

Prospective Board Member Orientation

So You Think You Want To Be A Board Member?

What Is A School Board?

Trustees:

- Act on behalf of the citizens of the school district
- Guardian of the public trust, responsible for the success or failure of the local public education
- Advocate for educational excellence for the students and puts their interest first

Qualifications BBA(LEGAL)

- A U.S. citizen
- 18 yrs. or older
- Resident of the district for 6 months
- Resident of Texas for 12 months
- Registered voter
- Have not been finally convicted of a felony
- Have not been determined by a court to be totally mentally incapacitated

What Does The Board Do?

- Hire Superintendent
- Evaluate the Superintendent
- Collaborate with the Superintendent
- Adopt a vision statement
- Adopt a budget
- Set the tax rate
- Canvass election results
- Adopt Policy

What Does the Superintendent Do?

- Collaborate with the School Board
- Manage district operations
- Prepare a budget
- Make professional employment recommendations
- Hire non-exempt employees
- Recommend policy

Deciding To Run:

Questions To Consider

- What do you believe the long-term vision of our district should be? What things would you like our district to be known for in five years that it is not known for now?
- What are the things you believe our school district is currently doing well?
- What are the biggest challenges our school district is facing?
- What do you believe the board's role is in meeting the biggest challenges?

Deciding To Run:

Questions To Consider

- What is your view on the ideal relationship between the board and the superintendent?
- What knowledge, skills, and experience would you bring to the board that could help you be an effective member of the board?
- How will you be able to dedicate between 5-30 hours or more a month to board service? What will need to change in your life?

Election Calendar

- See Handout

Board Member Code of Ethics

- See Handout

Serving On The Board

If Elected:

- Serve 3 year term or **remaining 2 years on the current unexpired term**
- Meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month
- Possible immediate BIG decisions
 - Elect Board Officers
 - Hiring professional staff
 - Adopting a budget
 - Setting a tax rate
- A lot to learn
 - Read policy manual
 - Talk with :
 - Superintendent
 - Board President
 - Experienced Trustees

Board Officer Election

At the first meeting after each election and swearing in of new Board members, the members of the Board shall organize by selecting:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary

Officer Duties

President

In addition to the duties required by law, the President of the Board shall:

- Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend.
- Have the right to discuss, make motions and resolutions, and vote on all matters coming before the Board.
- The Board President is responsible for ensuring that meeting procedures are followed and that discussions are fair, professional, and focused on the agenda items.

Officer Duties

Vice President

The Vice President of the Board shall:

- Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President of the Board in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President.
- Become President only upon being elected to the position.

Officer Duties

Secretary

The Secretary of the Board shall:

- Ensure that an accurate record is kept of the proceedings of each Board meeting.
- Ensure that notices of Board meetings are posted and sent as required by law.
- In the absence of the President and Vice President, call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer.
- Sign or countersign documents as directed by action of the Board.

Required Continuing Education

- Within 90 days after taking the oath of office you must have a minimum of 1 hour of Open Meetings Act training
- Within 60 days you must have a local orientation training of 3 hours
- Within 120 days you must have a 3 hour orientation on Ch. 26 of the Education Code

Required Continuing Education

- After each legislative session each board member shall receive an update
- 3 hours of team building annually
- 1st year of service a board member shall receive at least 10 hours of CE
- After the first year of service each member shall have at least 5 hours of CE

Compensation and Expenses

- Board members shall serve without compensation. Education Code 11.061(d)
- Local funds and state funds not designated for a specific purpose may be used for purposes determined by the Board to be necessary in the conduct of the public schools. Reimbursement of travel expenses for Board members is not illegal if the reimbursement is determined to be necessary in the conduct of the school and to serve a proper public purpose.
- The Board may not pay the travel expenses of spouses and other persons who have no responsibilities or duties to perform for the Board when they accompany Board members to Board-related activities.

Resources

- Texas Association of School Boards
 - Website – <http://tasb.org>
 - E-Mail – tasb@tasb.org
 - Candidate Page – <http://LTS.tasb.org/candidates>
- Texas Education Agency
 - Website – www.tea.state.tx.us
- Texas Ethics Commission
 - Website – www.ethics.state.tx.us
 - E-Mail – disclosure@ethics.state.tx.us

Resources

- Secretary of State
 - Website – www.sos.state.tx.us
 - E-Mail – elections@sos.state.tx.us
- Texas Attorney General
 - Website – www.oag.state.tx.us
 - E-Mail – cac@oag.state.tx.us
- Giddings Board Policy
 - Website - <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/805>

Questions

- Roger Dees
- Shane Holman
- Pat Jackson, Vice President
- Mary Ellen Whitsel, Secretary