

Example Policy Suite

Introduction

This set of sample policies has been developed over years of research, sector engagement and working with school boards to establish strong governance frameworks.

The first NZSTA Policy Framework was developed in 2006 and was loosely based on the work of John Carver and his Policy Governance® model. Our 2025 Governance Framework takes that original model, updates it and provides a refreshed framework that will work for boards today.

The policy suite that forms a major part of this governance framework is separated into the following four policy areas:

Impact Policies

These define the long-term results the school should achieve. They reflect the expectations of the owners that for New Zealand state and state integrated schools include the Crown and the local school community (including proprietors). Impact policies should be stated as results (for students as intended beneficiaries) – not activities, or efforts. They must describe what is the principal's job to accomplish (not board's philosophy or world view) and at what cost (e.g. must work within the available resourcing of the school).

Operational Expectation Policies

These policies set the boundaries for the principal's authority and actions. The model uses definitive phrases such as "shall not", "will not" to enforce boundaries. Within these boundaries the principal is free to manage the school or kura as they think best.

Board-Management Relationship Policies

As the board does not undertake the work within the school, these policies outline how the board delegates authority to and monitors the principal in their role as the board's CEO. These policies establish and clarify roles and authority delegated to the principal and held by the board. It will outline support and resourcing provided by the board to ensure the successful implementation of any policy requirements.

Governance Culture Policies

Policies that describe how the board will conduct itself and operate.

If you want to know more about how this framework could support your board to govern effectively, please get in touch with us:

Call the Advisory and Support Centre on 0800 782 435 or email govadvice@govhub.org.nz

Table of Contents

Example Policy Suite.....	1
Section One.....	5
Impact Policies.....	5
General Impact Policy.....	6
1.1 Fulfilment of Educational Potential.....	6
1.2 Experience of being in a Learning Community.....	6
1.3 Respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi	6
Section Two.....	7
Operational Expectation Policies	7
General Operational Expectation Policy	8
2.1 Expectations with students.....	8
2.1.1 Child Safety.....	8
2.1.1.1 Child safety reporting	8
2.1.1.2 Reducing distress and minimising physical restraint	8
2.1.1.3 Board to authorise.....	8
2.1.1.4 Use of physical restraint	8
2.2 Expectations with employees.....	9
2.2.1 Good Faith	9
2.2.2 Equal Employment Opportunities	9
2.2.3 Remuneration and Benefits.....	9
2.3 Teaching and learning programmes	10
2.4 Financial Conditions & Activity	10
2.4.1 Financial Planning/Budgeting	10
2.4.2 Financial Condition	10
2.4.3 Impact Focus of Grants or Contracts.....	11
2.5 Asset Protection.....	11
2.6 Communication and Support to the Board	11
2.7 Emergency Principal Succession.....	11
2.8 Health & Safety	11
2.8.1 Workers Participation	12
2.8.2 Managing Risk	12
2.8.3 Property and Equipment.....	12
2.8.4 Emergency Plans including evacuations.....	12
2.8.5 Health and Wellbeing	12
2.8.6 Induction, training and information	13

2.8.7 EOTC provisions	13
2.9 Concerns and complaints	13
2.9.1 Principal's responsibilities with concerns and complaints.....	13
Section Three	14
Board-Management Relationship Policies	14
General Board-Management Relationship Policy	15
3.1 Board – Principal Employment Relationship	15
3.1.1 Health and Wellbeing	15
3.2 Board authority	15
3.3 Accountability of the Principal	15
3.4 Delegation to the Principal through policy	16
3.4.1 Delegation to the Principal for achieving Impacts	16
3.4.2 Delegations to the Principal through Operational Expectation policies.....	16
3.4.3 Reasonable Interpretation	16
3.4.4 Changing delegations	16
3.5 Monitoring and Assessing Performance against Policy	16
3.5.1 Purpose of Monitoring	16
3.5.2 Sources of information.....	17
3.5.3 Board Judgements	17
3.5.4 Reasonable Interpretation	17
3.5.5 Frequency of Policy Monitoring.....	17
Section Four	18
Governance Culture Policies.....	18
General Governance Culture Policy	19
4.1 Governing Style	19
4.1.1 Group responsibility.....	19
4.1.2 Direction through policy	19
4.1.3 Board Discipline	19
4.1.4 Board Continuity & Development.....	20
4.1.5 Board self-monitoring	20
4.2 Board's Role	20
4.2.1 Connection to Owners.....	20
4.2.2 Monitoring & Assurance	20
4.2.3 Board Work Plan	20
4.3 Board meetings	21
4.3.1 Legal Compliance	21

