

# A Board's Guide to Effective Succession Planning

**2010 SCHOOL  
TRUSTEE  
ELECTIONS**



Strong leaders make  
strong schools

If you are failing to plan,  
you are planning to fail.

*Tariq Siddique*

## What does effective succession planning look like?

# The 3 R's

Succession planning is the strategic, systematic and deliberate effort to ensure:

### A: Readiness

1. Board documentation is in place and up to date to allow the new board membership to effectively govern the school.
2. The relevant skills, experience and behaviour of effective trustees is determined and advertised.

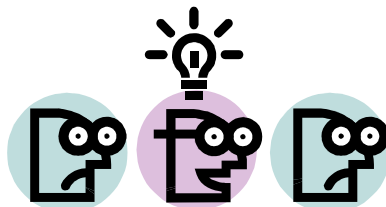
### B: Recruitment

1. Potential trustees with a balance of skills and experiences are identified through a range of activities.
2. Potential trustees are given accurate and relevant information as to the role of the board.
3. Parents on the voting roll have been given appropriate information regarding the voting process and the relevant skills, experience and behaviour required of school trustees.

### C: Retention

1. An inclusive, supportive and thorough induction process is planned and implemented.
2. Ongoing professional development opportunities are made available to support trustees and the board as a whole.

There is no defence for a board not doing the most it can to ensure the best possible trustees are elected who are equipped with the appropriate information and professional development available in order to carry out their governance role.



After 7th May 2010 what will your  
outgoing board's legacy be?

## Key dates for the board in planning for effective election outcomes.

Please note this is using the common election date 7th May 2010

Date	Task	Completed
<b>October/November 2009</b>	Returning Officer appointed. Plan process up to and including readiness of board documentation, advertising the elections, seeking nominations and induction of new trustees. Confirming board constitution/ membership.	
<b>February 22nd—26th 2010</b>	Ensure Returning Officer attends training/re-training session.	
<b>February 2010</b>	Advertise Elections organise community forums to be held March/April 2010. See NZSTA Power Point session <i>Community Forums</i> Minute election date before 1 Feb 2010.	
<b>February 2010</b>	Ensure Returning Officer has lodged copy of election timeline with the Regional Election Coordinator. Ensure Returning Officer attends training/re-training session.	
<b>By 1st February 2010</b>	Minute Election Date.	
<b>March/April 2010</b>	Advertise elections and proactively seek and encourage potential candidates. Ensure documentation for new trustees/board is in place. Plan induction programme.	
<b>7th May 2010</b>	Determine first communication to new board, and by whom, and set first meeting date.	
<b>14th May 2010</b>	New board takes office. Implement induction programme.	

## How ready is your board to hand over after the elections?

In order for you to hand over to new trustees after 7th May 2010 you will need to ensure clear, transparent documentation and processes are in place. In order to assess your readiness the answers to the following questions may be helpful:

Question	Documentation	Support
1. Have you a clear, documented definition of governance for your board?	Governance Definition	<b>STAnews article: What is Governance?</b> <a href="http://www.nzsta.org.nz/RexDefault.aspx?PageID=ac0f8885-f88f-4826-afa1-0824d74d66d6">http://www.nzsta.org.nz/RexDefault.aspx?PageID=ac0f8885-f88f-4826-afa1-0824d74d66d6</a> <b>NZ Education Gazette article: Governance and Trust</b> <a href="http://www.edgazette.govt.nz/articles.php?action=view&amp;id=7051">http://www.edgazette.govt.nz/articles.php?action=view&amp;id=7051</a>
2. Have you a Board's Roles and Responsibilities Policy?	Board Roles and Responsibilities Policy	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
3. Have you a code of conduct for your board?	Code of Conduct Policy	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
4. Have you an up to date Charter including your Strategic Plan?	School Charter including the Strategic Plan	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
5. Have you an up to date set of board policies that reflect your governance framework?	Policy Framework	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
6. Have you a trustee folder with all relevant information including policies?	Trustee Folder/Governance Manual	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
7. Have you a review programme covering all areas of board operations?	3 year review programme	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
8. Have you identified the variety of relevant skills, experience and behaviour required of trustees on your board?	List of relevant skills, experience and behaviour required	NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office
9. Have you an induction plan?	Board Induction Plan Trusteeship Booklet Working in Partnership - Information for New Trustees	See attached example NZSTA Local Ministry of Education Office

