



VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD CANDIDATES





Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD CANDIDATES

The following questions can be used as thought-provoking prompts and in no way represent a complete list of potential questions for interviewing potential school board members. Questions agreed upon by your board will best reflect the topics of importance and the candidate's responses should be judged in accordance with your board's standards.

Background & Reasons for Seeking Election:

1. Why are you running for the School Board? If elected, what will be your priorities?
2. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the board of education?
3. What particular experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a board member?
4. What differentiates you from the other candidates and/or board members? What unique qualities would you bring to this role? Are there aspects of your education and experience that you feel would be especially helpful in this position?
5. Describe your experience in working with parents, community members, the business community and human service agencies.

Governance & Role of Board:

6. What do you see as the primary work of the board of education?
7. What is a school board member's role and responsibility? How does that role differ from the role of the superintendent or administration?
8. How can a school board know if its goals are being accomplished and its policies are being implemented?
9. What do you believe is the greatest challenge about school board service?
10. What do you believe is the greatest reward about school board service?
11. School Board service is a huge commitment. How will you manage your time to ensure that you remain dedicated to being informed of the school division's operations and stay abreast of the ever-changing landscape of public education in this city/county as well as the commonwealth?



Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD CANDIDATES

12. What are your thoughts about school board members being relied upon as leaders in this community as a member of the body responsible for the governance of public schools in this division?
13. What do you believe our schools/division have been successful in accomplishing? What do you attribute to this success?
14. What do you believe are the greatest challenges currently facing this school division? What do you see as the board's role in addressing those challenges? What do you see as the administration's role in addressing those challenges?
15. How do you view the board's role vs the administration's role in running the school division?
16. What are your thoughts on the current and the proposed budget for your school district? As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts?
17. How would you determine your budget priorities?

Communications & Conflict:

18. Could you support a board decision you did not vote in favor of? Why or why not?
19. As an individual school board member, how would you handle a situation where the board takes a position which you do not agree with? What if that position was something you actively campaigned on?
20. What is the best way to address differences of opinion on the board or between the board and the administration?
21. How would you handle conflict with fellow board members? How would you handle conflict with administrators or teachers?
22. How would you handle being approached by an angry, irate parent or teacher with complaints about a school division issue or employee?
23. How would you handle being approached by a reporter for an interview about a controversial issue or something that the board has not yet taken action on?
24. How can the board be accessible to the community? To specific community groups?



Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD CANDIDATES

25. What is the public relations role of the board?

26. How can a board best communicate with its constituent groups?

Educational Program & Student Achievement:

27. What issues do you believe this division needs to address in its academic program and offerings? What changes would you recommend?

28. What should your school division do to better prepare students as citizens?

29. What can be done to improve student achievement and ensure everyone who graduates is life-ready?

30. What do you see as the major issue(s) facing your school division? Public education?

31. What are your areas of concern regarding student achievement in this school division?

32. Given all the issues that arise, how can the board stay focused on student achievement?

33. What do you believe is the best criteria for evaluating educational programs?

Advocacy & Vision:

34. How does a school board balance the need to provide a quality education with the need to respond to the local taxpayer burden?

35. What changes should be made on the state and local level regarding public education?

36. How do you believe a school board member can be most effective in making long lasting substantial positive changes for students?

37. What is your vision for education in this community?

38. Imagine you are at the end of your school board service. What three achievements do you most want to be remembered for?