

## ELMWOOD NORMAL SCHOOL

### MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES - NOVEMBER MEETING

Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 6.00pm

#### 1.0 MEETING OPENING

##### 1.1 Present:

Paul Armitage (Principal), Eden Chan, Lachlan Knighton, Emily Toth-Taylor, Anna Graves, Jamie Hall,

##### 1.2 In Attendance: Claire Peacock-Price (Teacher Rep) and Vicki Harrington (Board Secretary).

#### 2.0 ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

##### 2.1. Declaration of Interests:

Emily Toth-Taylor is on the Heaton BoT. This is to be added to the schedule. Action: Emily will email Vicki.

##### 2.2. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting dated 17 September 2025.

**Recommended:** That the minutes of meeting, together with the In Committee Minutes held on 17 September 2025 be approved and adopted as a true and correct record.

**MOVED:** Jamie Hall  
**SECONDED:** Claire Peacock-Price  
**PASSED**

##### 2.3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising of concern.

##### 2.4. Correspondence:

Paul explained the correspondence received as follows:

1. Letter of resignation from Susan Hird (Learning Assistant) after many years at Elmwood.
2. Inbound correspondence which will be dealt with in-committee later in the meeting.
3. Letter from Matt Hooper whose transition back into full time work is taking longer than expected. He is hoping to be back to full time and the leadership role in 2027.

**In committee correspondence:** This will be dealt with later in the meeting.

The Board accepts the inwards and outwards correspondence.

**MOVED:** Lachlan Knighton  
**PASSED**

#### 3.0 MONITORING FOCUS

##### 3.1 Principal's Report

Paul's spoke to his report, as follows:

Enrolments for 2026. We undertook the last ballot recently for Term 1 2026. We have two staff members who had children wanting to come here who are out of zone. They were priority 5. This is something we have always accommodated. Our school roll is stable at present.

The Attendance Report was taken as read. The majority of absence is from sickness and 24% consists of overseas trips. Some of the other data is quite interesting within the report. Sometimes different cultures impact the attendance report. Other colleagues around our region have a similar report.

Property:

There are funds remaining in our CSR programme, which were originally allocated for reroofing the Kahikatea block. We obtained quotes and found that the main membrane has failed, with repair costs exceeding \$300,000. Paul has relayed this information to the Ministry of Education and is awaiting guidance on how the issue will be managed. A project manager will be appointed, and this development may affect the scheduled external painting planned for January.

Our cyclical maintenance will roll forward.

Memorial project.

Thanks to those who could make the opening on Friday. Paul has done the paperwork to ask the MoE for permission to use the community funds for this project.

Bill has been preparing the swimming pool for the new season. It is now ready to go.

#### 4.0 GENERAL ITEMS

Board draft dates for 2026 are as follows:

24 February, 24 March, 19 May, 23 June, 18 August, 22 September, 10 November, 8 December

Lachlan asked the Board to look at the dates and check these at home. **Action:** Board please email Vicki to advise you can attend on the above dates.

#### 5.0 SPECIAL TOPIC:

##### 5.1 Draft Budget

Paul, Tina and Rachel from CES looked at the draft budget together, Paul and Lachlan also went through this.

Costs, together with increases and expenses are reviewed and adjusted accordingly. The Asset register shows items which decrease in value over time. Depreciation rates vary according to what the item is. The depreciation figure is around \$138,000.

Cyclical maintenance provides for funds the board needs to put away each year to look after the buildings. Putting aside an amount each year means in 10 years there will be enough funds to paint the school. The new blocks will also need painting in 10 years time.

We are projecting a deficit for next year, but we are comfortable with this since we achieved a surplus this year. The board has made a few major funding decisions, including allocating resources for a teacher's position in 2026. This addition is intended to support smaller class sizes.

We may need to reassess the budget beyond next year to return to a surplus. Paul has consistently managed the funds very well—often bringing us back into surplus even in years when we initially budgeted for a deficit. We are thankful for his good management and savvy in managing the budget and operational funding.

There is no need to stockpile funds for a rainy day. We should be spending on today's students and for future students for things around the school. We are in a strong position.

The Board moved the approval of the draft 2026 budget. This will be confirmed at the February 2026 meeting

**MOVED:**

**SECONDED:**

**PASSED:**

Paul Armitage

Eden Chen

##### 5.2 Principal Recruitment

We have engaged Sheffield New Zealand as the recruitment agency to manage the appointment of the new principal. They will oversee stakeholder engagement and help define the scope of the role. A community announcement will be made by the end of the year. The position is expected to be advertised in late January or early February, with the

recruitment process continuing through Term 1. Interested candidates can use the summer period to consider the opportunity, and expressions of interest can be directed to Sheffield or to Lachlan during this time.

