

NPS Board Newsletter – Term 2, 2026

Tēnā koutou katoa

As we pass the halfway point of the year, the Board wanted to share some of the activities happening both in and beyond the classroom.

It has been fantastic to see NPS learners embracing opportunities across sport, the arts and learning - including many NPS sports teams reaching final playoff games, strong participation in the Y5/6 'Have a Go' sports day and 68 students dancing in the incredible Showquest performance. These achievements reflect the talent and enthusiasm of our students, supported by the dedication of our staff, whānau and volunteers. It was also wonderful to see many parents visiting classrooms at the Open Morning earlier in the term.

What Does the Board Do?

A question we are often asked is "*What does the School Board actually do?*" While the Principal leads the day-to-day operation of the school, the Board focuses on governance - setting strategic direction, overseeing finances and property, ensuring compliance with its legal obligations and making decisions that support the long-term success of the school, its students and staff.

The Board's work is currently guided by the [Northcote Primary School Strategic Plan 2026](#), and we are now beginning to develop the next Strategic Plan for 2027–2029. Thank you to those who contributed to the recent Vision and Values survey, which will help shape this planning and ensure the school's future direction reflects the priorities of our community.

As much of the Board's work happens behind the scenes, we wanted to share some areas of focus this year.

Property and Grounds

Thanks to the Principal, Melissa Grant's efforts in identifying funding opportunities, reviewing contracts and driving a range of property initiatives, several improvements have been completed or are underway across the school, over and above the normal Ministry of Education-cyclical maintenance. These include:

- Sound-proofing of the hall and Room 23
- Identifying the ongoing water leak and drainage issues occurring on the school site
- Replacing the fence at the end of the Tiger Turf
- Significant tree trimming to reduce winter leaf drop and ongoing maintenance
- Cleaning roofs and gutters of all buildings ahead of winter to prevent blockages and overflows
- Completing a furniture audit to identify classroom needs and opportunities for reallocation

These projects help maintain a safe, functional and welcoming environment for students and staff.

With New Zealand weather patterns becoming increasingly unpredictable, we are also continuing to explore opportunities to increase shade and rain cover across the school grounds. Providing additional all-weather areas is an important consideration as we look at ways to improve the comfort and usability of outdoor spaces for students throughout the year. We look forward to sharing more as these options are further developed.

Outdoor Space between Totara & Kauri

Thanks to FONS, an initial design has been developed for the outdoor space between the Totara and Kauri classroom blocks to help guide future planning for this area.

However, before progressing further the drainage issues beneath this area of the school needs to be addressed. Given the scale of both the leak remediation required and the cost of the project for this space likely to be hundreds of thousands of dollars, this remains a longer-term aspiration for the school. The Board will continue to explore opportunities to progress it over time.

NPS Board Newsletter – Term 2, 2026

Financial Stewardship

The Board's Finance Committee continue to support the Principal with careful management of the school's financials. This includes reviewing expenditure, identifying opportunities to reduce unnecessary spending and working to improve the school's financial position while ensuring resources remain focused on supporting student learning and wellbeing.

With our current school roll lower than previous years, the school's Government funding has also reduced. This makes donations, activities fees, and the invaluable contributions from FONS even more important to help NPS continue to deliver the curriculum and opportunities it aims to provide its learners. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far.

Health and Safety

This year the Board has established a dedicated Health and Safety Committee to strengthen oversight and reporting in this area and to help maintain a safe environment for students, staff and visitors.

Building Our Understanding

To support informed governance, specialist staff members and team leaders have been presenting to the Board throughout the year. These sessions provide valuable insight into teaching, learning, wellbeing and school operations, which helps strengthen the Board's strategic decision-making.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools

Like many schools, we are beginning to explore how AI may support teaching, learning and school operations. To help guide its use, the Board is developing a draft AI Policy that sets expectations around the safe, ethical and responsible use of AI tools.

As this is an evolving area, we want to ensure our approach reflects both best practice and the expectations of our school community. So once the AI Policy is ready, we will circulate it for feedback via Hero and encourage interested parents and caregivers to email us their thoughts.

Thank You

Much of what keeps a school running happens goes unseen so we are grateful to everyone who contributes their time, expertise and energy. In particular, a big thank you to all our hard-working staff, the energetic FONS team who continue to fundraise and organise all sorts of amazing initiatives for our school community, and all the wonderful parent coaches, school-trip, GTT and in-class parent volunteers for their ongoing support and commitment to our school.

We also want to acknowledge Melissa's outstanding leadership in her first two terms as Principal, and the energy, care and determination she has brought to strengthening the school's environment, systems and direction. Together, we continue to invest in a school community where students can learn, grow and thrive.

That's a wrap for now but please keep an eye out for future updates from us. If there is a specific topic you'd like to hear about, please do let one of the Board members know, or email us at the Board email address below. All the best for the upcoming school holidays and we hope to see some of you at the Matariki celebrations on Wednesday morning.

Ngā mihi nui

Northcote Primary School Board

bot@northcoteprimary.school.nz

Current Board members

The current members of the NPS Board are: Melissa Grant (Principal), Courtney Ryder (Staff Representative) Fiona Eagles (Presiding Member), James Graham, Ash Matuschka, David O'Halloran and Max Brown (Parent Representatives).

2026 meeting dates

Members of the community are always welcome to attend our board meetings in the staffroom from 6pm. Our next meeting is on Monday 10 August.