

Timatanga Board of Trustee Minutes for Special Meeting October 13, 2021

4.30 - 7.15pm Meeting held online via Zoom

Present: Eve, Matt, Gary, Jo, Magenta, Robert, Elaine, Jackie

Guest: Greta, 4.30-5pm.

AGENDA

1. BOT check in
2. Discuss the implications of the MoE communications October 11 and 12, 2021
3. Decide on actions that we need to take
4. Draft a letter to the school community, communicating the MoE directives and how we are going to implement them

MINUTES

1. BoT round robin sharing: feelings, responses.

- a. Some BoT members are choosing to be vaccinated and some are choosing not to be. All members feel deeply the importance of upholding our community and being inclusive, not divisive. Everyone should be allowed to express their views honestly and their right to choose should be upheld and respected.

2. Discussion

- a. Eve has been offered help from her neighbour, Jo Silcock (lawyer) who is helping another school navigate a way forward with teachers who don't want to get vaccinated. Jo only wants to liaise with Eve.
- b. It is noted that there is a way forward where we don't have to be divisive re: mandate. There should be a place for the affirmation of other modalities for health. We have a choice to refuse to allow this to divide us... not using language that excludes and wrapping our arms around everyone.
 - i. All agree.
- c. It is noted that all our teachers have chosen to be vaccinated, including our caretaker. Therefore they can teach onsite.
- d. The government's decision is that this is the safest thing to do. There is an acknowledgement amongst the board that not all the families in the school are in agreement with this.
- e. The question is raised of how many parents are planning to be vaccinated/not and that the need to get clarity on this is very important to help us define our next steps.
- f. BoT notes the requirement of parent help is an important part of the special character of our school.
- g. It is noted that at some point there may be a legal challenge to the current MoE directive.
- h. There is a question raised about whether this mandate is a) in order to give schools authority to act in a certain way or b) is something it requires schools to do and whether we need to ask the MoE to clarify this.
 - i. *Addendum to the minutes: we now know the answer to this--it is a mandate until the health orders pertaining to it passed, (which is happening in chunks over the next week). At this point it will be law.*
 - ii. Regardless, The board has to respond to what MoE has tasked us with at this moment.

- i. The Proprietors reps make it clear that they cannot support challenging the MoE directive - following MoE directives was what proprietors agreed to do in the integration agreement in order to become a State-Integrated school.
- j. 5pm - BoT moves to being In Committee meeting; Greta leaves
- k. 5.30pm - BoT exits In Committee meeting
- l. The question / possibility is raised about how the school might be able to support people being fully part of Timatanga but without being onsite?
 - i. Eve expresses that she has several ideas for how to do this already, and will be talking with staff about it as well. Parents will have really good ideas, as usual.
- m. The suggestion is made that we send out a questionnaire so that the board and the school can establish exactly what families are feeling and intending.
 - i. Families would have the chance to freely express their thoughts / feelings / intentions.
 - ii. All like this idea and discuss the need to make it an option to be anonymous so that people don't feel apprehensive about their responses.
 - iii. A discussion is had about what we need to find out, in order to meet everyone's needs as best as we can within the new requirements. Notable remarks:
 - 1. What options might be possible for parents of Timatanga -- Satellite school? Is this even possible?
 - 2. Distance learning? The Ministry has said that distance learning must be provided for students who cannot learn onsite.
 - 3. Who we are and how we do things - school culture of inclusivity needs to be a part of how we move forward.
 - 4. We don't know when we are going back to school in person.

3. **Decisions**

- a. The board understands what is being asked of us by the Ministry of Education. We understand that we must act on these directives. Because of our Special Character, we will continue to ensure that all whanau are included in our school culture and so we will actively engage with them.
 - i. *Passed by consensus.*
- b. The board will write to parents communicating the above, and laying out exactly what the MoE directives are. We also will communicate our commitment to our Special Character and community, and to exploring new creative solutions for navigating this difficult time.
 - i. *Passed by consensus.*
- c. The board chair will send out a parent questionnaire (option to be anonymous in response) to ascertain parent feelings, concerns and intentions relative to the MoE requirements. This will ask parents to respond by Sunday 17 October.
 - i. *Passed by consensus.*
- d. After the questionnaires are returned, Eve may take the opportunity to consult with Jo (lawyer) to navigate the road ahead and to ask any questions that parents may have as needed.
 - i. *Passed by consensus.*
- e. The board will ensure regular communication, engagement and consultation with parents, and community (proprietors and residents) throughout this process.
 - i. *Passed by consensus.*

4. **Communication to parents** to contain the following:

- a. MoE communications (in sample letter from the MoE to principals)
 - b. Board affirmation of our special character:
 - i. Affirm our school values/operating principles: how we do things--inclusive parent cooperative
 - ii. Eliminate any confusion about whether the Board and the school will follow MoE and Public Health requirements. -We do. Our statutory obligations are the only frameworks we operate under in this regard.
 - iii. Open up a space for consultation and discussion--space to find creative solutions together, so that we can continue within this challenging situation.
 - iv. If there is any way we can support you as a family we will, to make sure you and your child are able to be part of the school regardless of your choices re vaccination.
 - v. Things are constantly changing. Don't lose hope
5. **TO DO:**
- a. EVE TO draft the letter--send out to BoT tomorrow for finalisation
 - b. MATT to draft the parent questionnaire--send out to BoT tomorrow for finalisation
 - c. BoT: to feedback on these by Thursday night
 - d. MATT to send the letter and the questionnaire to parents on Friday after BoT feedback
 - e. EVE TO let parents know that email will come on Friday not Thursday.

NEXT MEETING Monday 18 October 4.30.

Agenda:

1. Reviewing questionnaire feedback and discussing implications
2. Creative problem solving and discussion re. how BoT will liaise with/support proprietors and residents re. the MoE guidelines.