



Transform Your Passion into Action

Run for School Board

Turn your passion for community leadership, children, and education into action by serving on your local school board.

School Boards play a significant role in fostering the vitality of local communities throughout New Hampshire. They respond to the needs of their communities and reflect the will of the citizens in their districts. School boards are one of the only public service positions whose constituents—the students themselves, cannot elect them to serve. Voters place great trust in elected board members to sustain and advance education, knowing that school board decisions will impact future generations and their community's potential to thrive.

Great school boards

- Are committed to a vision of high expectations for all students.
- Have strong shared beliefs and values about all students' ability to learn.
- Value a school system whose employees are empowered to teach all children at high levels.
- Are accountability driven.
- Develop collaborative relationships with school staff, families, and community members.
- Are data savvy.
- Have the ability to align and sustain resources to meet their district's needs.



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What school boards do:

- Large scale planning, such as: setting long-term goals, communication plans, or adopting a new curriculum for the district.
- Detailed analysis of data to assess things like school bus schedules, individual line items on budgets, human resource issues, projections based on historical perspectives and data.
- Set objectives to accomplish as a board, sometimes assigning specific responsibilities to each member based on their experience and interests.
- Derive authority from the State Laws and the Department of Education rules to govern the district.
- Listen to issues affecting schools, students, and community members.
- Develop policies for superintendents to implement.

What school boards do not do:

- Manage the day-to-day operations of schools.
- Evaluate school staff, other than the district superintendent.
- Get involved in employee interviews, other than the hiring of the district superintendent.

Thinking of running for a school board position?

Get started by becoming involved in the educational community. Attend School Board meetings and school events. Write op-eds for your local paper to share your ideas and begin a public dialogue.

Begin to facilitate conversations by hosting an informal meeting with several parents or request a meeting with the superintendent to introduce yourself. To run, contact your Town Clerk's office or your local School District office. They can help guide you through the process.

Who is eligible?

To run for a school board position in New Hampshire, a person must be a registered voter in their district. Those who are serving as district moderator, treasurer, auditor, or are salaried employees of the district, are not eligible to run for school board.

What is the election process?

Elections are the critical link in any system of democratic governance. New Hampshire town elections generally take place in the first quarter of the New Year. Each town has their own timeline that specifies deadlines to file, the start of nomination processes, and when elections are held. Please note, deliberative sessions, budget sessions, and town meetings are all scheduled within a two-month period between January and March.

How to file for school board election

Each district sets its own filing requirements. For some, there is a minimal cost associated with filing. This information can usually be found online, often on the school district/SAU website. The Town Clerk's Office will have all the necessary information as well. School Board election rules vary from district to district, but all must follow the state guidelines for elections and campaigning. Rules about financial interest statements, campaigning, materials, contributions, committees, is all set by the state. For more information on specific campaigning policies, contact the NH Attorney General's Office.

For individualized town processes, in-depth coverage, and FAQs visit: ReachingHigherNH.org/SchoolBoard