



MEDIA RELEASE

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Boards benefit from investment into trusteeship

Boards of trustees of New Zealand's state and state integrated schools have benefited from a raft of new or enhanced support services over the past two years says Lorraine Kerr, President of NZ School Trustees Association (NZSTA).

NZSTA has been able to deliver these new and additional "free to boards" support services due to the government recognising the importance of the governance role, and the role that effective boards can play in improving student achievement.

For many years, there was little support for trustees in this important role but that changed significantly with the 2013 budget when the government appropriated \$14.5m over four years to support the governance role. This funding, combined with existing PD funding, has allowed NZSTA to move to the delivery of fully integrated free support and development services that can assist boards in enhancing all aspects of their governance role says Ms Kerr.

Examples of the new and improved services include: HR advisory services; a recruitment management system for schools; a Governance Internal Evaluation Tool to help boards identify areas of strength and where they can improve their governance practice; a full range of Professional Development (PD) options such as one-on-one PD and mentoring for qualifying boards, Board Chair residential courses, nationally advertised workshops and a range of on-line learning modules; a financial risk assessment tool for schools; and a wide range of resources available through the NZSTA website, including GovTalks - a library of 3-minute videos about governance related topics.

"Our aim is that all schools are effectively governed by a board of trustees whose primary focus is every student achieving their highest possible potential," Ms Kerr says, "and although we have some way to go to achieve that outcome, for the first time we do now have the financial support to enable us and the boards we serve to make that significant difference over time".

One of the really exciting tools we are making available this year is NZSTA's Governance Internal Evaluation tool which provides a new and robust way for individual boards to measure their improvement in governance practice over time. Not only will this assist the

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board concerned to identify what they need to improve, but regional or national results will also give NZSTA direct and measurable evidence of improved governance overall.

Improved governance practice has been shown to support ongoing improvement in student achievement and wellbeing Lorraine Kerr says, and will provide confidence to the Government and the Ministry of Education that the money invested into trusteeship is not only benefitting governance, but also through improved governance, contributing to improved student outcomes.

Ends

Enquiries regarding this release can be made to Lorraine Kerr, President, NZSTA at 0276875606