

Student Representative - Frequently Asked Questions

We held our student elections but there weren't any nominations. What should we do?

The Education and Training Act Amendment Bill 2023 repeals the following clause, removing the restriction to fill this vacancy: “If no nominations are received at the student elections this vacancy “may not be filled” until the following September (Education and Training Act 2020, [Schedule 23\(13\)2.](#)”. Note, this was passed in August 2023 but the Act has not yet been updated to reflect this change.

Because the Bill removes the requirement that prevents schools from filling a student representative position if one is not elected at the September election, the board should consider undertaking a casual vacancy process as they would for any other board member vacancy. The removal of this restriction will provide flexibility to help ensure student representation on boards.

Our student representative decided not to return to school in the new year. What should we do?

In these circumstances a casual vacancy is created, and the board should hold a by-election. Education and Training Act 2020, [Schedule 23\(13\)4.](#)

Help! Our board forgot to run a student election this year. Do we still have to do this?

Every board with students in above year 9 must hold a student election in September each year. If your board has not done this needs to request an extension of time to hold its elections by contacting the local office of the Ministry of Education to request an extension of time to hold its elections. The board is also welcome to contact NZSTA for [advice](#).

Our board values its student voice and would like to have its second-highest polling student on the board also. Can we do this?

There can only be one student representative elected onto the board, but co-opting another student could be an option the board could look at. You can find more information about this process [here](#) The board can also contact NZSTA [here](#) to discuss if co-optation is available to them.

Would the co-opted student be able to speak and vote at board meetings?

Co-opted board members have the same speaking rights and decision-making power around the board table as every other person on the board.

What training opportunities are available for our new student representative?

- NZSTA runs nationally advertised workshops in each region for student representatives. These are usually held in term 4, following the student elections.
- Student representatives can register to attend any of our learning events or access any of our board member resources via the [NZSTA Resource Centre](#) website.
- They are welcome to contact NZSTA for more information on our professional learning and development programmes and for [advice](#).