



Hiring Your School Board Members

Tips for Evaluating School Board Candidates

General Considerations

1. Decide what you are looking for in a candidate – shared values, useful experience, and strong positions to improve academic outcomes.
2. Do they offer specific, achievable solutions rather than generalities?
3. How will they make tough decisions?

Specific Questions

Why are you running for school board, and what qualifications do you bring to the role?

Look for answers that reflect direct involvement—such as volunteering in schools, serving on community boards, or having experience in budgeting or policy—rather than vague personal anecdotes.

What changes do you want to bring to how the school board currently operates?

Candidates should show they know how school meetings currently run and offer ideas to increase their effectiveness, such as monthly discussions of student academic outcomes, budget matters (on track, reserves status), and even a report back on community feedback (including public comments).

How do you plan to address student achievement gaps and support underserved populations, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and those from low-income families?

Effective candidates should demonstrate a clear understanding of a layered approach to improving student learning, cite data-driven strategies, and show awareness of policies like Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

What is your stance on standardized testing, and how would you ensure that assessments support student learning rather than teach the test?

Candidates should balance accountability with a critique of over-testing. Look for support for formative assessments and a commitment to using data to inform teaching.

What is your vision for school funding, and how would you ensure equitable resource allocation across all schools in the district?

Candidates should address budget priorities, explain how funding follows students, and support mechanisms. Be wary of vague promises or resistance to federal or state funding opportunities. The goal: help students achieve their fullest potential possible.

How do you plan to improve school safety for students and staff?

Look for candidates who advocate for comprehensive safety plans, trauma-informed practices, access to counselors, and protection of teachers in ways to reduce classroom disruptions.

How will you engage parents, teachers, and the community in decision-making?

Strong candidates will promote accessible meetings, two-way communication, and meaningful feedback mechanisms—such as advisory committees or digital forums.

How do you plan to address chronic absenteeism and student retention, especially in early grades and high school?

Candidates should propose evidence-based strategies like targeted outreach, family support services, and incentives.

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School districts oversee multi-million-dollar budgets, supported by taxpayers. What steps will you propose to ensure that the money is being spent wisely and efficiently?

A good answer will promote the need for audits to identify operational efficiencies, teacher training, high-quality educational materials, and limited bureaucratic structures.

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