PERTH MODERN SCHOOL
Exceptional schooling. Exceptional students.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
8 September 2026

Subject	Perth Modern School Board Meeting
Date	8 September 2026
Time	17:00 for a 17:10 start – 19:00
Location	McCusker Board Room
Chair	Kati Tonkin
Attendees	**Voting**: Kati Tonkin (Parent Rep and Chair), Grant Staffe (Staff Rep), Raymond Loh (Parent Rep), Bin Zhu (Parent Rep), Peter Farr (Perth Modernian Society Rep), Lora Brown (P&C), Monica Franz (Staff Rep and Secretary), Rick McMahon (Staff Rep), Mary McCusker (Student Rep), Alex Jenkins (Invited Guest), Avash Shakya (Student Rep), Trisha Bebek (Invited Guest), Mitchell Mackay (Principal)
Apologies	Sandra Song (Parent Rep), Cathryn Trott (Parent Rep and Deputy Chair),

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	STANDING ITEMS	
1	Welcome and acknowledgment of Country; Apologies; conflict of interest	Meeting opened 17:10 by KT. AS completed acknowledgement of country. No declared conflict of interest.
2	Minutes of previous meeting	No amendments. Accepted as a true record moved by PF and seconded by MaryM.
3	Correspondence	None
4	Action Items Register	Item 1: MM, PF and KT have made progress on community rep and hoping to report back at the next meeting. If we don't get the person discussed, they will go to the shortlist.
5	NIL	
6	**AI in Boards** - Alex Jenkins	Director of WA Data Science Innovation Hub. Part of AI advisory board and on the advisory board for classmate (DOE) His work focuses on supporting the introduction of AI into classrooms for students and teachers, including developing AI literacy and exploring its potential to support individualised learning and neurodiverse students. **History and development of generative AI** AI is intelligence demonstrated by machines and not people. AI is predicted to contribute approximately $22 trillion to the global economy by 2030, with health and education expected to be among the sectors most significantly affected. AI provides opportunities for cognitive offloading. The ability to use this effectively will be an important future skill, and students need to be prepared to use AI appropriately and effectively. By mid-2021, AI systems were beginning to understand the intent behind language. Image generators initially raised concerns about the unauthorised use of artistic works; however, they are also now being used creatively to extend and develop artistic work.

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		Students will grow up in an environment in which they cannot automatically trust what they read, see or hear. Critical thinking will therefore become an increasingly essential skill. AI-generated video remains at an early stage and can still appear strange because it struggles with temporal consistency and object permanence. Alex likened this to an infant stage of development, with AI currently operating at approximately the level at which object permanence is developing. There is significant potential educational value in the real-time and creative applications of AI. For example, AI can listen to speech, transcribe it, translate it into Hindi, recreate the speaker's voice and adjust the video image accordingly. This could provide real-time translation, although it currently requires an enormous amount of computing power. It is likely that real-time translation of this kind will be available on mobile phones within the next few years. **How Large Language models work** Large language models, which underpin tools such as ChatGPT and Claude, absorb millions of texts and large amounts of information from the internet. They use neural networks to compress this information into the smallest possible representation. This enables the models to move beyond individual facts towards concepts and more abstract understandings, which is more akin to the way humans think. Alex explained that a subset of the human neural cortex works in a way that is similar to a large language model. Both the human brain and a large language model generate and predict language one word at a time. Large language models can support: • language understanding; • semantic parsing; • interpretation of proverbs; • pattern recognition; and • written reasoning. Large language models can sometimes "hallucinate" by generating inaccurate or invented information. AI-generated content should therefore be approached with scientific rigour. Users should request sources and trace information back to its original reference to verify what the AI has produced. **Major AI Platforms** The three main large language model providers discussed were Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT and Claude. Microsoft Copilot can work with documents, email and meetings where the user's licence and organisation enable these functions. The base tier of Copilot uses a lower level of AI capability, and its interactions with documents and emails are less sophisticated. ChatGPT and Claude currently offer capabilities beyond the base level of Copilot. They provide more advanced interactions with documents and are generally better at converting documents into visual formats. A concern with the free versions of ChatGPT and Claude is that user interactions and data may be collected and used by the provider. This data is valuable to the companies and contributes to their ability to offer free access. Alex noted that Google similarly develops a profile of users based on information such as Google searches, calendars and emails. Paid accounts generally provide options to turn off data sharing so that the user's data is not used to train the model. Higher-level arrangements can allow organisations to retain control of their data. Although information may still be processed through the provider's servers, it can be separated from other data

