

SERVING ON YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD



- Non-partisan, non-profit organization.
- Provide leadership and assistance to public school governing boards statewide.
- Promote excellence in locally governed school districts
- Serving Arizona for 70 years and counting.
- More than 223 school boards are members.
- Represent more than 1,200 school board members and 1.2 million school children.

**Cultivating excellence in
locally governed school districts.**

The Basics of Board Service



- Four-year terms (unless running to fill a vacancy of term)
- Elections in even-numbered years
- Non-partisan = no primaries
- Service begins in January following election (unless running to fill a vacancy of term)
- All volunteer
- Appointments by County Superintendent to fill vacancies

Eligibility to Run



Board members must be:

- A resident of district (at least one year prior to the date of the election)
- A registered voter

Board members cannot:

- Be employed by the district (or have spouse employed by district)
- Serve simultaneously on more than one school board
- If serving on a five member board, have lived with an immediate family member within the last four years
- In Maricopa and Pima counties with districts of more than 250 students, have more than two related (within third degree) members serve on the same board

Legal Basis for Governing Boards



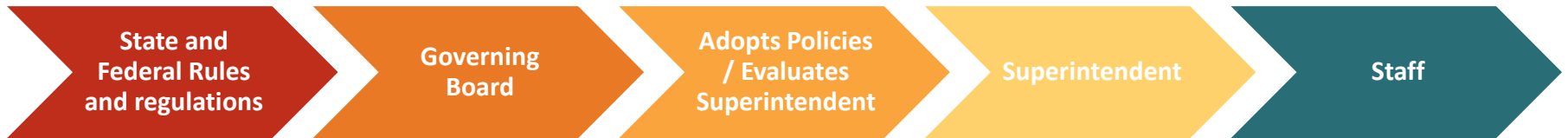
- School districts are political subdivisions of the state possessing only the authority granted to them in statute by the legislature
- Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) give certain powers to the **governing board as a body**.
- No authority is given to individual board members by statute.
- **A board's power is through majority votes at the board table.**
- A.R.S. § 15-341 outlines general powers and duties.
- A.R.S. § 15-342 outlines discretionary powers.



Most Duties in 15-341 and 15-342 are Delegable!!

- While a governing board has oversight function, day to day operations of the district and the requirements of statute are taken care of by district personnel
- The only duties that are clearly ***not*** delegable to district personnel are:
 - Approving policy
 - Passing a budget
 - Hiring, firing and evaluating the superintendent

Legal Authority / Chain of Command



Overarching Duties

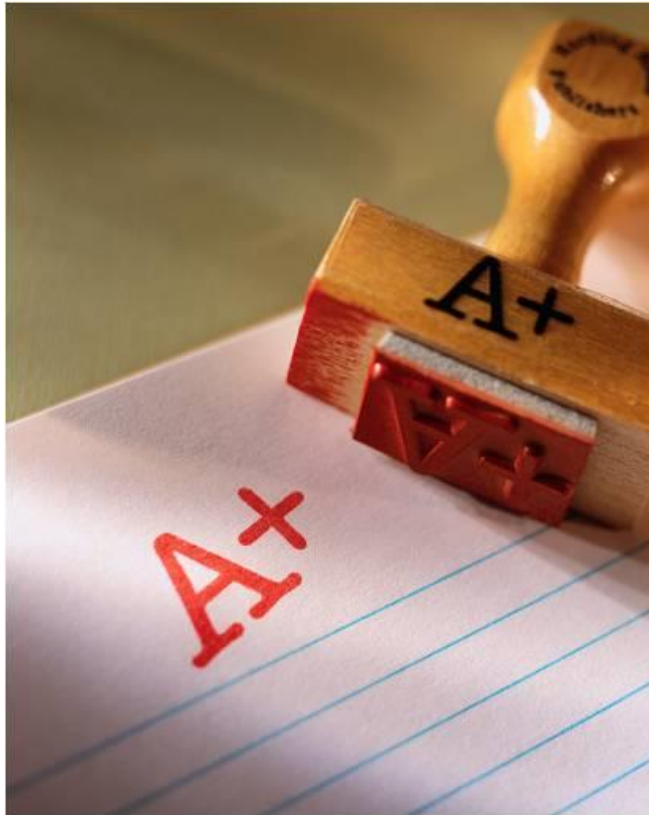
- **Set the Direction**
 - Vision, Mission, Goals
- **Establish the Structure**
 - Policies and procedures
- **Provide Support**
 - Resources aligned to meet goals
- **Ensure Accountability**
 - Academic, financial, and operational
- **Advocate for Students**
 - Ambassador for the district

