

# Schools must consult with their communities about the health education programme

The most recent statement from the Ministry of Education on schools consulting their communities is in *Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees* (2015). **Although the document is specific to sexuality education, the section on consultation applies to ALL aspects of health education.**

The Board of Trustees must consult with the school's community only in health education (see Section 60B of the Education Act). Consultation is a board responsibility, but the consultation process may be delegated to leaders and teachers with specialist knowledge.

<http://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-guidelines/Sexuality-education-a-guide-for-principals-boards-of-trustees-and-teachers>

In summary, the board must:

- **Consult with parents of enrolled students** (plus proprietors of state-integrated schools).  
Include *any other person that the board considers is part of the school community.*
- **Prepare a draft statement on the delivery of health education**
- **Complete a consultation process at least once every two years**
- **Decide upon, plan and facilitate a method of consultation that it considers will**
  - Explain the content of health education;
  - Learn the community wishes of health education (*taken in good faith, an account of feedback, but not negotiation or agreement where community wishes contradict education policy*); and
  - Determine the health education needs of the students.
- **Consider any comments received on the draft.**
- **Following consultation,** adopt a statement for the delivery of health education.

There is no one way of doing this, but a consultation needs more than just provision of information.

It is important to engage with Māori, Pasifika, Asian, and other communities so all students are understood and provided for. Include parent-teacher associations, whānau, hapū, iwi, and aiga support groups, church groups, and school committees, and consider venues for in-person meetings.

*For further community engagement resources see 'Partnering with community' <https://www.education.govt.nz/communities-of-learning/partnering-with-community/> and 'Community engagement' <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Principles/Community-engagement>*