

Minutes of Mount Aspiring College Board of Trustees Meeting held on Tuesday 3 March 2013 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: M Barton, E Brown, H Dobbie, R Hemingway, L Jolly (chair),
D Schikker, G Thornton, N Whyte
In Attendance: H Hammond (Secretary), T Gibson, J O'Brien, S King,
R O'Connell, J Hamilton
Apologies: W Bosley, B Pihama,

Welcome

L Jolly welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies

Received from W Bosley.

Special Topic: Rutherford

Jilly O'Brien, Simon King and Rachel O'Connell were welcomed to the meeting and thanked for the written report on the Rutherford programme.

Jilly added that having a team of three people delivering Rutherford was very positive and has led to changes and new goals for this year. Jilly is taking the Year 7 & 8 students, Rachel has the Year 9 group and Simon the Year 10 group. The programme fulfils the need of gifted children to meet together and to face high cognitive challenges. There are quite large numbers in the programme this year (groups of around 20) and others actively seeking to join the programme.

How the value of the programme is assessed is a current issue. ERO is also interested in this particularly how added value is measured. Currently this is done through parent and student evaluation, students voting with their feet, and through student profiles on the web portal.

Identification of students for the programme is ongoing and not just at Year 7, and there is a lot of interest from older students. The Year 7 group has started with a very small number and it is expected that this will increase during the year as more students are identified. Applicants for the programme may not be accepted for various reasons, but the channels are kept open. Two groups of interest are the twice exceptional, eg. gifted and dyslexic or Aspergers, and Maori gifted.

Having a team of teachers this year is a great improvement and provides collaboration and support. Another change this year is that the Year 7 & 8 students are coming out of homeroom rather than options, and the homeroom teachers are running a similar programme so the Rutherford students are not missing out on the curriculum.

The goals are to keep raising the profile of the programme through the newsletter, parent meetings and teachers and to embed a structure for profiles and reporting.

The programme could be assessed through the impact on the participants' performance in the normal classroom. The students may perceive they are missing out on the curriculum but they are usually very good at keeping up, and their engagement is heightened so this should lead on to better performance.

Simon suggested that at Years 11-13 the academic achievement of top students could be improved by keeping the Rutherford group together if possible, and it has been agreed that the Year 11 Lifeskills time could be used to get the group together for mutual support.

Simon has held a parent meeting which was well attended and used to identify the highs and lows of the programme. New initiatives include improved reporting that can track progress from Year 7 identifying individual goals and results.

Planning the programme can be difficult as the approach is to react to the needs of the students, however Year 10 Rutherford will include:

- A class blog so that parents can see what the children are doing;
- Future problem solving used as the approach – this is broad based and has something for everyone, and students can complete national assessments, exams and go to a national competition;
- Grass cart championships which involve designing and building an off road go-cart;
- Young designers award;
- Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA);
- Film-making competitions.

Support from the Year 10 teachers is important and there will be regular communication with them. The students can feel stressed through missing regular classes, so the periods they are in Rutherford will be changed part-way through the year.

In Year 9 there are currently 20 students with three more potentials. The students love competitions and are working on MUNA at the moment, and Rachel is looking for other competitions such as Fair Go ad awards, Young Designers and debating.

Generally it was felt that the programme has a very positive profile and there are students keen to join. This is helped by teachers' growing confidence in identifying students. It is very motivating to work with these students.

The request for a specialist teaching space was discussed and Jilly said that a similar set up to a primary classroom was ideal, incorporating different areas such as creative, writing and multi-sensory with a variety of resources, and should be available for students during breaks. Simon is currently using both the design room and the workshop and has noticed a different response to the students in the different spaces.

Jilly, Simon and Rachel were thanked and left the meeting.

Special Topic: Year 8 Interviews

Jane Hamilton was welcomed to the meeting and thanked for the written report.

Jane outlined how the one term sabbatical granted last year resulted from the Year 8 interviews, and she had looked at how "effective communication equals effective schools". She visited other schools and shared the Year 8 interview experience with them as well as gathering ideas from those schools.

Jane has offered the opportunity for a one on one interview with all Year 8 parents and students for many years, and has found it a unique way of hearing from parents every year especially the "silent majority". It can be an effective way of identifying potential problems and also setting parents' concerns to rest. Jane sees a good cross section of parents and often parents come back over time for different siblings. She offers the opportunity of home or school interviews with a focus on the transition to secondary school in Year 9.

In general parents are favourable about:

- The balance offered at MAC
- The teachers
- The environment
- The option subjects offered.

Students concerns are usually minimal but include provision of water fountains, canteen prices and the provision of ski days.

The opportunity for parents to raise concerns is extremely valuable and it can be an opportunity to dispel some myths and identify areas that need to be addressed, for example the concern of some parents that MAC does not meet the needs of high achieving students could help to be dispelled through better profiling of results and high achieving students and alumni.

It may be worth expanding the interviews to different year groups as there is a very high rate of response and if well documented this could fulfill the requirements for community consultation.

Jane was thanked and left the meeting.

Strategic Aim: Community Survey

The internet survey had a disappointing response with only 25 completed surveys. There was consistency in some of the responses, such as what MAC does well:

- All round education
- Outdoor education
- Academic success

H Dobbie suggested that internet surveys needed to be quick and short. They are good for quick feedback and honesty but the depth of information asked for in the survey would be better suited to a different method. For example a high level survey to identify any specific issues and then get a focus group together to discuss the issue.