4.3.2 Meeting Agenda	22
4.3.3. Decision-making process.....	22
4.4 Presiding Member's Role	22
4.4.1 Presiding Member's Role	22
4.4.2 Presiding Member's Authority.....	23
4.4.2.1 Authority only by delegation	23
4.4.2.2 Board Representation	23
4.4.2.3 Delegation.....	23
4.5 Board Secretary.....	23
4.5.1 Board Secretary's Role.....	23
4.6 Board Committee Principles.....	24
4.6.1 Board Committee Role	24
4.6.2 Board Committee Scope.....	24
4.6.3 Board Committees Limit on Authority	25
4.7 Cost of Governance.....	25
4.7.1 Resourcing the Board	25
4.7.2 Board Costs.....	25

Section One

Impact Policies

Impact Policies are the cornerstone of the board's governance framework. They express the board's expectations about the **strategic difference the school will make for learners**, for whom, and at what cost or priority. These policies are not about what the school does, but what results it is accountable for achieving on behalf of its learners and community.

Through Impact Policies, the board translates its **owners' vision** into **governing intent**, forming the basis for the principal's operational planning and reporting. These policies bridge the community's aspirations, as captured in the strategic plan, and the school's day-to-day work.

Impact Policies are:

- **Outcome-focused:** They define the desired outcomes for learners, particularly in terms of achievement, wellbeing, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness.
- **Community-driven:** They reflect the values, needs, and priorities of the school's community, especially those identified through engagement during strategic planning.
- **Hierarchically structured:** Starting with a broad, overarching vision of success, they cascade into more specific outcomes that guide leadership decisions and resource allocation.
- **Accountability anchors:** They serve as the basis for monitoring the principal's performance, ensuring alignment between governance, strategy, and results.

Together with the school's Strategic Plan, the Impact Policies create a coherent focus for school leadership, enabling the board to govern for equity, excellence, and the long-term success of all learners. These policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they align with the evolving aspirations of the community and the school's strategic priorities.

General Impact Policy

Each student will be enabled to develop their personality, talents, and abilities to their fullest potential and participate as responsible, informed, active, and critical citizens of the local, national, and global communities in which they live. This will be achieved in a learning community that respects everyone's rights and gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

1.1 Fulfilment of Educational Potential

Each student has developed, to a level suitable for a successful transition to the next stage of their lives,

- a. resilience, determination, confidence, and creative and critical thinking,
- b. good social skills and the ability to form good relationships,
- c. participation in community life and fulfilment of civic and social responsibilities,
- d. preparedness for work,
- e. appreciation of the importance of—
 - i. the inclusion of different groups and persons with different personal characteristics:
 - ii. diversity, cultural knowledge, identity, and the different official languages:
 - iii. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te reo Māori

1.2 Experience of being in a Learning Community

All members of the learning community value learning and human rights and support the learning and rights of others. Each student experiences respect for their rights to a suitable education, physical and emotional safety, non-discrimination, and other rights.

1.3 Respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Students acknowledge, understand and respect:

- New Zealand's bicultural heritage and the place of Te Tiriti as the founding document in the constitution.
- governance of New Zealand under the Crown;
- Tino Rangatiratanga: Māori rights and interests under Article 2;
- citizenship equality under Article 3.

Section Two

Operational Expectation Policies

Operational Expectation Policies define the board's expectations of the principal in managing the day-to-day operations of the school or kura. These policies set the boundaries within which the principal must operate and clarify the conditions, behaviours, and decisions the board considers prudent, ethical, and legally compliant.

Rather than prescribing how the principal must do their job, Operational Expectations are designed to provide **clear parameters**—what must not be done or what must always be done—so the principal has the freedom to lead creatively and responsively, while the board retains confidence that core responsibilities are being met.

These policies ensure that:

- **Legal, ethical, and financial obligations** are fulfilled and risks are managed.
- **Learner wellbeing, staff welfare, and safe environments** are protected and prioritised.
- **School resources** are used effectively and responsibly in alignment with the board's strategic intent.
- The board can **monitor operational performance** in a consistent and evidence-based way, without interfering in management decisions.

