

SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is a governing board member?

A. A governing board member functions as one part of a school district board (consisting of three or five members), making decisions and planning direction for the school district in accordance with State law.

Some areas of responsibility include:

- Develop and support the vision, mission and goals of the district
- Attend all regular and special meetings of the governing board
- Hire and evaluate the district superintendent
- Provide guidance in the development of the district's budget
- Approval of the district budget
- Establish and approve district policies
- Review district regulations for compliance with policy
- Approve personnel actions based on the superintendent's recommendations

Q. What are the qualifications for becoming a governing board member?

A. To be eligible for nomination to a school district governing board pursuant to A.R.S. § 15- 421, a candidate must be a registered voter of the state and has been a resident of the school district for at least one year immediately proceeding the day of election. In addition, no employee of a school district or the spouse of such employee may hold membership on a governing board of a school district of which such employee is employed.

Q. What duties/powers does a governing board member have?

A. The governing board shall prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for the governance of the schools, not inconsistent with law or rules prescribed by the State Board of Education.
A.R.S. § 15-341

Q. Is there training available for newly elected governing board members?

A. Yes. The Arizona School Board Association (ASBA) provides model training and leadership to school board members and administrators. ASBA also conducts in-service education for prospective and experienced board members, including workshops and seminars, an annual delegate assembly, a university of board development, a law conference and an annual conference. Governing boards may also contract with ASBA for customized board training sessions. ASBA also has a publication available – *Boardsmanship in Arizona* – a comprehensive manual and guide for governing board members as well as other resource materials relating to school board issues.

Q. When elected, when do governing board members take office?

A. Newly elected governing board members will take office at the first organizational meeting of the school board, which must be held between the first and the 15th day of January following the general election. The oath of office can be administered any time after the district receives the certificate of election, but must be administered AT LEAST one day before the first governing board meeting.

Q. When are governing board elections held?

A. Governing board elections are part of the general election in even-numbered years. The next election date is **November 2, 2010**. A.R.S. § 16-204.

Q. When are governing board meetings held?

A. For the purposes of regular meetings of the governing board, the board shall hold a regular meeting **at least once each month** during the regular school year and may hold other meetings as often as called. The board shall meet at the most convenient public facility in the school district. A.R.S. § 15-321

Q. When can I start collecting signatures?

A. Signatures can be collected at any time during the election cycle once either the Statement of Organization or the \$500 Threshold Exemption Statement has been filed.

Q. When can I file for governing board office?

A. All candidates who desire to have their names printed on the General Election ballot must file all required forms with the Graham County School Superintendent during the filing period: **July 5, 2010 through August 4, 2010.**

Q. When do I fill out the nomination paper, affidavit of qualification and campaign finance law statement?

A. This three-part form is to be filled out, signed, and notarized *not less than ninety nor more than one hundred twenty days before the election.* This form is to be filed with the nonpartisan nomination petitions at the Office of the Graham County School Superintendent during the filing period of July 5, 2010 through August 4, 2010. A.R.S. § 16-311.B

Q. Can I file my nomination petitions and nomination papers separately?

A. No. A.R.S. § 16-311 states that the nomination paper of a candidate must be accompanied by the nomination petitions.

Q. What forms are required?

A. The following forms are required:

1. Nonpartisan Nomination Petitions (with sufficient valid signatures);
2. Nomination Paper, Affidavit of Qualification and Campaign Finance Laws Statement (all three are on one page); and,
3. Either the Statement of Organization or the \$500 Threshold Exemption Statement.

Q. Do I fill out a financial disclosure statement?

A. No. The detailed personal financial disclosure statement required by A.R.S. § 38-542 is not required of governing board members.

Q. Where do I file my nonpartisan nomination petitions and nomination paper?

A. Candidates for the office school district governing board file their **Nonpartisan Nomination Petitions and Nomination Paper, Affidavit of Qualification and Campaign Finance Laws Statement** with the Graham County School Superintendent, 921 Thatcher Blvd., Safford, AZ 84435. A.R.S. § 16-311

Q. What is the 500 word statement?

A. A.R.S. § 15-421.F Requires the county school superintendent to publish on its website a 500 word statement of each certified candidate for governing board. The statements will be linked to each of the eight school districts in Graham County. The candidate statement is to be typewritten or electronically submitted along with a recent photograph of the candidate. The statements will be published verbatim.

Q. Do I have to file a 500 word statement?

A. No. If a candidate does not submit a statement, the county school superintendent's website shall state "no response submitted" for the candidate.

Q. When do I file the 500 word statement?

- A. Candidates shall submit a 500 word statement, along with a recent photograph of the candidate, to the Graham County School Superintendent's Office no later than September 10, 2010.
- Q. How are petition signatures challenged?**
- A. Challenging the nomination of a candidate is outlined in A.R.S. § 16-351. Any elector filing any court action challenging the nomination of a candidate shall do so no later than 5:00 p.m. of the tenth day (excluding Saturday, Sunday and other legal holidays) after the last day for filing nomination papers and petitions. For the November 2, 2010 general election the deadline to challenge nomination petitions is August 18, 2010. The elector shall specify in the action the petition number, line number and basis for the challenge for EACH signature being challenged.
- Q. Can individuals or the media obtain names and addresses of candidates?**
- A. When filed, the Nomination Petitions, the Nomination Papers and the Statement of Organization or the \$500 Threshold Exemption Statement are all public information.
- Q. Where do I file either the Statement of Organization or a \$500 Threshold Exemption Statement?**
- A. These forms must be filed with the Graham County School Superintendent's Office at 921 Thatcher Blvd., Safford, AZ 85546. The Graham County School Superintendent will forward all Nomination Petitions, Nomination Papers and the Statement of Organization or the \$500 Threshold Exemption Statement to the Graham County Election Director located in the Graham County Board of Supervisors Office, 921 Thatcher Blvd., Safford, AZ 85546.
- Q. What is the term of office for a governing board member?**
- A. The regular term of office for each member shall be four years from January 1 following the General Election. Governing Board members' terms are rotated so that in any given general election year not all Governing Board members' terms expire at the same time. For this November General Election the majority of the school districts have three members whose terms will expire on December 31, 2010. There are districts that will have a **special term** position on the ballot. These positions have either been vacant or an appointment has been made by the Graham County School Superintendent to fill the position until the next General Election.
- Q. What is the special term for a governing board member?**
- A. Should a governing board member vacate their position before the expiration of their term, the county school superintendent may appoint an individual to fill the vacancy. The term of the appointment shall be only until the next regular election for governing board members, at which time a successor shall be elected to serve the unexpired portion of the term. A.R.S. § 15-302.
- Q. Which school districts have special term elections?**
- A. Due to appointments in 2009, the following school districts have a special term governing board position (expiring 12/31/10) that will be on the November 2, 2010 ballot:
- Bonita School District #16
Three seats open – one seat expiring due to appointment
- Gila Institute for Technology (GIFT) District #2 (Joint Technological Education District – JTED)
Thatcher Representative
- Klondyke School District #9
Three seats open – two seats expiring due to appointments
- Q. How do I find out which member district I reside in if I want to run for the JTED Governing Board?**
- A. The JTED boundaries are the same as the regular school district boundaries.