



Stratford High School Board Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 6.31 pm in Staffroom, Stratford High School

Present:	Jason Loveridge - Chair, Carl Triggs, Brent Watkins, Greg Topless, Kate Machen Cameron Stone (Principal), Riejeanne Campbell (Staff Rep), Lily Single (Student Rep)
Late:	
In Attendance:	Nic Orr – HOD Music
Apologies:	Jane Tobin

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

Member	
Cameron Stone	Overseas application - rugby

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. Nicholas Orr – HOD Arts Department

Mr Orr spoke to his report attached in the agenda and explained where he thought improvement was needed – i.e. regarding write-ups, practical assessments and standards, templates and process to follow. Year 11 results were a bit of a surprise being lower than envisaged. Last year's Level 2's who are now Year 13 - noted there has been a big reduction in returning numbers in the classes. But senior classes in the future are looking good and concentrating on trying to retain the junior classes. Level 3 results were shocking, and have reflected on the senior class culture – in the past he had been quite hands off with the seniors but realized that approach not working as it isn't sustaining interest – so looking at structuring the class better and changing the culture. It is recognized the success with results and the connection between the students that are attending the music lessons regularly and the itinerant music lessons, are the ones that are doing well at performance particularly, that is a positive and it shows our ITM programs are working well. Also focusing on relationships with the students, know them, know their needs, interests and aspirations and where they want to be and then how music is going to help their pathway.

Conversation around the challenges of identifying if achievement is not being met by students followed. Nic explained he has been teaching more earlier in the year and then assessing later in the year as a trend. It can be hard to spot but have more awareness over the last couple of years and knowing the students more. Shoulder tapping students, especially in the Year 11 space, and contacting home before assessments and afterwards keeping parents in the loop also. The question was asked to Nic if he has seen, as we've grown as a school, an increase in demand for itinerant music? Nic answered there is a lot of front-end interest – around 10% of the roll is in lessons or 60 students at a time. Definitely seeing growth in the junior school, lots of students signing up and a wait list – the issue is sustaining their interest, absences can take a toll, especially if its only a fortnightly lesson and they miss that lesson they don't see a tutor for a month so that can have an impact. Also noticed this with choir – initially got a choir off the ground at the start of the year, it gained momentum from the production last year – lots of kids theoretically interested and show up for maybe one or two practices, and he works hard to create a positive environment and choose the music that they want to be doing and set the right kind of tone, and then only get two or three people turn up for rehearsal – you can't sustain a choir with those numbers. The issue is committing to stuff – the follow through after signing up but it seems there is a resistance to commitment and hard work. Mr Stone commented it's not an individual school issue – it's a generational issue across the country, probably across the world if we look deeper. Technology has created that laziness because its easy to sit on that instant gratification. This comes back to

the commitment to attend the lessons and it shows with the achievement in music and NCEA. Nic always has conversations with those on the cusp of not achieving and saying you've got to put the work in.

A question was asked if we lend out instruments. Nic replied at present not really – it depends on the instrument – guitars are easy, but things like keyboards and drums not so easy. Orchestral instruments etc. there would have to be a cost or bond to the student to enable this. For instance the cost of a trumpet would be \$300-400 and the admin around it and addition to the workload. The classroom is open at lunchtime which raised another talking point around the music classrooms upgrades and the sound proofing requirements.

Nic concluded by commenting on budget and appreciated the support from the board when any resources required. Completing the carpeting in the side rooms, computer lab and office would finish off the upgrades to the music space. Climate control was also discussed of the department.

New curriculum discussion and the complexity was of concern to Nic and the balance between keeping it engaging and hand-on as well as trying to give as much curriculum coverage is going to be a big challenge moving forward. He commented he didn't know how he was going to navigate that yet, but suspected we would see that in the achievement data, particularly for junior school, that once we start teaching this new curriculum there's going to be a vast majority of students below curriculum, not because our students are failing, but because the curriculum level is so much higher. Year 9 and 10 is a pretty basic music course for that very reason to keep it accessible and as an entry level thing in junior school, but by the time they get to senior school they've got to be playing with a super level and you need to get them there in quite a short time, and with the time allocations indicated its just not enough. Mr Stone commented on the exposure in the primary schools that doesn't really happen, so the students are coming in with very low exposure to the arts and technology curriculums.

ADMINISTRATION - Minutes

Matters Arising from previous meeting:

Board :

Red Van Update – van has been into the shop and fixed and now being utilized.

People & Policy Sub-Committee:

The Sub-Committee Chair gave a brief summary of the minutes as attached in the agenda.

Ride sharing for staff living outside Stratford – a survey was sent out to staff. Red Van trialed but not enough uptake from staff – preference for staff to carpool.

Overseas Trip applications – two applications received – netball and rugby. The Principal noted a conflict of interest in discussion as he was leading the application for the rugby trip initially to Japan and then reconsidered to Fiji to experience a different culture rather than Australia. Discussion then focused around the expectation of costs per student, and the amount of fundraising required. The recent Australia Hockey Trip and cost was used as an example, comparing the costs for the proposed netball trip application. It was recommended in the sub-committee minutes to cap the amount of fundraising allowed per student, therefore minimizing the impact on asking the community for support.

Decisions are now required – next steps with both applications. Rugby costs are still pending – the intention is to take two teams of 12 – boys and girls playing 7s or 10s. This opens up the opportunity to more students. It was noted the previous netball trip initially proposed two teams, but the excessive cost dwindled the numbers to go. The policy of adults to students should be considered, and whether there should be one or two trips per year approved. Discussion of a hardship budget was also discussed but this hasn't been used for overseas trips to date.