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		and not collected or used in the same way. This type of arrangement is used in health settings because of confidentiality requirements. Alex identified Claude Cowork as a particularly valuable tool. **Three ways AI could save the Board time** Alex identified three practical ways in which AI could support the work of the Board: 1. Preparing for meetings by summarising Board papers and developing possible questions. 2. Using recording and transcription tools to automatically generate minutes and action items. 3. Exploring scenarios and drafting communications for review. **Capture the conversation** • **Otter:** Can record meetings held online or in person and generate speaker labels, summaries and action items. Speaker labels, summaries and actions should be reviewed for accuracy. • **Fireflies:** Can capture online meetings. • **Microsoft Teams:** Can record and transcribe meetings, provide AI-generated summaries and identify action items. **Reviewing Board papers** AI tools can be used to review documents, reports and meeting notes. NotebookLM was recommended for reviewing non-sensitive documents. Users can upload documents as sources and then ask questions of the material. NotebookLM consults only the documents that have been uploaded. It can also generate a range of artefacts from the content of PDFs, including: • slide decks; • podcasts; • infographics; and • other summaries. Users can listen to a generated podcast and interact with or ask questions about its content. Claude and ChatGPT can provide summaries of documents but do not offer the same form of interactive conversation with a generated podcast. The **Australian Framework for Generative Artificial Intelligence in Schools** was recommended as a document worth reviewing. **Data Analysis and Visualisation** Claude was recommended for data analysis because it can scan spreadsheets and produce visual artefacts from the data. Users can request graphs, website-style summaries and spreadsheets containing formulas. KT asked whether Claude might hallucinate or draw on information outside the spreadsheet when analysing uploaded data. Alex advised that, when instructed to work within the spreadsheet, Claude operates on the data provided rather than introducing outside information. Its formulas will be either correct or incorrect rather than invented in the same way as a factual hallucination. However, all outputs must still be checked. Users should ask the AI to show the calculations or working behind its spreadsheet analysis so that the accuracy can be verified. ChatGPT can also take control of a computer, with the user able to observe it manipulating a spreadsheet.

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		Claude Cowork, rather than Claude Chat, was recommended for working with data and spreadsheets. Claude Cowork can work from a folder on the user's computer. Although it works with local files, the data is still sent to Claude's servers for processing. PF commented that it would be valuable to have a reliable tool to review data without removing the user's capacity to examine the information in detail. Data can be imported into an AI tool to generate statistics, analyse spreadsheets and assist with further investigation. **Transcription and action management** Returning to NotebookLM, Alex discussed its speaker diarisation and audio-recording capabilities. Users can identify and name speakers within a recording, after which the tool can attribute the remainder of the conversation to the relevant speakers. The tool can then summarise the discussion and create an action-item list. Participants can also verbally identify an action during the meeting so that it is captured in the record. This has the potential to save a significant amount of time and provide a concrete record of what was said and agreed. **Key messages** Alex encouraged Board members to experiment with three high-value and accessible uses of AI: • reviewing and preparing for meetings; • capturing and documenting discussions and actions; and • analysing data and exploring scenarios. He reiterated that if a person is using a free AI product, their interactions and data may form part of the value provided to the company. In ChatGPT, the setting titled "Improve the model for everyone" can be turned off. Generally, paid products provide greater control over how data is used. Users must remain alert to hallucinations and invented information. Sources should always be requested and checked, and the working behind spreadsheet calculations should be reviewed to verify accuracy. **Board Discussion** MM noted that, in a competitive environment, the school needs to remain informed and capable in its use of AI or risk falling behind. Students are already using AI, but teachers are not necessarily progressing at the same rate. Responses from school leaders have been mixed. PF commented that Alex's demonstration showed that effective understanding comes from actually using the technology. AI should be viewed as a productivity tool. The Board should begin using AI collectively, informed by Alex's advice, to model responsible practice and support the school to remain ahead of developments. PF noted that the Board may need to spend a small amount of money to use the technology properly. TB emphasised the need to identify and use a version in which all information is secure. Peter thanked Alex for his presentation. **Action** A small working party/subcommittee will be established to identify practical initial steps for the Board's use of AI. PF and MF expressed interest in joining the subcommittee. The group will meet before the next Board meeting, and AI will be included as a further agenda item at that meeting.