Operational Expectations are the **board's safeguard policies**—establishing the non-negotiable standards for leadership practice, decision-making, and organisational behaviour. The principal is accountable for demonstrating compliance with these expectations through regular reporting and assurance processes.

Together with the board's **Impact Policies**, these policies support a coherent governance framework in which **ends are pursued within ethical and strategic means**, enabling the school or kura to thrive in service of its learners and community.

General Operational Expectation Policy

The principal will not cause or allow any school practice, activity, decision, or circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of their professional standards, or commonly accepted business ethics and practices.

2.1 Expectations with students

The principal will not fail to ensure the wellbeing of students in our care, so they belong, thrive, and achieve.

- a) The principal will ensure that there are procedures in place to protect all students and to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- b) The safety and wellbeing of the student is our top priority. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.
- c) The principal will take all reasonable steps to recognise the rights of each student, including ensuring each student attends the school when it is open, and not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are contrary to students' rights, or are unsafe, untimely, undignified, or unnecessarily intrusive to any student.

2.1.1 Child Safety

The principal will not fail to establish procedures that comply with legislation and recognised best practice for child safety. The principal will ensure all employees and school contractors are aware of these policies.

2.1.1.1 Child safety reporting

Any person in the school who believes that any child or young person who have been or are at risk of being harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived must follow school procedures and report to a senior leader or the school guidance counsellor who may report the matter to the police and Oranga Tamariki.

2.1.1.2 Reducing distress and minimising physical restraint

The principal will ensure the implementation and operational compliance with s99 the Act and the 2024 Physical Restraint Rules and Guidelines, including the completion of best practice training by all staff who are authorised to use physical restraint.

2.1.1.3 Board to authorise

The principal shall ensure that all non-teaching staff who may use physical restraint on a student have been authorised by the board and have undertaken appropriate training as required by Rule 12.

2.1.1.4 Use of physical restraint

Except as authorised under this policy, no staff member may use any form of physical restraint on our students.

Our principal, teachers, and board-authorised staff members can only physically restrain a student as a last resort, where:

- the use of physical restraint is necessary to prevent imminent harm to the student or another person,
- there is a reasonable belief that there is no other option available in the circumstances to prevent the harm, and
- the physical restraint is reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

2.2 Expectations with employees

The Principal will not fail to ensure that employment practices comply with all relevant legislation and uphold the board's obligation to be a good employer. Accordingly, the Principal must not cause or allow working conditions that are:

- a. Inconsistent with the principles of a good employer as defined in the **Public Service Act 1988** and the **Education and Training Act 2020**.
- b. Unfair, undignified, disorganised, unsafe, or unclear.
- c. Inconsistent with the terms and conditions set out in any applicable **collective or individual employment agreements**.

2.2.1 Good Faith

The principal will maintain a position of good faith in all interactions with staff. The principal will not fail to:

- a. Ensure that employees are not discriminated in a way prohibited by the Human Rights Act 1993.
- b. Ensure all employees have their rights to personal dignity, safety, and access to an approved and fair internal grievance process.
- c. Ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities as school employees, to their colleagues, and to their employer.
- d. Provide Protected Disclosure procedures.

2.2.2 Equal Employment Opportunities

The principal will not fail to develop and execute an EEO programme that is available to all employees and report to the board on its implementation and compliance.

2.2.3 Remuneration and Benefits

The principal will not fail to have an employment agreement for all employees. If a position is covered by a collective agreement, the provisions that apply to that position as prescribed in the collective agreement must be used. For positions for which there is no collective agreement available, an individual agreement is in place.

2.3 Teaching and learning programmes

The principal will not fail to ensure the delivery of quality teaching and learning programmes that are inclusive of and catering for students with differing needs and that give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi to all students.

These programmes must comply with any expectations for teaching and learning programmes in the Education and Training Act 2020, especially s127 and s90.

2.4 Financial Conditions & Activity

In relation to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities of the school, the principal will not cause or allow the development of financial jeopardy or material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Impact Policies.

