



Navigating Proprietor & Board Roles and Responsibilities

Effective governance relies on everyone knowing their role and responsibilities. Respecting each others boundaries ensures positive outcomes for all.

Roles & Responsibilities

Discover the specific responsibilities and relationships that define integrated school boards and their key stakeholders.

Governance Structure

Explore the unique governance model that distinguishes integrated schools from state schools.

How State Integrated School Boards Work

Effective governance of a state integrated school requires understanding several interconnected components. Below is an overview of the key governance areas that every board member should be familiar with.

1

Role of the Board

Understanding board composition, governance models, the legislative framework, and how the Governance Framework applies to your school's daily operations.

2

Special Character, Enrolment, Employment & Property

Special Character Guidelines, evaluation and compliance, property responsibilities, understanding who in your community can be enrolled and the legal requirements when employing some staff.

3

Role of the Proprietor

Safeguarding special character, understanding the Proprietor–Board–Crown relationship, the Integration Agreement, and the Proprietor Appointee's role and purpose.

4

Board Toolkit - key documents

Legislation, Strategic/Annual Plan, MOU, Governance Manual
Templates, Code of Conduct, Proprietor Appointee role description, and
Concerns and Complaints processes.

Legislative Framework

Boards must understand and operate within the legal framework established by the **Education and Training Act 2020**. Meeting all legislative requirements is fundamental to effective, compliant governance.

Education and Training Act 2020 The primary legislation governing all aspects of school board operations, responsibilities, staffing, enrolment, and property across New Zealand's state education system.	Schedule 6: State Integrated Schools Specific provisions within the Act that address the unique requirements and characteristics of integrated schools – covering special character, enrolment preference, attendance dues, and property.
Powers and Functions of the Board Clear legislative definition of board authority, decision-making powers, and operational boundaries, ensuring accountability to both the Crown and the school community.	Integration Agreement The legally binding document that brings the school into the state system. It sets the legal and structural foundation defining the school's special character and the obligations of all three partners.

What Is Special Character and Where Is It Defined?

Defining Special Character

"Special Character" refers to the unique faith, values, education philosophy, and practices that define a state integrated school. It is fundamental to the school's identity and ethos, providing a distinctive educational environment where faith or philosophy is integrated into all aspects of learning and daily life.

Its importance lies in offering parents and students a genuine choice of education grounded in a specific faith or philosophy.

Legal Protection & Governance Role

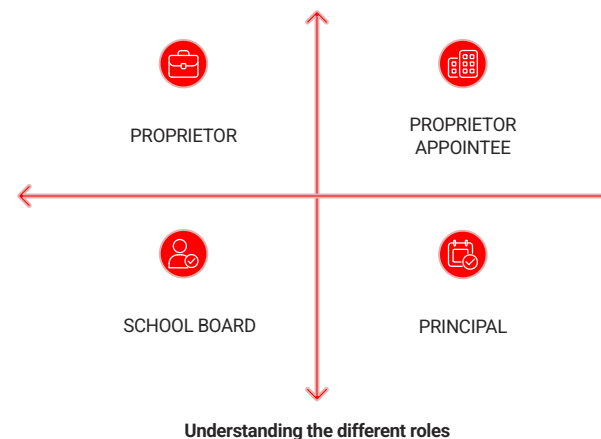
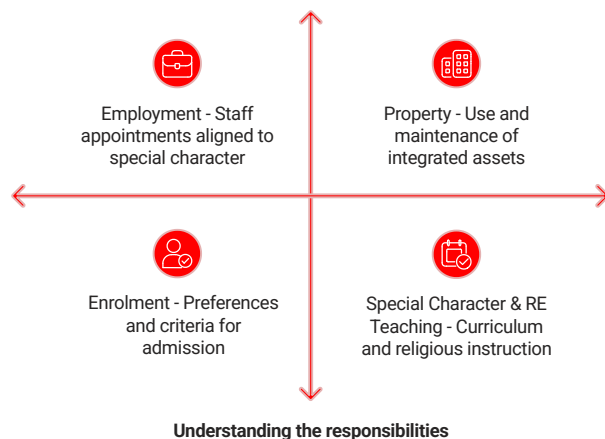
Special character is legally protected under the **Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 6**, which outlines how state integrated schools operate while maintaining their unique identity.

