



# GUIDE FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

An overview of Roles and Responsibilities

Spring 2026

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## BOARD OF EDUCATION CONTACTS

The Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education can collectively be reached by emailing [board@bloomfield.org](mailto:board@bloomfield.org), or can be reached individually at the email addresses published on their webpage: <https://www.bloomfield.org/about-bhs/board-of-education>

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT CONTACTS

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We are pleased that you are interested in serving our community as a Trustee of the Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education. Our constituents entrust the Board with the important responsibility of overseeing the education of their students.

School board trustees serve the community in a visible and meaningful way by helping shape the quality of education in the district. Through their decisions, they influence student outcomes and help ensure the district is responsive to community needs. In this role, trustees also contribute to the strength of our democracy by supporting a high-quality system of public education for all students.

With the increasing demand for educational excellence and fiscal accountability, the responsibilities of school boards are far more numerous and of greater impact than at any previous time in history. Board members are expected to become interpreters of school law, establish district policies and long-term goals, ensure accountability and transparency, and serve as vigilant stewards of taxpayer money. What's more, they must function as part of a united team, despite differences in backgrounds, political philosophies, and areas of expertise.

This candidate guide is a first step to help you understand what the Board of Education does, the role and responsibilities of a Board Trustee, the concept of the Board–Superintendent team, rules regarding campaigning, the time commitment involved in board service, and our pledge to the students and residents of Bloomfield Hills Schools. A digital resource guide has been provided to assist prospective candidates with the filing process and requirements.

## **THE FUNCTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The primary function of the Board of Education is to provide governance and oversight of the education of students in the community. Under Michigan law, the Board holds ultimate responsibility for the direction and accountability of the school district. The Michigan Revised School Code grants each local board broad authority to educate students; ensure their safety and welfare; acquire and manage school property; oversee the use of public funds; and enter into cooperative agreements.

Within this framework, Boards establish district policies and goals, approve curriculum and courses of study, adopt the annual budget and levy taxes as authorized, and determine whether to provide services such as student transportation. They also employ and evaluate the Superintendent and authorize agreements with employee unions regarding salaries and working conditions.

## THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT TEAM

While the Board and Superintendent have distinct roles, they work together as a unified team of eight with a shared focus on student achievement. A strong Board–Superintendent relationship is built on trust, mutual respect, clear understanding, and a shared purpose.

A simple way to distinguish responsibilities is that the Board defines the “what,” while the Superintendent and staff determine the “how.” The Board establishes the district’s core values, vision, mission, and short- and long-term goals. The Superintendent is responsible for implementing those goals and leading the district’s day-to-day operations. In turn, the Board holds the Superintendent accountable for progress and results.

The Board has one employee—the Superintendent. All other district employees report, directly or indirectly, to the Superintendent. The table below outlines key roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education and the Superintendent:

| Role of the Board of Education                                                                                                                                                                              | Role of the Superintendent                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goal Setting:</b> The district vision is translated into short and long-term goals. The Board establishes the structure to accomplish the vision, and periodically evaluates the results.                | <b>Goal Setting:</b> Assists and advises the Board in creating the short and long-term goals. Based on the goals, the Superintendent establishes strategies for implementation at each school. |
| <b>Policy:</b> Establishes policy for the district and shares in policy development.                                                                                                                        | <b>Policy:</b> Advises the Board on policy development rationale, and is responsible for creating and implementing administrative regulations to carry out the requirements of each policy.    |
| <b>Designating and Evaluating the Superintendent:</b> Recruits, hires and evaluates the performance of the Superintendent.                                                                                  | <b>Superintendent’s Responsibilities:</b> Manages the day-to-day operations of the District. Works towards meeting district and superintendent goals as established by the Board.              |
| <b>Budget:</b> Reviews the budget submitted by the Superintendent and aligns funding priorities to the District’s goals.                                                                                    | <b>Budget:</b> Develops a recommended budget for presentation to the Board, makes revisions as requested, and administers the adopted budget.                                                  |
| <b>Curriculum:</b> Approves recommended curriculum resources based on standards, goals and policies established by the Board. Reviews and evaluates curriculum as it relates to student assessment results. | <b>Curriculum:</b> Recommends courses of study and texts aligned to the District’s vision, goals, and objectives. Provides student assessment data for the Board’s analysis.                   |
| <b>Staffing and Appraisal:</b> Adopts policies governing salary schedules, terms and conditions of employment, fringe benefits, professional development and employee evaluations.                          | <b>Staffing and Appraisal:</b> Recommends all personnel to be hired, and is either directly or indirectly responsible for performance evaluations of the staff.                                |
| <b>Facilities:</b> Determines school facility needs and communicates proposed construction plans to the community.                                                                                          | <b>Facilities:</b> Analyzes, interprets and communicates the needs of the school system to the Board, and supervises facility renovations and new construction projects.                       |

