



# Monroe County School Boards Association

## Considerations for Elected Board of Education Service

### 1) What questions should I consider before seeking a school board position?

- What **skills** would I bring to board service? Do I have other board or leadership experience?
- What **goals** do I have for the district that can be reached better through elected board service than through other opportunities?
- How much **time** do I have to devote to board service?
- Does my **family support** the time I will need to dedicate to being an elected official?
- Am I prepared to take on a **public role** in my community?

### 2) What qualifications do I need?

Education Law governs school board elections. You must meet all eligibility requirements:

- Be able to read and write
- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be a resident of the school district for at least the past year on election day (moving *within* the district is allowable)
- Not be a district employee, (may be an employee of BOCES or teacher/staff in another district)
- Not be a convicted felon (unless you have a certificate of relief)
- Not be in the family of a currently seated Board member (spouse or relative in same home)

### 3) What is the time commitment necessary to do the job well?

Board service typically requires 10-20 hours per week, and will include:

- reading Board packets, reference and educational materials
- getting any questions clarified by the Board president or superintendent
- attending Board meetings, study sessions, workshops and retreats
- serving on board and district subcommittees
- attending arts or athletic events, community forums and public hearings
- attending staff and student celebrations (such as graduation)
- attending professional development and advocacy opportunities

### 4) How do I get nominated?

- **Nominating Petitions** are obtained from your District Clerk. They will have the necessary forms, local policies and rules, timelines, etc. District clerks will provide guidance on the documents.
- **You MUST file your petition on time.** The deadline is Monday, April 18, 2022, by 5:00 p.m.
- **Make sure you really want to run before filing. Only district residents may sign your petition.**
- Ballot position is assigned by lottery.
- You are required to keep track of all expenses and report them to the district clerk on three occasions, even if you do not win the election:
  - 30 days BEFORE the vote
  - 5 days BEFORE the vote
  - 20 days AFTER the vote
- Expenses over \$500 must be reported to the Commissioner of Education.

5) **Is Board Service really for me?**

Being a board member means being a part of the whole and working as a team. It is difficult to run or serve as a "single issue" board member. As a board member you are responsible for conducting **all the district's business** needed to provide for students and staff. Other characteristics you should consider are:

- Am I **continuous learner**?
- Am I an **active listener** and can I take criticism without taking it personally?
- Can I work for consensus and **support Board decisions** if I am not in the majority?
- Can I support what is best for **all** children?
- Am I free from any **conflict of interest**, perceived or otherwise, that would inhibit my service?

6) **What resources are available to help me learn about my district?**

- District Website:
  - District Mission and Vision Statement
  - Board of Education Policies (By-Laws for the BOE is in the 1000 series)
  - Code of Conduct
  - Board meeting minutes and audits
- Board of Education meetings
- District mailings and publications

7) **How do I prepare for a campaign?**

- **Prepare a biography and have a photograph available.** Keep your biography short! List relevant qualifications only. You will need this for mandated district vote publications, potential media requests and for your own campaign.
- **Set a budget for both your time and money and stick to it.**
- **Be aware some forms of communications cost money** (postage, lawn signs, advertisements). Be cognizant of community norms and regulations on lawn signs.
- **Be cautious with social media.** Monitor what others post on your behalf. Keep communications positive and be informed on the issues.
- **Decide if you wish to run on a slate.** Know the positions of all candidates on the slate before you agree.
- **Decide if you will seek endorsements.** Know the implications. Don't over-promise, remember your authority as a board member is limited by laws and regulations.
- **Be aware electioneering** may not occur within 100 feet of polling locations. Legally, you cannot use district communication channels or students to distribute partisan materials. This includes PTA/PTO/PTSO organizations. You cannot appear at school functions for partisan purposes.
- **Screen your calls.** Make sure you have time and are in an appropriate setting to speak with people over the phone. Return calls in a timely fashion, be respectful of media and be aware of publication deadlines.

**REMEMBER TO USE A GOOD HANDSHAKE. DO NOT BE SHY. ASK PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR YOU.**