



**NZSTA**  
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## **Governance support resources**

# **Review of effective governance - board self assessment checklist**

The board has 4 areas of responsibility;

### **Leadership**

Boards provide strategic leadership and direction to schools through the Charter and policy framework which give direction to guide all school activities and decisions. Leadership involves setting direction, vision and strategy to ensure that every student achieves their educational potential.

### **Representation**

School boards, and individual trustees, are elected to act in an independent stewardship role on behalf of those who cannot sit around the board table. This includes effective succession planning, options for governing, the importance of effective and meaningful community consultation and engagement.

### **Accountability**

The board takes its accountability for the performance of students and the school seriously and ensures that the school is well managed, well prepared and on track towards achieving its aims, objectives and targets.

### **Employer role**

The board is the employer of all staff at the school and is responsible for a range of decisions and tasks that arise during the employment relationship. This involves ensuring there are policies, plans and programmes in place to meet all requirements related to this role. This includes what being a good employer means, the appointment of key staff, dealing with staff concerns and complaints and staff performance management.

Leadership		Yes	No	Don't know	Comment
1.	Does the board have a clear understanding of governance and management and understand their roles and responsibilities?				
2.	Has the board an agreed, documented governance statement?				
3.	Has the board a set of clear policies for itself that outline the rules for the board? eg. Board Roles and Responsibilities, Code of Behaviour, Role of the Chair				
4.	Has the board a set of clear policies that give bottom line instructions to the principal regarding the boards expectations for the management of the school?				
5.	Does the board ensure that every trustee has a governance manual containing all the policies and documentation required in order to fulfil their role?				
6.	Does the board have a standing committee structure or mainly ad hoc committees?				
7.	Are board committee delegations formally delegated and terms of reference documented?				
8.	Does the board lead the Charter review process?				
9.	Does the board approve annual goals and strategies?				
10.	Does the board understand and protect the special character of the school?				
11.	Is the board satisfied that all processes and plans are in place to bring about the values and culture it seeks and to achieve the vision, mission, values, strategic and annual goals and targets?				
12.	Do we use our student achievement data to make decisions and set priorities?				
13.	Does the board focus on policy matters rather than operational issues?				
14.	Has the board identified clear expectations and delegations to the Chair?				
15.	Does the board as a whole monitor and understand the financial management of the school and approve the budget?				
16.	Does every board member take an active role at board meetings?				
17.	Are board meetings conducted in a manner that ensures open communication, meaningful participation, appropriate challenging of management and timely resolution of issues? Do board meetings provide for adequate discussion of issues?				
18.	Is there domination of discussions by some trustees?				
19.	Has the board undertaken any professional development that you are aware of in the last 2 years?				
20.	Does the board have good relationships with stakeholders?				
21.	Do board members treat each other with respect?				
22.	Do you as a board respond constructively to criticism?				
23.	Do you have reason to be optimistic about your ability to deal with whatever the future brings in the next 3 years?				

24.	Is there a code of behaviour in place for all trustees that is adhered to?				
25.	Is the board culturally competent and understand the importance of effective communication with parents, family, whānau?				
<b>Representation</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1.	Does the board actively seek trustees from a diverse range to ensure that the board effectively represents its community?				
2.	Does the board have a succession plan in place?				
3.	Does the board provide adequate orientation, training, and evaluation for board members and review the effectiveness? Does the board have an induction programme in place for new trustee				
4.	Do you have difficulty recruiting or retaining credible board members?				
5.	Is there evidence that the board communicates effectively with all parts of the school community?				
6.	Do you know if the school is performing to parent's expectations?				
7.	Does the board ensure that the concerns and complaints process is regularly publicised to the school community?				
8.	Does the board deal effectively with any disputes and conflicts referred to it?				
9.	Do you view students and parents as customers and clients?				
<b>Accountability</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1.	Does the board have a good understanding of the current state of student achievement at your school?				
2.	Does the board regularly review performance against the strategic goals and targets?				
3.	Does the board understand the importance of ensuring that the priority groups of students (Maori, Pacifica and students with special education needs) are reported on and are a focus for setting targets?				
4.	Has the board read, discussed and planned the implementation of the following strategies? Ka Hikitia, Success for all and the Pacifica Education Plan?				
5.	Does the board have a 3 year review programme in place and implement it?				
6.	Does your board gather evidence to determine whether its policies are implemented?				
7.	Does the principal give you the information that you expect and need to evaluate your school's performance?				
8.	Does the board receive data that is timely, relevant and user friendly?				
9.	Do you examine your data against gender, ethnicity etc. to measure the success of all students?				
10.	Is your board confident to critique and challenge the information it receives from the principal?				
11.	Do you use the analysis of variance to support the setting of goals and targets for the following year?				
12.	Does your board have a clear process for budget development?				
13.	Do your financial monitoring and control systems enable you to quickly identify errors and protect you from most criminal activities?				
14.	Does your board have a reporting to the board policy?				
15.	Does the board have a 5 and 10 year property plan in place that is implemented and regularly reviewed?				

Employer Role	Yes	No	Don't know	Comment
1. Does the board have a good understanding of, and does it implement the requirements of being a good employer?				
2. Is there an effective relationship between the board and the principal?				
3. Is there a robust principal performance management process in place?				
4. Does the board understand current employee morale and employee issues and concerns?				
5. Has the board made delegations through policy to the principal for the day to day running of the school?				
6. Does the board have effective personnel policies in place that are reviewed regularly?				
7. Do all staff have an employment agreement?				
8. Are all required staff registered or have a Limited Authority to Teach at the school?				
9. Have all staff been appraised during the last 12 months?				
10. Is the board informed of the staff professional development plan, its objectives and outcomes?				

### Where do I get advice?

The *Governance advisory and support centre* advisers can also assist and are contacted on 0800 782 435, option 1 or [govadvice@nzsta.org.nz](mailto:govadvice@nzsta.org.nz)