

HASTINGS GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL NGĀ RAU HUIA O ĀKINA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Date: Wednesday 6 August 2025
Time: Meeting opened at 5.15pm
Location: HGHS Principals office

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1. Karakia

1.2. Present:

Catherine Bentley, Brendan Jones, Amataga Iuli, Moira Fomai, Sonya Lyndon (Secretary), Candyce Keelan, Nicole Vakatini

1.3. Apologies:

Lani Kawana

1.4. Declaration of interests:

None

2. FOR APPROVAL

2.1. Minutes of the previous meeting [June]

Motion: That the minutes of the previous meeting from June be approved. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Candyce Keelan. Carried.

2.2. Minutes unsigned for Board signature:

The Board acknowledged that the minutes from the meetings held on November 25, 2024; November 6, 2024; and June 26, 2024, were approved by the Board but were not signed by the previous Presiding Member, who has since resigned. The Board was advised by NZSTA that a minute acknowledging this fact was sufficient.

2.3. Correspondence:

Motion: That the inwards correspondence be accepted. Moved by Catherine Bentley. Seconded by Brendon Jones. Carried.

2.3.1. Inwards

- **10YPP for review and approval:**

The MOE has added the swimming pool maintenance to the property plan, which will be funded by the Ministry of Education. The school will not incur any costs for this project. The timeframes for this project are set to begin in October. The property projects manager, James, met with Catherine to discuss the plan. The next project to start is the "tech in the student centre," which is scheduled to begin during the next school holidays.

Motion: That the Board accepts the property plan. Moved by Catherine Bentley. Seconded by Brendon Jones. Carried.

- **Paid Union Meetings and Strike Action**

The Board was notified of upcoming paid union meetings that will affect seven staff members, most of whom are in non-classroom roles. Arrangements have been made to ensure their work is covered. Additionally, the Board was given a heads-up that a teachers' strike day is likely on 20 August.

- **Parental Provisions extension - Horiaana Taoho**

Horiaana Taoho's request for an extension of her parental leave has been approved by the Board.

Motion: That the Board approves Horiaana Taoho's request for an extension of her parental leave. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Catherine Bentley.

- **Leave request from Jess Cross**

The Board discussed the leave request from Jessica Cross for her sister's wedding in the UK on August 1, 2026. Catherine will be guided by the Collective Agreement regarding leave payment. Jessica's initial request was for 15 working days of leave, with a backup request for 10 working days if the first was not successful.

Motion: That the Board approves Jessica Cross's leave request to attend her sister's wedding in the UK, granting her the full 15 working days of leave. The leave will begin on Monday, July 20, 2026, and the last day of leave will be Friday, August 7, 2026.

Moved by Catherine Bentley. Seconded by Brendon Jones. Carried

2.3.2. Outwards

The Board acknowledged the outward correspondence, which included letters to Jesamine Te Huia and Jo-ell Husband accepting their resignations and thanking them for their service to the Board. Final arrangements for their departure have been organised.

Motion: That the Board accepts the outward correspondence. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Catherine Bentley.

2.4 Finance Report

The Board's financial position is tracking significantly better than the initial budget. The budgeted deficit was -\$274,000, but the current projection is a deficit of approximately -\$30,000. This is a considerable improvement from the budgeted bank staff deficit of -\$90,000, which is currently at -\$11,000. Budgeted funds are on track at \$1.3 million. The overall income is up, and spending is tracking well. The financial report also noted that most significant items are coding errors. Uniforms were not included in this year's budget. Educational services were projected to have a deficit of -\$274,000 but are now expected to finish at a deficit of -\$150,000. No questions were raised about payments, with the exception of host family payments.

Motion: That the Board accepts the finance report. Moved by Catherine Bentley. Seconded by Candyce Keelan.

2.5 Draft Report to the Board from the auditor for response:

The Board reviewed and discussed the School Draft Report to the Board 2024 - HGHS Report.pdf from MOORE Oldershaw Audit. The Board agreed to work through the recommendations and take action on them over the coming meetings.

Summary of Recommendations:

Cyclical Maintenance:

The report recommends that the school consider if it is meeting its property maintenance obligations. It is suggested that the school may need to hire a property expert to create a new 10-Year Property Plan that aligns the school's maintenance obligations with its ability to fund them.

MOE Approval over Capital Works:

The report recommends timely communication on completed projects and that project close-out documents are readily available to the external accounting service provider. It also recommends that appropriate Ministry of Education (MOE) approval for projects is obtained before work begins.

Detailed Receipt/Invoice:

The report suggests that all detailed invoices/receipts for sensitive expenditure be kept on file as a management trail.

EOY Dinner:

The school should review and update its sensitive expenditure policy, especially regarding alcohol purchases, to align with the sensitive expenditure guide for public organisations.

Gift Policy:

The report recommends updating the gift policy to provide clear guidance on the purpose, occasion, nature, and value of gifts.

Budget:

The report recommends that the Board produce a budgeted Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flows at the beginning of each year as part of the budget-setting routine.

