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**From:** [Karyn Fielding](#)  
**To:** [Richard Wingham](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Previous news article as discussed  
**Date:** Monday, 24 August 2020 1:24:00 pm

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Kia ora Richard

Will come back to you soon.

In general, school boards are state agencies and “as a state agency, you need to be politically neutral and can’t encourage electors to vote or not vote for specific parties, policies or candidates”.

State Services Commission provides guidance and specifically includes school board of trustees.  
<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/our-work/parliamentary-election-2020/general-election-guidance-2020/>

Ngā mihi

**Karyn Fielding** | Education Advisor  
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**From:** Richard Wingham **9(2)(a)**  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 August 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** Karyn Fielding <~~x@xx~~>  
**Subject:** Fw: Previous news article as discussed

Hi Karyn

Apologies for previous misspelling of your name.

Lynne and Ann haven't been able to give me a clear path forward on this matter, they are having some further internal discussions and will provide more feedback this afternoon. They have indicated that the MOE is the entity that would ultimately form a view on the appropriateness of the communication and what actions/if any would need to be taken.

As part of briefing **9(2)(a)** we need to understand where we sit in relation to our governance obligations.

Have you been able to get any feedback in relation to the article below from within MOE (noting Katrina Casey's comments on the matter)?

Regards  
Richard Wingham  
Chair  
King's High School Board of Trustees

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**From:** Richard Wingham 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 August 2020 10:20 AM  
**To:** Karyn Fielding <x@xx>  
**Subject:** Previous news article as discussed

Hi Karen

Thanks for your help this morning.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/122107639/to-legalise-is-to-normalise-auckland-catholic-schools-say-no-sign-raises-eyebrows>

Regards  
Richard Wingham  
Chair  
King's High School Board of Trustees

**From:** [Karyn Fielding](#)  
**To:** [Nick McIvor](#); [Richard Wingham](#)  
**Subject:** MOE media Response  
**Date:** Wednesday, 26 August 2020 8:25:00 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Mōrena Nick and Richard

Please find below the media responses signed off yesterday:

**Query:** The XXX and XXX raised questions about the appropriateness of the King's High School rector airing his views against the legalisation of cannabis on Facebook.

**Response:** There is information available on our [website](#) about the requirement for schools to be politically neutral. In summary, it says:

*You can display material encouraging staff and parents to vote, but you can't show political party information. As a state agency, you need to be politically neutral and can't encourage electors to vote or not vote for specific parties, policies or candidates. To comply with Public Service Commission requirements, you must not allow billboards, posters, pamphlets and other political party advertising material at the school.*

The referendum on the legalisation of cannabis is not a party political matter. It is an important social issue, and, like other social issues, people are free to express their views about it. Ultimately people have to make their own minds up about it. If the school's parent community have any concerns they should contact the school's Board of Trustees.

**Follow-up query:** The XXX inquired about PSC guidance that indicates Boards of Trustees should not engage in political debate on referendums.

**Response:** The Rector is employed within the wider public sector and his role is not close to, nor involved in, providing advice to Ministers. The issue he is commenting on is not strictly party political. The school board has made it clear the Rector's views are his own and not the board's. We are satisfied that this is a matter for the school and not the Ministry.

Ngā mihi

Karyn

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He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga***

