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# Principal's Column

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*Brent Gray*

This year schools will be looking for people to stand in elections for the Board of Trustees. Every three years members of the school community are asked to put themselves forward and commit to being a Board Member for the purpose of governing the school.

All of New Zealand's state and state-integrated schools have a board of trustees. The board of trustees is the Crown entity responsible for the governance of the school. The board is the employer of all staff in the school and is responsible for setting the school's strategic direction in consultation with parents, staff and students, and for ensuring that its school provides a safe environment and quality education for all its students. School trustees have a very important role in making sure every child achieves their potential at school. Here are some of the things they do:



- Work with the principal and consult with staff, students and the community
- Set the educational goals and strategic direction of the school
- Monitor progress and inform parents on how the school is progressing against its annual targets and on the development of the students
- Decide how the school's funding will be spent
- Select the school's principal and support the development of all staff
- Oversee the management of staff, property, finances, curriculum and administration.

Being on a Board of Trustees gives an insight into the day to day running of a school and provides members with professional development opportunities that benefit the school and its community. The skills and knowledge developed as a Board member can then be applied to other aspects of a Board members life outside of the schooling aspect. Likewise, skilled members of the community are able to share with schools their knowledge and expertise.

Parental input to the strategic direction of your community's school is an extremely important and valued position to hold. There are many exciting developments happening in our local community with the establishment of the Opuke Community of Learning, bringing together nine schools with similar goals for their students, to collaborate, develop staff and students, and give our children the best learning opportunities they can get. The Board of Trustees will be an important part of this development.

For further information about becoming a Board of Trustees Member, visit:  
<http://www.trustee-election.co.nz/>