Principal's Wellbeing - Declaration:

It is recommended that the school follow the guidance from the PPTA and ensure the principal provides an annual written declaration about their uptake and use of professional support funds by the end of Term 4 each year.

Board Approval of SUE Report:

The report recommends that a board member independently review and approve Staff Usage and Expenditure (SUE) reports periodically at board meetings, and that this approval is evidenced by a signature or similar.

The Board agreed to review the Gift Policy next.

A letter will be sent to the auditor, Moore Oldershaw Audit, today confirming that the Board has reviewed the School Draft Report to the Board 2024 - HGHS REport.pdf and will action the recommendations in due course.

Motion: *Going forward, the Board will not fund alcohol for any school-funded dinners, specifically staff and Board end-of-year functions. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Moira Fomai.*

2.6 Principals Report

Motion: *That the Principals Report be accepted. Moved by Catherine Bentley. Seconded by Candyce Keelan.*

2.6.1 Te Kanorautanga (Learners are achieving excellent and equitable educational Outcomes) - Shaping Teacher Capacity - Curriculum enrichment - Strengthening structures and Systems:

This term has seen a continued commitment to shaping teacher capacity, enriching the curriculum, and strengthening the systems and structures required to lift achievement across the school. A key focus has been on raising literacy and numeracy outcomes and ensuring all ākonga are well prepared for the NCEA co-requisites. We have now received our first set of CAA results from the assessments undertaken in Term 2, and while it is early in the year, the data is already providing valuable insights. Pleasingly, the numeracy data is tracking ahead of where we finished in 2024, despite only two terms of instruction. Literacy results are slightly behind the equivalent point last year, although we believe this may be due to the assessment being delivered in two separate components. As such, we are not concerned at this stage.

Our school is contracted to work alongside Evaluation Associates as part of the Ministry's Te Manu Ka Rere support programme. However, this workstream has not been of value to us. Much of the planning and action outlined through their processes had already been completed in 2024 and embedded into our annual plan and curriculum tools. Our own Literacy and Numeracy Action Team, established at the start of the year, has been driving this work effectively, guided by the data and the needs of our students. In hindsight, the investment from the Ministry might have been better spent if distributed directly to schools, allowing us to allocate resources where they are most needed and impactful. Following feedback from the Board at the end of Term 1, a significant amount of time in the early part of this term has been spent gathering staff voice and data to identify current pressure points across the school. This included consultation on proposed timetable changes for 2026, aimed at reducing fragmentation and creating more coherent teaching blocks. The feedback from staff has been overwhelmingly positive, and the proposed changes will now move to the next phase of planning and refinement. It is also encouraging to note that staff have elected new PPTA branch representatives. This will provide another important avenue for staff to express concerns and share ideas, and I look forward to meeting regularly with the branch chairs to support a transparent and constructive dialogue.

As we move forward, our goal remains focused on improving educational outcomes in a way that is both excellent and equitable. By continuing to invest in teacher capacity, listening to staff, and refining the systems that underpin our curriculum delivery.

2.6.2 Te Tuakiritanga (Learners and whānau tell us they see and feel their identity, language and culture on a daily basis) - collaborative community partnerships - enhancing Ākina coach capacity - Strengthening Relationships with Whānau:

This term, our work under the pou of Te Tuakiritanga has continued to focus on strengthening community partnerships, enhancing the capacity of our Ākina Coaches, and embedding culturally sustaining practices that allow learners and whānau to feel seen,

heard, and valued each day. We know that when students feel a sense of identity and belonging, their engagement improves — and attendance is a key indicator of that connection. Unfortunately, Term 2 saw a disappointing drop in our regular attendance rate, down to 39%, following a strong start to the year in Term 1 where we had reached 49%. While this figure remains 3% higher than the same time last year, it nonetheless indicates that targeted intervention is required to maintain momentum and reach the national goal of 80% regular attendance by 2030.

We have responded with a series of focused actions to reinforce the importance of collective efficacy — recognising that attendance is everyone's responsibility. Daily attendance data is now shared in the staffroom each morning, alongside the number of unmarked rolls, as this has a significant impact on the accuracy of our data. The introduction of weekly 'Susi Awards' celebrates students with 100% attendance, with a fresh start each week to encourage sustained engagement. In addition, Deputy Principal Emma Jensen and Attendance Officer Sue Eaton have undertaken PLD to strengthen staff understanding and ensure the new attendance codes are being applied correctly and consistently.

At a systems level, we are also preparing to implement a new support layer through the Ministry of Education's in-school attendance provider initiative. While we had the option to begin this mahi from October, we have elected to delay full implementation until Term 1, 2026. This will allow time to appoint a skilled staff member and integrate the role within our existing pastoral care framework. Our application outlines a two-pronged approach: first, the appointment of a dedicated staff member to work intensively with students whose attendance sits in the 'irregular' range, setting weekly goals and engaging whānau in problem-solving; and second, the establishment of a small, flexible support fund to remove practical barriers such as transport, uniform, and extracurricular costs.

