

School Board

Board Member Development¹

The School Board desires that its individual members learn, understand, and practice effective governance principles.² The Board is responsible for Board member orientation and development. Board members have an equal opportunity to attend State and national meetings designed to familiarize members with public school issues, governance, and legislation.

The Board President and/or Superintendent shall provide all Board members with information regarding pertinent education materials, publications, and notices of training or development.

Mandatory Board Member Training³

Each Board member is responsible for his or her own compliance with the mandatory training laws that are described below:

1. Each Board member elected or appointed to fill a vacancy of at least one year's duration must complete at least four hours of professional development and leadership training in: (1) education and labor law; (2) financial oversight and accountability; (3) fiduciary responsibilities; (4) trauma-informed practices for students and staff; and (5) improving student outcomes, within the first year of his or her first term.⁴
2. Each Board member must complete training on the Open Meetings Act (OMA) no later than 90 days after taking the oath of office for the first time. After completing the training, each Board member must file a copy of the certificate of completion with the Board. Training on OMA is only required once.⁵
3. Each Board member must complete a training program on evaluations under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) before participating in a vote on a tenured teacher's dismissal using the optional alternative evaluation dismissal process. This dismissal process is available after the District's PERA implementation date.⁶

¹ State law governs the mandatory board member training provisions in this sample policy.

² The Ill. Association of School Boards (IASB) *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance* is available online at: www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/.

³ A board may omit the description of mandatory training requirements by deleting "~~that are described below~~" and deleting the numbered list. IASB is an authorized provider of all mandatory trainings for school board members. To view IASB online trainings, see www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/online-learning/.

⁴ 105 ILCS 5/10-16a, amended by P.A.s 102-638 and 103-771, eff. 6-1-25. See 105 ILCS 5/10-16a(b-5) for the required and recommended elements of the training regarding trauma-informed practices. See 105 ILCS 5/3-11, amended by P.A. 103-413, for the definitions of *trauma*, *trauma-responsive learning environments (including trauma aware, trauma responsive, and healing centered)*, and *whole child*. Training on improving student outcomes "must include information that is relevant to and within the scope of the duties of a school board member." 105 ILCS 5/10-16a(b-10), added by P.A. 103-771, eff. 6-1-25.

⁵ 5 ILCS 120/1.05(b) and (c).

⁶ 105 ILCS 5/24-16.5. This mandatory training requirement was phased-in as districts implemented evaluations that incorporate student growth as a significant factor, otherwise known as Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) evaluations. The implementation timeline for PERA evaluations varied from district to district but all districts had to implement PERA evaluations. A district may use an optional alternative evaluative dismissal process using the PERA evaluation. Before voting on a dismissal based upon an optional alternative evaluative dismissal process, a board member must complete a training program on PERA evaluations. For more information about PERA, see *PERA Overview for School Board Members*, available at: [www.iasb.com/policy-services-and-school-law/illinois-laws-affecting-schools/performance-evaluation-reform-act-\(pera\)/](http://www.iasb.com/policy-services-and-school-law/illinois-laws-affecting-schools/performance-evaluation-reform-act-(pera)/).

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain on the District website a log identifying the complete training and development activities of each Board member, including both mandatory and non-mandatory training.
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Professional Development; Adverse Consequences of School Exclusion; Student Behavior ⁸

The Board President or Superintendent, or their designees, shall make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to Board members about the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14,⁹ adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments,¹⁰ appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.

Board Self-Evaluation

The Board will conduct periodic self-evaluations with the goal of continuous improvement. ¹¹

New Board Member Orientation ¹²

The orientation process for newly elected or appointed Board members includes:

1. The Board President or Superintendent, or their designees, shall give each new Board member a copy of or online access to the Board Policy Manual, the Board's regular meeting minutes for the past year, and other helpful information including material describing the District and explaining the Board's roles and responsibilities.
2. The Board President or designee shall schedule one or more special Board meetings, or schedule time during regular meetings, for Board members to become acquainted and to review Board processes and procedures.
3. The Board President may request a veteran Board member to mentor a new member. ¹³
4. All new members are encouraged to attend workshops for new members conducted by the Illinois Association of School Boards.

⁷ 105 ILCS 5/10-16a(b) requires each school district to post on its website, if any, the names of all board members who have completed the minimum of four hours of training described in #1. Recognizing that a board may want to highlight all training and development achievements, the sample policy extends this reporting requirement to all training and development activities. For a website reporting template, see sample exhibit 2:120-E2, *Website Listing of Development and Training Completed by Board Members*.

A board may choose to strictly follow the statute by using the following alternative: "The Superintendent or designee shall post on the District website the names of all Board members who have completed the professional development leadership training described in number 1, above."

⁸ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896. While a district must make reasonable efforts to provide professional development to board members in these areas, the inclusion of this subhead is optional. Information about professional development opportunities is available through IASB's website at: www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/.

⁹ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A.s 102-466, eff. 7-1-25, 102-539, and 103-896, addresses the suspension or expulsion of students and school searches. See sample policies 7:190, *Student Behavior*, 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*, 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*, and 7:220, *Bus Conduct*. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, amended by P.A. 103-896, addresses parent-teacher advisory committees and their functions. See sample policy 2:150, *Committees*.

¹⁰ See 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), amended by P.A. 103-413, for the definition of *trauma-responsive learning environments*.

¹¹ Boards are not required to conduct self-evaluations, but may hold a closed meeting with representatives of a State association authorized under Article 23 of the School Code for the purpose of discussing self-evaluation practices and procedures, or professional ethics. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).

¹² New board member orientation is a critical step in helping new board members become effective and in promoting a smoothly functioning new team. The orientation process should include information about the IASB policy services to which the board subscribes, **PRESS**, **School Board Policies Online (SBPOL)**, and **PRESS Plus**.

¹³ See sample exhibit 2:120-E1, *Guidelines for Serving as a Mentor to a New School Board Member*.

Candidates

The Superintendent or designee shall invite all current candidates for the office of Board member to attend: (1) Board meetings, except that this invitation shall not extend to any closed meetings, and (2) pre-election workshops for candidates. ¹⁴

LEGAL REF.: 5 ILCS 120/1.05 and 120/2, Open Meetings Act.
105 ILCS 5/10-16a and 5/24-16.5.

CROSS REF.: 2:80 (Board Member Oath and Conduct), 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses), 2:200 (Types of School Board Meetings)

APPROVED:

¹⁴ IASB maintains helpful resources for school board candidates, including webinars regarding running for the school board. See www.iasb.com/memberships-and-divisions/school-board-elections/information-for-candidates.