2.4.1 Financial Planning/Budgeting

Budgeting will not fail to reflect the board's Impact policies, risk financial jeopardy nor fail to show a generally acceptable level of foresight. Thus, the budget should not neglect to:

- a. Reflect the impacts sought by the board.
- b. Reflect the priorities as established by the board.
- c. Comply with the board's requirement of a balanced budget.
- d. Ensure adequate working capital.
- e. Demonstrate an appropriate degree of conservatism in all estimates

2.4.2 Financial Condition

The financial viability of the school must be protected at all times. Therefore, the principal will not:

- a. Incur unauthorised debt.
- b. Violate generally accepted accounting practices or principles.
- c. Use tagged funds for purposes other than those approved.
- d. Spend more funds than have been allocated in the fiscal year.
- e. Fail to ensure all money owed to the school is collected in a timely manner.
- f. Fail to make timely payment to staff and other creditors.
- g. Sell or purchase unauthorised property.
- h. Spend on single items beyond a board-established limit.
- i. Fail to ensure that all relevant government returns are completed on time.
- j. Fail to ensure that no one person has complete authority over the school's financial transactions.
- k. Make any purchase:
 - i. over \$xxxx without having obtained comparative prices and quality.
 - ii. over \$xxxx without an adequate review on ongoing costs, value and reliability

2.4.3 Impact Focus of Grants or Contracts

The principal will not enter into any grant or contract arrangements that fail to emphasise primarily the meeting of Impacts and, secondarily, the avoidance of unacceptable means.

2.5 Asset Protection

The principal shall not cause or allow school assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked. Therefore, the Principal will not:

- a. Fail to insure assets.
- b. Allow unauthorised personnel to handle funds or school property.
- c. Subject plant and equipment to improper wear and tear, insufficient maintenance, or inappropriate use.
- d. Fail to ensure the implementation of the 10-year property maintenance plan.
- e. Fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from loss or significant damage or unauthorised access or duplication.
- f. Receive, process or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the board-appointed auditor's standards.
- g. Invest or hold operating capital in insecure accounts, or in non-interest-bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions.

2.6 Communication and Support to the Board

The principal will not cause or allow the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

2.7 Emergency Principal Succession

To protect the board from sudden loss of Principal services, the principal will not permit fewer than one other senior manager to be sufficiently familiar with board and Principal issues and processes to enable them to take over with reasonable proficiency as an Acting Principal.

2.8 Health & Safety

The Principal will not fail to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for all students, staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.

Accordingly, the Principal must:

1. Develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive Health and Safety system that complies with all relevant legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
2. Ensure systems are in place to identify, assess, and proactively manage health and safety risks.
3. Promote a culture of shared responsibility for health, safety, and wellbeing across the school.
4. Ensure all staff are trained and supported to meet their health and safety obligations.
5. Respond appropriately and in a timely manner to all health and safety incidents, hazards, and near misses.

6. Regularly evaluate and improve the school's health and safety practices.
7. Provide the board with scheduled assurance reports, including evidence of compliance, incident summaries, and actions taken to address any areas of concern.

The board delegates operational responsibility to the Principal while retaining governance-level accountability as the PCBU. Regular reporting enables the board to meet its due diligence obligations and maintain confidence that the school is a safe and supportive environment for all.

2.8.1 Workers Participation

The principal will not fail to maintain a Health and Safety System that will ensure workers are regularly made aware of opportunities to participate in improving health, safety and wellbeing, including through health and safety representatives and the Health and Safety Committee.

The principal will also ensure workers can raise any health and safety concerns directly with them.

2.8.2 Managing Risk

The principal will ensure that the Health and Safety System includes clearly documented procedures for identifying and reporting hazards and risks, along with systems for managing those risks that may include mitigation or rectification.

2.8.3 Property and Equipment

The principal will have systems that ensure all school property and equipment are well-maintained and safe to use, that staff are trained to use any school property or equipment appropriately, and that individuals are provided with the appropriate PPE wherever necessary.

2.8.4 Emergency Plans including evacuations

The principal will ensure that the Health and Safety System includes plans for responding to emergencies affecting the school, including weather-related events, natural disasters and other threats to health and life. The principal is delegated the authority to deal with all aspects of such events, including decisions to close the school if it is deemed unsafe to remain open.

2.8.5 Health and Wellbeing

The principal will engage closely with staff and students to support a proactive approach to health and wellbeing with specific health and wellbeing programmes.