## Readiness for Recruitment

<b>Process</b>	<b>Date: If using common triennial election date</b>
1. Agenda time at a board meeting to discuss the succession planning process.	Nov/Dec '09 Board Meeting
2. The board discusses the election process and the work that the board needs to take responsibility for. Commitment is sought. Person or team is identified as the process driver/s. e.g. Current trustee/s not intending to re-stand. Remember this is not a task for the returning officer! The delegations to this team are clarified and documented.	Nov/Dec '09 Board Meeting
3. The board/committee determines and documents the relevant skills, experience and behaviour required for effective trusteeship. This can be a brainstorming exercise using the suggestions on page 7 as a basis for discussion.	Feb '10
4. Prepare an information booklet for prospective trustees which includes all the relevant information they require. See suggestions on page 8.	By 1 March '10
5. Organise several community forum/information evenings for prospective trustees. e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at your school.</li> <li>• for your Parents and Friends group.</li> <li>• at local Rotary, Lions clubs or other service groups.</li> <li>• at the local early childhood centre or your local contributing schools.</li> <li>• local church, marae and other community focus groups.</li> </ul>	Until noon 23rd April '10
6. Continue to promote the elections to your parent community in newsletters. Outline what skills, experience and behaviour would be helpful around the board table. Promote the importance of having a say by exercising your vote.	Until noon 7th May '10

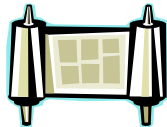
“The importance with which the board is viewed, can be seen by the amount of effort dedicated to board recruitment, orientation, and training. In far too many nonprofits, board recruitment is a process of finding the nearest warm body without regard to the organisation’s needs or the role of the board.”

*Nathan Garber*

# Trustee Folder Index

In order for new trustees to be as effective as possible after the elections the development or review of a trustee /governance manual before this time is a positive and effective resource for the board. Trustees who are elected and do not have all the information they need are seriously hindered from participating fully. What information could this folder include?

## 1. The Future (Ends)



- The Charter
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Plan
- Triennial Review Plan
- Annual Agenda
- Meeting Agenda
- Current Budget

What information do you wish you had been given when you started on the board in order to make more informed decisions?

## 2. The Present

The board's definition of governance and management which sets out the governance framework for the board operations.

### Governance Policies ( Gov. Process)



- Roles & Responsibilities
- Code of Behaviour
- Chairperson's Role
- Meeting Process
- Meeting Procedures
- Meeting Agenda
- Board Review
- Board Professional Development

### Operational Policies ( Executive Limitations)

- Roles & Responsibilities of the Principal
- Principal Performance Management
- Disciplinary Process
- Professional Expenses
- Reporting to the Board
- Curriculum Delivery
- Personnel (NAG 3)
- Financial Planning (NAG 4)
- Financial Conditions (NAG 4)
- Asset Protection (NAG 4)
- Health & Safety (NAG 5)
- Legal Responsibilities (NAG 6)

## 3. The Past ( Review )



- Last Annual Report
- Last ERO Report
- Last 6 months' minutes
- Trustee Register
- Staff Organisation Chart
- Policy Review Reports
- Curriculum Review Reports
- Glossary of Terms
- Board Constitution/Membership



# Recruitment

Identify the skills, experience and behaviour that you would like to see represented around your board table. It is not expected that each trustee has all of these, but a variety is essential for an effective board.

## General Competencies

Visionary leadership  
Strategic thinkers  
Analytical thinkers  
Practical people  
People who can communicate well  
Team Player

## Job-related Competencies

Strategic expertise  
Financial understanding  
Legal understanding  
Risk management  
People management  
Knowledge of education environment

## Personal Qualities

Integrity  
Honesty  
Curiosity  
Courage  
Interpersonal skills  
Genuine interest in the schooling community and its students  
Time and Commitment

Adapted from the Australian Institute of Directors

What strategies for recruitment have you identified?

