

**Houghton Valley School Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday 30 August 2021**

*(Meeting held via Google Meet due to COVID-19 Level 4)*

**Meeting opened:** 7:00pm

**Present:** Bret McKenzie (Chair), Luana Carroll (Principal), Mike Brough, Georgie Ferrari, Vanessa Smith, Kelly Williams, Stephanie Bosch (Staff Trustee), Emily Faith (Secretary)

**Conflict of interest:** None

**Last month's minutes:** Approved

**1. COVID-19 Update; Health and Safety at Levels 3 and 2**

Luana advised that staff had a quick meeting on the afternoon of the Level 4 lockdown announcement, so had a short amount of time to prepare for working from home. Reviewed feedback from last time; connecting/whanaunatanga was a strong theme, so have been focusing on that. Teachers know that parents are working so it is important to make learning optional. Trying to make it fun. Consistency of messaging is key, which is hard when often updates go out in the media at set times but detailed information isn't sent through from the Ministry of Education until late in the evening. Still uncertainty for some whānau who are essential workers, and are not sure if their children will be at school at Level 3.

The Leadership Team meets regularly and discusses issues daily. Luana is trying to limit teachers' workdays so they are only able to respond 9am-3pm, otherwise they would be online all day. Teachers' meetings are held within these hours too. Teachers have been in contact with every child, including those who have not had access to wifi/Zoom. The Ministry of Education has provided some devices to help with this. Food parcels have been distributed to some families.

Have had positive feedback from whānau about how things are operating.

Procedures/guidelines for learning under Level 3 went out to staff this afternoon. A small bubble class is likely to start on Monday 30 August, with Jill as the teacher and probably also with a teacher aide. Luana will also be onsite. Luana and Jill will go in this Friday to set up the room. All families that attend the bubble class receive a copy of the procedures so they are aware of how it operates – children must stay 1m apart, singing can only take place outside 2m apart, etc. Level 3 is very strict and not much 'fun' for learners. A staff debrief will be held at the end of each day to work through any issues.

Have good stocks of hand sanitiser and paper towels, and gloves and masks for staff if needed, plus plenty of cleaning products.

The Level 2 procedures have been prepared, but are waiting on further advice to come through from the Ministries of Health and Education. Hauora/wellbeing will be important as we transition back to school. Last time some children were happy to return, while others weren't.

## 2. Principal's Report

Miriam and the junior team are planning to hold a whānau session for Year 0-1 to share and discuss Better Start Literacy, a structured reading programme. This may need to be deferred however as it requires 10 consecutive weeks' teaching. Charles attended the PB4L conference. Luana attended a principals' conference in Rotorua from 2-4 August, which had a focus on cultural leadership and curriculum innovation. Due to COVID-19 we have decided to pause some professional development for now, aside from mathematics, which is important.

The architects came back with questions about the roof, as the pitch wasn't right for the changes we had suggested, so further interior plans are being drafted. Trees along the walkways have been trimmed, and some wires removed.

A LGBTQIA+ whanau hui was co-facilitated by Miriam and Inside Out on 27 July, and Vanessa also attended. The hui was a good opportunity for families to come together and discuss issues. Key steps coming out of this are: unisex toilets in each block (restructure of main block will achieve this), staff professional development, de-gendering events such as sports days, community event. Bret noted that there were some communication issues last year when planning to celebrate Pride Week. Vanessa noted that it was important to consult and communicate with families before organising any community events.

3 Way Conferences were held on 9-10 August, with 80% attendance (despite terrible weather!).

Due to COVID-19, the enrolment scheme opening has been extended. A small number of initial enquiries were received pre lockdown.

## 3. Budget

Bret, Luana and Georgie have been planning to meet to discuss the request from Home & School to confirm how funds are spent. A portion of the funds raised goes to the board. Part of this amount is earmarked to cover flying fox maintenance, bike servicing, and replacing the bark in the playground. These costs are in the region of \$9-\$12k p/a. Home & School has discretion over the remaining amount (approx. \$15k p/a??), and has asked the board for suggestions. In the past funds have been used to pay for the hall/kitchen area, support a school librarian, buy chromebooks, new furniture, and high jump mats (etc). Any large asset purchases result in depreciation costs which are covered by the board (for 25 years in the case of the hall). Luana noted that as the roll is decreasing, HVS's operational grant will decrease accordingly, and the funds from Home & School are an important means to fund initiatives that would not otherwise be possible.

80%  
Bret  
20%  
Luana

Bret will write to Home & School (which is meeting next week) with a list of board suggestions for the use of the remaining funds. Teachers consider that blinds or curtains are needed for their classrooms, to avoid glare and make the whiteboards easier to read. It was agreed that kapa haka and the band were great initiatives that could be funded through this means. Planters along the new retaining wall were another option.

**Meeting closed: 8.30pm**

**Next Board meeting: Monday 20 September 2021 (online if necessary)**

