



**NZSTA**  
e tipu e rea

## Governance support resources

### Appointing a presiding member (chair)

The board must always have someone appointed to preside over its board meetings. Neither the principal, staff nor student representative can be the presiding member. If more than one person wishes to stand for this position, the board will need to follow a process to appoint its presiding member.

#### When does the board have to appoint a presiding member?

- At the board's first meeting in any year except a triennial election year
- At the first meeting after the triennial election
- If the board has passed a vote of no confidence in the presiding member
- If the presiding member ceases to be a board member or has resigned as the presiding member in writing to the board

#### What is involved in being presiding member?

The key tasks are to:

- Set meeting agendas and preside at board meetings
- Lead the board to work as a team and ensure the work of the board is done
- Develop an effective and professional working relationship with the principal
- They are the public face of the board but cannot work independently of the board unless delegated to do so.

Ideal qualities / characteristics include honesty, integrity, empathy, courage, the ability to relate well to people, and organise work effectively.

#### Who runs the process to appoint a presiding member?

The following people can all run the process to appoint a presiding member:

- the board secretary or minute taker
- any trustee not standing for this role

## Process to appoint a presiding member

The person running the process to appoint a presiding member calls for nominations. If there is only one nomination, they declare that person elected unopposed.

If there is more than one person interested in the role, each can be asked to speak about what they would offer in terms of skills and experience. Using a secret voting process is advisable, especially if there are tensions.

If there are equal votes (a “tie”) for two candidates, there is usually a second vote. If there is still a tie on the 3rd vote, then the tie can be broken by “lot”. The most common option is to toss a coin.

## NZSTA support for presiding members

There are many resources to assist in presiding over a school board:

- NZSTA [website](#)
- NZSTA [Knowledge Hub](#)
- NZSTA Governance support [resources](#) suite
- NZSTA Governance [framework](#)
- NZSTA workshops including Leading and effective board and Effective meetings
- NZSTA Advisory and Support Centre:
  - [govadvice@nzsta.org.nz](mailto:govadvice@nzsta.org.nz) – 0800 782 435 (option 1)
  - [eradvice@nzsta.org.nz](mailto:eradvice@nzsta.org.nz) – 0800 782 435 (option 2)
- NZSTA one-on-one mentoring

Additionally, NZSTA regional tailored support for boards is available if needed.

## Useful links:

- Knowledge Hub: [Appointing a chairperson](#)  
[Leading an effective board](#)
- [NZSTA governance framework](#) policy - The role of the presiding member
- Governance support resources – [The role of the presiding member](#)
- [Education \(School Boards\) Regulations 2020, clause 11](#)



[nzsta.org.nz](https://nzsta.org.nz)



[facebook.com/NZSTA1](https://facebook.com/NZSTA1)



[twitter.com/NZSchoolTrustee](https://twitter.com/NZSchoolTrustee)

For further advice please contact the **Advisory and Support Centre** on **0800 782 435, option 1** or **[govadvice@nzsta.org.nz](mailto:govadvice@nzsta.org.nz)**