## CAMPAIGNING

School Board elections are administered by Oakland County. Individuals interested in running for the Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education must file the required paperwork with the County Elections Division, typically by a deadline in July preceding the November election. Following filing, candidates are required to submit campaign finance and organizational forms, as well as a post-election financial report. Additional information: <https://elections.oaklandcountymi.gov/>.

Board policy prohibits using school facilities to advertise or promote a political party, political cause, or candidacy of an individual for public office. The use of all school properties is governed by Board Policies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Board Policies apply to everyone on school property including, but not limited to, Board Trustees, staff, PTOs, clubs, boosters, athletics, as well as individuals and non-school organizations using or renting school property. An individual in violation of Board policy will be asked to leave school property. Campaigning on school property is strictly prohibited. This applies to any candidate for elected office and anyone attempting to promote a ballot initiative.

### Permissible Activities:

- An organized voter forum on school property only when all candidates for the specified public office are invited to participate. Board policies shall be followed regarding disseminating and displaying campaign materials on school property during such forums.
- Individuals are permitted to disseminate factual literature for a ballot initiative (which may include the ballot language); however, the literature may not promote a yes or no vote.
- Candidates may distribute voter registration forms.
- Subject to BHS school dress codes, candidates may wear personal campaign apparel (e.g. shirts, buttons, hats) on school property.
- Employees may endorse, support, and contribute personal funds to candidates and issues when they are not on district property and not during their work day.

### Prohibited Activities:

- All BHS property is prohibited from use in photographs, videos, and other images that appear in campaign material, however photographs taken for purposes other than campaigning that occur on school property are permitted provided that the district logo, mission, vision, or core values are not depicted in the image for any political purpose.
- Candidates, their committee members, and supporters may not campaign or otherwise display or distribute campaign material on school property. Examples of items that advertise a political party, cause, or candidate and therefore are not permitted on school property include, but are not limited to: literature/flyers, flags, banners, “wrapped” vehicles, and any campaign material that is affixed, whether permanently or temporarily, to the inside or outside of any school property. Per above, apparel may be worn, provided it is school dress code compliant.
- Board policy prohibits use of school facilities, school equipment, staff (during working hours), or the school mail/email system as a means of producing or disseminating to the community any materials that advertise or promote a political party, a political cause, or the candidacy of an individual for public office.
- Students and employees of the Board shall not be used to distribute campaign literature, or other campaign material within the schools or on school grounds.
- All BHS property is prohibited from use in photographs, videos, and other images that appear in campaign material, however photographs taken for purposes other than campaigning that occur on school property are permitted provided that the district logo, mission, vision, or core values are not depicted in the image.

## TIME COMMITMENT:

Trustees are expected to attend all scheduled meetings of the Board of Education. Parliamentary procedure is followed at meetings, and Robert's Rules of Order governs the structure of Board meetings. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please contact the Board President and the Superintendent's Office.

