

**NOVEMBER
2022**

e-Dition



INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

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Postcard on Regional Meetings and Other Work Happening This Fall

By **Terry Spradlin**, Executive Director, tspradlin@isba-ind.org



This has been quite a busy season at ISBA with the spotlight on school board races and school corporation referenda on the general election ballot and the Fall Regional Meetings. It has been wonderful to see close to 1,000 members and school leaders at the regional meetings. I have enjoyed the opportunity to visit with many of you on my travels across our beautiful state.

Your input from the survey questions administered at the regional meetings about the significant issues of the day confronting school boards has proven to be quite informative, especially as Lisa Tanselle and I ramp up our meetings with state legislative leaders in advance of the 2023 session.

To all the outgoing school board members whose terms expire at the end of this year, thank you for your dedicated public service and commitment to the students and families within your school communities. We have sincerely appreciated your membership in ISBA.

Please continue to advocate for children!

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Support for New School Board Members

Congratulations to the candidates who won election to their first term on a school board. While you will not take oath of office until January, ISBA has planned the 2023 New Board Member Academy that will support you with comprehensive training on board roles and responsibilities as you strive to pursue effective board practices. Details about the New Board Member Academy can be found on pages five and six of this newsletter.

Regardless of your personal motivation to seek a seat on your school board, once in office, you will have an obligation to fulfill all governance responsibilities to the best of your ability and contribute to cohesive and collegial board/superintendent relations. ISBA stands ready to assist you in these endeavors!

Survey Data Shares Top Issues and Concerns

ISBA has asked members attending our Regional Meetings to answer a brief 4-question survey to help us deepen our understanding of issues and needs confronting school boards and your school communities. If you were unable to attend the meeting in your region, we invite you to contribute your input and share your perspectives.

The survey is available [HERE](#) and should only take 2-3 minutes to complete. We ask that only school board members complete the survey. I will share a summary of the survey data with you via my e-Dition column in December.

Gearing Up for the 2023 Session

ISBA's 2023 Legislative Priorities and Foundational Statements that have been spotlighted at the Fall Regional Meetings are available [HERE](#). Dates and times for grassroots advocacy training webinars will be announced soon. Please begin to advocate for our priorities by writing, emailing, or calling your area legislators.

When the filing window opens and bills are publicly released with bill numbers, ISBA will send members an update to highlight those aligned to our legislative agenda. As priority bills move through the legislative process, ISBA will send call-to-action alerts with talking points asking for you to communicate support for these bills.

Let's gear up for another very important budget session! I hope you have a great Thanksgiving.

School corporations encouraged to join tutoring recovery effort

The Indiana Learns program officially launched in October. School corporations are encouraged to participate by contributing a \$250 match of federal funds per student. This match will allow eligible families to access a total of \$1,000 to spend on learning recovery services outside of regular school hours. Matching school corporations can apply to serve as a tutoring partner for their students, or they can work with Indiana Learns to identify and promote already approved tutoring partners. For more details about Indiana Learns and completing the process to become a matching school corporation, contact Seana Murphy at smurphy@indianalearns.org

The Oath of Office Can Actually Be Taken Prior to January

By **Lisa Tanselle**, General Counsel, ltanselle@isba-ind.org



Now that the elections are over and school board members prepare to take office in January, it's a good time to share some pertinent information about the oath of office that elected (and appointed) board members must take.

Contents of the Oath

[IC 20-26-4-2](#) requires any person “elected or selected” to be on the school board to take the following oath:

I solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, and the laws of the United States and the State of Indiana. I will faithfully execute the duties of my office as a member of this governing body, so help me God.

The statute allows the school board to add provisions to the oath that the board considers appropriate for the office. Some school boards choose to add language that requires the board member to abide by a code of ethics adopted by the school board, for example.

Administration of the Oath

[IC 33-42-9-7](#) specifies who is authorized to administer the oath of office. The list includes notaries public; judges and justices of Indiana courts; mayors, clerks, clerk-treasurers of towns and cities, township trustees, in their respective towns, cities, and townships; clerks of circuit courts and master commissioners in their respective counties; judges of Indiana federal district courts; county auditors in their respective counties; and any member of the Indiana General Assembly.

