Jim Thorpe Area School District

Book	Policy Manual
Section	000 Local Board Procedures
Title	Membership
Code	004
Status	Active
Legal	1. 24 P.S. 303 2. 24 P.S. 1081 3. 24 P.S. 322 4. 24 P.S. 323 5. 24 P.S. 324 6. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 1101 et seq 7. 24 P.S. 321 8. 51 PA Code 15.2 9. 51 PA Code 15.3 10. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 1102 11. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 1104 12. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 1105 13. 24 P.S. 301 et seq 14. 24 P.S. 315 15. 24 P.S. 316 16. 24 P.S. 317 17. 24 P.S. 318 18. 24 P.S. 319

19. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq

20. 24 P.S. 407

21. 65 P.S. 91

22. Pol. 006

23. Pol. 011

24. Pol. 901

25. 24 P.S. 516

26. 24 P.S. 328

27. 24 P.S. 516.1

24 P.S. 519

Pol. 331

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Number

The Board shall consist of nine (9) members.[1]

The Superintendent shall have a seat on the Board and the right to speak on all matters, but not the right to vote.[2]

Qualifications

Each school director shall meet the following qualifications:

1. Be of good moral character, be at least eighteen (18) years of age, have been a resident of the district for at least one (1) year prior to the date of election or appointment, and not be a holder of any office or position as specified in Section 322 of the School Code; nor shall the individual be a member of the municipal council.[3]

2. Shall not have been removed from any office of trust under federal, state or local laws for any malfeasance in such office.[4]

3. Shall not be engaged in a business transaction with the school district, be employed by the school district, or receive pay for services from the school district, except as provided by law.[5][6]

4. Shall take and subscribe to the oath or affirmation prescribed by statute before entering the duties of the office.[7]

5. Shall file a statement of financial interests with the Board Secretary or designee at the following times:[8][9][10][11][12]

    a. Before taking the oath of office or entering upon duties.

    b. Annually by May 1 while serving on the Board.

    c. By May 1 of the year after leaving the Board.

Election

Election of members of the Board shall be in accordance with law.[13]

Vacancies

A vacancy shall occur by reason of death, resignation, removal from a district or region, or otherwise. Such vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the School Code and Sunshine Act and by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board within thirty (30) days of the occurrence of the vacancy.[14][15][16][17][18][19]

If a vacancy occurs during the last two (2) years of the former school director's term, the individual appointed to fill that vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term. If a vacancy occurs during the first two (2) years of the term, the new appointee shall serve only until the first Monday in December following the first municipal election that is scheduled for more than sixty (60) days after the vacancy occurred.[14]

When a majority of the memberships are vacant, such vacancies shall be filled by the Court of Common Pleas of Carbon County.[15][16]

Temporary Vacancy – Active Military Service –

A temporary vacancy shall be declared when a school director is ordered to active duty in the military forces of the United States for a period of more than thirty (30) days. The temporary vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the School Code and Sunshine Act and by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board within thirty (30) days of the occurrence of the temporary vacancy. The school director so appointed shall serve either until the school director returns from active duty or until expiration of the term for which s/he was elected, whichever occurs first.[14][19][20]

Term

In election years, the term of office for all newly elected and re-elected school directors shall begin on the first Monday in December. The term of office of each school director shall be four (4) years, expiring on the first Monday of December of the fourth year of service.[1][14]

The term of office for an individual appointed or elected to fill a Board vacancy shall be determined by the number of years remaining on the term the school director was appointed or elected to fill, as stated above under Vacancies.[14]

Removal

Whenever a school director is no longer a resident of Jim Thorpe Area School District, eligibility to serve on the Board shall cease. [14][21]

If a school director shall neglect or refuse to attend two (2) successive regular meetings of the Board, unless detained by sickness or prevented by necessary absence from the district, or if in attendance at any meeting s/he shall neglect or refuse to act in an official capacity as a school director, the remaining members of the Board may declare such office vacant on the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining members of the Board.[18][22]

If a person elected or appointed as a school director, having been notified, shall refuse or neglect to qualify as such director, the remaining members may, within ten (10) days following the beginning of the school director's term of office, declare said office vacant on the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining members of the Board.[18][22]

Orientation

The Board believes that the preparation of each school director for the performance of duties is essential to the effectiveness of the Board's functioning. The Board shall encourage each new school director to understand the functions of the Board, acquire knowledge of matters related to the operation of the schools, and review Board procedures and policies.