The meeting schedule is adopted annually at the organizational meeting in January, and then posted online: <https://www.bloomfield.org/about-bhs/board-of-education/attend-a-board-meeting>.

Regular meetings of the Board of Education are on average, approximately three hours long.

Periodically, special meetings for the purposes of workshops, retreats, or time-sensitive district matters may be called.

Closed session meetings may also be added for purposes permitted under the Open Meetings Act. Most closed sessions, however, are placed at the bookends of regular meeting agendas.

Trustees serve on at least one standing board committee and participate in those meetings. Committee assignments and calendars are set annually at the January organizational meeting. There are currently three standing committees: Curriculum and Instruction, Finance and Operations, and Strategic Planning. Currently committees meet two weeks before the regular board meeting virtually, for up to 90 minutes over the lunch period.

Other committees or task forces may be established on an ad-hoc basis.

The Board of Education receives bimonthly written updates from the administration, which include materials provided in advance to prepare for each scheduled meeting.

Trustees are issued a Bloomfield Hills Schools individual email address, and are included on the [board@bloomfield.org](mailto:board@bloomfield.org) email address, which reaches all seven members. The Board President serves as the spokesperson, and responds to emails coming in through the [board@bloomfield.org](mailto:board@bloomfield.org) address. Trustees are responsible for managing their email accounts and responding to calendar invitations.

Trustees and the Superintendent meet tri-annually on an individual basis, and may select from a variety of times that best accommodate personal schedules.

Trustees are invited to participate in learning walks and building site visits led by district administration, which are scheduled in the Fall and Spring.

Trustees are invited to community and stakeholder engagements and events throughout the year, which can be attended as schedules allow.

Trustees are expected to attend annual commencement ceremonies and graduation events.

Trustees will be offered opportunities for local, state and national professional development throughout the year to consider.

Trustees are required by law to complete superintendent evaluation training in the first year.

In short, the time commitment is not fixed, rather it is influenced by each member's level of involvement and participation in board related activities.

## **TRUSTEE COMPENSATION:**

Members of the Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education serve without compensation. The district provides each trustee with a \$2,000 annual allocation for professional development and authorized business and travel expenses, as well as supply a district-issued device for the conduct of board-related duties during their term of office. The district does not supply cell phones to school board members, nor does it offer a stipend towards personal cell phone use.

## **ONBOARDING:**

Bloomfield Hills Schools' onboarding process begins with the unofficial results of the school board election, and is intended to be a collaborative and continuous process with no limits placed on a board member's onboarding experience.

Prior to beginning board service on January 1, incoming board members will:

- Receive communications from the Office of the Superintendent
- File an acceptance of office, and take and file the oath provided in Article XI, Section 1, of the State Constitution
- Receive an invitation to meetings with the superintendent and the district leadership team to learn about the organization and one another
- Become a member of the Oakland County School Boards Association, Michigan Association of School Boards and National School Boards Association
- Receive an invitation to the Oakland County School Boards Association New Board Member Orientation
- Receive a curated portfolio of materials to assist in the transition from community member to board member

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR TRUSTEE INVOLVEMENT:**

Candidates should understand that, if elected, a Board Trustee serves the entire district community. Trustees are responsible for acting in the best interests of all students enrolled in Bloomfield Hills Schools. The position must not be used for personal gain or to benefit family members, individuals, or organizations outside the broader interests of the District.

Trustees should also recognize that, in certain circumstances, their official duties may take precedence over their roles as parents or private citizens. Board members are expected to represent all students equitably and must not show favoritism toward, or discriminate against, any individual student or group. While participation in community and district activities is encouraged, Trustees must remain mindful of avoiding any real or perceived alignment with a specific student, group, or school.