Time Period to Take the Oath

[IC 5-4-1-1.2](#) says a person appointed or elected to a school board may take the oath “at any time after the individual’s appointment or election.” However, the person must take the oath no later than 30 days after the beginning of the term of office. Thus, for board members taking office on January 1, 2023, they must take the oath no later than January 31, 2023. If a board member fails to take the oath of office by January 31, 2023, the board position becomes vacant. Once the oath is taken, a copy of the oath must be delivered to the circuit court clerk. The oath must be delivered no later than January 31, 2023.

Setting for the Administration of the Oath

Indiana law allows for the administration of the oath of office to individual board members in a private setting and at times convenient to that individual member. There is no requirement in statute for the oath to be administered in a group setting or at a school board meeting open to the public. Alternatively, the oath can be administered to all newly elected and re-elected board members in a group setting at the school corporation’s administration office/building without advertising a meeting since the Open Door Law exempts from the definition of a meeting “a gathering for the sole purpose of administering an oath of office to an individual.” Finally, the oath can be administered to board members at the first school board meeting in January 2023.

Procedures and Deadlines for Non-Renewal of Administrator Contracts

By **Julie Slavens**, Senior Counsel/Director of Policy Services, jslavens@isba-ind.org



At times school boards may wish to remove an administrator from the administrative position — an action referred to as a nonrenewal. This column will explain the due process procedures that must be followed under Indiana law for nonrenewal of administrator contracts. It is important to note that nonrenewal does not terminate the administrator's employment with the school corporation. Rather, nonrenewal removes the employee from the current administrative position at the end of the contract and allows the school board to reassign the individual to another position for which the employee is certified.

Superintendent

The school board must vote in a public meeting to nonrenew a superintendent's contract. This vote must take place no later than December of the year before the contract expires. The board or an attorney acting at the direction of the board must give formal written notice of nonrenewal to the superintendent, which must be delivered in person or by registered mail, on or before January 1 of the year in which the contract expires. [IC 20-28-8-7\(3\)](#)

Assistant Superintendent, Principal, and Assistant Principal

For an assistant superintendent, principal, or assistant principal, the board must vote at a public meeting to give written preliminary notice to the administrator that it is considering nonrenewal. The written preliminary notice must be delivered to the administrator by the board or by an employee, generally the superintendent, acting at the direction of the board. The written preliminary notice must be given at least 30 days before the written notice of nonrenewal.

The actual vote and delivery of written notice of nonrenewal must occur before March 1 of the year in which the contract is to expire. To meet this timeline, the school board should initiate nonrenewal in December before the year the contract expires or in January of the year the contract expires. The preliminary notice must state the reasons for consideration of nonrenewal and advise the administrator of the right to a private conference with the superintendent. The administrator has five days after receipt of the preliminary notice to request a private conference. There is no statutory time frame in which to hold the conference. After the conference with the superintendent, the administrator may request a private conference with the school board. This request must be made within five days of the conference with the superintendent. The conference with the board and the board vote for nonrenewal must be held prior to the issuance of the notice of nonrenewal, thus any conference with the board should take place in January or early February. [IC 20-28-8-3](#)

Director of Special Education

The vote and receipt of the written notice of nonrenewal must occur before February 1 of the year the contract expires. To meet this timeline, the nonrenewal process should be initiated in November or December of the year before the director's contract expires. [IC 20-28-8-11](#)

Pathways for New Board Members

By **Steve Horton**, Director of Board Services, shorton@isba-ind.org



School board elections in some communities felt particularly contentious this year. Regardless of the outcome, the hope is that once new board members take the oath of office, they work together to advance a better future for students.

It is safe to say that many of the newly elected board members will soon realize that school boards are far more complex than they anticipated. That is why new board member education is a critical support offered by ISBA.