2.8.6 Induction, training and information

The principal will not fail to ensure that a programme of induction is provided for all new employees and that staff receive professional development in health and safety that will strengthen the capability of staff to maintain a safe and happy work environment, including how to keep themselves as safe as possible.

2.8.7 EOTC provisions

The principal will ensure that the Health and Safety System includes specific systems for ensuring that all EOTC events, including sports events, are safe for all participants and appropriately supervised.

2.9 Concerns and complaints

The principal will not fail to ensure robust procedures to ensure complaints, concerns, and incidents are attended to promptly, fairly, respectfully, and professionally, and seek to bring an effective resolution to all parties concerned.

2.9.1 Principal's responsibilities with concerns and complaints

The principal will ensure:

- a. that the principles of natural justice are always adhered to, and all parties have a right to be heard and a right to be treated fairly.
- b. that the process for raising concerns or complaints is clearly communicated and posted on the school website;
- c. Staff are empowered to successfully address concerns and complaints, including de-escalating without minimising concerns;
- d. Advice is given to members of the learning community on how to formulate concerns and complaints;
- e. that a complainant has previously followed the school's concerns and complaints procedure before a complaint is escalated to board level;
- f. complainants are advised that, if the principal's action or inaction in relation to a concern or complaint is unfair, unreasonable, or contrary to the facts, board policy or the law, they may make a complaint in those terms to the board.

Section Three

Board-Management Relationship Policies

Board/Principal Relationship Policies define how the board governs through the principal, who serves as the board's sole employee and Chief Executive. These policies clarify the nature of the delegation, the scope of authority, and the accountability mechanisms that support a productive and professional working relationship.

As the board does not directly undertake the operational work of the school or kura, it delegates this responsibility to the principal. These policies:

- **Establish the delegated authority** of the Principal and the retained authority of the board.
- Define the **limits and expectations** of that delegation.
- Set out how the board will **monitor performance and compliance** without stepping into management.

The policies also describe how the board will support the principal, through appropriate resourcing, strategic direction, and a commitment to respectful and open communication, to ensure successful implementation of board policy.

Clear, structured communication between the board and the principal is essential. These policies ensure that **information flows are predictable, transparent, and purposeful**, enabling the board to govern effectively while empowering the principal to confidently lead the school.

General Board-Management Relationship Policy

The board must understand the role of the principal and support the principal to succeed in their leadership of the school. The principal is a board member and, as the board's chief executive, brings specific professional knowledge and expertise to board discussion and decision-making to support their board colleagues in the governance of the school. The board's official connection to the operational organisation of the school, its achievements, and its conduct will be through the principal.

3.1 Board – Principal Employment Relationship

The board shall comply with current employment law and may not cause or allow conditions that are inconsistent with the public sector expectations of a good employer or are unfair, undignified, disorganised, or unclear. The board will ensure there is an employment agreement for the principal and will adhere to all parts of the current collective agreement.

3.1.1 Health and Wellbeing

The board, through the presiding member, will engage closely with the principal to support a proactive approach to health and wellbeing and fund specific health and wellbeing programmes.

3.2 Board authority

The board is responsible for the governance of the school, including setting the policies by which the school is to be controlled and managed. Only officially passed motions of the board are binding on the principal.

- Individual board members' decisions or instructions, officers' decisions, or committee instructions are not binding on the principal except in rare instances when the board has delegated explicitly that authority to them.
- In the case of board members or board committees requesting information or assistance without board authorisation, the principal can refuse such requests that require, in the principal's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.

3.3 Accountability of the Principal

The principal is the board's only formal link to the operation of the school, so that all authority and accountability of staff is through the principal.

The principal is accountable for school performance.

The board will view school performance as an indicator of principal performance in so far as it is reasonable. Achievement of board-stated Impacts within Operational Expectations is a measure of principal performance.

3.4 Delegation to the Principal through policy

The board will instruct the principal through written policies that prescribe the organisational Impacts to be achieved, broad Operational Expectations, organisational situations, and actions to be avoided, allowing the principal to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies.

3.4.1 Delegation to the Principal for achieving Impacts

Impact policies will be developed by the board, providing instruction to the principal to achieve specified results for all students within the resources available to the board.

3.4.2 Delegations to the Principal through Operational Expectation policies

The board's Operational Expectation policies will describe those practices, activities, decisions, and circumstances that would be unacceptable to the board even if they were to be effective. Outside of these operational expectations, the principal has the freedom to use their discretion in exercising their delegations.