- Run parent community forums - include early childhood centres' or contributing schools' parents.
- Hold local church, marae and other community focus group meetings.
- Hold service group meetings - Lions, Rotary or other service groups.
- Have the board and staff identify possibilities. Make contact and follow up with a signed nomination form.
- Send newsletters home.
- Advertise in community newspapers.
- Hold information meetings with other local schools.

# Recruitment

Consider putting together an information pamphlet individualized for your school. This could include the following:

## Trusteeship at xxx School/ College

Give a brief outline as to the positions on your board.

eg.

1 x Principal

1 x Staff Trustee

5 x Parent Elected Trustees

Outline what skills, experience and behaviours would be beneficial around the board table.

\* Use the list on page 7 as a guide

- Document your board's definition of governance

\* example STAnews article  
What is Governance?

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- Include your board's 'Board Roles and Responsibilities Policy'

Include your board's Code of Conduct and the reasons why it is so important to adhere to it.

Outline:

- When and where your board meets and for how long.
- Your board's vision and mission statements.
- The professional development opportunities offered both internal and external.

Finish with a statement about :  
We are looking for trustees who are focused on supporting professional leadership, teaching and learning, and the ongoing improvement of student achievement.

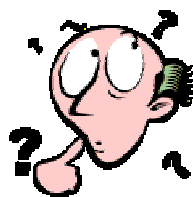
Is this YOU?

Give contact details

What information did you get when you were considering standing for the board?

What information do you wish you had received?

Will you be ensuring that this new board has all the information it needs?



# Retention

In order to retain effective, productive trustees, boards need to focus particular attention on the following in the first 3 - 6 months of the new board's term.

Make trustees feel welcome!



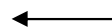
Letter of welcome sent after results are declared. Include:

- Congratulations on your election.
- Informing them that a trustee folder will be sent/given to them in the next xx days.
- Inviting them to an informal get together before the first formal board meeting, which will include an induction programme.
- Informing them of the proposed date, time, and duration of the first formal board meeting.

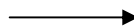
By :

- Electing an effective chairperson.
- Abiding by the Code of Conduct.
- Implementing a planned internal induction programme.
- Supporting attendance at external new trustee professional development opportunities.
- Evaluating each board meeting until confident they are meeting expectations.
- Building relationships.

Value individual trustees and the work of the board



Provide for ongoing review of performance



By :

- Ensuring there is a review programme in place.
- Implementing the review programme.
- Being prepared to act on information from reviews.
- Asking the hard questions.
- Seeking relevant professional development.

# Board Induction Plan

A board only gets one chance to make a first impression. Here are some ideas that you might like to try for your board’s induction programme:

Activity	Led by:	Outcome Expected
Ensure letter of congratulations has been sent with invitation to pre-meeting.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New trustees feel included and welcomed to the board.</li> <li>• Trustees know what the next steps are.</li> <li>• Trustees know what is expected of them.</li> </ul>
Send trustee folders.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees will have all the information they require in order to fulfill their role.</li> <li>• Trustees can attend the pre-meeting and ask any questions.</li> </ul>
<p>Hold pre-meeting induction. Use trustee folder as the resource for this.</p> <p>Trustees taken on tour of the school.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees get to know one another and the skills and experiences that each member brings to the board.</li> <li>• Trustees get an opportunity to assess each person’s strengths and weaknesses before electing a new chair.</li> <li>• Trustees understand the requirements of the board chair role before electing the new chair.</li> <li>• Trustees understand the Charter.</li> <li>• Fully informed trustees who understand the workings of the board.</li> <li>• Trustees sign and agree to work within the Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Trustees are up to date with opportunities and risks facing the board.</li> </ul>
Encourage board members to attend external new trustee training.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees networking with other trustees.</li> <li>• Opportunity to look at what we can and cannot do within the governance framework.</li> <li>• Opportunity to compare our board’s governance framework with others.</li> </ul>





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