Board meeting 17 August 2017 Agenda item 9.1

**Adoption of Education Funding Strategy**

**Process**

At the recent meeting held at Greytown Primary School stakeholders were invited to make written submissions for consideration at this Board meeting, prior to the Board formally adopting the strategy. The opportunity also exists for Trustees to consider other matters arising from the meeting and through other discussion that may need to be addressed as part of the process of adoption of the strategy.

**Written submissions**

We have received only one written submission, from John Rhodes. This appears on the agenda under item 8.1.

**Other matters for consideration**

*Primary v secondary allocation*

Prior to the stakeholder meeting, the Deputy Chairman and I met (at his request) with Alistair Plimmer, Chairman of the Greytown School Board of Trustees. Not wishing to broach the subject at the stakeholder meeting, he wanted to record his intention to enter into discussion with Kuranui College Board of Trustees about the proposed allocation of funding between them which he felt favoured Kuranui.

The driver for the proposed discussion was the change in Greytown School’s decile rating which had recently been upgraded by MoE, resulting in the School receiving less central government funding. By contrast Kuranui’s decile rating has remained unchanged.

The discussion centred around the predicted increase in the School’s roll number and the pressure this is already exerting on its facilities at a time when MoE has programmed no funding for upgrading them. Alistair referenced the fact, in relation to the Trust’s legislative mandate, that the majority of students attending Greytown School reside in Greytown, which is not the case with Kuranui College students.

It was agreed at the suggestion of the Deputy Chairman it would be useful for the two school Boards to have their discussion and come back to the Board with an agreed proposal (if any) for amending the funding allocation. I have since heard from Alistair that Kuranui College are not willing to accept a lower funding allocation but they have agreed to undertake a jointly funded project with Greytown School to provide an improved transition pathway for students moving on to Kuranui.

*New strategy implementation transition*

Both Alistair, leading on from the outcome of his discussion with Kuranui, and Early Years, at the stakeholders meeting, have queried how we will transition from the current grant scheme to implementation of the new strategy.

We have yet to pay this year’s roll-based grants to Greytown Primary and Kuranui under the current scheme – these would normally be paid out in September. For his part, Alistair would be happy to apply the new priority based approach to the use of this funding. This is perhaps a good way of ushering in the new approach that Trustees should consider.

Early Years have indicated that a key priority for them will be to introduce as soon as possible a professional development programme for their teachers. However, they are concerned that the current suggested timing of bulk funding applications under the new strategy means they will not be able to implement a programme until early 2019.

While I have reminded them they are still able to access community grant funding this year, I believe they are worried any amount that may be allocated to them will be constrained by the level of competition from other applicants for this funding. They have also indicated they will wish to apply for community grant funding for improvements to their outdoor area, most probably in the upcoming September round. I believe their concern extends to the possibility that having received a grant in September Trustees will be less inclined to award a further grant for professional development later.

A more general issue arises as to whether applying the new education funding strategy effectively means Early Years and Greytown Kindergarten will be excluded in future from being able to apply for community grant funding. If this is the case, it needs to be made explicit in the adopted strategy.

**Next steps**

Having approved the new strategy, I will work with the Chairman to prepare an appropriate presentation of it at the AGM on 20 September. I will also prepare a communication strategy regarding the changes that will result from implementing the strategy and (the timing of) the application process that will apply in future for wider community information purposes.

Kevin Murphy

General Manager