

Riwaka School Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Date: 04 November 2025

Time: 6:00pm

Venue: Riwaka School staffroom

Present: Adele Lidgard, Stevee Rhind, Morag Ingram, Shay Gill, Tim Norman,

Apologies: Claire Brownlie, Jane Corston

In Attendance: Tess Hansen, DP

1. Meeting Opening

- **Karakia / Welcome**
- Confirmation of previous minutes:
Following correction of spelling of Claire's surname, moved that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record.
Moved: Shay **Seconded:** Tim **Carried**
- **Leave of absence granted for Claire Brownlie and Jane Corston - moved/seconded**

2. Matters Arising

- Attendance Report comments were noted for inclusion in this session.
- Additional correspondence to be included under General Business.
- No further queries or amendments to the previous minutes.

3. Strategic Planning – 2026–2028 Strategic Plan & 2026 Annual Plan

Presented by Adele

Discussion Summary:

- The 2026–2028 Strategic Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with staff, community, and the previous board.

- Community voice was gathered via a “if you could dream your Dream School, what would it look like in 4 years” survey to identify shared aspirations.
- The new **Vision Statement** – *Connected in Community, Nurtured to Grow, Empowered to Flourish* – will anchor all strategic goals and actions.
- Each goal includes targeted initiatives:
 1. **Connected to Community** – community engagement, belonging, shared stories.
 2. **Nurtured to Grow** – strengthening school identity, Hauora, belonging.
 3. **Empowered to Flourish** – teaching and learning, attendance, achievement.

Board Discussion:

- Trustees asked how the plan builds on the previous board’s work and strategic plan.
- The new plan shifts from “systems building and structures” to aspirational growth.
- Trustees discussed the need for measurable indicators to track progress against the plan. Examples included:
 - Attendance and engagement data
 - Parent participation in goal-setting meetings and school events
 - Whānau feedback on connectedness and cultural confidence
- Adele noted that not every goal can be measured quantitatively; balance between data and meaningful narrative will be maintained. Only measure what we need to.
- Board to review the draft Strategic Plan and provide any feedback prior to the next meeting ready for consultation with the community.
- Annual Plan will naturally fall out of this and will be modified with success measures and timeframes. Tabled in 2026.

Actions:

- Trustees to review the draft Strategic Plan and provide their feedback before the next meeting.
 - Principal to collate existing data sources and identify key metrics for tracking success under each goal.
 - The community will receive a copy of the plan for feedback in December to follow Board endorsement of the draft.
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4. Curriculum Discussion – National Curriculum Changes

- Adele outlined the current uncertainty around the new English and Maths curriculum rollout (now planned for Term 1 2026).
 - Board discussed the pressure of continuous curriculum changes and the impact on staff wellbeing.
 - Consensus reached to pause implementation until clearer guidance and assessment tools are provided.
 - Focus will remain on high-quality teaching and learning already embedded at Riwaka School.
 - Trustees supported the leadership stance to protect staff from change fatigue.
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5. Cultural Confidence & Community Engagement

- Trustees discussed ways to strengthen whānau understanding of local curriculum and cultural learning.
- Ideas included student-led family events where tamariki teach parents about tikanga, reo, and local stories.
- Board supported continuing initiatives that build confidence and belonging through whānau participation.

Action:

- Staff to explore opportunities in Term 1 2026 for student-led sharing events (e.g., cultural evenings or open classrooms).
 - Adele to hold information sessions for whānau around curriculum
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6. Board Committees

Existing Committees: Finance, Property, Personnel, School Policies.

Discussion:

- Disciplinary committee to be convened only as required, and involve whole Board (not standing).
- Property Subcommittee - Tim Norman
- Personnel Subcommittee - Shay Gill
- Finance Subcommittee - Morag Ingram
- Policies Subcommittee - TBC

- Proposal to form a **Community Liaison** role to improve coordination with F.O.R.S (Friends of Riwaka School).
- Discussion on Health & Safety responsibilities – whether to retain as a full Board function or delegate for reporting.
 - Consensus: Health & Safety remains a whole-board responsibility, but reporting format to be clarified.
 - Noted that the Principal provides ongoing assurances as part of regular Board cycle.