We are open to bringing the timeline forward. Lachlan will discuss with Andrea next week whether the advertisement should be released before Christmas. He will meet with Andrea on Monday and then provide an update.

#### 5.3 Strategic Plan 2026

Since we last spoke, the Minister has decided that the rollout will occur at the end of 2026. Normally, we would consult with the community on our areas of focus and then develop a three-year Strategic Plan. That framework remains in place: we must have both a Strategic Plan and an Annual Implementation Plan. Paul has made only minor adjustments and has included the priorities we already know are on the horizon.

Next year, we will begin working in depth on the curriculum. Schools will have a significant workload in this area. Attendance will continue to be a major focus, and expectations from the Ministry will increase. Paul has developed an attendance plan and will present it at the December meeting.

In terms of property, the most substantial issue is the removal of the additional buildings.

Recruitment will also be a major focus. Paul will proceed with drafting the Annual Implementation Plan, which will be broad and high-level. This will also support Jill with her reporting. The Board appreciates Paul's work in setting us up for this shift.

Te Tiriti responsibilities will be moved from the school level to sit directly with the Ministry of Education. This is something for us to monitor and consider in terms of how our community may respond.

#### 5.4 Year 5 Camp

There was an issue of the water quality at the Hanmer Camp. While we were disappointed with the vendors of the camp, we shared our concerns with them.

Discussion was had around the situation. Going forward for approval of camp in 2026 we could seek some sort of water assurance for water quality then. The Board needs to trust the process that we have undertaken. You can reduce risk but you cannot get it to zero. The board was comfortable with the report they had received.

#### 5.5 School Counsellor

The counsellors report was included with the board papers. It was a great summary of how the School counsellor is going. It was noted as follows:

- She is very professional and a good counsellor.
- The board sees value in her work and believes we should continue this for 2026.
- She could perhaps run some workshops for parents.
- The board agreed to keep the funds for the counsellor in the 2026 budget.

Lynette Williamson sent a message to the board expressing her sincere gratitude for the care of the board. Thanking for their unwavering support, generosity and kindness. This was read by Claire.

Paul also expressed the struggle this year has been for the staff.

The board appreciated the comments. Lachlan talked about the relationships with the children, staff and ENSCA. Personal governance should happen naturally.

#### **The Board Moved into committee at 7.22pm**

***MOTION: That the public be excluded from the following proceedings of this meeting.***

***The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section***



**48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution is as follows:-**

**General subject of each matter to be considered:**

- **Personnel**

**Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each resolution:**

- **Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7**

**Ground(s) under Section 48 (1) for the passing of this:**

- **7 (2) (a) 48 (1) (a)**

**This resolution is made in reliance on Sections 48 (1) (a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 or Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:**

**For reasons of professional and legal privilege and to protect the privacy of a natural person.**

**MOVED:** Lachlan Knighton  
**SECONDED:**  
**PASSED**

Lachlan attended the November ENSCA meeting with Jill Evans. It was a good meeting and the increased presence from the Board has been appreciated from ENSCA. We will keep the momentum going with that relationship. They are looking to find a large fund raising event to deliver. Jill and Lachlan talked about some of the projects happening. They asked for a wish list of things to fundraise towards.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.0 The Financial Report for month ending 31 October 2025 and the Operating Summary, together with the Principal's Report and recommendations as tabled be accepted.
- 2.0 The draft 2026 Budget will be approved in principle.  
Note: the school donation of \$220 per child (maximum of \$440 per family remains the same).  
Note: The international fee of \$14,500 (incl gst) per child remains the same for 2026.
- 3.0 The 2026 Draft Board Meeting dates be approved.
- 4.0 Board member's 2025 meeting reimbursements to be set for 8 meetings.

Paul moved the adoption of his report together with the recommendations.

**MOVED:** Paul Armitage  
**SECONDED:** Claire Peacock-Price

#### **6.0 MEETING DATES FOR 2025:**

The following are the meeting dates for 2025

9 December.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

**Board Talk** - Anna Graves - **Action:** Vicki to send Anna examples.

Signed:



Dated:

9/12/28.

(Presiding Member of the Board)