7	CCTV in CTA & Finance Update – Trisha Bebek	Trish presented the Finance update: Finance Update The school's financial summary to the end of August was presented. **One Line Budget** The main variance in the One Line Budget relates to locally raised funds of approximately $160,000. A number of significant income and expenditure items are still to be processed. Approximately $6.7 million has been allocated to salaries, most of which has now been expended or committed. Several significant goods and services expenses are still outstanding, including: • wayfinding signage to be installed around the school; • basketball court shading, with work commencing next week; • the teacher laptop lease, with approximately $50,000 still to be expended; and • other projects that may need to be carried over into 2027. The P&C will contribute $100,000 towards the basketball court shading project, with the school contributing $50,000. The project is expected to be completed during Term 4. The Minimum Expenditure Requirement report is showing green, indicating that the school is on track to expend approximately 95% of its budget for the year. This was considered an appropriate position. The Operational One Line Budget Statement provides further detail about the school's income and expenditure. MM indicated that they would like to see a higher level of expenditure. It was noted that some significant expenditure occurs towards the end of the year. Discussions are continuing about whether planned expenditure has already been accounted for and whether some budget allocations should be reduced or adjusted. TB advised that information is beginning to be collected from each learning area to inform the 2027 budget. MM raised the possibility of using available budgets to support events or other activities, noting that there are restrictions on how some funds can be used. TB advised that the school has several positions it has been unable to fill, including the System Support Officer position. Recruitment efforts are continuing. AS noted that development expenditure falls within the building and equipment categories and asked whether the $250,000 set aside for utilities and maintenance would carry over. TB confirmed that these funds would carry over. MM noted that there are often long delays in having work completed. **Student-Centred Funding and Collection Rates** TB advised that the Student-Centred Funding Statement has not changed since the beginning of the year. Current collection rates are: • approximately 91% for compulsory charges; and • approximately 76% for voluntary contributions. The school is continuing to follow up with parents and carers regarding outstanding accounts. These collection rates compare favourably with those of many other schools. The proposed contributions and charges for 2027 will be presented at the next Board meeting. RL asked whether the funded student FTE information on the Student-Centred Funding Statement indicated that the school had one Aboriginal student and sought clarification regarding the disability figure. It was confirmed that one student has identified to the school as Aboriginal and that 24 students have a diagnosed disability that has been disclosed to the school.

CCTV Proposal in Cyril Tyler Auditorium Proposal to Install CCTV in CTA - Final.pptx

A proposal was presented to install CCTV within the Cyril Tyler Auditorium to improve the security of audio-visual, lighting and sound equipment.

The proposed system is intended to deter people from tampering with or removing equipment. It would also support accountability when external hirers use the auditorium and make changes to systems that subsequently create operational or technical issues for the school.

Current concerns include unauthorised or unsupervised use of equipment.

Measures already implemented include:

- restricting access to authorised staff and technicians;
- requiring users to follow theatre and equipment-use procedures; and
- conducting checks of equipment where possible.

Proposed camera locations

The proposal includes the installation of three CCTV cameras, each focused on equipment and restricted-access areas:

1. **Bio Box communications room:** The camera would be directed towards the communications racks and would record anyone plugging in or unplugging equipment. It would also show people entering and leaving the room.
2. **Backstage communications racks:** The camera would be positioned near the backstage racks at the side of the stage, close to the walkway between the Harmony Room and the stage. It would be directed towards the communications racks.
3. **Level 2 equipment storage:** The camera would be positioned in an area where general access is not permitted and directed towards the dark-grey equipment storage lockers. It would record anyone entering, leaving or accessing the lockers.

MM noted that the auditorium foyer has been causing significant problems. Interference with equipment has resulted in expensive technical issues.

Mary M asked whether there were any other CCTV cameras operating around the school.

TB confirmed that there were not.

Mary M noted that the school site is very open and that people are sometimes observed walking through the car parks.

TB advised that the CCTV system would be a closed system, with recordings stored on a hard drive located within the school. Access would be restricted. The estimated cost of the CCTV system is $8,000.

The installation of RFID access controls on the Bio Box doors is also being considered, at an estimated cost of approximately $10,000.

AS emphasised the importance of communicating with students so they are aware that CCTV is operating.

TB clarified that the purpose of the system is not to monitor students. Signage would be installed and the arrangements would be communicated to Drama students. Camera 2 would be positioned to avoid recording students entering or leaving the stage.

Access to recorded footage would be tightly controlled. Only three authorised people would be able to access the system, with two authorised people required to be present whenever footage is viewed. Footage would only be accessed where equipment had been damaged or another relevant incident had occurred.

Consultation is required with the School Board, P&C and staff.

KT proposed that the Board endorse the CCTV installation.

The Board unanimously endorsed the proposal.