Actions:

- Adele to seek advice on appropriate Health & Safety reporting level for governance.
- Standing item “Health & Safety” to remain on each agenda.
- Review committee structure early 2026 once new Board is settled and all trustees present.

Motion:

Sub-Committees formed

Moved: Tim **Seconded:** Stevee **Carried**

7. SchoolDocs – Policy Review Process

- Adele demonstrated the SchoolDocs system.
- Board noted advantages: automatic legislative updates, three-year review cycle, and streamlined access.
- Trustees to log in, read, and submit feedback before Week 8.

Action:

- Board members to complete reviews of Term 4 review schedule by 27 November and questions to be tabled at next meeting to Morag by that date.

8. Principal’s Report

- Presented and taken as read.
- Discussion focused on curriculum impacts, staff workload, and progress toward existing 2023–2025 strategic goals.

Reflective Questions:

- How does the Board model AWHI values in governance practice?
- In what ways can Trustees promote and celebrate the school's unique identity?

Action:

- Plan a separate Board session before Term 1 2026 to unpack AWHI attributes ("looks like, sounds like, feels like") from a governance perspective.
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9. Attendance Report

- Term 3 data: **57%** of students attended school 90% + of the time.
- Improvement from Term 3 2024 (↑ 7%), but overall attendance below national expectations.
- Illness and family holidays during term time remain key contributing factors.
- Board discussed regional influences (seasonal work, cost of travel during holidays).
- Attendance continues to be a strategic focus area for 2026.

Action:

- Continue working with Attendance Services (Carol Fowler) to support whānau engagement.
- Attendance Strategy for 2026 - Adele to action

Motion:

That the Principal's Report, including the Attendance Report, be accepted.

Moved: Morag **Seconded:** Stevee **Carried**

10. General Business

10.1 Finance

- Financial reporting deferred to next meeting to allow for a Board training session with Solutions and Services (Sandy) and Chris on interpreting financial statements.
- Draft 2026 budget to be reviewed at December meeting.

Action:

- Adele to arrange a Zoom financial overview with Solutions & Services before next meeting.

10.2 Community Fundraising & F.O.R.S

- Discussion around supporting current F.O.R.S organisers for the upcoming Country Christmas Fair.
- Board acknowledged the workload on the small parent team and staff. Acknowledging Amanda Atkin and Jenna Compton who have done so much to organise this.
- Plan to send clear, specific requests for whānau help (e.g., time slots and tasks).
- Potential to establish a Board liaison role for F.O.R.S.

Actions:

- Tess and Adele to meet with organisers (Amanda & Jenna C) to coordinate roles and communication.
 - Form to go home for parent volunteers.
 - Trustees to assist on the day where possible.
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11. In Committee Business

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting to protect the privacy of individuals.

Moved: Adele **Seconded:** Tim **Carried**

Items discussed (summary for public record):

- Staff leave applications
- Staffing update and recruitment
- Upcoming interviews for Team Leader and Kaiako positions

Resolution:

That the Board moves out of committee and confirms that all discussion remains confidential.

Moved: Shay **Seconded:** Tim **Carried**

12. Meeting Evaluation

Board reflected on:

- Inclusivity of discussion and opportunities for all to contribute
- Public attendance and future engagement protocols
- Need to ensure all Board documents are uploaded to Mergy prior to meetings

Action:

- Adele and Jenna to check all correspondence and supporting documents are in Mergy before distribution.

13. Meeting Close

Karakia whakamutunga

Meeting closed: 8:08pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday 2 December 2025 @ 6.00 pm


M INGRAM
2/12/25