A·S·B·A
Alberta School Boards Association

Be a leader in your community

become a school board trustee



October 16, 2017
SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Do I have what it takes to be a successful school board trustee?

Am I prepared to put my community and students first?

Successful school board trustees put the needs of students first. They run for office because they passionately believe a quality education is one of the most important things a community can do to ensure students have the knowledge and skills that enable them to be better prepared for life.

Do I need to be an expert in education?

No, you don't. The school board trustee does not serve as a professional educator or as the spokesperson for a particular interest group or region. The ideal school board includes people from all aspects of life and is as representative as possible of the community it serves.



Residency

Where there is no separate school board in a geographical area, a person of any faith may run for the school board. Where there is a separate and public board in the same geographical area, people having the same faith as the separate board are only eligible to run for the separate board. Other people are only eligible to run for the public board.

Conflict of interest

Trustees may not participate in making decisions in which their economic self-interest may be in conflict with their public duty. The economic or pecuniary interest of a trustee's spouse or adult interdependent partner is deemed to be the economic interest of the trustee. See sections 80 to 91 of the *School Act* for more information on:

- the types of pecuniary interest;
- the steps a trustee who is in conflict must follow;
- the disqualification of a trustee;
- the consequence of refusing to resign upon being disqualified as required under the *School Act*.

Please note these are general guidelines only, and not a guarantee of your eligibility. Consult the most current version of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *School Act* online at www.qp.alberta.ca, as well as your local school jurisdiction's candidate requirements, to confirm your eligibility.

Legal considerations for candidates

Am I eligible to run for school board trustee?

Regardless of the school division or regional authority you want to represent, there are some basic requirements you must meet. You must:

- be at least 18 years old;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have lived in Alberta for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding nomination day, and you live within the boundaries of the jurisdiction in which you wish to run.

This year, **Monday, September 18, 2017** is nomination day in Alberta; however, there may be local exceptions. You are responsible for verifying the date and time for nominations with your local school division.

Depending on the school jurisdiction – public, separate or francophone – there may be additional eligibility requirements you must meet.

In public school jurisdictions, you must:

- be eligible to vote in the election;
- have lived in the local jurisdiction and the ward, if any, for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding nomination day*

In separate school jurisdictions, you must:

- be eligible to vote in the election;
- be of the same faith as those you want to represent on the separate school board;
- have lived in the local jurisdiction and the ward, if any, for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding nomination day.*

In francophone school jurisdictions, you must:

- be at least 18;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have lived in Alberta for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding nomination day;
- comply with the faith requirements set out under section 256(3.1) of the *School Act*.

* Regardless of this requirement, a candidate for trustee of a board of a school district that is wholly or partly within the boundaries of a city is not required to be a resident of the ward but must be a resident of the school district.

Who is not eligible to run for school board trustee?

You are not eligible to run if, on nomination day, you:

- are an employee of any school district, school division, charter school or private school as of nomination day – unless you take an unpaid leave of absence to run before the last working day prior to nomination day;
- are an auditor of the jurisdiction in which you want to be a candidate;
- do not meet the residency requirement for the jurisdiction in which you want to run;
- are otherwise ineligible or disqualified as outlined under section 22 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

See sections 22, 23 and 24 of the *Local Authorities Election Act* for more details.

Who is eligible to vote?

You are eligible to vote in a public or separate school division or district election if, on election day, you:

- are at least 18 years old;
- are a Canadian citizen;
- have lived in Alberta for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding election day;
- live within the boundaries of the local jurisdiction on election day.

You are eligible to vote in a francophone regional authority if, on election day, you:

- are at least 18 years old;
- are a Canadian citizen;
- are francophone;
- have lived in Alberta for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding election day;
- have a child enrolled in a school operated by the francophone regional authority.

*A person who is eligible to vote in an election for a board other than a regional authority and in an election for a regional authority may exercise the right to vote in both elections.

Alberta's 61 school boards include more than 400 trustees, who make important decisions about how to educate close to 600,000 students from kindergarten to Grade 12. School boards guide the expenditure of $6 billion in tax dollars.

What do school board trustees do?

School board trustees are local politicians elected by and accountable to the community they serve. The provincial government delegates to school boards the responsibility for conducting the affairs of the school jurisdiction. The school board has many responsibilities, including:

- setting school jurisdiction goals that ensure students have the knowledge and skills that enable them to be better prepared for life;
- planning school jurisdiction priorities based on provincial curriculum requirements, community input, available resources and best practices in education;
- developing and implementing an annual budget for the school jurisdiction based on curriculum requirements and strategic priorities;
- developing policies to guide school jurisdiction administration and employees toward division goals;
- ensuring residents of the school jurisdiction are regularly informed about the work and achievements of the school division;
- advocating on behalf of the school community to decision-makers and stakeholders on important issues that affect education, and to ensure education is a top public priority;
- ensuring regular opportunities for public input and access;
- evaluating the school jurisdiction's chief executive officer – the superintendent of schools.

This is general information only. Please confirm all dates and times with your local school board office. Local authorities may set different dates and times for filing nomination papers, and they may set another date for election day.

Submitting nomination papers

When do candidates file their nomination papers?

Typically, the returning officer for each local school jurisdiction receives nominations from prospective candidates between 10 a.m. and noon on nomination day. Generally across Alberta this year, nomination day is **Monday, September 18, 2017**.

How many signatures do I need?

Check with your local school board office. This requirement varies depending on the school jurisdiction.

Who can sign my nomination papers?

Each person who signs a candidate's nomination papers must be eligible to vote in the election for the office for which the candidate is running. They must be residents of the local jurisdiction on the day they sign the nomination form. Where there are wards, only electors who are residents of the ward for which a candidate is being nominated may sign the nomination form.

For more information:

Please contact your local school board office or visit the ASBA website at www.asba.ab.ca

Alberta School Boards Association
1200, 9925 109 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J8
Phone: 1.780.482.7311
www.asba.ab.ca

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