



Elections Update

24 August 2022

2022 school board triennial elections **Returning officers' Memo 6**

Kia ora,

If this is the first memo you have received since registering as a Returning Officer for the 2022 triennial elections, please read the previous memos on our [school board election website](#).

This memo provides advice on:

- Closing voting
- Scrutineers
- Counting votes
- Invalid votes
- Late candidate withdrawal
- How to handle a tie

Closing voting

If you are using the recommended election date of Wednesday, 7 September 2022, voting will close at 4 pm on that date. If you cannot be at the school on this day, make sure that there is a designated person to collect delivered voting papers. Make sure that this person knows to mark any envelopes received after 4 pm with the time received – these voting papers will be invalid.

You can only accept posted voting papers for five days after the election date.

Votes must then be counted six days after the election date. For example, those using the recommended election date of Wednesday 7 September, you must count the votes on Tuesday 13 September.

Scrutineers

If a candidate wishes to have a scrutineer present at the vote counting, they must make this request in writing to the returning officer before election day.

The scrutineer does not assist the returning officer in any way. They may:

- observe the opening of envelopes containing voting papers
- examine the envelopes and voting papers
- observe the counting of votes.

Remember to advise any scrutineers appointed by candidates where and when vote counting will take place.

Note: Only a candidate can request that a scrutineer be present at the counting of votes.

For electronic elections, scrutineers can recount the electronically cast votes if a recount is necessary.

Counting of votes

The counting of votes must be done six days after voting closes. For schools using the recommended election date of Wednesday 7 September 2022, vote counting will take place on Tuesday 13 September 2022. See pages 20-23 of the [Returning Officers' Handbook 2022](#) for more information on counting votes.

Note: a returning officer can have administrative assistance at the vote count.

Invalid votes

A vote is invalid if:

- The vote is for more candidates than there are vacancies
- The returning officer believes on reasonable grounds that the voting paper was not issued to the voter by the returning officer
- The voter votes more than once in the election
- The voting paper does not clearly indicate the candidate or candidates for whom the voter intended to vote
- A hand delivered vote is received after 4pm on election day
- A postal vote is received later than five days after the election day.

Late candidate withdrawal

If a candidate withdraws from the election too late to advise voters and that candidate is elected, the board will have a casual vacancy to fill once it has taken office.

You may not declare the next highest polling candidate elected. For more information on casual vacancies, see the [school board election website](#).

How to handle a tie (a lot)

If two or more candidates receive the same number of valid votes, the returning officer must decide which of them is elected by conducting a lot. The lot must be completed in the presence of the candidates' scrutineers (if any) and two board members or staff members (if board members are not available in a reasonable timeframe). See page 22 of the [Returning Officers' Handbook 2022](#) for more information.

Contact the NZSTA Elections Team

Our team is here to support you and your board during the board elections:

- School Board Elections website schoolboardelections.org.nz/returning-officers/
- NZSTA Election Advice Line 0800 ELECTION (0800 353 284)
- Email electionsadvise@nzsta.org.nz

Checklist & recap on our last elections memo

In [memo 5](#) we looked at:

- Reminder to register nominations
- Preparing voting papers

- Delivery of voting papers
- 'No voting' elections
- Student election process

Kind regards,
NZSTA Elections Team

