**NZEI
TE RIU ROA**

Understanding the Difference between Management and Governance

Establishing a clear understanding with your board about where the line sits between management and governance is fundamental to having an effective school operation. Reality suggests that the smaller the school, the more problematic this boundary becomes. Whether for pragmatism (board members "volunteering" to do work which should be resourced either through the schools's operational grant and/or ministry resourcing) or with the best of intentions, the boundary should firstly be acknowledged and understood – board training is very useful here. From here, then the relationship and regular communications, preferably once a week *kanohi ki te* kanohi between the presiding member and the principal, is critical in maintaining the two-way information flow and both small and large issues clarified re content and/or process.

Put simply, "**Governance**" is the strategic task of setting the school's goals, direction, limitations and accountability frameworks. "**Management**" is the allocation of resources and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. These boundaries are often contained in the [board's delegation](#) of duties. The sample [Kiwi Park schedule of delegations](#) can be modified as needed to reflect the needs of your school and adopted at a board meeting. They will be further guided by the school's policies and procedural documentation. When this boundary becomes blurry and something doesn't feel right, contact a trusted colleague and/or a PSO to share your concern… earlier is always better than later.

Governance – the School Board

As the governance body for the school, the board (including the principal in their capacity as a full board member) is responsible for:

- development and ongoing review of the school charter
- monitoring and reviewing your school's progress
- putting in place a policy framework
- employing the principal
- managing assets, including financial and property management
- ensuring your school's legal compliance
- implementing the National Education Guidelines
- health and safety
- setting the strategic direction of the school/kura

Management – the Principal

The principal is responsible for the management of the school. While that management must be undertaken in accordance with the board's policies and relevant legislation, it is important that boards have a clear understanding that this is not an area into which they should stray. Disharmony and dysfunction in schools commonly have roots in excessively zealous boards moving beyond their governance role into attempting to be directly involved in school management and decision-making.

Understanding, tact and diplomacy have to be part of the principal's skill set when making calls in which the community has huge interest. How and when communicated can be an art form and in smaller schools, the principal can be quite vulnerable if not backed by the board. There is no harm in seeking views from around the table before making a difficult operational decision but articulate that it remains an operational decision.

Management in a school context is multi-faceted. First and foremost, the principal is the professional leader of the school. Effective professional leadership includes the following components:

- the health and safety of both students and staff – well-being of all
- the educational achievement - creating a climate conducive to enabling students to achieve to their full potential
- creating a positive working environment for all staff and "green" (growth) mindset
- growing leadership capability

The principal is also responsible, in alignment with the school's charter and operational plan, school policy and procedures and collective and/or individual employment agreements, for the day to day operation of the school, including:

- the employment and performance of staff [Our Code Our Standards](#)
- student behaviour management
- day to day finance/property management
- communications within and beyond the school
- relationship with the community
- liaison with outside agencies