3.4.3 Reasonable Interpretation

As long as the principal uses any reasonable interpretation of the board's Impact and Operational Expectation policies, the principal is authorised to establish all further policies and procedures, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and pursue all activities. The principal's decisions shall have full force and authority as if decided by the board.

3.4.4 Changing delegations

The board may review and change its Impact and Operational Expectation policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and principal decision-making.

3.5 Monitoring and Assessing Performance against Policy

Systematic and rigorous monitoring of school performance will be against:

- expectations as described in the Impact and Operational Expectation policies
- the board's Strategic Plan and principal's Annual Implementation Plan.

The principal must provide evidence that they kept within the boundaries established in board policy.

3.5.1 Purpose of Monitoring

Monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which board policies and plans are being met. Information that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring information.

3.5.2 Sources of information

The board will acquire monitoring information by one or more of three methods:

- a. By internal report, in which the principal discloses interpretations and compliance information to the board.
- b. By external report, in which an external, disinterested third party assesses compliance with board policies.
- c. By direct board inspection, in which a delegated member or members of the board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.

3.5.3 Board Judgements

In every case, the board will judge (a) the reasonableness of the principal's interpretation and (b) whether data demonstrates the accomplishment of the interpretation.

3.5.4 Reasonable Interpretation

When monitoring, the standard of compliance will be any reasonable interpretation of the board policies by the principal. The board is the final arbiter of reasonableness but will always judge with a "reasonable person" test rather than with an interpretation favoured by board members or by the board as a whole.

3.5.5 Frequency of Policy Monitoring

All policies that instruct the principal will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule, set in the board's workplan.

Section Four

Governance Culture Policies

Governance Culture Policies define the board's own standards of conduct and collective responsibility. These policies describe how the board governs, how it relates to the school community and to its principal, and how it ensures it remains focused, ethical, and effective in its role.

These policies establish the **culture and discipline of governance**, creating a clear and shared understanding of the board's purpose, boundaries, and obligations. They provide the framework through which the board holds itself accountable to the community it serves, and ensure consistency, integrity, and professionalism in board practice.

Governance Culture Policies ensure that:

- The **board operates as a cohesive and strategic governance body**, not as a group of individuals.
- Board members act in accordance with **legal, ethical, and fiduciary responsibilities**, including those outlined in the **Education and Training Act 2020** and associated regulations.
- The **Presiding Member** and individual board members are empowered to act within defined parameters to support strong governance and productive working relationships.
- The board's processes, behaviour, and decision-making are **transparent, inclusive, and community focused**.

These policies give the Presiding Member and board members the clarity to make any **reasonable interpretation** of the board's expectations when fulfilling their governance role. They enable the board to focus on **strategic leadership** while ensuring it models the values and behaviours expected throughout the school or kura.

Governance Culture Policies underpin the board's effectiveness, enabling it to lead with integrity, uphold community trust, and confidently guide the school or kura's vision and direction.

General Governance Culture Policy

The purpose of the board, on behalf of the Crown and community, is to see to it that the school (a) achieves its desired results for its students (as described in its Impact policies) within the resourcing available to it, and (b) avoids unacceptable actions and situations (as outlined in board Operational Expectation policies) while fulfilling its commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Decision-making will be informed by the expectations of the school's owners, ensuring policies reflect both legislative obligations and community expectations while supporting the continuous improvement of governance practices.

4.1 Governing Style

The board focuses on strategic leadership rather than administrative details, clearly distinguishes board and staff roles (as described in its Board—Management Relationships policies), concentrates on the future rather than the past or present, and is proactive rather than reactive.

4.1.1 Group responsibility

The board will foster a sense of group responsibility. All board members have equal standing, equal voice, equal vote, and equal accountability. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governance. The board will initiate policy to describe how the school will be controlled and managed, not merely react to staff initiatives. Although individual board members may have expert knowledge on matters being discussed, the decision rests with the whole board.

4.1.2 Direction through policy

The board will direct, control, and empower the school staff through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the board's values and perspectives. The board's written policies realistically address the broadest levels of all organisational decisions and situations:

- a. Impact - the impacts/results for the learner.
- b. Operational Expectations - boundaries or guardrails within which operations must occur.
- c. Board-Management Relationship - how power is delegated, and its proper use monitored, the principal's role, authority, and accountability.
- d. Governance Culture - specification of how the board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task.

