

Virtual participation in board meetings, post-public health emergency



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

With the discontinuation of the public health emergency, school boards may no longer meet virtually unless the school board adopts and follows a policy addressing the parameters for remote school board member meeting attendance as set out in [IC 5-14-1.5-3.5](#). Following is a summary of the board policy requirements from the 2021 law.

Board members may participate in a meeting of the school board by an electronic means of communication allowing all participating members of the governing body to simultaneously communicate with each other **and** the public to simultaneously attend and observe the meeting. Board members who participate electronically may be considered present for purposes of establishing a quorum and may vote **only** if the means of electronic communication allows the board members to be seen and heard.

Additional requirements for meetings where board members participate electronically include:

1. At least 50% of the members of the governing body must be physically present;
2. All votes taken must be by roll call; and
3. The meeting minutes must identify the members who participated by electronic means and the electronic means that were utilized for said purpose.

Restrictions on remote participation in board meetings include: 1) a board member may not attend more than 50% of the board's meetings in a calendar year by electronic means and may not attend more than two consecutive meetings by electronic means, unless the board member is participating electronically due to military service, illness or other medical condition, death of a relative, or an emergency that involves actual or threatened injury to persons or property; and 2) a board member may not participate by electronic means if the board intends to vote on adoption of a budget, personnel reduction, initiation of a referendum, establishment or increase of a fee, use of eminent domain, or establishment of, raise in, or renewal of a tax.

The law requires school boards to adopt a policy on electronic participation in school board meetings that addresses how an individual school board member would notify the board of the need to participate by electronic means, the person to whom notification would be given, and the timeframe within which to file such notice.

Comprehensive Policy Management Services

The Indiana School Boards Association can help you create, revise, and update policies to fit your district's needs.

Learn more at www.isba-ind.org/cpms.html.

A red rectangular graphic with white text. It features a large white quote icon on the left. The text is a testimonial from Dr. James Hanna, Superintendent of Rossville Consolidated Schools, praising the Comprehensive Policy Management Services (CPMS) provided by the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA). The ISBA logo is at the bottom left of the graphic.

“ School corporations are complex organizations with many moving parts. Corporations must have clear policies to guide the day to day operations in order to operate effectively. Rossville Schools have been fortunate to team up with ISBA and utilize their Comprehensive Policy Management Services (CPMS). CPMS has been instrumental in guiding Rossville School's policy development to ensure policies are up-to-date, on point, and necessary. I have been extremely pleased with the service and hold it in high regard.”

- Dr. James Hanna, Superintendent
Rossville Consolidated Schools

ISBA
INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION