**Minutes of the Ngaio School Board Meeting held Tuesday 8 September 2026 at 7.00 pm in the Staffroom**

**Present**: Phil McIntosh (Principal), Emma Andrews (Presiding Chair), Joe Winton, Mike Mercer, Sarah Deans, Dan Byrne (Staff Representative), Kirsten Fraser, Kirsty Donbavand, and Katy Robertson (Minutes)

**Guest:** Gina (FRENZ)

1. **Opening Karakia** – Kirsty Donbavand

2. **Meeting Opened** – 7.02 pm

**Welcome and Apologies –** The Chair welcomed Gina from FRENZ. No apologies were received.

**Conflicts of Interest Declarations** – None declared.

**Confirmation of Previous Minutes as a True and Accurate Record** – Moved: Joe Winton; seconded: Kirsten Fraser. Carried.

**3. Board Items**

**Bilingual Unit, including presentation by FRENZ –** Gina presented an overview of FRENZ, a charitable organisation operating six French bilingual units across Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Across the units, approximately 240 students are supported by 13 teachers. FRENZ works with the French Embassy, which contributes funding, and requests an annual family donation of $700. Units deliver the New Zealand Curriculum through a locally agreed bilingual model, generally comprising 60% French and 40% English instruction. FRENZ supports teacher recruitment, including French-language input during interviews, and subsidises teacher salaries; the school remains the employer. Entry includes an assessment of each child's basic French proficiency, and classes may include up to five language levels. The Board discussed likely demand, noting that the existing Wellington unit is at capacity, approximately 10 families have expressed interest, and Ngaio School is well located for Wellington's French community and Embassy families. A new Christchurch unit grew from seven to 15 students and is expected to reach 22 students next year. It was noted that students would participate fully in school activities and that school-wide participation would be encouraged for French events. A Ngaio unit would initially operate as a separate class for the full day, with opportunities to join other classes for activities such as art, hui, and physical education. The proposed starting model is a class of 16 students in Years 1–3, supported by two teachers, with growth over time. The unit would sit outside the school budget, although families would pay both the school family donation and the FRENZ donation. FRENZ would liaise with the Ministry of Education before a memorandum is developed; the Ministry does not provide classrooms for French units. The proposed governance relationship would involve Gina, a parent representative, and the Principal. No expectation would be placed on existing school staff to speak French. The Board considered workload, recruitment, the school's character, financial and legal arrangements, and the school's commitment to Te Tiriti. Phil advised that the additional work, alongside after-school care, was manageable and noted that Ridgeway had attracted several strong teaching candidates. Dan confirmed staff support for the proposal and its anticipated benefits. The Board agreed unanimously to establish the bilingual unit as a two-year trial, followed by a formal review, with the classroom intended to be ready for Term 1 2027. Communications will be issued after a teacher has been

appointed. Phil will liaise with the Ministry of Education and commence recruitment, and Mike will assist with the contract.

**Update on Annual Plan 2026 –** The Board considered whether to reduce the number of goals or narrow the four pillars for 2027. It agreed to continue progressing the Graduate Programme, writing, and work required to maintain the pool. The proposed French bilingual unit will be reflected under the Belonging pillar. The Board also noted an opportunity for a broader range of leaders to attend future meetings and present on their work. At the next meeting, the Board will identify any priorities that may not be achievable in 2027.

**4. Action Points –** The Board reviewed and updated the action points spreadsheet.

Emma confirmed that she is available to attend the next PTA meeting.

The Board agreed that Wadestown Vet's donation should be acknowledged again in the newsletter and with a thank-you card from students.

The Board discussed the effect of several Māori families leaving the school on whānau meetings and considered how engagement with Māori families could be strengthened. It noted that responsibility for Māori engagement should be shared across teaching staff rather than resting solely with Hayden. A marae visit was discussed as being organised in the year alternating with the EOTC camp.

The Board supported family breakfasts organised by cohort group as a practical way to increase parent involvement. Phil will inform early childhood education providers about cohort entry and transition-to-school arrangements.

Stay interviews – Joe will work with Phil to identify suitable dates for teachers.

The NOSCAR Team Lead role has been advertised, with an appointment expected the following week.

**5. Standing Items/Reporting**

**Principal's Report –** The Strategic Plan must be in place by January and submitted by March. Joe offered to assist with strategic planning. The Board discussed the proposed school structure, including a combined Years 5–6 group, and noted the implications for camp planning. A minimum of 60 students is required for camp to proceed, and this will be communicated clearly to parents. The new structure will include one additional team leader. Three vacancies will be advertised, with potential team leadership responsibilities. The move to two teams reflected reduced staffing and the previous curriculum split, which is no longer relevant because the curriculum is now organised year by year.

**Health & Safety** – Nothing to report.

**Finance –** Nothing to report.

**Policy –** The Board noted that police vetting is not required for volunteers who are not left alone with children. The Board agreed that parents should not act as teacher aides for their own children at school.

**PTA –** Emma reported that she had recently met with the PTA co-chairs, who responded positively to the proposed Ways of Working and intended to consider it further at a PTA meeting. PTA planning takes place in Term 4, after which plans should be discussed with Phil. It was acknowledged that the constitution and charitable status could be updated. The Board

discussed inviting PTA representatives to relevant Board meetings, potentially a budget meeting, to better understand school priorities such as pool maintenance. Approximately $20,000 remains to offset the playground matting shortfall, and it is hoped that proceeds from the Colour Run will meet this cost. The Board also discussed an appropriate way to acknowledge the PTA's significant fundraising contribution.

**6. Admin**

**Inwards/Outwards Correspondence –** None.

**Email Decisions Noted –** Phil's trip to Christchurch.

**Acknowledgements –** The Board acknowledged Michelle for the Mathathon; Katy for the Asset Register; Susie for her work as a teacher aide; Sarah Young and Hannah Baker for organising Book Week; sports coordinators Nicola Wilks, Sarah Young, and Jo Mettrick; and Simon Fraser for hockey.

**Newsletter –** Week 10: Strategic Plan.

**Date of Next Meeting –** Thursday 29 October 2026.

**The Board moved into committee at 9.16 pm.**