

The Ministry of Education, New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) and experienced appraisal practitioners, including Associate Professor Eileen Piggot-Irvine, Murray Fletcher and Tim White have, over a year or more of consultation, developed and agreed on a framework to guide boards in effective practice when managing their responsibility for principal appraisal.

This initiative has been driven from regional School Support Networks<sup>1</sup> to work within the current policy and legislative environment.

### Managing Principal Appraisal (Performance Review) – Good Practice Framework

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appraisal has both <i>accountability</i> and <i>development</i> purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Accountability</i> - of the principal for leading and managing the school, achieving agreed goals, and ensuring the quality of teaching and learning;</li> <li>• <i>Development</i> - of the principal against agreed goals, and to ensure the development of the school and the ongoing improvement of student achievement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Appraisal is based on the annual performance agreement.</li> <li>3. The performance agreement contains annual objectives for the principal (including one or more professional development objectives) and all the professional standards relevant to the role (principal/teaching and principal).</li> <li>4. The performance agreement is future focused and must reflect the school's strategic and annual plans, and the principal's job description.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Responsibility</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The board, as the employer, is responsible and accountable for the principal's performance management, including appraisal.</li> <li>2. The board will consult<sup>2</sup> with the principal before exercising responsibility for decisions regarding principal appraisal.</li> <li>3. It is the responsibility of both parties to act in good faith. Appraisal effectiveness is linked to high trust and mutual respect, based on collaboration, mutual transparency, and respect for confidentiality.</li> <li>4. The board should ensure that sufficient resourcing (including time and professional development) is given to understanding and implementing the appraisal process.</li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> Groups of key educational stakeholders that work with regional Ministry offices to ensure that support for schools is co-ordinated. Members usually include: NZSTA; Local Principal Associations; PPTA; NZEI; NZAIMS; Te Akatea; School Support Services.

<sup>2</sup> The board's consultation with the principal, at any stage of the appraisal process, is to assist and inform the board in exercising its responsibility. Consultation includes respecting, understanding and considering the views of the other. After considering the views, if the parties cannot agree, then respective employment agreements for state sector principals provide direction, as must the board's policy.

<b>Delegations<sup>3</sup></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The board may resolve to delegate<sup>4</sup> to a trustee or a committee of the board the management of the appraisal process.</li> <li>2. When the board delegates in this manner, the board retains the responsibility and accountability for the actions of any delegate.</li> <li>3. Delegations must be written, be specific and identify where the delegated responsibility begins and ends.</li> <li>4. The board should ensure that any delegated party fully understands all aspects of the principal appraisal process, including documents used.</li> <li>5. A board delegation to a trustee or a committee is distinct from an external agent being contracted to provide a service.</li> </ol>
<b>Contracting<sup>5</sup></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any person/organisation brought in by the board to assist in principal appraisal is an agent of the board and should be contracted according to a clearly identified need (e.g. objective view, or to supplement the skills and knowledge of the board).</li> <li>2. When the board contracts assistance in this manner, the board retains the responsibility for the actions of any contractor.</li> <li>3. The written contract should clearly set out the parameters of the respective roles and responsibilities of the board, the principal and the contractor.</li> <li>4. The board will provide overall direction to any contractor about the process.</li> <li>5. Any contractor should be required to follow a documented process that is in line with the board's principal appraisal policy.</li> </ol>
<b>Process</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal appraisal process is undertaken at regular agreed intervals on an annual cycle.</li> <li>2. Written board policy determines the principal appraisal process and respective responsibilities.</li> <li>3. Delegations and contractual relationships need to be formalised.</li> <li>4. It is the board's role to determine, in consultation with the principal, what support<sup>6</sup> (if any) may be provided for the principal.</li> </ol>

<sup>3</sup> When a board resolves that any of its functions or powers should be exercised by identified trustees and/or a committee, this must be reflected through written delegation. The written delegation can be revoked at any time by board resolution, and written notice to the delegated party. The requirements on the board to act in good faith, and to model high trust and mutual respect, based on collaboration, mutual transparency, and respect for confidentiality, extend to any delegated party.

<sup>4</sup> The legislative requirements for any board delegations are stated in section 66 of the Education Act 1989.

<sup>5</sup> When a board (or delegated party) accesses the services of an external provider, to assist the board in the exercise of its powers and functions, it should reflect the extent and nature of those services in a written contract. Contractors can provide a level of expertise, objectivity and/or professional practice to the board's appraisal process. They may also provide a fresh perspective; assist in solving any problems and setting new directions. They may also assist in gathering and analysing evidence. The board needs to be assured that the contracted agent (whether they are another principal or other external consultant) sees appraisal as an accountability and development tool; and has the professional integrity to provide honest feedback. The requirements on the board to act in good faith, and to model high trust and mutual respect, based on collaboration, mutual transparency, and respect for confidentiality, extend to any contracted agent.

<sup>6</sup> Support for the principal may include a mentor, developer, or confidant. They might be engaged to provide specific developmental support that is outside the expertise of the appraiser.

5. To protect the objectivity of the *evaluation* and the effectiveness of the *support*, each should be undertaken by different parties. However, if one person undertakes **both** the *evaluation* of the principal's performance and also provides the *support* for the principal, the board should be conscious of any potential conflict between the two roles and manage accordingly.
6. The board and any delegated party and any contractor are required to objectively collect information. Any actual or perceived conflict of interest should be identified and addressed prior to commencing the role.
7. The principal and the appraiser should provide evidence that is relevant to the performance agreement.
8. Evidence should be robust and cross-checked to ensure verification; and may be collected through methods including surveys, interviewing, focus groups, whanau or fono group feedback, observation of teaching (if appropriate) and/or documentary evidence.
9. The board (or its delegated trustee/committee) must consider the report of any contractor, make a written evaluative judgment and assemble the final appraisal report for the principal.
10. The principal will receive a copy of the final appraisal report for their consideration and comment<sup>7</sup>.
11. Irrespective of whether the board delegates to a trustee/committee the management of the appraisal process, the final appraisal report, or a summary of it, will be prepared for the full board in accordance with the board's own policy.
12. This final appraisal report, or a summary of it, should always be provided to the full board 'in committee'<sup>8</sup>. Provision should be made for the board's discussion of the report, during which time the principal is able to speak to the report; but in accordance with legislation<sup>9</sup>, will not otherwise be in attendance.
13. The final appraisal report must remain confidential to the board and the principal.
14. The board then takes the opportunity to comment and participate in developing the performance agreement for the next annual cycle (unless board policy reflects that this is delegated).

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<sup>7</sup> Respective employment agreements for state sector principals provide direction in circumstances where parties cannot agree, as must the board's policy

<sup>8</sup> When a board meeting 'moves into committee', members of the public are excluded from the meeting. The legislative requirements for managing this process are stated in the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

<sup>9</sup> Education Act 1989, Part 9, Section 117, Schedule 6, Clause 8, Subclauses (9) and (11):

(9) Subject to sub clause (11) of this clause, a trustee who is a member of the board staff shall be excluded from any meeting of the board while it discusses, considers, considers anything relating to, or decides, any matter relating to the trustee's employment by the board, or to the course of action to be taken following the hearing of a complaint against the trustee (being a complaint against the trustee in the trustee's capacity as a member of the board staff).

(11) A trustee may attend any meeting of the board to give evidence, make submissions, or answer questions