



Nominees for SPELD NZ Inc Board and Professional Standards Committee for 2023 AGM

Nominees for SPELD NZ Inc Board

Dr Mike Sleeman

Position Nominated for: Board Member



Mike Sleeman works at Massey University within the Institute of Education, where he supports students completing the Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching and students pursuing a master's in education with a specialisation in literacy. Mike also supervises PhD students conducting research in the field of literacy. In his own research, he concentrates on the identification and support of children facing literacy difficulties. Mike is also an editor for Kairaranga, an Aotearoa New Zealand-based educational research journal.

Prior to joining Massey University, Mike held a lecturing position within the Specialist Teaching Programme at the University of Canterbury, and he coordinated the specialist teaching fieldwork at the New Zealand Graduate School of Education. Mike also conducted educational assessments for children with learning difficulties after completing the SPELD NZ Assessor Training programme, and he has provided mentorship to students completing the same training.

Before embarking on his career in higher education, Mike spent 14 years as a teacher, assuming various senior leadership roles. During this time, he founded Teacher Tools, a company known for publishing a range of mathematics resources widely utilised in schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Mike's diverse experiences in education have equipped him with valuable insights into both the practical and research aspects of the field. He is deeply committed to making a positive impact on the lives of learners and contributing to the advancement of educational practices.

There being only 1 candidate for the Board Member positions vacant, Dr Mike Sleeman is automatically elected.

No other nominations were received by the nominations' due date.

However, pursuant to Rule 11.6 b) of the Constitution, nominations may be made from the floor of the AGM. Peter Scanlan and Shona Hutchinson now offer themselves for election at the AGM.

Peter Scanlan – Nominated from the floor of the AGM



Peter Scanlan has worked as a senior manager in tertiary education since 1992 and he has over 30 years' experience in education in New Zealand and overseas.

Peter is currently working at the NZ Post Primary Teachers Association, Te Wehengarua.

Peter became interested in the work of SPELD NZ when his dyslexic son received assistance from a SPELD NZ teacher with excellent results. His son is now completing his post graduate teaching diploma at Victoria University Wellington.

Peter is married with sons; one is teaching in Japan and the other is completing his studies as above. Peter has a passion for high quality education and training. Peter was Chairperson of SPELD NZ for 6 years but is keen to lend his experience as a continuing Board member.

Shona Hutchinson – Nominated from the floor of the AGM



Many years ago, when I became a Board member, I had very little knowledge about SPELD NZ and specific learning disabilities. I have learnt so much over the years and I now have a much greater understanding and awareness of the challenges faced by those with learning difficulties and their families. I am constantly in awe of the work of SPELD NZ professionals and their commitment for the betterment of all peoples with learning difficulties and their extended families.

For many years I worked across the public sector in senior government roles spending considerable time in Wellington. I now work with Synergia (over the past 8 years!) and have been retiring for two years – not quite out of Synergia yet! Synergia is a leading professional organisation that works in the health, education and social sector services to deliver sustainable improved outcomes using analytics, service design and evaluation across Australasia.

I am a very active Justice of the Peace, have two adult children and six grandchildren, and consider myself very lucky as they are all happy, healthy and achieving the best that they can. I recently moved to Torbay (Auckland) where I live with my recently retired partner.

I have a strong belief in giving back to community and supporting volunteer/ charitable entities. I offer SPELD NZ an understanding of governance v management; strategic thinking; personal integrity and commitment.

Nominees for SPELD NZ Inc Professional Standards Committee (PSC)

Debbie Williams steps down from the PSC at the AGM.

No nominations for the PSC were received by the nominations' due date.

However, pursuant to Rule 11.6 b) of the Constitution, nominations may be made from the floor of the AGM.

Natalie Wallace and Sharon de Castro now offer themselves for election at the AGM.

Natalie Wallace – Nominated from the floor of the AGM.



With a background in psychology and education, and roles in the tertiary sector, Natalie has been a SPELD NZ Educational Assessor in Taranaki since 2019 and a member of her local Taranaki LLG since 2018. She has been active in her local community with presentations to local primary and high schools, as well as assisting with facilitating workshops for local parents.

Natalie has personal experience supporting a whānau member with literacy concerns and is passionate about equal learning opportunities in education and optimising the potential for all tamariki. She is an advocate of structured literacy and early identification of students in need and enjoys sharing her passion and knowledge to help others.

In her spare time, Natalie enjoys mountain biking, reading and spending time with her husband and two sons exploring the outdoors.

Sharon De Castro – Nominated from the floor of the AGM.

Ko wai ahau



Ko Tapuae o Uenuku te Maunga whakamarumaruru i a au
Ko Wairau te awa whakaora i au
Ko Kurahaupō te Waka
Ko Rangitane te mana whenua
Ko Omaka te marae
Kei Te Waiharakeke tōku whanau wahi
Ko Brown tōku whānau,
Ko Murray tōku pāpā,
Ko Colleen tōku māmā,
Ko Stephen de Castro tōku hoa rangatira,
Ko Rebecca rātou, ko Ashley, ko Robert, ko Laura āku tamariki.
Ko Luke, rāua ko Ophelia āku mokopuna
Kei Tokoroa tōku kainga noho.
Ka Whakaako i te kaiwhakahaere kaiako o te Reo Matatini.
E ngā kaunui ana ahau ki te kauhoe
Ko Sharon de Castro toku ingoa. Kia ora

Kia ora koutou,

I live and work in Tokoroa, originally from Blenheim, I moved here for my career as a Resource Teacher of Literacy in 2018. I am married to Stephen and together we have four children who all have wonderful partners. I also have two moko Luke and Ophelia.

My career in education began while my youngest three children attended Playcentre. Whilst there, I held the position of Education Coordinator and Team leader. When my son was diagnosed dyslexic, I became very interested in literacy and the ways we should teach our children to read. This led to a Post graduate Diploma of Literacy Education, SPELD NZ Board member and training as a SPELD NZ Teacher. I have previously been on the SPELD NZ board as a Regional representative for Central, but now as a specialist teaching professional with wide ranging experience I am excited by the opportunity to work with the SPELD NZ Board on the Professional Standards Committee. I continue to be excited about the direction of SPELD NZ and all the work that is being done by the organisation in advocacy for people with literacy learning difficulties.

Finally, I love to swim. The ocean is my choice but as I live in Tokoroa the pool is much closer.

Hapaitia tea ra tika pumau ai te rangitiranga mo nga whakatipu
Foster the pathway of knowledge to strength, independence, and growth for future directions.