



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Board of Trustees Meeting: Thursday 26 March 2026

Report prepared by Phil McIntosh

From the Tūmuaki,

Term 1 is now in full swing, with a wealth of opportunities in motion for both our tamariki and staff. From energetic sports trips to a highly successful PTA chocolate fundraiser, the school is humming. A particular highlight has been our recent Kākāpō and Tūi hui; seeing such a strong turnout from whānau to support their children was incredible.



Our Kākāpō team celebrating their learning at their recent hui

I want to acknowledge the mahi of Hayden Trass and Louisa Marks, who are championing the redevelopment of McLeod Hall. They have identified several key areas for improvement, from fresh planting and painting to the painstaking task of removing what feels like thousands of staples from the walls! Our goal is to restore the hall to a space that evokes pride and can be used by our tamariki and community.

In tandem, work has commenced on "The Arb." Following the recent Wellington storms, several trees have been identified as health and safety risks. While we are eager to clear these, local arborists are currently in high demand across the city. We are currently awaiting quotes to ensure the area is safe for student exploration once again.

Recently, our leadership group attended the Wellington Regional Principals' Association (WRPA) conference. The theme, 'Lead at Speed,' addressed the unprecedented pace of change in the current educational landscape. Jason Miles (NZPF President) captured the sentiment perfectly, noting that "I can testify that, after 30 years as a principal, the education space and pace of change that we are experiencing is unprecedented".

Our focus remains on navigating these mandated changes with Resilience, ensuring we support our staff's well-being and keep our community informed. While the "last-minute" nature of some national communications remains a challenge, I am incredibly grateful for our forward-thinking staff. They continue to adapt their practice in a careful, considered way that always puts our learners first.

I've spent time recently visiting several local ECE centres to strengthen our transition pathways. There is a shared appetite for deeper collaboration to ensure those turning five feel a sense of belonging before they even step through our gates. Watch this space for some tangible new initiatives.

The calendar remains packed as we look toward the end of the term and the start of Term 2. With the Year 6 camp, Pedal Ready, and Cross Country on the horizon, there is plenty for our tamariki to be excited about.

Ngā mihi

Phil McIntosh

Tūmuaki

Strategic Progress

The draft annual implementation plan has been completed and is ready for board feedback.

I have begun reporting against the goals, with the aim of providing updates on two goals per board meeting. Orange will signal a delay or slower than anticipated progress; green signals that we are on track.

Outcomes	Who	Updates
Student Agency is fostered by teachers who have mastered agentic learning and know how to support student autonomy, competence and relatedness.	Sarah, Nicola, Team Leaders	<p><i>April Update: We identified that there is crossover between our values and the graduate profile. This has caused some confusion regarding the purpose of the graduate profile. We will spend some further time unpacking this in Term 2.</i></p> <p><i>April Update: We spent some time at the start of the year linking the graduate profile to our learning programmes. This is now embedded and we will look to review it's effectiveness towards the end of the year.</i></p>

Student Achievement & Curriculum

Assessment

Schools in New Zealand must utilise at least one form of standardised assessment in 2026. The choices are between E-Asttle, PAT (Progressive Achievement Tests) or the new SMART (Student Monitoring Assessment and Reporting Tool). We have chosen to use PATs for 2026.

Professional Development

Staff have been provided with the following professional development:

- 1) Restorative Conversations. A staff meeting was led by Catherine Forester (University of Waikato) to help develop an understanding of what restorative practice is and how we can utilise this in our Kura.
- 2) Literacy: Ensuring that staff understand how to support high expectations within our literacy programmes. Michelle Pontifex led this session.
- 3) Individual Education Plans: Staff spent time looking at how to facilitate effective conversations with whānau to support children who have diverse learning needs. Phil McIntosh and Jo Purcell led this session.

As a staff, we have also spent time looking at our Term 2 learning programmes, our values, and the graduate profile.

Wellington Regional Principal's Conference:

In mid-March, I attended the conference with our Deputy Principal and two Team Leaders. The theme was "lead at speed". The conference highlighted that while schools may not be ready for full implementation of new Ministry mandates, the immediate priority is developing a plan to navigate the tension of these changes.

- Dame Farrah Palmer challenged us to step out of our comfort zones and embrace being "better than before," noting that leadership performance depends on how we recognise and respond to those around us.
- Dr Denise Quinlan reinforced this by stating "decisions are easy when values are clear," urging "ruthless prioritisation" and the recognition that "we are each other's environment."

Personnel

Leadership

We are happy to announce the following leadership appointments for 2026:

Cultural Competence: Hayden Trass

Literacy: Michelle

Maths: Louisa and Nicola

Inclusive Education: Jo Purcell

To support our leaders, they will be provided with ongoing coaching and mentoring by a member of the senior leadership team. They have co-developed a set of outcomes, which are linked to our strategic and annual plans.

Moira Campbell is continuing to work alongside our senior leadership team, providing coaching and guidance. A Professional learning group has also been established for our Deputy Principal, Sarah Simpson, with other local leaders.

As a principal, I have received the following professional development:

- A Professional Learning Group has been established. A framework for the year has been developed with a mix of professional readings, discussion topics and space for 'what's on top' at each meeting.
- Workshops on School Property and Finance.
- Two Tarikākā Cluster Principal's hui; one facilitated by Mark Sweeny who specialises in leadership development and coaching.

Health, Safety, and Compliance

Property Update

The property sub-committee met on Thursday, 12 March. We focussed on the removal of two classrooms on the field. I have requested a meeting with the Ministry of Education to find more information.

The swimming pool has been reopened after a brief closure due to a suspected gas leak. A valve has been replaced, and the site has been signed off as safe. I will be looking into designing a maintenance plan that will support the upkeep of the pool in Term 2.

We are awaiting quotes and a timetable for the much-anticipated heating upgrades in the junior block. Following this, we will look at the electrical system report that was commissioned towards the end of 2025 to plan the next set of upgrades.

Attendance

We currently have 270 children attending Ngaio School. The Ministry of Education has predicted it will reach 290 by the end of the year.

We are currently accepting a small number of out-of-zone children, in specific year groups, through our ballot system

Artificial Intelligence Guidance

Tessa Gatenby (Digital Lead Teacher) has been working on guidance for the school to follow. She has consulted with the Ministry of Education and a local high school when working on this. We would appreciate any feedback from the board on this.

[Link](#)

Financial Overview

The finance subcommittee met on Tuesday, 24 March with Education Services. Our main focus was the 2026 school budget.

The 2026 budget has now been approved. There may be variances as the year progresses due to staffing changes and student funding.

There are no significant unbudgeted expenditures to report this month. Financial focus remains on confirming the budget and developing a plan to reduce the forecasted deficit.