Our Ākina Coaches continue to play a key role in supporting this work. Their relationships with students and whānau provide a strong foundation for targeted attendance conversations. Ongoing mentoring and system development are in place to further strengthen the consistency and effectiveness of their role. Alongside this, we are continuing to invest in strengthening whānau relationships, recognising that trust, communication, and early intervention are all key to shifting attendance patterns. While the data from Term 2 has been sobering, we are confident that the right structures are now in place to support improvement. Our focus remains on nurturing identity, removing barriers, and ensuring that every student can experience success through regular, engaged attendance.

2.6.3 Kaitiakitanga (Learners as guardians of our past, present and future) - Building Leadership Capacity, Establishing a Hub based Junior Curriculum:

Midway through the year, it is timely to reflect on the progress we've made. Attached is our current Analysis of Variance, which outlines the key developments, successes, and areas for ongoing growth across our strategic goals. This document provides a detailed account of the workstreams underway, including progress in structured curriculum design, embedding common assessment tasks and rubrics, and strengthening our moderation and tracking systems.

Much of our Term 2 focus has been on reviewing and refining curriculum structures, building on the groundwork laid earlier in the year. Significant work has gone into the implementation of consistent assessment practices across the junior school. Department leaders have developed shared rubrics, aligned to national curriculum progressions, and begun the process of cross-subject moderation to ensure consistency and rigour.

As always, our work is iterative and evolving. The attached Analysis of Variance provides a comprehensive snapshot of where we are currently placed and the priorities that will guide our continued focus through Terms 3 and 4.

2.7 Policies for review

Brendon will be looking at the policies and bringing them to the meeting.

2.8 Synthetic Turf Sports Complex – Fundraising and Funding Applications

Board approval is required for fundraising application paperwork and to pass the necessary resolution for submission to the First Light Community Foundation. In preparation for funding applications towards the Hastings Girls' High School and Community Synthetic Turf Sports Complex, the required documentation has been prepared and needs to be signed off by the Board. This includes a resolutions to apply for funding, a consent form for NZCT, project letters, a project summary including estimated timelines, and a tax exemption confirmation.

Recommendations:

That the Board review and approve all attached documentation prepared by Kim Brady for the fundraising applications.

That the Board sign off on the NZCT consent form (bottom section only).

That the Board approve the tax exemption letter and authorise the Principal to sign it.

Brendon asked the Board if they were comfortable with him signing letters on the Board's behalf. Concerns were raised regarding letters to gambling organisations. Moira asked for clarification on the principal's letters, which were confirmed to be samples.

Motion: *That the Board approves that Brendon sign the letters off on behalf of the Board.*

Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Moira Fomai.

Motion: *An application be made to the First Light Community Foundation for funding towards our School and Community Synthetic Turf Sports Complex Project, valued at \$15,000. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Catherine Bentley. Carried.*

3 GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 Board Elections

Brendon explained that the process of appointing a returning officer was not completed due to Jesamine's resignation, as she was originally tasked with handling it. Because of this, Juliet and Sonya had not received formal agreements regarding their remuneration for the upcoming Board election. Brendon proposed that Juliet, as the returning officer, and Sonya, as the returning officer support, split a total of \$3,500 for their time and effort. This would result in each of them receiving \$1,750 (excluding GST).

Motion: The Board moved to approve Brendon sending the remuneration agreements to Sonya and Juliet, finalising the payment of \$1,750 (excluding GST) to each of them for their roles in the Board election. Moved by Brendon Jones. Seconded by Candyce Keelan.

3.2 Health and Safety Report

Candyce gave the board an update on the progress of the school's health and safety systems, noting that significant progress has been made. She extended her thanks to Christian for his ongoing work and dedication. The committee also reaffirmed its commitment to staff wellbeing.

Key Highlights:

- A lockdown practice was held today, which was deemed a success. The assembly presentation that accompanied it was also highly praised.
- Christian is collecting feedback from staff regarding the new health and safety procedures.
- An external provider will be brought in to support the review of the school's Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) systems.
- The new system for recording hazards is now live and in use.

Motion: *That the Health and Safety plan is accepted. Moved by Candyce Keelan. Seconded by Catherine Bentley.*

3.3 Meeting record keeping and security

The Board agreed to review and improve its internal information-sharing practices. Sonya will prepare and share information with the Board regarding the security features available within the Smartsheet's platform.

4 MEETING CLOSURE

4.1 In-Committee: Brendon moved that the meeting go In Committee at 6.27pm and that that the public be excluded under Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 because the Board wishes to discuss personnel or financially sensitive matters and for reasons that discussion of these matters in public would infringe the privacy of a natural person under Section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982.

4.2 Out-of-Committee: Brendon moved that the meeting go out of Committee at 7.00pm.

4.3 Finish and date of next meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.00pm. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 18 September at 5.15pm in the Principals office.

4.4 Closing karakia

Brendon jones


Brendon jones (Aug 25, 2025 13:25:45 GMT+12)

Aug 25, 2025







6 August BOT Minutes 2026

Final Audit Report

2025-08-25

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