



**NZSTA**

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## Governance support resources

### Co-opted and appointed board members

Co-opted and appointed board members have the same rights and responsibilities as every other board member. They are included when counting for a quorum (i.e. making sure there are the required minimum number of board members present for a valid meeting), can be the presiding member (chair) and are entitled to meeting fees.

There should always be more parent representatives than the total of co-opted and appointed members on a board. A board with casual vacancies for parent representatives can continue to operate with more co-opted / appointed board members than parent representatives, but only if the casual vacancies are in the process of being filled (described as being “in transition”).

Co-opted and appointed board members must meet the same eligibility rules as parent representatives. They must sign an eligibility declaration when co-opted or appointed to the board and should complete [Appendix 2](#). The board member register also needs to be updated.

Co-optation or appointment can never be used to fill a [casual vacancy](#) for an elected parent, staff, or student position on the board.

#### When are board members co-opted or appointed?

Board members are co-opted or appointed for the following reasons:

- they are proprietor appointees (there must be four on a state-integrated board)
- to cover issues of equity (i.e. ethnicity, gender, economic)
- to reflect the school’s character, or the geographical, or some other type of character of its community
- to ensure the board has appropriate skills and expertise available to it
- they are appointees of an organisation, or body corporate associated with the school e.g. whānau group or an Iwi Education Authority
- they are appointed by the Minister of Education for a specified time, as a statutory intervention to assist a board.

#### How long are board members co-opted or appointed for?

- co-opted or appointed board members are on the board for a maximum term of three years from the time of co-optation or appointment

- the board can also decide on a shorter term at the time of co-optation. For instance it might co-opt someone to assist with a particular project that is expected to be completed within six months – in that case, the motion should be:

“to co-opt \_\_\_\_\_ until the \_\_\_\_\_ project is complete, to assist the board in \_\_\_\_\_ area”

- proprietors, approved body corporates and the Minister of Education are entitled to appoint (and dismiss) their appointees on the board as they see fit.

### Can a state-integrated school board co-opt board members?

Options for a state-integrated board to co-opt board members. The board could:

- ask the proprietor to appoint the person the board has in mind. (There first needs to be a vacant position for a proprietor appointee)
- ask the proprietor to consent to reducing the number of board members it is entitled to appoint. (Consent needs to be in writing, and include the dismissal of enough appointees to allow for the reduction)
- alter the constitution of the board to increase the number of parent representative positions from 5 to 6. The board must then call a by-election. (The person the board wanted to co-opt could be nominated). The board may not necessarily want to have two more board members, but this option means:
  - the proprietor’s consent is not needed to reduce the number of its appointees, and there is no loss of proprietor appointee positions
  - the board has a position available for co-opting, as 4 is the maximum number of proprietor appointee positions.

### Useful Links

[Trustee elections website](#)

Education and Training Act 2020

Resources and information for boards

[sections 120 and 121](#); [schedule 23\(1\)-\(2\)](#)



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