

FSPS Board Member Application

Applicants are encouraged to read all of the information below before applying. To access the information, please click on each heading below or on the word "Expand" to reveal the full content.

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About the Application and Selection Process



The FSPS board is looking to fill a board seat that became vacant **Monday, June 19, 2023**. By state law, the board has 30 days to appoint a qualified individual living in **Zone III** to the seat.

The process for applying opens on **Thursday, June 22, 2023**. All qualified applicants must review the information below and submit all requested materials by the close of business on **Monday, July 10, 2023**.

The board anticipates conducting interviews with select candidates prior to their next regularly scheduled board meeting on **Monday, July 17, 2023**, at which time the board expects to vote on the appointment.

Position Qualifications



The vacant board seat is for Zone III, so only residents who live in Zone III may apply for this position. **Other qualifications** include:

- Must be a qualified registered voter of the school district and the electoral zone (if applicable A.C.A. §§6-13-616(a), 6-14-111(h), (i) (1), Article 3, §1)
- Must be a U.S. citizen (Article 3, §1)
- Must be an Arkansas resident (Article 3, §1)
- Must be a resident of the school district and, if elected from zones, the respective electoral zone (A.C.A. §§6-13-631(d) (1), 6-14-111(i) (1))
- Must not be an employee of the school district served (A.C.A. §6-13-616(b))
- Must be lawfully registered to vote (Article 3, §1)

- Must never have been convicted, plead guilty, or plead nolo contendere of embezzlement of public money, bribery, forgery, or other infamous crime (A.C.A. § 21-8-305, Articles 3, §6 & 5, §9)

If you meet all of the above and are interested in becoming a FSPS board member, the Fort Smith school board wants to hear from you!

Required Responsibilities



School boards are most effective when members focus on the big picture; making policy, setting goals and engaging stakeholders, all with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. Legally defined duties of a school board are:

1. make, enforce, and obey district policies;
2. hire and evaluate the superintendent;
3. set the district's vision, mission, and direction;
4. oversee district finances and budget;
5. approve the employment of staff;
6. attend legally convened board meetings;
7. conduct hearings;
8. visit schools annually when students are present;
9. receive training and professional development;
10. follow state and federal laws and Arkansas Department of Education rules governing public schools, including the **Arkansas Freedom of Information Act**.

Additional roles of school board members include:

- monitor and advocate for student achievement and district progress;
- advocate student needs to lawmakers and stakeholders;
- collaborate with community partners;
- ensure facilities are safe and adequate; and
- align resources with goals.

Desirable Qualities for Applicants



According to the [Arkansas School Boards Association](#), the decision to serve as a school board member is one of the most important responsibilities that a citizen can undertake. The policies and standards the board establishes affect the future of the students, staff, the community, and society. Ideal qualifications that a candidate can possess include being:

- motivated by the best interest of ALL kids;
- passionate about public education;
- sharing responsibility for fiscal accountability, facilities, and student academic achievement;
- willing to follow high ethical standards;

- good listeners and communicators;
- reliant on facts and exercising objectivity on issues;
- interested and well informed about current issues in public education;
- supportive of the democratic process;
- understanding and accepting of "the will of the majority";
- willing and able to dedicate time and energy to board business;
- committed to learning by participating in on-going training;
- collaborative and able to function as part of a team; and
- willing to exercise power only at legally held meetings.

Helpful Resources



[Handbook for Arkansas School Board Members](#)

[Arkansas School Board Association](#)

[Arkansas Freedom of Information Act](#)

[Fort Smith Public Schools Board Meeting Schedule](#)

[FSPS Continuous Improvement Plan](#)

APPLY NOW!



To begin your application process, please **[click on this link](#)**. Please note that all questionnaire fields must be completed and a cover letter and resume must be uploaded and submitted for your application to be considered.

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the timeframe for service under this appointment?



This Zone III appointment will expire in March 2024. If the appointee wishes to continue in the position, the appointee will need to file their candidacy for election in the 2024 election. The filing window for the Zone III position is November 6-14, 2023. The election date is March 5, 2024. You may contact the **[Sebastian County Clerk's Office](#)** for more information.

Am I required to attend all meetings?



It is preferable to board members to attend as many meetings as possible.

How many meetings may I miss?



A board member that fails to attend three consecutive board meetings or fails to physically attend six regularly scheduled board meetings in a calendar year will be required to give up their seat ([Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-611](#))

How often does the board meet?



The board meets once a month at a regularly scheduled board meeting each month. Called board meetings and work sessions may happen during the month if needed.

How much time must I dedicate to reviewing the board packet?



Board members should review the board packet before the meeting. Specific time allotted depends on the agenda's size and time determined by the individual board member.

Do I get paid if I am selected as a board member?



No. Being a school board member is voluntary and unpaid.

Are there any out-of-pocket expenses that can be anticipated if I become a board member?



Most official board activities, such as travel and meals, are reimbursed by the district. Board members are personally responsible for any other expenses, including election expenses.

Can my company do business with the school district if I am a board member? What if I have a family member who works for the district?



Please refer to the [Arkansas Code § 6-24-105](#).

As a board member, can I be held personally liable for legal claims against the board or the school district?



As a general rule, no. By state law, governing board members cannot be held liable for actions taken in good faith and within the scope of their authority. Boards also may receive legal counsel to advise them, and the liability insurance of most, if not all, organizations covers board members who are acting in their official capacity.