

MINUTES

Meremere School

Thursday 5 March 2026 6.00pm

Item	Subject	Reporting
1.0	WELCOME / KARAKIA	
1.1	Attendees: Catherine Brown, Chris Wismans, William Ropiha, Maxine Stensness	
1.2	Apologies: None Moved: Catherine Seconded: Maxine	
1.3	Declaration of Conflict of Interest None Moved: Catherine Seconded: Maxine	
2.0	NEW BUSINESS	
2.1	Catherine Brown has been nominated as Presiding member. Moved: Maxine Seconded: Chris	
2.2	The Code of Conduct was presented to Board members. Information only	
2.3	Following the resignation of Rebecca Latu from the Office Administrator position and consequently the Board a school by-election must be held. Maxine Stensness has been nominated to be the Returning Officer Moved: Catherine Seconded: Chris	
2.4	Education and Training Amendment Act 2025 Main points were presented to the Board for discussion. Education and Training Amendment Act 2025 Parliament has passed the Education and Training Amendment Act 2025, introducing several important updates for schools: Focusing school boards on raising educational achievement by making this a board's highest priority objective and introducing new supporting objectives on student attendance and assessment. Changes to remove an explicit obligation on school boards to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. To meet the new paramount objective of educational achievement a school board will be required to ensure it: seeks to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori students takes all reasonable steps to provide for students to be taught, and to learn, in te reo Māori on request of their parents and caregivers, and; takes reasonable steps to ensure that the policies and practices for the school reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity. NELP removed – the Minister can no longer issue national education priorities.	

CB
26 March 26

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Schools must have a plan in place to help manage and improve student attendance. Most schools need to have this ready by late January 2026, while distance schools have until July 2026.

Strike notice period extended from 3 to no less than 7 days to help families plan childcare arrangements.

Teaching Council membership will now have a ministerial majority.

2.5	The Strategic Plan 2026- 2028 was presented to the Board with an alteration being made regards roll growth. The Strategic Plan is to be presented to the Board at the next meeting with changes.
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Seconded: Chris

2.6	The Annual plan was presented to the Board. A few alterations are to be included. They include a wider community event being planned to be held at the school, the Meremere Facebook to be utilised to publish positive aspects of the school and the monitoring of the numbers of children catching the bus to Te Kauwhata Primary School.
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Seconded: William

2.7	The Term 1 School Docs Policies review was discussed. The Board are having difficulty accessing the School Docs site. Maxine is to discuss easier access for the Board with the School Administrator.
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Information only

2.8	The Budget 2026 was presented to the Board. After a series of questions to clarify aspects of the budget this was accepted. Maxine will now forward the ratified budget to the accountants.
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Seconded: Chris

2.9	The significance and impact regarding the new allocation of property resourcing to small schools was discussed.
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5YA "From July 2026, the base rate will rise by 50 percent – from \$30 per square metre to \$45 per square metre. In our ongoing work with the Rural Schools Association, we are aware of the unique challenges smaller schools face. That's why the minimum 5YA allocation for small schools will double, from \$45,000 to \$90,000. The first group of 450 schools will receive increased allocations from 1 July 2026. Doubling the minimum allocation is particularly significant for the smallest schools, 24 schools will double their existing funding in the first year." See Minister of Education's letter

