

Supporting your School to be Inclusive

Boards of Trustees are tasked with supporting progress and achievement for ALL students at their schools. An effective board develops policies, sets goals in its Charter and is accountable for them through a self-review process. Every student has a right to receive a good quality and inclusive education in their local school. As a board member, it is your role to ensure that all children at your school are included equally.

Here are some questions to consider when reviewing how your school is inclusive of all students.

Guidance, Legislation and your School Charter

Your school has a charter or 'map' to follow in its day-to-day work with your school community. The Charter supports effective planning so that all students learn well.

1. How does your Charter show that all students are valued?
2. How does it focus on teaching, learning and achievement for ALL students?
3. How does your Charter acknowledge and build upon the **inclusive values** of the New Zealand Curriculum, including, respect for diversity; equity; community and participation; integrity; and respect for self, others and human rights?
4. Inclusive values can also include equality, compassion, honesty, rights, joy, non-violence, trust, love, hope/optimism, and beauty. What would these values look like if they were put into practice in the day-to-day life of your school and its community? Do values such as these have a place in your school?
5. Does the board consult regularly with its school community? How does the board ensure that the school's values reflect those of its community?
6. Does the Charter recognise that support for student learning also involves breaking down barriers that can prevent access to curriculum and learning opportunities?
7. How does your Charter acknowledge and build upon key ideas about inclusive education as stated in the New Zealand Curriculum, the New Zealand Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People?
 - Inclusion is one of the principles, or foundations of curriculum decision making, in the **New Zealand Curriculum**.
 - The **New Zealand Disability Strategy** says that inclusive schools are vital in achieving the goal of an inclusive society
 - The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People** says that governments shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels.

National Administration Guidelines

NAG 1: Boards foster student achievement by providing teaching and learning programmes which incorporate The National Curriculum.

1. How do teaching and learning programmes in your school foster success for ALL students? Are barriers to participation and learning recognised and challenged?
2. How do you ensure that ALL students have support to access a range of social and learning opportunities that cover the breadth of the curriculum?

3. Do ALL students have opportunities to develop a knowledge and enjoyment of literacy and numeracy?
4. Does the board gather a range of assessment information that allows them to understand and review progress for ALL students?
5. Does the board identify students who are not achieving; or are at risk of not achieving; and/or have special needs? Does the board:
 - o have high expectations for these students?
 - o develop approaches to teaching and learning that respect and respond to the interests, capabilities and needs of these students?
 - o ensure that teaching approaches support ALL students to be included alongside their peers and friends; to feel a sense of belonging; to have friendships and positive relationships; and to learn well?
 - o ensure that teachers take responsibility for ALL their students, and have professional development and other opportunities to learn about diversity?

NAG 2: In relation to student achievement and reporting:

1. Does the board report to parents using a positive and credit-based approach for all students, including students with disabilities?
2. In reporting on National Standards, has the board considered meaningful and positive ways of providing information to parents who have children with disabilities?

NAG 5: In relation to the provision of a safe physical and emotional environment for all students:

1. How does the board promote a culture in which diversity is valued and respected, and how do you know that these ideas are understood and shared by all members of the school community?
2. Is there a 'no-tolerance' approach to bullying and other forms of exclusion and discrimination?
3. Do ALL students feel that they are able to express their views in a safe and respectful environment? Do teachers listen to and value the perspectives of all students, including disabled students, and their families?
4. Do ALL students feel there are safe and effective procedures for resolving difficulties associated with bullying, exclusion and other forms of discrimination?

Community Consultation

1. How does the board promote a positive school culture in which ALL students and families feel they belong in the school, have a voice, and are part of a supportive school community?
2. Does the board have regular, open and friendly processes for consulting on matters that are relevant, of interest, and/or concern to its school community?

Policy and Curriculum Reviews

1. Are your school's policies fair and equitable? Are they inclusive of and respectful towards all students and families in your school community?
2. How do students and parents have opportunities to have a say on the development of school policies?
3. When school policies and curriculum areas are reviewed, how are the experiences of ALL students taken into consideration and given full attention?
4. Do students and parents have a voice in processes of curriculum review and the development of effective teaching and learning in curriculum areas?