Trustees may participate in organizations that support and benefit the District as a whole. In some cases, they may also be appointed to serve as Board of Education liaisons or representatives to stakeholder organizations.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA USE GUIDELINES**

A Board member's personal use of social media can have unintended consequences for both the individual and the District. These may include potential violations of the Open Meetings Act or issues related to the creation and retention of public records. Accordingly, all online activity should reflect an awareness of the responsibilities of Board service, applicable District policies, and legal obligations.

Board members should observe the following guidelines:

- Electronic communications with the community—including platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and text messaging must comply with Board policies and align with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.
- If a Board member maintains a personal website or blog that references District matters, employees, or students, the member must clearly identify themselves and state that the views expressed are their own and do not represent the full Board.
- Confidential information must never be disclosed.
- Care must be taken not to share or repeat information obtained during closed sessions or through private discussions with fellow Board members, District staff, or administration.
- District logos and trademarks may not be used on personal websites, blogs, or social media platforms.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Board members will receive information that is not available to the general public. This includes information that is received during a closed session of the Board. In order for the proper functioning of the Board, an individual Board member will not share confidential information without the prior authorization of the Board or as may be required by law.

## **RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS**

As a candidate or elected Trustee, you may be approached by community members, friends, students, or staff with requests, concerns, or complaints, and asked to “fix” an issue. It is important to understand that resolving individual concerns is not the role of a Board Trustee.

Trustees should not make commitments to personally address or resolve specific issues. Instead, the appropriate response is to guide the individual to the proper channel within the District's established chain of command. Depending on the situation, this may include the classroom teacher, building principal, administrative team, or Superintendent.

Following this process helps ensure concerns are addressed efficiently, consistently, and at the appropriate level of authority. For additional guidance, please refer to the District's resource on addressing concerns: <https://www.bloomfield.org/about-bhs/contact-bhs>

## BOARD OF EDUCATION CODE OF ETHICS

As a member of the Board, I will promote the best interest of the School District as a whole and will adhere to the following ethical standards and principles:

- I will represent all School District constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to any partisan principal, group or interest.
- I will avoid any conflict of interest prohibited by law or appearance of a conflict of interest that could result from my position, and will not use my membership on the Board for personal gain or where contrary to the interests of the School District.
- I will recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public meeting of the Board.
- I will take no private action that might compromise the Board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
- I will abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
- I will encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and will participate in Board discussions in an open, honest and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective.
- I will prepare for, attend and actively participate in School Board meetings.
- I will become sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the Board.
- I will respectfully listen to those who communicate with the Board, seeking to understand their views, while recognizing my responsibility to represent the interests of the entire school community.
- I will strive for a positive working relationship with the Superintendent, respecting the Superintendent's authority to advise the Board, implement Board policy, and administer the School District.
- I will model continuous learning and work to ensure good governance by taking advantage of Board member development opportunities, including, but not limited to, those sponsored by state and national school board associations, and encourage my fellow Board members to do the same.
- I will strive to keep the Board focused on its primary work of clarifying the School District purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring District performance.

## RESOURCE TOOLKIT

- [Michigan Association of School Boards Candidate's Guide to School Elections](#)
- [Schedule of Virtual Statewide Townhall Meetings for Prospective Candidates](#)
- [Video: Filing Requirements](#)
- [Filing Requirements for Oakland County Local School District Board Members](#)
- [Affidavit of Identity and Receipt of Filing Instructions / Forms](#)
- [State of Michigan Petition Manual](#)
- [Video: Campaign Election and Campaign Finance Laws](#)
- [Michigan Campaign Finance Act](#)
- [Statement of Organization Form for Candidate / Committee \(Campaign Finance Form\)](#)
- [Acceptance of Office and Oath of Office](#)
- [Overview of the Open Meetings Act](#)
- [Eight Traits of an Effective School Board Member](#)
- [Board of Education Governance Standards](#)
- [Roles of a Board Member](#)

## FILING DEADLINE

Candidates must file no later than 4:00 PM on Tuesday, July 21, 2026.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Oakland County Election Division  
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