



GOVERNANCE FACT SHEET

Role of Proprietor's appointee on the Board of Trustees

Those who wish to become a Proprietor's appointee on a Board of Trustees are asked to read the following information about the role and to sign this document, indicating that they understand and accept the responsibilities of the role.

Proprietor's appointees on the Board are full members of the Board, with all the rights and obligations of other Board members. All Board members have responsibility for the Catholic special character of the school inscribed in the school's Integration Agreement and charter.

The Proprietor's appointees also have some special responsibilities that derive from the fundamental characteristics of Catholic schools as described in Canon Law and safeguarded by the Education Act 1989. These responsibilities are to:

1. Assist the Board to carry out its obligations to ensure that the school remains a Catholic school¹ and that it fulfils the primary objective for which it was founded. The primary objective of providing a Catholic education has implications for the appointment of teachers, the enrolment of students, the Religious Education programme and for other matters relating to the school's special character.
2. Be an important channel of communication between the school and the Bishop and/or Proprietor.
3. Assist the Board in ensuring that the Proprietor's property is kept in good order, repair and condition, and ensure that the proportion of the Operations Grant that is intended to cover the repair and maintenance of buildings is used for this purpose.
4. Report to the Proprietor on the progress of the school, in writing, at least annually (or more often if requested or if the need arises).

Job description for a Proprietor's appointee to the Board of Trustees

A Proprietor's appointee to the Board of Trustees must:

- participate fully in Board activities, contributing to discussion and making decisions in the best interests of the school
- work closely with the Principal and other Board members to ensure that the school remains a Catholic school
- ensure that the school fulfils its primary purpose of giving a Catholic education to Catholic children and young people

¹ These obligations are specified in detail in the Catholic Special Character Review and Development document, which provides detailed standards for New Zealand's Catholic schools. The document is available on the NZCEO website (www.nzceo.org.nz).

- help preserve the Catholic Character by being aware of relevant policies of the Proprietor, and by acquiring knowledge and expertise in the areas that influence Catholic Character – in particular, staff appointments, staff relationships, school programmes and student enrolments
- seek to ensure that the school strives for excellence in all of its endeavours
- be sensitive to matters of equity and justice, and have respect for different cultural, ethnic and family backgrounds and circumstances
- support the Religious Education programme and the Director of Religious Studies
- ensure that the Catholic community's property is kept in good order
- be a channel of communication between the school and the Proprietor (note that for diocesan schools, communication is normally through the Diocesan Education Office)
- communicate with the Proprietor on a regular basis about property issues
- report annually to the Proprietor in writing (see example report in Resources section of website)

This report is normally a joint report by the Proprietor's appointees. It covers both strengths and weaknesses and contains the views of the appointees, even if these opinions are not shared by the remainder of the Board. As a matter of courtesy, a copy of the report is shown to the Principal and presented to the Board.

- include in the annual report to the Proprietor a statement about the amount of the Operations Grant that is allotted to repair and maintenance, and the amount spent on repair and maintenance
- report promptly to the Proprietor about issues that are the concern of the Proprietor; these include issues relating to the Proprietor's legal responsibility for Catholic Character and for property
- liaise with the Proprietor, particularly if anything of a serious nature emerges or happens in the school that could put the school's effectiveness or reputation in jeopardy
- be conscious of the close relationship that needs to exist between the school and the parish Church community, and assist in fostering that relationship
- ensure that there is at least one Proprietor's appointee on any committee dealing with staff appointments, including direct involvement in the appointment process when the right to make particular appointments is delegated to the Principal
- if resigning from the position of Proprietor's appointee, inform the Proprietor and then inform the Chair of the Board.

I understand and accept these responsibilities:

Signature: Date:.....

This material is drawn from the Handbook for Boards of Trustees. The Handbook contains the information, including legal requirements, needed by Boards of Trustees of New Zealand Catholic schools to ensure that they fulfil the contractual requirements of their Integration Agreement. All material in the Handbook can be found at <http://www.nzceohandbook.org.nz>.