

Role of the Board

Based on ERO Board Assurance Guidelines

Introduction

- The Education Act 1989, under section 60A provides the legislative basis for the establishment of ***National Education Guidelines***
- These have five components including the ***National Administration Guidelines (NAGS)*** that places responsibility on boards of trustees to focus on high quality outcomes for students.
- This legal framework provides a baseline for all boards.
- ERO wants to know that the board is taking all reasonable steps to meet the legal requirements with which it must comply in order to promote ***high quality outcomes for all students.***

Board Administration

The Basics

- The Board is responsible for ensuring that *“every student at the school is able to attain his/her highest standard of educational achievement”* - Section 75, Education Act 1989
- The Board is responsible for setting overall school policy and direction at a high level
- The Principal, as the Board’s Chief Executive, has complete discretion to manage the school’s day to day administration
- The Principal must follow the Board’s general policy direction

Housekeeping

- Boards can have 3 - 7 parent representatives
- Boards must meet at least every *3 months* and must publicise where and when they will meet beforehand
- Agenda, reports, meeting and minutes are all open to the public
 - However, the public may be excluded from certain sections where the Board has “good reason” to do so
- A quorum is more than half of the Board members
- The chairperson must preside and if not available then another parent trustee
- Chairperson has the casting vote if votes are equal
- Minutes must be kept to provide a clear, accurate, stand-alone record of what happened at the meeting and all decisions made by the Board

The Charter, Strategic and Annual Planning

- The **School Charter** is a critical document as it serves as a promise by the Board to the Minister of Education about how the Board will run the school in accordance with National Educational Guidelines
- The Charter sets clear aims and priorities of what the Board is looking to achieve in areas such as **student achievement**, meeting **government policy objectives** and **managing the school's resources** (e.g. human resources, finances, property, etc)
- The Charter sets a standard against which the school's performance will later be assessed
- The **Strategic Plan** sets priorities and directions for the next 3-5 years
- The **Annual Plan** describes annual targets relating to student outcomes and the use of school resources

Annual Self-Review

- The Board must maintain a programme of ***self-review*** with particular evaluation of student achievement data
- The Board is required to complete an ***annual update*** of the school charter
 - This must be provided to the Secretary for Education before 1 March of the relevant year
- The Board is required to provide a statement providing an ***analysis of any variance*** between the school's performance and the relevant aims set out in the school charter
 - This is done at the same time as the updated school charter provided to the Secretary for Education.

Other Administrative functions

- Boards have to ensure that schools are open for the required number of days each year
- Boards are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that students who are required to attend school, do so.
- Boards are required to keep immunisation registers
- Principals and Boards must ensure that the decision to stand down or suspend a student is made in accordance with all legal requirements
- Boards have to ensure compliance with:
 - Human Rights Act - freedom from discrimination
 - Copyright Act 1994 - do not permit copying of copyright works
 - Public Records Act 2005 - keeping school records as required

Curriculum and Student Achievement Reporting

Reporting on Student Achievement

Each board of trustees, with the principal and staff is required to report:

- to students and their parents on the achievement of individual students and
- to the school's community on the achievement of students as a whole and of groups
 - those who are not achieving
 - those who are at risk of not achieving
 - those who have special needs
- including the achievement of Māori students against the plans and targets agreed to in consultation with the Maori community.

Curriculum Compliance (NAGS 1 & 2)

- The Board is required to foster student achievement by providing teaching and learning programmes which incorporate ***The National Curriculum***
- The teaching staff and principal monitor, manage, and deliver the curriculum, but the Board has the ultimate responsibility for curriculum delivery.
- The Board is required to use and report to students and parents at least twice a year in relation to ***National Standards*** for students in Years 1-8.
- The Board must, at least once in every 2 years, after consultation with the school community, adopt a statement on the ***delivery of the health curriculum***.
- Boards must ensure all the policies, procedures and practices relating to ***students with special education needs*** are in place in the school and are applied without discrimination.
 - Boards should be aware of what special education resourcing and support is available.

Health, Safety and Welfare

Safe and Healthy Environments (NAGS 4 & 5)

- The Board is required to:
 - Provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students
 - Promote healthy food and nutrition for all students
 - Comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.
- The Board is required to meet all requirements of the newly passed ***Health and Safety Reform Bill 2015***.
- Boards must ensure that ***Internet Safety*** is being managed properly through use agreements, system maintenance, monitoring and education programs.
- ERO requires schools to have clear policies and procedures to manage ***Bullying***

Personnel

Being a good Employer (NAG 3)

- The Board is required to:
 - Develop and implement personnel and industrial policies which promote high levels of staff performance, use education resources effectively and recognise the needs of the students;
 - Be a good employer as defined by the State Sector Act 1988 (largely defining a clear set of Personnel policies and then ensuring compliance with these policies) and comply with the conditions contained in employment contracts applying to teaching and non-teaching staff.
- The Board should take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and positive working environment
- The Board must obtain a Police vet of every person who works at the school (including during EOTC) and who is not a registered teacher or holder of a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT)
- Boards should ensure that are familiar with the terms and conditions of the relevant employment agreements

Finance

Looking after The Money (NAG 4)

- The Board is required to:
 - **Allocate funds** to reflect the school's priorities as stated in the **charter**
 - **Monitor** and **control** school expenditure, and ensure that annual accounts are prepared and audited as required by the Public Finance Act 1989 and the Education Act 1989
 - Boards must provide audited annual financial statements no later than 31 May
- Boards are required to report to the school community on their operations for the year in an **Annual Report**.
- The Annual Report provides details of all trustees, auditors report, report on compensation paid to the principal and any trustees, annual financial statement and a comment on variance between objectives set out in the Charter and the actual results achieved
- The Board is required to properly authorize withdrawal and payment of money from school bank accounts
- The Board is required to ensure that accounting records are kept

Assets

Looking after the Buildings (NAG 4)

- The Board is required to:
 - implement a maintenance programme to ensure that the school's buildings and facilities provide a safe, healthy learning environment for students
- Boards are required to meet minimum safety standards and to conduct regular safety checks to identify and eliminate hazards
- The terms and conditions for occupying public land are contained in the ***Property Occupancy Document (POD)***
- The POD requires the Board to engage a ***Project Manager*** to assess school facilities and create a ***10-Year Property Plan (10YPP)***.
 - The 10YPP must cover both Property Maintenance requirements and a Capital Works plan
- The Ministry provides the Board with an annual ***Property Maintenance Grant (PMG)*** as part of general operational funding
- The Ministry gives each Board capital funding over a 5 year period (a ***Five Year Agreement - 5YA)***.
 - This cannot be spent on maintenance and must be spent on existing buildings only.