

ACE Aotearoa Board Statement

10 April 2026

The Board of ACE Aotearoa acknowledges that our Chief Executive, Hannah Pia Baral, has been selected as a candidate for the New Zealand Labour Party in the upcoming 2026 General Election.

We wish to recognise Hannah's commitment to public service and her decision to participate in New Zealand's democratic process. Standing for election is an important contribution to civic life, and we acknowledge the dedication this requires.

At the same time, the Board affirms that ACE Aotearoa remains firmly non-partisan. As the national peak body for adult and community education, our role is to advocate for the value of lifelong learning and to represent the interests of our members and the wider sector, irrespective of the government of the day. The Board has considered this situation carefully and has put in place a clear governance framework to ensure:

- A strong and visible separation between Hannah's role as CEO and her role as a political candidate
- That no ACE Aotearoa resources are used for any campaign-related activity
- That our advocacy and engagement with government and stakeholders remains balanced, evidence-based, and non-partisan
- That organisational leadership and continuity are maintained throughout the election period

The Board will actively oversee these arrangements, with particular attention to maintaining both the reality and the perception of neutrality, which is critical to the trust placed in ACE Aotearoa by our members, partners, and funders. Hannah will continue in her role as Chief Executive, supported by appropriate delegation arrangements during periods of increased campaign activity. We remain focused on our core purpose: supporting a thriving adult and community education sector across Aotearoa New Zealand and continuing to work constructively with all political parties and stakeholders to achieve this.

If you have any questions, please contact the Board via the Co-Chairs.

Contacts:

Jay Rupapera
Tangata Whenua Co-Chair
Mobile: 021 0267 2266
Email: jay@tehikuiwi.com

Dr Edmond Fehoko
Tangata Tiriti Co-Chair
Mobile: 021 0264 7008
Email: edmond.fehoko@fehokoconsulting.org

[aceaotearoa.org.nz](https://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz)
+64 4 473 6625

registered Charity number CC31474

kori Road, Thorndon 6011
30x 12114, Wellington 6144
Aotearoa/New Zealand
admin@aceaotearoa.org.nz