The **Proprietor** is the guardian of special character, ensuring its preservation and promotion in line with the Integration Agreement. It shapes the curriculum through religious instruction or educational philosophy, guides staff appointments, fosters a committed community, and embeds belief and philosophy into school culture.

Board members are jointly responsible for upholding and promoting this special character in partnership with the Proprietor.

Navigating Proprietor Role & Board Responsibilities

Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act grants state integrated schools the right to reflect their special character through teaching and conduct, alongside a responsibility to maintain and preserve it. It's crucial for everyone on the board to understand these rights and responsibilities, as they underpin effective governance and collective safeguarding of the school's unique character. These are legislated and outlined in the integration agreement, establishing four key areas of shared focus.

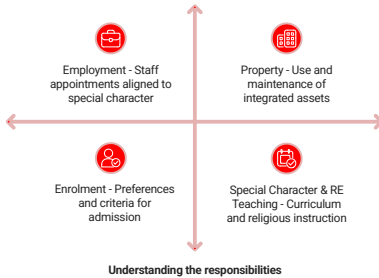


Effective governance relies on everyone knowing their role and responsibilities: These four roles and areas of responsibility are critical to ensuring the continued preservation of your school's special character. We encourage the board to engage with dedicated webinars for a deeper understanding of each aspect, tailored to your school's unique context.

Navigating the Four Key Areas of Responsibility

The maintenance and preservation of special character is protected through four critical operational areas that require careful board attention and ongoing compliance with the Education and Training Act 2020 (Schedule 6).

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES



Employment

Ensure understanding of the teaching positions which are 'tagged' for staff willing and able to provide religious instruction. For secondary schools, acceptability is established by appointments committees that must include a Proprietor's Appointee. For primary schools, acceptability is established by the proprietor. Legislation specifies requirements for advertising tagged positions. [E&TA Sch6 Cl 46-52].

Property

The Proprietor owns all land, buildings, and improvements described in the Integration Agreement. Property must meet minimum safety standards. Boards must annually prepare a rolling 10-year maintenance plan for the Proprietor. The Proprietor may require attendance dues as a condition of enrolment, which must be used for new footprint.
[E&TA Sch6 Cl 30(1)]

Enrolment

The Proprietor determines enrolment preference. Both Proprietor and Board must have clarity around criteria for preference and delegation of responsibility. Roll must be managed to not exceed the maximum agreed in the Integration Agreement. [E&TA Sch6 Cl 26, 27]

Curriculum & Teaching

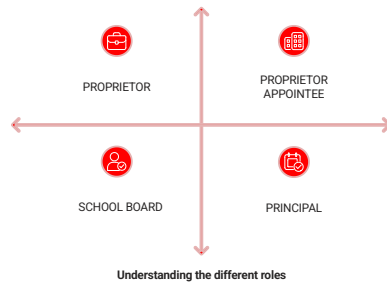
The Proprietor supervises the maintenance and preservation of education with Special Character [E&TA Sch6 Cl 1(3)(a)]. State integrated schools retain the right to reflect Special Character through teaching and school conduct.

[E&TA Sch6 Cl 1(1)]

Protecting Special Character: Four Key Roles

Effective Governance relies on everyone knowing their role and responsibilities.

KEY ROLES



PROPRIETOR:

Although they do not sit around the board table it is important to know your proprietor and understand what rights and responsibilities they have.

- Core purpose of the school
- Defines special character in Integration Agreement
- Maintains and preserves special character
- Owner of land and buildings

PROPRIETOR APPOINTEE:

The proprietor appointee plays a key role in safeguarding and promoting the special character within the school's policies and practices.

- Maintains and preserves special character
- Channel of communication
- Reports to the proprietor annually
- Has role description
- Reports on special character

SCHOOL BOARD:

The board is the governing body of the school and has objectives set out in legislation that it must met. The board employs the principal in partnership with the proprietor and ensures special character requirements are met.

- Is Crown entity and the governing body of the school
- Sets out aims and targets in strategic plan
- Employs the principal (in partnership with Proprietor)
- Ensures special character requirements are met

PRINCIPAL:

The principal is the board's chief advisor and the professional leader of the school.

- CEO and lead adviser to the board
- Leads and responsible for day to day operations of school (within the special character requirements)
- Curriculum delivery, student wellbeing, consulting with community
- Is appointed in partnership with the proprietor/proprietor appointee

The Proprietor's Appointee

BALANCING THE RIGHTS OF THE PROPRIETOR AND NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The Proprietor's Appointee plays a vital role in bridging the Proprietor's interests with the board's governance responsibilities. Understanding this role is essential for every board member.



