

## 2026 School Board Candidate Election Procedures

### I. Dates to File

#### A. General Election (November 3, 2026)

May 19, 2026                      First day for filing Petition of Nomination and Consent (IC 3-8-2.5-4)

June 18, 2026, Noon              Last day and hour for filing Petition of Nomination and Consent (IC 3-8-2.5-4)

### II. Election Procedures

#### A. Petition of Nomination and Consent (IC 3-8-2.5)

Candidates for school board offices must file a petition of nomination and consent ([CAN-34](#)). The petition and consent form is available: (1) at the offices of the Indiana Secretary of State, Election Division; (2) on the Division's website at [SOS: Election Division: Candidate Information](#); and (3) from circuit court clerks' offices. The petition of nomination and consent must be filed with the county voter registration office. Candidates seeking election in a school corporation located in more than one county must file the petition of nomination and consent with the county voter registration office in the county that contains the greatest percentage of the population of the school corporation. ([IC 3-8-2.5-5](#))

The petition must include: (1) the candidate's name; (2) residence address and mailing address (if different); (3) the office being sought; and (4) one of the following: (a) the candidate's political affiliation; (b) the candidate is an independent candidate; (c) the candidate elects not to disclose a political affiliation; or (d) the candidate is not affiliated with a political party and does not identify as an independent candidate. ([IC 3-8-2.5-2.5](#))

Affiliation with the Democratic or Republican Party is determined by which party the candidate voted for in the last two primary elections held in Indiana in which the candidate voted. If the candidate cannot meet this party affiliation requirement, the candidate must obtain and file with the Petition of Nomination and Consent a certificate from the appropriate county chair of the party.

In most school corporations, the petition of nomination and consent must be signed by the candidate and ten (10) registered voters *residing within the boundaries of the school corporation*. ([IC 20-23-4-29.1](#)) In some school corporations, however, state law requires more than ten (10) signatures. Candidates should check with the county voter registration office to determine the number of signatures required.

In a metropolitan school district, the petition of nomination and consent must be signed by ten (10) registered voters *residing in the same board member district* as the candidate. ([IC 20-23-7-8.1](#)) Additionally, when a school board member is elected from an electoral district, the signatures on the petition must be from registered voters residing within that same electoral district.

A petition of nomination and consent may be circulated by another individual, on behalf of the candidate, and must be signed by both the petition carrier and the candidate.

#### B. Statement of Economic Interests (IC 3-8-9)

In most counties, candidates for school board offices must file a statement of economic interests ([CAN-12](#)) **with** the petition of nomination and consent. Statements of economic interests are available: (1) at the offices of the Indiana Secretary of State, Election Division; (2) on the Division's website at [SOS: Election Division: Candidate Information](#); and (3) from circuit court clerks' offices. **Failure to file a statement of economic interests with the petition of nomination will result in the petition of nomination being rejected.** ([IC 3-8-9-6](#))

### C. Campaign Financial Statements

A candidate for a school board office who receives more than \$500 in contributions **or** makes more than \$500 in expenditures as a candidate for a school board office must have a principal committee. A candidate who meets either of these threshold amounts must file the [CFA-1](#) form no later than noon ten (10) days after the candidate exceeds the \$500 contribution or expenditure amount. (IC 3-9-1-5.5)

Candidates should contact the county voter registration office for information on the filing of these reports and other additional requirements. Campaign financial information may also be found on the website of the Indiana Secretary of State, Election Division, at [SOS: Election Division: Campaign Finance](#) and in the [2026 Indiana Campaign Finance Manual](#) published by the Indiana Election Division.

### D. Campaign Violations

Among the criminal offenses for campaign violations are: filing a fraudulent petition of nomination; failing to report campaign receipts and expenditures; and wrongful use of campaign contributions. ([IC 3-14-1](#))

A school board candidate who receives more than \$500 in contributions or spends more than \$500 as a candidate is also subject to civil penalties for failure to file reports required by law. ([IC 3-9-4-16](#))

### E. Applicable Laws

[IC 3-9-2](#) (campaign contributions); [IC 3-9-3-2.5](#) (candidate communications disclaimer); [IC 3-9-4](#) (election boards' duties); and [IC 3-14-1](#) (campaign violations).

## III. Eligibility Requirements

### A. Voter Registration

A person is not qualified to run for:

- (1) a state office;
- (2) a legislative office;
- (3) a local office; or
- (4) a school board office;

unless the person is registered to vote in the election district the person seeks to represent not later than the deadline for filing the declaration or petition of candidacy or certificate of nomination. ([IC 3-8-1-1\(b\)](#))

### B. Disqualification of Candidates

Under [IC 3-8-1-5](#), a person is disqualified from assuming or being a candidate for elected office if the person has been convicted of a felony, defined as a conviction for which the individual might have been imprisoned for more than one (1) year. Disqualification occurs when a jury or court publicly announces a felony verdict or when a person pleads guilty or nolo contendere to a felony.

The disqualification does not apply if the felony conviction has been pardoned, reversed, vacated, set aside, not entered because the trial court did not accept the guilty plea, or expunged under [IC 35-38-9](#). A subsequent reduction of a felony to a Class A misdemeanor after a verdict or guilty plea does not remove the disqualification. ([IC 3-8-1-5\(e\)](#))

A person is also disqualified if the individual offered a bribe, threat, or reward to procure election; has been removed from the office sought under Article 7, Section 11 or 13 of the Indiana Constitution; is prohibited from candidacy under applicable federal or state law, including the Hatch Act or Little Hatch Act; or is otherwise prohibited under the additional categories listed in [IC 3-8-1-5\(d\)](#), including certain court employees and full-time Department of Homeland Security employees.

### C. Multiple Lucrative Offices

A person may not hold more than one (1) lucrative office at a time, as provided in Article 2, Section 9 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana. ([IC 3-8-1-3](#))

#### D. Residence

A candidate for a school board office must have resided in the school corporation for at least one (1) year before the election. If a candidate is seeking to represent an election district that consists of less than the entire school corporation, the candidate must have resided in the election district for at least one (1) year before the election. ([IC 3-8-1-34](#))

#### E. Age

No person otherwise eligible to assume office as a member of a governing body shall be disqualified on the basis of age, if the individual is at least eighteen (18) years of age. ([IC 20-26-4-9](#))

#### F. Property Ownership

Property ownership may not be a qualification for serving as a member of a governing body. ([IC 20-26-4-10](#))

#### G. School Corporation Employees

An individual who is employed as a teacher or as a noncertificated employee of the school corporation may not be a member of the governing body of the school corporation. ([IC 20-26-4-11](#)) An individual who is a school employee may run for a seat on the governing body but must resign as an employee if elected to the governing body before taking office.

#### H. Hatch Act

Individuals covered by the Hatch Act who have additional questions may contact the Hatch Act Unit at the U.S. Office of Special Counsel by phone at 202-804-7002 or by email at [hatchact@osc.gov](mailto:hatchact@osc.gov). Additional information is available on the U.S. Office of Special Counsel's website at <https://osc.gov/>.