



Governance support resources

Student Elections

Boards of state and state-integrated school with students above year 9 must hold a student representative election in September each year (unless they have an approved alternative constitution that does not require one).

The election process

The election process for the student election begins when the board sets an election day in September and appoints a Returning Officer (RO) to manage the election process. Once appointed, the RO's role is to run the election; the board's role is to promote the elections.

The board must appoint an RO to manage the election process **at least 9 weeks** before the September election day date. To meet these timetable requirements boards need to start election planning in May, i.e. 3-4 months ahead of election day.

Once appointed, the RO should use the election planner tool below to generate a timetable of events for the election.

How boards can help promote participation and awareness

Boards play an important role in promoting participation in their student elections - standing for election or voting for their student representative is often the first real experience young people have of participating in a democratic process – encourage them to use their vote well!

Ensuring students at your school have the opportunity to know what being a board member is all about before they stand and/or vote is important.

Think about having an information session for students ahead of your next board meeting or inviting interested students to attend your meeting so they can get a first-hand experience of what a board does.

As well as providing support to Returning Officers to run the student elections, NZSTA also helps boards promote the elections in their school by providing a range of free promotional resources, including videos, posters, social media posts and newsletter notices. You can access these resources [here](#).

Election funding

There is no election funding for the student election, however the board can still decide to pay its returning officer a fee. This should reflect the actual and reasonable expenses and time involved for the RO and can be budgeted for by the board, as it will come out of the school's operations grant.

Recommended student election date

Each year the Ministry of Education and NZSTA together promote a recommended election date in September. The date for the next student elections is posted on this website as soon as it is known.

When setting the election date ensure key dates e.g. when nominations close, do not fall either over a weekend or in the holidays.

Useful Links

[Trustee elections website](#)

[Education website](#)

Education and Training Act 2020

Resources and information for boards

About board elections and funding

[section 119](#), [schedule 22\(2\)](#) and [schedule 23\(3\)](#)



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For further advice please contact the Advisory and Support Centre on 0800 782 435, option 1 or email govadvice@nzsta.org.nz