4.1.3 Board Discipline

Board members are aware of and comply with the government-mandated Code of Conduct for State School Board Members. The board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence, integrity and adherence to board policies. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, meeting preparation, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability.

4.1.4 Board Continuity & Development

The board will prioritise ongoing development and succession planning to maintain effective governance. This will include a comprehensive induction program for new members, continuous learning opportunities for all board members, and the implementation of a clear succession plan to ensure smooth transitions in leadership.

4.1.5 Board self-monitoring

The board will regularly assess its actions and adherence to policies, specifically within Governance Culture and Board-Management Relationship categories. This ongoing self-evaluation ensures alignment with governance standards and promotes accountability and continuous improvement in board performance.

4.2 Board's Role

The board's role is to provide leadership by reflecting the agreed aspirations and expectations of the school community and the Crown in board policy. The board is accountable to the community and the Crown on these key roles and will regularly report on progress and compliance.

The board is a continuous entity, regardless of changes in membership, and its policies and decisions continue to exist until such time as they are rescinded or revoked.

4.2.1 Connection to Owners

The board will actively engage with its owners—Crown representatives and the wider school community—to understand their expectations, values, and aspirations. This input will inform the development and refinement of board policies, ensuring they align with both legislative requirements and community priorities.

4.2.2 Monitoring & Assurance

The board will monitor the effect of its policies through principal reports, third-party monitoring and, where warranted, direct inspection, in order to be assured of successful school performance on Impacts and Operational Expectations.

4.2.3 Board Work Plan

To fulfil its role the board will follow a work plan that:

- a. completes a re-exploration of Impact policies annually.
- b. reviews other policies as appropriate.
- c. continually improves board performance through board education and enriched input and deliberation.

The cycle will conclude each year on the last day of December so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing the annual implementation plan.

The cycle will start with the board's development of its workplan for the next year.

Consultation with selected ownership groups or other methods of gaining ownership input will be determined and arranged in the first quarter and held throughout the year.

Governance education and education related to ends determination (presentations by futurists, demographers, advocacy groups, staff, and so on) will be arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.

4.3 Board meetings

Board meetings will follow the requirements of the Education (School Boards) Regulations 2020, part 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, and reasonable and fair processes for agenda formation and decision making.

4.3.1 Legal Compliance

Board meetings will follow the requirements of:

(a) the Education (School Boards) Regulations 2020:

- a meeting to be held no later than 3 months after the previous meeting;
- no decision will take place without a quorum of a majority of members currently holding office being present;
- decisions by majority of members present, and casting vote if necessary by presiding member;
- exclusion of a member who has a pecuniary interest in any matter or any interest that may reasonably be regarded as likely to influence them in carrying out their duties and responsibilities;
- validity of an unanimously agreed decision outside the meeting;
- an honorarium for attendance at meetings taking into account loss of income and childcare costs determined by a scale agreed by the board; and
- determination of time and place of next meeting will be made by the board, presiding member, or if necessary the principal.

(b) part 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987:

- taking all reasonable steps to ensure that parents of students enrolled at schools that the board administers can readily find out, within a reasonable time before those meetings, where and when meetings of the board are to be held;
- making all agendas and associated reports available on request;
- excluding the public on allowable grounds under the Official Information Act;
- right and duty of presiding member to maintain order; and
- making the minutes of the meeting available on request.

4.3.2 Meeting Agenda

The agenda will be set following the board's workplan.

Policy monitoring will be on the agenda if reports have been received since the previous meeting, if plans must be made for direct inspection monitoring, or if arrangements for third-party monitoring must be prepared.

A board member may recommend or request an item for board discussion by submitting the item to the Presiding Member no later than five days before the board meeting.

Throughout the year, the board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible.

4.3.3. Decision-making process

The board may determine on a given issue whether to use formal meeting procedure or consensus decision making, taking into account whether the issue is strategic, high stakes, or requires a strong, united position, or is relatively minor or affecting relatively few. In any case the board will:

- allow fair opportunity of all members to participate in discussion;
- ensure that formal proposals before the board are clearly stated for final board consideration, and that resulting board decisions are clearly stated (and indicated in minutes); and authorises the presiding member to facilitate accordingly.

