

Serving on the Evansville Community School Board

A question often asked by prospective school board members is, "How much time does it take to serve on the School Board?" The best way to help you to determine the answer to this question is to talk to current and past Board members. They will be able to provide tremendous insight to this question along with helping you to understand the roles and responsibilities of this important and rewarding opportunity. Please know that current Board members and I will be happy to answer the questions that you may have as you seek to serve the Evansville Community School District and community.

To help understand the responsibilities and time commitment related to serving as a Board member, I have included the following information for your convenience:

Major Time Commitments and Responsibilities of a School Board Member

- 30-90 minutes to read bi-weekly Board packets. Board packets are prepared and ready for delivery to you on the Thursday prior to a Wednesday Board meeting in most cases. I encourage new Board members to meet with me or an experienced Board member upon receiving the Board packets for the purpose of discussing the items in the packet.
- 2-4 hours for bi-weekly Board meetings. The first meeting of the month is principally for information sharing and for action items. The second meeting of the month is mainly for discussion and planning in a committee-of-the-whole format. This means that the entire Board serves as one large committee to address issues such as Finance, Policy, Facilities, Safety and Transportation.
- 15-20 minutes a week to review Board email. Each Board member is provided with a District email account. Expect to receive emails from me, the administrative team, staff and parents. The content of emails will include: District related information; school bulletins and newsletters; staff issues and concerns; and parent questions and concerns.
- I encourage each Board member to check the website regularly. There are many resources on the website that will help you to understand what is happening throughout the District and help you to navigate the many responsibilities of being a Board member.

Other Commitments and Opportunities

- In addition to the two regular Board meetings, there are typically several other special meetings throughout the school year. Special meetings are convened for Board retreats (1-2 a year), student expulsion hearings (0-3 a year), and the budget process.
- Board members are invited to attend the opening of the school year all staff gathering in August, staff recognition in April or May, graduation in June, as well as other special events.
- Board members are encouraged to attend Back to School open houses, concerts, and athletic events.
- Board members are welcome to attend staff development activities offered throughout the school year.

- As a Board member you will have occasions where parents, staff and community members will want to discuss issues with you that pertain to the District. Expect to be approached while shopping or while attending school and community events and expect to be contacted by phone to discuss issues and concerns that are important to your constituents.

School Board Development and Resources

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) is a beneficial resource for all Board members. You may access the WASB website at <http://www.wasb.org>.

You will receive a variety of publications from WASB on a monthly basis. WASB provides in-depth information on specific issues such as, policy development, legal updates, legislative updates, and public education news. WASB holds a training meeting for new board members in the spring and a regional meeting in the fall. WASB also sponsors workshops on legal issues, employment issues, special education or other topics of interest.

One board member is the District's representative to our Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA#2). This is one meeting a year. John Rasmussen represented us this year and is also a member of their board of control which meets a few times a year.

There is an annual WASB convention in Milwaukee during the third week of January. This event is often attended by one or more Board members along with me. The WASB Annual Convention allows us to learn about a variety of issues and topics that affect public schools.

Important aspects of serving as a Board member are to listen carefully, to communicate effectively and to know where to direct people to get questions answered and concerns addressed. In many cases Board members will direct questions and concerns to administration and staff.

Serving as a school board member is an exciting and fulfilling opportunity. As a Board member you will help to: determine the mission and direction of the District; you will support and encourage all staff members as they strive to serve the District through highly effective methods; and you will ensure that our students receive the best possible education that we can provide in our schools.

I appreciate your interest and desire to serve our students, families, School District, and community.

Jerry Roth, District Administrator