From here it was suggested that the survey could be condensed and relaunched with further promotion, and also provided in paper format and in the newsletter. The prize draw should be from the original respondents.

Strategic Aim: SA1 Progress - to foster and develop community partnerships

G Thornton advised that a report from Kahu Youth on the Year 10 mentoring scheme would be circulated later. It was hoped to have 25 students linked with a mentor this year, compared to 13 last year.

Strategic Aim: Charter, Strategic Goals

Updated strategic aims for 2012 to 2015 and the annual goals for 2013 were included as part of the Principal's Report. The following points were raised:

- Academic targets (for example, at Scholarship level) can be challenging to set because national levels and cohorts can vary so much from year to year. However it does provide a discussion point amongst heads of department on how to achieve the target.
- Bicultural heritage – B Pihama is keen to be involved with the Board but would need to be co-opted, even to the end of the current Board's term. With elections coming up this will provide an opportunity to decide whether he still wants a long term role.
- The strategic goal for the Sports Council needs discussion as it may be unrealistic. It was noted that goals for future years are provisional and may be revised before the year in question.
- Rooms 10 to 14 refurbishment will be an opportunity to provide a modern learning environment and a small group is currently researching ideas which can be passed to an educational designer.

Self Review: NAG5 Health & Safety

The Audit Committee reported that NAG5 had proved to be a more complicated audit than anticipated but could be finalized and circulated before the next meeting.

The commencement of the NAG4 audit should be moved to the agenda for the next meeting.

Other Business:

Principal's Performance Agreement:

L Jolly explained that the performance agreement was a separate process from the appraisal. It puts in place a set of objectives for the year and these are reported back at the end of the year. The appraisal can be internal or external and given the changeover of the board this year it was probably timely that an external appraiser is used this year. Previous external appraisals have been carried out by Peter Wilson in 2008 and Wayne Dixon in 2010. The appraiser would meet early on to help set goals, and then again during the year, with a summative review at the end of the year. This would need to be set in place as soon as possible. The process is outlined in the Governance Manual.

This topic to be included on the agenda for the next meeting, by which time there should be a report from the previous 12 months' appraisal plus an agreement for 2013. G Thornton to discuss the possibilities with W Bosley on his return from China.

In the future it would be good to have a regular cycle in place of two years' internal review and the third year external.

"General Business" discussion:

The current agenda format may be restricting the opportunity for discussion of general topics at board meetings. It was agreed that General Business should be included as an agenda item where issues can be raised and then, if agreed, included in the following meeting agenda following some background research.

Reports

Finance

M Barton / H Dobbie moved:

1. *That the Board authorizes the Board Chairperson and Principal to sign the Statement of Responsibility for the 2012 Annual Accounts on the Board's behalf when confirmation is received that the audit has been completed.*
2. *That the Board approves the inclusion of a budget for the 2012 Balance Sheet which is derived from the Board's 2012 operating and capital purchases budgets.*

Carried.

General Business

Recognition of Academic Excellence

This followed a point raised by Simon King in the Rutherford discussion. How does the college culture value academic success whilst retaining the holistic approach to learning? Some suggestions:

- Structure of prizes.
- Publicity boards, for example, in each subject area profiling excellent results.
- A pathway for students who want to achieve, for example, extending Rutherford, MEX programme.
- Teacher expectations.

It was also noted that Senior Staff are looking at the decisions made by students at Level 3 immediately prior to external exams.

Medical Clinic

L Jolly noted that the free medical clinic for students on Friday lunchtimes has not had a particularly high uptake recently, and whether it was worth continuing. It could be that students are not that aware of it and it may need a further push to bring it to their attention.

Student Attrition

R Hemingway noted that there are parents each year who choose to send their children to boarding school and as a result we can lose some potentially very good students. If this is something we could change then we need to look at how. To start by collecting some statistics on which local students have left to attend out of town schools and what the reasons are for this, and whether there are any trends over the last five years.

Correspondence

The correspondence schedule was tabled. One item discussed was a request to use the food technology room for a Wine and Food Convivium, which required Board permission as it involved the consumption of alcohol. It was agreed that as the function was to be run following good host responsibility guidelines that approval be granted.

Minutes of the previous meeting

M Barton / H Dobbie moved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 February 2013 were a true record. Carried.

Dates

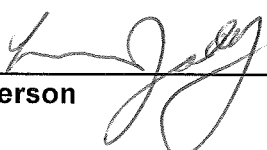
Next Board meeting: **Tuesday 9 April, 6.00pm**

Next Meeting Agenda:

Self Review:	NAG5 Health & Safety (report) NAG4 Finance / Property (commence)
Strategic Aim:	SA2 To support innovative learning programmes (progress).
Special Topics:	BoT Elections (30 May) Principals Performance Agreement
Other:	Distance Learning, Sports Coordinator
General Business	Student Attrition

Meeting closed at 9.07pm.

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:



Chairperson

9/4/13

Date

Action Plan

Review and relaunch community survey	Greg
Circulate report from Kahu Youth	Greg
Principal's performance agreement follow up	Greg, Linda, Wayne
Student attrition – investigate trends over 5 years	Greg