8	NAPLAN Data with Grant Staffe	**NAPLAN Report** NAPLAN Data NAPLAN testing occurred very early in the year, commencing in Week 6 of Term 1. The school does not undertake specific NAPLAN training or preparation with students. It also does not administer the Department's suggested practice test. This means that the results provide authentic data about how students perform without targeted preparation. There have been changes to NAPLAN and its reporting over the past three to four years, which affect the amount of comparative data available. **Year 7 results** The Year 7 numeracy results indicate that the students entering the school are appropriately suited to its selective academic context, with 99% achieving within the Exceeding proficiency level. When comparing students' Year 5 and Year 7 results, the opportunity to demonstrate measurable progress can be limited. Students who were already achieving near the top of the assessment scale in Year 5 or Year 7 have little room to demonstrate further growth within NAPLAN. Growth data can therefore provide a somewhat misleading picture of their actual progress. State-by-state achievement data was presented for the Board's interest. Western Australia is reasonably well placed compared with other states. A breakdown of student scores showed that all Perth Modern School students performed above the national mean. In spelling, 92% of students achieved within the Exceeding proficiency level. This result was slightly lower than in some other areas. It was noted that many students gain entry to the school through strong performance in the mathematical components of GATE testing. Consequently, some students enter with comparatively stronger numeracy skills than literacy skills. This reflects the profile of the school's student intake. Less longitudinal data is available for spelling and grammar and punctuation because these areas have only been reported separately in recent years. Year 7 results included: • Numeracy: 99% Exceeding • Reading: 97% Exceeding • Grammar and punctuation: 95% Exceeding • Spelling: 92% Exceeding • Writing: 87% Exceeding and 13% Strong One or two students were identified through the writing results as requiring closer monitoring and targeted support. Reading results provide a useful indicator of students' likely future academic achievement. MM noted that Year 9 reading achievement has a high predictive correlation with strong future ATAR results. **Year 9 results** The Year 9 results were not significantly different from the Year 7 results. Year 9 results included: • **Numeracy:** 95% Exceeding • **Reading:** 92% Exceeding and 8% Strong MM noted that the NAPLAN results should be considered alongside other school achievement data. Combined reading and writing performance has a strong correlation with achievement in Humanities and Social Sciences, while combined reading and numeracy performance has a strong correlation with achievement in Science.

		AS suggested that the results may underestimate some students' capabilities because not all students necessarily apply themselves fully during NAPLAN testing. RM noted concerns expressed by ATAR examiners about the clarity of students' written responses. Examiners will not interpret or translate unclear writing on a student's behalf; students must communicate their ideas clearly. GS advised that the underlying data is available and invited Board members to email any questions or raise them at the next meeting.
9	Principal's Report	Principal's Report September 2026.pdf Accepted as tabled and read. The Director General visited the school on Friday afternoon for an event celebrating 30 years of Gifted and Talented Online. The event recognised the significant expertise in gifted education within the school and the opportunities to draw on this expertise to support gifted learning more broadly. The Director General gained further insight into the support the school provides to gifted students.
8	Student Report	• **Athletics Carnival:** A great day despite the weather. Everyone attended for at least part of the day, with strong participation. • **Book Week:** A successful new addition, including a dress-up day, parade and competition organised by the English learning area. • **R U OK? Day:** A testament to the school's commitment to mental health and a valuable opportunity for students to check in with friends. • **House events:** The final Advocacy competition concluded the year's House events. School spirit is high, and the House program feels positive from a student perspective. RL asked whether students were experiencing anxiety about the rise of One Nation. AS said students educate themselves and understand how to have their voices heard. MaryM noted that students have intelligent conversations about politics. This appears to generate discussion rather than anxiety.
9	P&C Report	• LB will open discussion next month. No new expenditure for this meeting. $50K left and need more proposals.
10	Modernians Report	• Modernians Oration with Gaye McMath, Chancellor of ECU delivered an engaging address that resonated strongly with students. Her central message was: life is short—what are you going to do about it? • Scholarships: A further $27,000 has been raised for three new scholarships: one in Science, one in Humanities and Social Sciences, and one equity scholarship. This was a very satisfying outcome. • Alumni Reunion: Members of a graduating class whose cohort turns 85 this year are holding another reunion and producing a booklet featuring surviving classmates and their stories. The group has maintained strong connections over the years and has been highly philanthropic towards the school, expressing great pleasure in being able to give back.

	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
11	Any other business	No more time. KT on behalf of board expressed appreciation to Mary and Avash for their contributions to the board and wished them all the best for their exams.
	NEXT MEETING. 3 November 2026 *MEETING CLOSE:* 19:10pm	

Action Items Remaining Open Prior to this Meeting and subject to updates (red = completed), plus new Action Items:

#	Meeting Date	Action Description	Due Date	Status	Comments	Actionee(s)
1	2/12/2025	Board to consider potential community members for the Board and provide names to the Chair	Term 1 2026	Ongoing	Suggestions to be conveyed to MM, ongoing. **KT, MM and PF reporting on progress at next meeting.**	All
2	8/9/26	Working Party to consider and explore use of AI on the Board	3/11/26		AI on the board to be discussed at the next meeting	PF and MF

Signed and dated as approved:

Associate Professor Kati Tonkin

Chair of Perth Modern School Board

Date: 3/11/2026

Signed and dated as approved:

Mitchell Mackay

Principal of Perth Modern School

Date: 3/11/2026