



## Governance support resources

### Welcome to new board members

This resource gives ideas and suggestions on a framework for induction when new board members are elected at a triennial election. The same induction could be used whenever a new member comes on to the board, whether by election (including mid-term elections for boards that use the staggered election cycle), by-election, selection, appointment, or co-option. The focus of any induction programme needs to be around the questions of:

- What do new board members need to know
- What information do you wish you had been given when you joined the board in order to make more informed decisions?

Boards need to be mindful that no two induction processes should be exactly the same. Board members come from different backgrounds, with different levels of knowledge and experience, both of your school and of their governance role. They will all have different support needs in the same way that new members of staff have support and professional development needs.

**Note:** All new board members should ensure they have completed [Appendix 2](#) on the School trustee elections website. Unless they do this they will not be recorded on the NZSTA database.

### New board members' pack

In order to assist new members of NZSTA member boards to be as effective as possible, NZSTA suggests that they download a copy of 'School governance' from [nzsta.org.nz](http://nzsta.org.nz) as soon as possible (they will need to register via appendix 2 first). If your board is not a member of NZSTA, new members will be able to download a copy of the 'Making a difference' booklet from the same website. Ideally new members would be sent one of these resources and an accompanying Induction pack with a welcome letter before attending their first meeting.

#### What information could this pack include?

- Current board membership and contact details
- Board code of conduct policy
- Board triennial workplan
- Board committee structure and delegations (if applicable)
- Board's internal evaluation plan and process
- Board meeting schedule
- Minutes of last three open board meetings
- Principal's report to last three open board meetings including supporting documents
- Last three finance reports to the board
- Last three property reports to the board

- Latest ERO review report
- Details of any current Ministry of Education interventions/support at governance level

- Current charter/strategic and annual implementation plans
- Current budget
- Current governance framework
- Latest annual report including analysis of variance

- School staff organisation chart

## Board orientation

The board is committed to ensuring continuity of business and a smooth transition when board personnel change. Therefore:

1. The presiding member (chair) or delegate will meet with new board members to explain board policy and procedures
2. The presiding member or delegate, after consultation with board members, will recommend to the board changes to committees and delegations
3. The principal and presiding member or delegate, will brief all new members on the organisational structure of the school, including roles and responsibilities of the board, its policies and processes, and the teaching and management structure of the school
4. The principal will conduct a site visit of the school and clearly show what property there is and what is planned
5. New board members are to be advised of the professional development that is available from NZSTA
6. After three months on the board the effectiveness of the induction process is to be reviewed by the presiding member with the new members.

## Induction plan

The board may also wish to have an induction plan in place for the new board

Activity	Led by	Expected outcome
Ensure letter of congratulations has been sent with invitation to pre-meeting		New members feel included and welcomed to the board Members know what the next steps are Members know what is expected of them
Access to board member packs		Members will have all the information they require to fulfil their role Members can attend a pre-meeting Induction and raise questions about the pack contents
Following triennial elections: Hold pre-meeting induction. Use board member pack as the resource for this. Members taken on tour of the school. Preparation for appointing a presiding member (chair)		Members get to know one another and the skills and experiences that each brings to the board Members have an opportunity to assess each person's strengths and weaknesses before electing a presiding member Members understand the requirements of the role before electing the presiding member Members understand the charter/strategic plan Members have an understanding of board functions Members sign and agree to work within the code of conduct Members are aware of current opportunities and risks facing the board
Encourage board members to attend external professional development		Networking with members of other boards Opportunity to explore what can and cannot be done within the governance framework Opportunity to compare governance styles with others

## Following triennial or mid-term elections:

Boards may wish to have an informal get together before the first formal board meeting. This allows members an opportunity to get to know each other as at the board's first formal meeting it will need to appoint a presiding member (chair).

At the pre meeting induction of the new board it might useful to conduct a skills audit. This can be done verbally or board members could fill out a form similar to this:

### Sample trustee skills audit

1. What skills and experience do you consider you bring to the board

- Curriculum knowledge
- Change management
- Conflict resolution
- Equal opportunities
- Financial
- General strategic planning
- Governance
- History of the sector
- Human resources
- Knowledge of the community
- Legal
- Leadership
- Marketing
- Media/PR
- Policy development/ implementation
- Property
- Other (please give details)

2. Are there any areas of the board's work you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in

3. What motivated you to become a board member at our school

## Ongoing support for school boards

Many boards budget for ongoing professional development. If we are to truly model being "life-long learners" then we must lead by example. Professional development is not only for those boards that have new members. Every board should be looking to continually do things better – the good to great philosophy. Conducting a professional development needs assessment at the first meeting will support the board plan for this development.

### Sample professional development needs assessment

1. What information or support do you think you need to carry out your role as a board member

2. How would you prefer to learn about these areas

- Professional development sessions for the whole board
- Away day/weekends - retreats
- Attending courses individually
- Information with board papers
- Regular briefings/workshops at board meetings
- Networking with other board members

- Learning from somebody else (mentoring)

All professional development, advisory and support services provided by NZSTA are free of charge to all state and state integrated school boards

## NZSTA Knowledge Hub

Visit the [NZSTA Knowledge Hub](#) where you can find a range of learning tools, such as interactive modules, videos, podcasts, e-books, and events and workshops in your region. No log-in needed.

## Three Strikes and you're out.

New board members need to be aware that if they miss 3 consecutive meetings without prior leave from the board their position on the board automatically becomes vacant. Tendering apologies is not the same as getting prior leave from the Board. If In doubt, contact NZSTA governance advisory and support centre.



[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)