While no curriculum can possibly account for every decision new school board members will be asked to make over the course of their terms in office, the New Board Member Academy will provide a wide variety of best practices, insights, and practical strategies to support effective and productive school board work. The format has been thoughtfully planned out to combine the energy of an in-person event with the convenience and flexibility of virtual technology.

The New Board Member Academy will begin in January with a series of five regional introductory sessions covering the following topics:

- **Boardmanship 101:** Set yourself up for success in your first year of service with a practical introduction to the art of boardmanship, ethics, and tips for establishing yourself as an effective board member.
- **Board meeting 101:** Get into the basics of board meetings, how school boards use Roberts Rules of Order, and strategies for being more than a member occupying a seat at the table.
- **The Things We Do (But Shouldn't):** Take a dive into the common missteps and practices that cause people to be labeled “bad” board members. Hear advice for avoiding dangerous new board member pitfalls.
- **Board Communication and Superintendent Relationship:** Understand the dynamics between the board and the superintendent, and strategies for maintaining a highly effective communication for the leadership team.

The in-person sessions will be recorded for on-demand access, with one to be live-streamed.

From March through June, the New Board Member Academy will consist of four live virtual clinics for attendees to enhance their expertise in the following areas:

- **Understanding the Open Door and Public Access Laws:** Board members need to understand how to effectively govern their school corporations while staying within the bounds of the law.
- **Policy 101 for New Board Members:** An introduction to the policy manual and the board's role in maintaining policies that are compliant and relevant to your school corporation.
- **An Introduction to Budgets and Funding:** An important function of the board is to approve the corporation's budget and ensure that the corporation has the capacity to operate in a fiscally sound manner. Understanding the annual budgetary process and the way in which schools are funded is critical.
- **Six-Month Checkup:** You have been on the job for six months. Here's your chance to ask ISBA anything.

New (and old!) school board members can register for the Academy at <https://www.isba-ind.org/new-board-member-academy.html>.

We are excited to put this robust curriculum together and look forward to helping new school board members jump start their service to public education.

New Board Member Academy Is Now Enrolling!

ISBA's New Board Member Academy is a comprehensive learning pathway that will empower you with the knowledge and skills you need to govern your school community effectively and efficiently.

We designed the New Board Member Academy to give you valuable, practical information and guidance that you can put to use immediately. Through expert-led discussion and feedback at in-person and virtual sessions, newly elected and appointed school board members will develop a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities as they work to make a difference for kids.

Not a new board member? Hey, no problem. This program is also a great refresher curriculum for veteran members.

The New Board Member Academy will kick-off with a series of five foundational workshops scheduled for January-February 2023 covering the essential basics of school board service, including boardsmanship, public meeting procedures, communication strategies, and board-superintendent relations. After the foundational workshop, there will be a monthly sequence of live virtual clinics from March through June, each covering a different topic.

All in-person and virtual sessions will be recorded and made available on demand — ensuring you can learn on a schedule that fits your needs.

Pricing is \$425. This package also includes access to bonus on-demand video content covering grassroots advocacy, optimizing public comment at board meetings, and conducting superintendent evaluations.

For more information and to register, visit www.isba-ind.org/new-board-member-academy

IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

Northwest – January 14

Kesling Intermediate School – Cafeteria
306 E 18th St. La Porte, IN 46350

Central – January 21 (optional live stream available)

Central IND Educational Service Center, Frontier Rm
3500 DePauw Blvd. Pyramid Two - Suite 2020
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Southeast – February 4

Ivy Tech Columbus Campus - Community Rm
4475 Central Ave. Columbus, IN 47203

Northeast – February 11

Ivy Tech Fort Wayne Coliseum Campus
3800 N. Anthony Blvd. Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Southwest – February 25

Jasper High School - LGI Rm
1600 Saint Charles St. Jasper, IN 47546

All in-person sessions will run from 10:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Doors will open at 9:30 a.m.

