in principle but requested the date be checked to ensure it does not clash with the King's Birthday holiday weekend.

2023 Meeting Schedule:

The Board agreed to move ahead with the proposed 2023 meeting dates and confirm once the new committees are elected next year.

CALL FOR BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING - None

Moved that: *General Business be accepted*

Rod Way/Matt Dalton

The Board went into Public Excluded business at 7.51pm.

Action Item	Who	Due Date	Completed By
<i>Review PTA constitution</i>	<i>RW, MD</i>	<i>2023</i>	

<i>Ruth to share Suzanne Aubert's constitution</i>	<i>RD</i>	<i>2023</i>	
<i>Check New Era Cyber Security Strategy and N4L's standard security statistics/system</i>	<i>KK</i>	<i>2023</i>	
<i>Check Pride & Prejudice date does not clash with King's Birthday Weekend</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>2023</i>	