4.4 Presiding Member's Role

The presiding member (PM) chairs the board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position. The PM ensures the integrity of the board's process and is authorised to carry out those duties that are delegated by the board.

4.4.1 Presiding Member's Role

The presiding members role is to oversee the work of the board. The PM leads the board to behave consistently with its own policies, rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the school.

- Meetings will focus solely on issues that clearly belong to the board, to determine or monitor according to board policy.
- Information that is neither for monitoring performance nor for board decisions will not be discussed or tabled at board meetings.
- Deliberations by the board will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
- Discussions will be facilitated to enable a collegial, robust, high-trust meeting culture.

4.4.2 Presiding Member's Authority

The PM has the authority to make decisions under the board policies on Governance Culture and Board-Management Relationship as long as they can be shown to be reasonable interpretation of the policies except for:

- The employment or termination of the principal and
- Areas where the board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others.

The presiding member will act as the board's connection with the principal, to ensure the board acts as a "good employer" and monitor the principal's wellbeing and workload when implementing board policy.

4.4.2.1 Authority only by delegation

Except as delegated by the board, the PM has no authority to supervise or direct the principal.

4.4.2.2 Board Representation

The PM may as delegated represent the board to outside parties in announcing board decisions and confirming the process being undertaken by the school in urgent or critical matters.

4.4.2.3 Delegation

Under the authority of the board the PM may delegate any part or all of these responsibilities.

4.5 Board Secretary

The role of the board secretary is to ensure the integrity of the board's documents, including minutes, policies, board information registers, and correspondence.

4.5.1 Board Secretary's Role

While the formal contractual arrangements may sensibly be handled by the principal, the board secretary is accountable to the board (and their key functional relationship is with its presiding member).

The assigned result is to see to it that all board documents and filings are accurate and timely, including the following:

- a) Meeting minutes that are an official record of the board's process and actions, particularly its resolutions and adoption of policies (board policies cannot be shown to have been created or altered except through the authority of the minutes).

- b) A centrally-organised, accessible and visible collection of current policies, with clear indication of adoption date by the board.
- c) Central filing of formal board correspondence.
- d) Up-to-date board membership records, including ensuring and filing eligibility declarations, a board membership register (that records phone and email contacts, formal position on the board, membership type (elected, selected, co-opted, ex officio) date membership started, date member left board, expiry of term), and ensuring new board members (including the principal) and new presiding members complete Appendix 2 to update Te Whakarōputanga records.
- e) Information portfolio for each board member: Core documents that each board member should be given (Code of conduct, Key legislative requirements, Core policies, Strategic plan, Contacts list...)

4.6 Board Committee Principles

Board committees are to be used sparingly, preferably as ad hoc committees to preserve the board functioning as a whole, when other methods have been deemed inadequate, and so as never to interfere with delegation from the board to the principal.

This policy applies to any group formed by board decision, whether or not it is called a committee. A board committee may include non-board members, but must include at least one board member. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the principal.

A board committee shall be given a written terms of reference that describes the constitution, aims and delegations (including decision-making ability).

4.6.1 Board Committee Role

Board committees are to help the board do its job, never to advise or carry out the work of staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for board deliberation. In keeping with the board's broader focus, board committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.

4.6.2 Board Committee Scope

Board committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order to prevent conflict with authority delegated to the principal.

4.6.3 Board Committees Limit on Authority

Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. The principal works for the full board and will therefore not be required to obtain the approval of a board committee before an executive action.

4.7 Cost of Governance

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity.

4.7.1 Resourcing the Board

Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to ensure governing with excellence.

1. Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing members' skills and understandings.
2. Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the board can exercise confident control over organisational performance. This includes, but is not limited to, a financial audit.
3. Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the board's ability to listen to owner viewpoints and values.

4.7.2 Board Costs

The board will act prudently and only incur those cost necessary to ensure excellent governance including board member development.

The board will establish its Cost of Governance budget for the next financial year during the month of October.

- a. Up to \$ in financial year XXXX for board member honorarium.
- b. Up to \$ in financial year XXXX for training, including attendance at conferences and workshops.
- c. Up to \$ in financial year XXXX for audit and other third-party monitoring of organisational performance.
- d. Up to \$ in financial year XXXX for surveys, focus groups, opinion analyses, and meeting costs.