Finance & Property Sub-Committee:

The Sub-Committee Chair gave a brief summary of the minutes as attached in the agenda.

No updates from Brad Gibbon regarding lounge. Carpet in library yet to be completed. Brad Gibbons has now finished as a co-opt to the Committee. It was suggested a letter of acknowledgement for Brad in his nine plus years of service be sent.

The roof tenders closed on Friday and applications will be considered in the next few weeks. It was noted the toilet upgrades were now at a level where they are desperately required to be upgraded. This work will be undertaken by Brad Gibbons during the school holidays.

Discussion on purchase of an iPad or similar for board members was raised and agreed to.

Principal has met with the Dairy Trust Manager and Demonstration Farm Manager, and agreed for takeover on 14 July 2026. An email has since been received and handover details are now being further negotiated. The purchase of stock as per the recommendation in the sub-committee will proceed as required once paddocks are free.

2. Confirmation of minutes:

Resolution:

That the Board take as read and confirms the minutes and resolutions of the Board of Trustees Meeting held at Stratford High School on 24 March 2026.

Receipt of Sub-Committee Minutes:

That the recommendation regarding a fundraising cap of \$2,000 per student, be amended to \$1,500 per student, and a ratio of 1 adult to 8 students, and that the netball and rugby applications be resubmitted to the next Sub-Committee with revised costs based on this new recommendation.

That the Board receives the minutes of the People and Policy Sub-Committee held at Stratford High School on Tuesday 21 April 2026, and adopts any recommendations therein.

That the Board receives the minutes of the Finance and Property Sub-Committee held at Stratford High School on Wednesday 22 April 2026, and adopts any recommendations therein.

Moved: Jason Loveridge
Seconded: Cameron Stone
Carried: ALL

TRUSTEE REPORTS

3. Principal – Cameron Stone – April 2026 Report

The Principal spoke to his tabled report for the month.

Attendance codes have been updated in the KAMAR system based on Ministry changes. This has effectively increased attendance rates slightly. Chronic attendance sits at 7.78%. Year 9 attendance is always the best, and Year 12 and 13s are the best due to the qualification. He also drew the Boards attendance to SMART testing. A video has been posted on social media. This is a busy term for Year 9s and 10s – it is a school-wide testing that looks at literacy and numeracy. It will be used twice a year and we will be able to track where are students are at and if the school is making a difference. Current Year 11 literacy and numeracy rates (based from last year's Year 10) were discussed – at the moment only 41% of students have literacy in Year 11, and these results against the national results.

Mr Stone expanded on a guest speaker to a recent staff meeting, Dane Haskell from Safer Community Trust. It centered around a current reality of our teenagers and where they are and what they are watching and exposed to. AI companions were discussed and the technology and mental health issues. It was suggested to invite Dane back to speak to the school students in the future.

Opening of the new Te Rangimarie building went very well and it has provided a really good space.

Discussion on recruitment of vacant Careers Advisor will continue.

Formal acknowledgement was required that the proposed Principals sabbatical be delayed until Term 2 2027.

Resolution:

That the Board take as read and confirms the Principal's Report for April 2026.

That the Board accept the change of dates for the Principals sabbatical to Term 2 2027.

Moved: Carl Triggs
Seconded: Brent Watkins
Carried: ALL

4. Student – Lily Single – tabled.

Miss Single spoke to her report, highlighting the last months events – Easter Egg hunt, ANZAC day wreath making, Kapa Haka Festival.

Resolution:

That the Board take as read and confirms the Student Report for April 2026.

Moved: Lily Single
Seconded: Cameron Stone
Carried: ALL

5. Staff – Riejanne Campbell – verbal report.

Ms Campbell advised there were a number of staff, although not unhappy here, were more worried with regards to the new curriculum and what it will require them to be teaching, or even pick up a new subject. There are a lot of different needs in the classroom and it is really difficult to cater for all those different needs, and seeing a lot of anxiety from this and finding it hard to motivate students if they don't want to do it. Simple things like getting students to complete lessons, see it through – they want to do it now in two lessons and how many credits will they get. Will there need to be extra support in Pastoral as well? The staff were really thankful with the clothing provided by the Board, and the offer of transport to school.

Resolution:

That the Board take as read and confirms the Staff Report for April 2026.

Moved: Riejanne Campbell
Seconded: Jason Loveridge
Carried: ALL

GENERAL BUSINESS

6. Use of School Van to Transport Teachers from New Plymouth – Cameron Stone - discussed in matters arising.
7. Brad Gibbons – Co-opt on Board – discussed in matters arising.
8. Governance – discussed in matters arising.

Inwards Correspondence

Date	Name	Regarding

Outwards Correspondence

Date	Name	Regarding

PUBLIC EXCLUDED BUSINESSResolution:

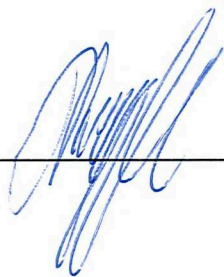
That the public be excluded pursuant to section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act. The reason being to discuss matters regarding personnel and students, including Welfare and Discipline Committee, on the grounds to protect the privacy of individuals.

Moved: Jason Loveridge
Seconded: Brent Watkins
Carried: ALL

Meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed:

Board Chair: _____



Date: _____

26/5/26