



Clarifying boards of trustees' roles and responsibilities

Boards of trustees are the governing bodies of our schools, and play a central role in the educational achievement of our children and young people. The Act now provides clarity on the key roles and responsibilities of boards in school governance, and sets these out in one place.

Three changes to the Act make boards' roles and responsibilities clearer. Together, these provide a legislative basis for boards to understand what they should prioritise when undertaking their work. They will focus boards on raising student achievement for all children and young people.

What are the changes?

The first change brings all the various roles and responsibilities of boards of trustees together in one place in the Act – Schedule 6. This will make it easier for boards to see what they should be doing and what they should focus their time on.

The second change makes it clear, for the first time in the Act, that a board is the governing body of a school, and is responsible for setting the schools' policies. This change gives boards and principals a clearer description of the board's role.

The third change is an explicit obligation on boards to be consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi when performing their roles and responsibilities. This reflects that boards are already required to consider the Treaty of Waitangi under National Education Goal 9.

What impact will these changes have on boards?

The changes make board's roles and responsibilities clearer. The changes do not put more requirements on boards or result in more work for boards.

The roles and responsibilities in Schedule 6 mainly cover work boards already undertake, or expectations that government and the school community have of them. This includes the primary objective of boards to ensure each student can attain their highest possible standard in educational achievement. It also addresses other matters such as employment, providing a safe and inclusive environment, cultural diversity, and planning and reporting.

There have been some other small changes to board roles and responsibilities to reflect the new strategic direction framework established in the Act and to update language.

Where can boards go for advice on the changes?

Boards wanting to know more about the changes around their roles and responsibilities can contact NZSTA on 0800 782 435 or at www.nzsta.org.nz.

Where are boards' roles and responsibilities located in the Act?

Schedule 6 sets out the roles and responsibilities of boards.

When do the changes take effect?

These provisions take effect from 19 May 2017.