Duties & Obligations:

- Familiar with state law & District policies, rules & regulations (OML, FERPA, Conflict of Interest, Executive Session)
- Knowledge of educational aims/objectives
- Work harmoniously
- Vote & act impartially for District good
- Accept the will of majority vote & give wholehearted support
- Accept responsibility for confidentiality
- Represent Board & District to the public
- Refer complaints & refrain from individual counsel or action

Source: Policy BBA - Board Powers and Responsibilities

School boards
have a **vision**
and **goals** for
high academic
achievement
for all
students.



Defining vision, mission and goals is critical to creating change and achieving different outcomes.



School boards actively work to **inspire** parents and other stakeholders to have **confidence** in the local public schools.



Your local school board makes decisions that...

- Affect virtually every important aspect of the local schools.
- Determine how your community's children are educated.
- Support teaching and learning, and ensure student achievement.
- Determine how tax dollars are spent.

Why School Boards Matter



Behavior and attitude of board members affects the reputation of the entire school system.

The board's decisions impact:

- Children and their parents
- The livelihood of school system employees
- The economic well-being of the community and the quality of life in its neighborhoods.



School boards
must
work
collaboratively
to get things
done.



The governing board and superintendent:

- Understand and respect each others' roles
- Partnership based on trust and respect
 - ✓ Frequent two-way communication
 - ✓ Support, not surprises!
 - ✓ Clear roles and responsibilities
 - ✓ Professional growth
 - ✓ Regular evaluation


TEAM SUCCESS = DISTRICT SUCCESS



Board/Superintendent Relationships

- School systems suffers when either attempts to overtake the responsibilities of the other.
- Involvement with administration and operation functions distracts from essential functions of planning, policy development and promotion.
(Inform vs. Involve)

Communication protocols or understanding one another's team member style can help!



#1
Adopt
Goals

#2
Adopt
Policies

#6
Evaluate
Results

Board Authority

Oversight of Management

Sets Expectations & Parameters

Superintendent Authority

Recommendations to the Board

Provides Leadership &
Supervision

#3
Develop
Plans

#5
Monitor
Progress

#4
Implement
Plans



The focus of school boards is on
“the big picture” ...



and not day-to-day operations
of the district.

BOARD

- Role is to **Govern**
 - Hires, evaluates and may fire the superintendent (the only employee the board directly oversees)
 - Sets direction and policy
 - Allocates resources
 - Monitors progress toward set goals
- Accountable to the community

SUPERINTENDENT

- Role is to **Manage**
 - Oversees the day-to-day operations of the district
 - Implements policies and goals set by the board
- Accountable to the board

Power and authority of...

Board Members

- No official power
- Can be a great ambassador or undermine decisions

Superintendent

- Great – needs to run the district

School boards
are
committed to
doing what's
right for **ALL**
children,
even in the
face of
opposition.





In the Board Room

- Use discussion at the board table to build support for decisions.
- Make all decisions in an open meeting in accordance with Arizona's Open Meeting Law.
- Support the final vote of the board.



ASBA Code of Ethics

BCA: Code of Ethics for School Board Members

As a member of my local Board of Education I will strive to improve public education, and to that end I will:

- Attend all Board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- Recognize that a board member should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings;
- Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
- Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff, and all elements of the community;
- Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent;



ASBA Code of Ethics

- Communicate to other Board members and the Superintendent expression of public reaction to Board policies and school programs;
- Inform oneself about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by my state and national school boards association;
- Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
- Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my Board position for personal or partisan gain;
- Take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law, and
- And...



ASBA Code of Ethics

Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.



- Working to continually improve student learning
- Building a better future for our youth, our communities and our state
- Strengthening our democracy through an educated citizenry

How Do I Get Started?



1. File a Statement of Interest with the county superintendent (A.R.S. §16-311H)
2. Pick up an information packet from the county superintendent of schools. (<http://www.azsba.org/becoming-a-board-member/>)
3. Collect signatures.
(signature requirements can be found on your county school superintendent website)
4. File a campaign committee organization statement with the county elections office when combined revenue and expenses reach \$1200.00.
5. File signatures pages and forms with the county superintendent of schools.
6. Run your campaign.

Decision is made by the voters in your district.

Arizona School Boards Association

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For more resources visit:

<https://azsba.org/becoming-a-board-member/>