Accordingly, each new school director shall, no later than the first regular meeting, be provided access to the following items during the school director's term on the Board:

1. The Board Policy Manual.
2. The district Administrative Regulations Manual.
3. The current budget statement, audit report and related fiscal materials.
4. District information on comprehensive planning, curriculum, assessments, facilities planning and district programs.
5. The Board's adopted Principles for Governance and Leadership.[23]

Each new school director shall be invited to meet with the Board President, Superintendent, and Board Secretary to discuss Board functions, procedures and policy.

Inservice Educational Opportunities and Required Training Programs

The Board places a high priority on the importance of a planned and continuing program of education and training for its members. The purpose of the planned program shall be to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the Board's governance and leadership by providing both in-service educational opportunities and required school director training by an approved provider.

Inservice Education -

The Board, in conjunction with the Superintendent, shall plan specific in-service education programs and activities designed to assist school directors to improve their skills as policy-making leaders; expand their knowledge about issues, programs, and initiatives affecting the district's educational programs and student achievement; and deepen their insights into the nature of leadership, governance and community engagement.

The Board shall annually budget funds to support its planned program of in-service education and training.

The Board establishes the following activities as the basis for its planned program of in-service education and training:

1. Participation in School Board conferences, workshops and conventions.**[25]**

    a. The Board shall identify annually the issues, objectives, and cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation by school directors in conferences, workshops and conventions.

    b. The Superintendent shall inform school directors, in a timely manner, of upcoming conferences, workshops and conventions.

    c. The Board shall periodically decide which meetings appear to offer the most direct and indirect benefits to the district.

    d. When a conference, workshop or convention is not attended by the full Board, those who do participate shall share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting that will be beneficial to the district.

2. District-sponsored in-service education and training programs designed to meet Board needs.

3. Subscriptions to publications addressing school directors' concerns.

4. Maintenance of current resources and reference materials accessible to school directors.

Required Training Program: Newly Elected or Appointed School Directors **[26]**

Each newly elected or appointed school director shall complete a training program consisting of at least five (5) hours of instruction, including, at a minimum, information regarding:

1. Instruction and academic programs, to include, but not be limited to, a minimum of one (1) hour of instruction on best practices related to trauma-informed approaches.

2. Personnel.

3. Fiscal management.

4. Operations.

5. Governance.

6. Ethics and open meetings, to include accountability requirements.

Required Training Program: Re-elected or Re-appointed School Directors **[26]**

Each re-elected or re-appointed school director shall, within one (1) year after such re-election or re-appointment, complete an advanced training program consisting of at least three (3) hours of instruction, including:

1. Information on relevant changes to federal and state public school law and regulations.

2. Fiscal management.

3. Trauma-informed approaches.

4. Other information deemed appropriate by the PA Department of Education to enable school directors to serve effectively.

Expenses [7]

Funds for school director education and training shall be budgeted on an annual basis.

Each school director shall receive Board approval prior to attending a conference, workshop or convention at Board expense.

When attendance has been authorized by the Board, school directors, a nonmember Board Secretary, and solicitor(s) shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred as delegates to any state convention or association of school directors' convention held within the state, or for attendance at any other meeting held within the state or at an educational convention out-of-state. All such expenses shall be itemized and made available for public inspection at the next succeeding Board meeting. Expenses shall be reimbursed by the Treasurer in the usual manner, upon presentation of an itemized, verified statement.[27]

Advance payments may be made upon presentation of estimated expenses to be incurred, to be followed by a final itemized, verified statement of such expenses actually incurred, and a refund shall be made to the district of such funds remaining, or an additional payment shall be made by the district to meet the verified expenses actually incurred.[27]

No school director shall be reimbursed for more than one (1) out-of-state meeting per school year.

Reimbursement shall be limited to actual expenses incurred, and shall not include or be construed to include compensation to individual school directors.[7]

Student Representation

The Board may authorize student representation on the Board in order to facilitate effective communication and to provide an opportunity for students to participate in school governance.

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