Appointment Authority

The Proprietor can appoint **up to four members** of the Board to ensure their interests are represented. The Proprietor also retains the right to remove and replace appointees at any time.



Full Board Rights

Proprietor's Appointees are **full board members** with all the rights and obligations of other members including full voting powers on all matters before the board.



Leadership Eligibility

Appointees have the right to be elected as the **Presiding Member (Chairperson)** of the Board, enabling them to lead the governance of the school at the highest level.



Key aspects of Proprietor Appointee role:

1. The **primary responsibility** of the proprietor appointee is to represent the interests and values of the school's proprietor on the school board. The appointee ensures that the school's special character, as agreed upon in the school's integration agreement with the government, is maintained and preserved.
2. **Maintaining the School's Special Character:** State-integrated schools are granted a high degree of autonomy to maintain their unique special character. The proprietor appointee plays a key role in safeguarding and promoting this special character within the school's policies and practices. They may provide input on matters related to curriculum, values, religious education, and other aspects that align with the school's ethos.
3. **Balancing Interests:** While the proprietor appointee represents the proprietor's interests, they are also part of a broader school board responsible for the overall governance of the school. Therefore, they must balance the interests of the proprietor with those of the parent and community representatives to ensure the best interests of the students and the school as a whole.
4. **Accountability:** Like all board members, the proprietor appointee is accountable for their decisions and actions as part of the school board. They must adhere to the legal and ethical responsibilities associated with school governance, such as financial stewardship, policy development, and strategic planning

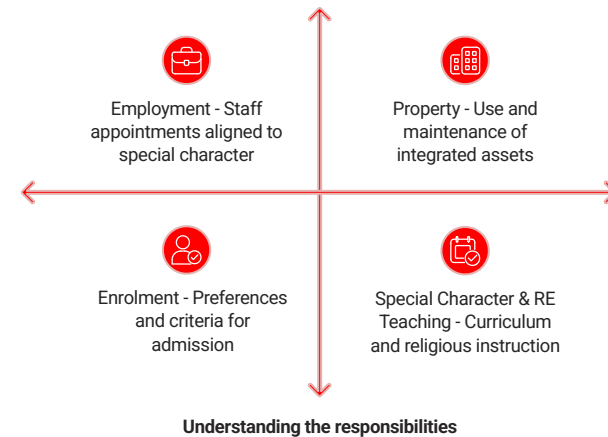
❑ For more information, read the board policy under Part B (7) Proprietor's Appointee Role Description Policy. The [policy framework](#) is available for download and adaptation to meet the context of your state integrated school.

Summary

Proprietors hold rights and responsibilities in four key areas within a state integrated school, crucial for effective board governance:

- **Employment:** The board must understand special character positions, employment processes, and advertising requirements.
- **Enrolment:** The board must ensure adherence to proprietor-set preference/non-preference criteria and manage the maximum roll.
- **Property:** The board needs to understand the Proprietor's rights and fulfill maintenance obligations.
- **Special Character & RE Teaching:** The board and Proprietor must collaborate to protect special character, including audit and review mechanisms, and annual reporting to the Proprietor.

FOUR KEY AREAS OF SHARED FOCUS



Partners and Support

Key Partnerships

State integrated schools are communities of partnership. The three core partners are the **Proprietor**, the **Ministry of Education**, and the **School Board**. Each partner holds a legal responsibility to maintain the school's special character and to work collaboratively for the benefit of students and the school community.

Support Network

It is important to know who is there to support and guide you in your role as a school board member. The following organisations are available to assist:

- **New Zealand School Boards Association (NZSBA)** – governance training and support for all school boards.
- **Ministry of Education** – policy guidance, funding information, and legislative compliance support.
- **APIS** – free advice and support, training, and workshops specifically for state integrated school proprietors and boards.



Build Relationships Early

Establish open communication with your Proprietor, fellow board members, and the Ministry of Education from the outset of your governance role.



Use the Resources Available

The APIS Governance Manual, Proprietor Handbook, policy templates, and MOU frameworks are all available to support your board's effective operation.



Know Where to Get Help

You don't need to navigate complex governance questions alone. APIS, NZSBA, and the Ministry of Education are all available to provide guidance and support when you need it.