Information only

2.10	The latest ERO email regarding Maori Achievement was discussed.
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	This Board is now well briefed about their responsibilities regarding student achievement and learning. ERO email Maori Achievement Māori learner success is supported: where school boards, leaders and teachers know about and specifically support the aspirations of Māori learners and their whānau to achieve where schools set high expectations for attendance, progress and achievement where schools actively engage in respectful working relationships with Māori learners and their whānau - invitational, respectful, reciprocal relationships are evident the school affirms Māori learners and provides engaging, challenging and relevant content and curriculum that is progressive and paves the way to success and future learning and careers teachers use evidence-based strategies that respond to each learner's diverse needs and reduce barriers to learning, so that every child, no matter their background or circumstances, can thrive. the school is a place where students feel safe and included – a sense of belonging school boards, leaders and teachers use a range of high-quality assessment information to look at what is working well for groups of learners – including Māori - and what they could do to improve their provision and success. Information only	
2.11	The principal expressed her appreciation with staff, ex staff, service personnel ie ex RTLIT, 50% of whanau, senior children and the Presiding member for their voluntary participation during the ERO visit. ERO Ruth Pritchard <Ruth.Pritchard@ero.govt.nz> Thu, Dec 11, 8:49 AM (4 days ago) to me, office@meremere.school.nz Kia ora Maxine We hope your school year has gone well, and your end-of-year activities have gone smoothly. We are getting in touch with you (before you head off on a well-deserved break!) to alert you to an opportunity to take part in a national project ERO is undertaking early next year. We are approaching your school (as part of a small group of schools) to learn about what has helped you to make the recent improvements your school has experienced. We want to understand your story of improvement - what has helped you to focus your priorities, what supports you have accessed, the key	

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	things that have made the difference for your school, and what further support would be helpful. This will be part of a national review to learn about how to better support schools who may face significant challenges in delivering outcomes for their learners and community. We want to better understand what helps schools improve, and sustain that improvement, so that other schools can learn from your journey, and support can be better targeted to help schools that may be struggling. We are planning to visit a small group of schools early next year to talk with senior leaders/board members/teachers and/or students about how improvement has occurred within your school, and the impact that it is having. We would love to include your school! Please let us know if you would like to hear more about this exciting mahi and how you school what it would involve. We will phone you over the next few days to see if we can set up a time – (perhaps later in January?) to talk further about this mahi. We look forward to working with you Ngā mihi Ruth Pritchard Senior Evaluator Education Review Office Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga P 04 979 8991 M 027 464 9061 W ero.govt.nz; evidence.ero.govt.nz Wellington Office Legal House Level 1, 101 Lambton Quay, Wellington, 6011 Information only	
2.12	The Term 4 2025 Attendance Report with notable improvements was presented to the Board and accepted. Chronic Attendance is 0% compared to 20% in Term 4 2024. Moderate Absence is 8% compared to 20% in Term 4 2024 Irregular Absence has climbed to 50% compared to 20% in Term 4 2024 and Regular Attendance is 42% compared to 40%. This is the area that the Government, ERO and school want to improve upon. The principal mentioned that the only acceptable reasons for school in-attendance were sickness and funerals. The school's current issue is late arrivals which will be referred to the Attendance Service as a last resort. This severely impacts learning in Writing and even Maths. Moved: Catherine Seconded: William	
2.13	Catherine and Chris will organise a calendar for Board meetings for 2026 and present to the Board at the next meeting aiming for two a term. Moved: Catherine Seconded: Maxine	
2.14	The scheduled Power Outage was discussed. Maxine is to follow up with this. Moved: Maxine Seconded: Catherine	
2.15	The website was discussed as being problematic. Maxine is to follow up on this Moved: Maxine Seconded: Catherine	

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3.0	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	Minutes of Last Board Meeting Moved that the minutes of the Meremere School Board Meeting held on 19 November 2025 be approved Moved: Catherine Seconded: William	
4.0	PRINCIPAL'S REPORT	
	The Strategic and Annual plan were presented by the principal. Moved: Maxine Seconded: Chris	
5.0	FINANCIAL REPORT	
5.1	The January 2026 Financial Report was accepted. Moved: Catherine Seconded: William	
6.0	ITEMS TO BE APPROVED AND SIGNED	
	Board Remuneration form signed Yes Declared Conflict of Interest Register completed Yes SUE reports signed No	
7.0	CORRESPONDENCE INWARDS	
8.0	CORRESPONDENCE OUTWARDS	
9.0	CLOSURE	
	There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.07pm	
10.0	NEXT MEETING	
	Date: 26 March 2026 Time: 6.00 Location: Staffroom	