

Media Release – 2019 school trustee elections

Getting involved in my kids' education

Amanda Neil wanted to get involved in her children's school and in her community. When the opportunity presented itself, Amanda didn't hesitate to put her hand up to be a trustee on her kids' school board.

"I was co-opted onto the board during the change of management with a new principal and other exciting changes were happening. Our two local schools had a combined trustee board. It was quite a new initiative in our region, and it was done to allow the school with a smaller student roll to have a greater voice and better community representation."

"Being a joint board, we all worked closely together and had a common vision for our two schools. It also meant that we could share resources and create more opportunities for our children."



Boards have the important responsibility of working with principals, school staff, other educators and whānau to the school for the combined interests of students and community.

"It was an exciting and challenging time for us as a board. During my time we had to recruit a new principal, which is never an easy process. Working through this process brought us closer together as a board, and we got to know one another well. Our strength came from embracing individual strengths and working as a collective."

"We had a real cross section of our community, people from different walks of life bringing their own skills and experiences to the table. Some of us had financial and people management backgrounds, others were more hands-on and had a strong connection to our community. We all played our part."

Amanda was a chair on the Putaruru (St Mary's & Bishop Edward Gaines board for 6 years. "One of the most rewarding things for me was assisting in strengthening the financial situation for Bishop Edward Gaines and being able to provide our kids with a better learning environment. I'm very pleased to have played a part upgrading school facilities where our children could learn and play. Every time I drive past the school, I feel very proud about what we achieved as a board!"

Parents, caregivers and people from the wider community can be nominated for election to a school board. It is important that the board reflects its community.

“My message to parents is if you want to be a part of your children’s education, become a trustee. You’ll be part of a school community and you’ll get a good understanding of your school and the work. I’ve learnt that you play just a big role in your child’s education as the teachers. Don’t be afraid that you might not have the right skills. As a board you are a collective, you work to each other’s strength and you develop the skills that you don’t have when you first start.”

“Becoming a trustee is not a huge time commitment as you might think. You invest as much time as you can because after all, we all have busy lives but there’s always enough time for our children.”

Anyone who is interested in being on the school board, can find more information on www.trustee-election.co.nz. The call for nominations for school trustees will be happening for most schools between 10 and 24 May.

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About the school trustee elections

School trustee elections are one of the most significant democratic processes in New Zealand and are a way that parents, caregivers and communities can make a difference to their local school. The New Zealand School Trustees Association runs the trustee elections on behalf of the Ministry of Education. NZSTA provides election resources and election advice to all schools to help run successful elections.

For further information contact:

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