



**PPTA**

NEW ZEALAND POST PRIMARY  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
TE WEHENGARUA

[www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz)

**STAFF  
REPRESENTATIVE  
ON THE  
BOARD  
OF TRUSTEES**

**MEMBERS' GUIDE**

**February 2009**



Integrity is the key quality of the staff representative on the board.

## **The staff representative on the board ...**

### **... represents the staff**

The board must know about the staff's needs, attitudes and opinions, including factual information about:

- who does what on the staff
- what the staff thinks about current issues
- the importance of EEO and sexual harassment procedures
- the frustrations of budget limitations for departments
- PPTA policy on day relief, timetabling and class size
- the Treaty of Waitangi
- the collective agreement terms and conditions
- concerns of all unions on site
- how an application for leave should be processed.

Because of the particular perspective they bring from their daily interactions with colleagues, the staff representative will have insights that no other member of the board has.

### **... represents the board**

Teachers need to know what the board is doing. The staff representative on the board is the board member who is in the staff room regularly and can talk about:

- where the board stands on current issues
- the need for PPTA observers at board meetings
- the board's present concerns
- the board's view on collective agreement issues.



The staff representative on the board influences the kind of relationship that exists between staff and the board. Staffroom interest and involvement in board activities can be fostered by detailed and clear reporting. Staff need to know how their school is administered and what decisions they can influence.

### **... knows the school**

There is a great fund of shared knowledge in the staffroom. The staff representative on the board should have a comprehensive view of the school and a knowledge of how school employees think. Things they might be expected to know about include:

- relevant legislation, including the Employment Relations Act and the Education Act
- how the collective agreements work
- the neighbours, the local council and the PPTA field officer
- who to seek information from when needed
- the kawa of the marae
- curriculum areas other than their own.

### **... is a board member**

All board members, whether parents, co-opted members, the principal, a student or a teacher, have the same rights and responsibilities.

Board of trustees meetings should be conducted according to formal meeting procedure. The staff representative should be provided, and be familiar with, the *Model Standing Orders for Meetings of Local Authorities and Community Boards*. See also the PPTA booklet *Meeting Procedure*.

Staff representative trustees have the right to take a full part in any discussions or considerations of the board, except where their own personal interest, as distinct from their general interest in common with all teachers, is at issue.

Standing orders enable boards to go “into committee” in order to discuss a topic confidentially when appropriate. This does not allow the board to exclude staff representatives unless they have a personal conflict of interest in the matter.

It is desirable for the board staff representative to be able to:

- be assertive and diplomatic
- maintain appropriate confidentiality
- work cooperatively
- lobby board support for PPTA policies
- speak effectively at meetings
- influence decision making
- initiate action
- prepare carefully for meetings
- have the confidence to use their own discretion
- recognise hidden agendas
- utilise skills of others
- debate issues boldly.

The role of the board staff representative can be a difficult one at times because conflicts of interest may arise, owing to the unique nature of the role. The staff representative is both an employee of the board and a member of the employing body. The staff representative who is a PPTA member is encouraged to seek advice from a field officer when such issues arise.



## Advice and guidance

For further advice consult your local PPTA office.

### **Auckland**

4 Western Springs Road, Morningside  
P O Box 52 006, Auckland 1352  
ph (09) 815 8610 fax (09) 815 8612  
email: [auckland@ppta.org.nz](mailto:auckland@ppta.org.nz)

### **Hamilton**

Level 1, ANZ Building, 650 Te Rapa Rd, Te Rapa  
P O Box 20 294, Hamilton 3241  
ph (07) 849 0168 fax (07) 849 1794  
email: [hamilton@ppta.org.nz](mailto:hamilton@ppta.org.nz)

### **Palmerston North**

Level 2, Guardian House, cnr The Square and Main Street  
P O Box 168, Palmerston North 4440  
ph (06) 358 4036 fax (06) 358 4055  
email: [palmerston@ppta.org.nz](mailto:palmerston@ppta.org.nz)

### **Christchurch**

Latimer View House, 215 Gloucester Street  
P O Box 13-005, Christchurch 8141  
ph (03) 366 6524 fax (03) 379 4011  
email: [christchurch@ppta.org.nz](mailto:christchurch@ppta.org.nz)

### **Dunedin**

Level 1, Queens Garden Court, 3 Crawford Street  
P O Box 1561, Dunedin 9054  
ph (03) 477 1311 fax (03) 477 1804  
email: [dunedin@ppta.org.nz](mailto:dunedin@ppta.org.nz)



This pamphlet has been produced by NZPPTA / Te Wehengarua and provides the association's contractual interpretation. Nevertheless, it is not a substitute for the collective agreement and should be read in conjunction with the relevant clauses of the appropriate collective agreement.

### **Pamphlets in this guide series include:**

- Beginning teachers
- Community education
- Employment relations problems/Personal grievances
- Guidance for teachers in their relationships with students
- Guidance for teachers working with Pacific students in secondary schools
- Guidance for teachers working with Māori students
- Introducing Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake
- Making schools safe for people of every sexuality
- Meeting procedure
- Overseas teachers
- Parental leave
- Part-time teachers
- PPTA support service
- Sick leave
- Teacher competence
- Teacher conduct and discipline
- Teachers' salary guide: Area schools
- Teachers' salary guide: Secondary schools
- The staff representative on the board of trustees

Printed by:



PO Box 2119 Wellington  
ph (04) 384 9964, fax (04) 382 8763  
email: [gensec@ppta.org.nz](mailto:gensec@ppta.org.nz)  
[www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz)