VIRTUAL CLINICS

Public Access – March 14, 6:30 p.m. or March 15, noon
Understand the school board's obligations under the Open Door and Public Records laws

Policy-Making – April 5, noon or April 11, 6:30 p.m.
Key considerations for establishing and maintaining the policies under which the school system operates

Budget & Funding – May 17, noon or May 18, 6:30 p.m.
Delve into the fundamentals of the school finance issues that shape the fiscal health of your district

Six-Month Checkup – June 13, 6:30 p.m. or June 14, noon
You have been on the job for six months. Now it's time to reflect, discuss, and ask questions

School Board Member Updates

- The North Central Parke Community School Corporation appointed **Mark Graves**, former White River Valley High School girls' basketball coach, to fill the seat vacated by the resignation of **Jim Wrightsman**.
- The Northeastern Wayne School Corporation School Board selected **Kimberly Fultz Claypoole** to replace **Kristy Anderson**, who resigned from the board to become school nurse for the middle and high school.
- The North Spencer School Corporation appointed **Chris Flohr**, a manager for plastics manufacturer Spencer Industries, and **Jennifer Aldridge**, who works in human resources for eMoney Advisors, to fill two seats where no candidates filed for election.
- The Lake Station Community Schools Board of Trustees selected **Kevin Music**, a funeral director, to fill the at-large vacancy created by the resignation of **Brent Watts**.
- Lake Ridge New Tech Schools appointed **Samuel Roberts**, captain of the Gary Police Department, to the school board to replace **Glenn Johnson**, who resigned after three terms.
- **Tara Wolf** has been appointed to the Beech Grove City Schools Board of School Trustees to replace **Kim Buckley**, who resigned after moving out of the district.
- Center Grove Community School Corporation School Board President **Joe Hubbard** resigned from the board, as he moves outside district boundaries.
- **Seth Clinkenbeard** resigned from the M.S.D. of New Durham Township Board of School Trustees. He has been replaced by **Philip Burdine**, a construction manager.
- MSD of Pike Township School Board President **Larry Metzler** resigned from the school board. He's relocating to be nearer to his grandchildren. He has served since 1996.
- MSD of Pike Township School Board member **Veronica Ford** resigned for health reasons.
- Congratulations to Bloomfield School Board member **Terri Lee Neighbors**, who was named Bloomfield Citizen of the Year for her work with Erin's Purpose.

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Region 7 — Stacy Killion, Vigo County School Corporation

Region 8 — Jack Russell, Center Grove Community School Corporation

Region 9 — Travis Nolcox, North Gibson School Corporation

Region 10 — Lee Ann Wiseheart, New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- » [What could the Vigo County superintendent search look like?](#) - WAWV
- » [Local school board races becoming more contentious](#) - WRTV
- » [Indiana's non-partisan school board election process proving its usefulness](#) - Terre Haute Tribune-Star
- » [The importance of school board elections for each community](#) - Shelbyville News
- » [Penn-Harris-Madison school board candidates raise tens of thousands](#) - South Bend Tribune

ANALYSIS OF NEW AND RETURNING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Hoosier voters re-elected 470 incumbent school board members and defeated 89 incumbent school board members at the November 8 general election. That means 84% of incumbents who ran for re-election were successful. There will be 337 new school board members who take office in January.

SALUTE TO YEARS OF SERVICE

We would like to take this opportunity to salute two additional school board members with significant career milestones who have chosen to retire at the conclusion of the calendar year rather than run for re-election. **Mark Lucas** is stepping down from the Merrillville School Board after 30 years — and more than 500 school board meetings! In the East Washington School Corporation, **Linda McClellan** is moving on after 28 years of school board service.

ALL SCHOOL BOARDS INCREASED TEACHER SALARIES

All 290 Indiana school corporations provided their teachers with a base salary increase for 2021-2022. Full-time public school teachers in Indiana earned an average salary of \$56,609 in the 2021-2022 school year, an increase of 8.0% from \$52,385 in 2018-2019.

Calendar of Upcoming ISBA Events

December 8

[ISBA/IUSA Legislative Webinar](#)

December 9

[School Law Seminar](#) (Ivy Tech Conference Center, Indpls.)

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