

A Year in the Life of a School Board

Mark your calendar to be ready for a busy year

While every school board in New Jersey deals with its own particular issues, there are certain tasks and responsibilities that all boards share. Many of these are as predictable as the seasons. The schedule below will help you understand what your board should and will be doing — and when.

The timing on the following activities is suggested, not required, except where noted.

JANUARY

- Board reorganization (after November elections)*
- District in-house orientation for new board members (for districts with November elections)
- Board Code of Ethics discussion with NJSBA representative *(for districts with November elections)
- Review mandatory training requirements for board members (for newly sworn in as well as existing members)
- Review requirements of the superintendent contract renewal for contracts expiring July 1.* (Superintendents must be given 30 days notice for each year of a contract duration.) See *N.J.S.A. 18A:17-15*. Title 18 A is the section of state law governing public education.
- For new board members, financial disclosure forms are due to the School Ethics Commission within 30 days of joining the board*
- Review preliminary budget numbers with superintendent/chief schools administrator (CSA) and board administrator

FEBRUARY

- CSA provides an update on progress toward achievement of district goals and objectives
- Board provides public update on progress toward achievement of board goals and professional development improvement plan
- CSA reports on teachers meeting definition of highly qualified or evidence of progress toward same
- CSA/BA provide update on capital projects
- Meet with NJSBA representative to review superintendent and board evaluation process and set timelines for completion

MARCH

- Hold public budget hearing / adopt budget (April elections)*
- Suggested: Public hearing of the Violence, Vandalism and Bullying Report. (By law a board must have a public hearing twice yearly; once between Sept.1 - Jan. 1 and again between Jan. 1- June 30.)

APRIL

- Financial disclosure forms to the Ethics Commission for board members elected in April and for all continuing board members*
- Hold public budget hearing / adopt budget (November elections)*
- Approve the school health nursing services plan
- Approve the comprehensive equity plan

MAY

- Board reorganization (if April elections held)*
- In-house orientation for new board members (April elections)
- Review mandatory training requirements for board members (April elections)
- Board Code of Ethics discussion with NJSBA representative *(for districts with April elections)
- Complete online CSA evaluation forms* (all non-conflicted board members) once CSA has completed his/her goals portion.
- Complete online board self-evaluation form
- Approve written curriculum that clearly and specifically aligns with the most recent State Board adopted version
- End-of-year staff review report to board by CSA (All staff: non-tenured, tenured, and administration)
- Report on compliance of submitting financial disclosure statements to the School Ethics Commission
- Act on personnel recommendations of CSA

JUNE

- Schedule closed-session meeting (all non-conflicted board members) to review board members' evaluations and organize the overall superintendent evaluation narrative (Provide "Rice" notice to superintendent. "Rice" refers to the case that led to the legally-required process of notifying school employees when matters affecting their employment will be discussed privately by the school board.)
- CSA provides end-of-the-year report on district goals
- Board provides end-of-the-year report on board of education goals
- Review and revise as necessary the superintendent evaluation instrument for upcoming year based on goals and objectives
- Finalize the superintendent's evaluation and conduct closed session summary conference (all non-conflicted board members); provide Rice notice to superintendent.*
- Board annual goal-setting retreat
- Review results of compiled board self-evaluation
- Board should request contract analysis from NJSBA labor relations staff, for employee contracts ending in June of the upcoming year.

JULY

- Board of education approves district and board of education goals
- Superintendent develops action plans to achieve district goals
- Board develops action plans to achieve board goals
- Review and approve staff development plans for next year and the connection to student achievement
- Review the district mentoring plan
- Approve board professional development improvement plan
- Review curriculum writing process and the connection to increased student achievement

AUGUST

- Review progress of all students at key grade levels in mastering the current education standards and on the performance of student subgroups on state tests
- Approve any additional personnel recommendations for coming school year
- Annual review of student code of conduct
- Annual review of memorandum of agreement (MOA) and law enforcement operations for alcohol, other drugs, weapons and safety

SEPTEMBER

- Board approves district and board of education goals
- Superintendent presents action plans for achievement of district goals
- Approve the comprehensive maintenance plan
- Approve the long range facility plan
- Approve the safety and security plan
- Board plans for negotiations for employee contracts ending in June of upcoming year

OCTOBER

- Public hearing of the Violence, Vandalism and Bullying Report (suggested for this month; by law a board must have a public hearing twice yearly; once between Sept. 1- Jan.1 and again between Jan 1- June 30).
- Develop budget parameters focusing on student achievement based on strategic planning goals and/or district annual goals
- Update on curriculum writing/pilots/cycle
- CSA provides update on progress toward achievement of district goals and objectives
- Board provides update on progress toward achievement of board goals and Professional Development Improvement Plan
- Attend NJSBA Workshop

NOVEMBER

- Board election (November elections)
- Approve submission of the NJQSAC Statement of Assurance*
- Review audit report / approve and oversee the corrective action plan if needed* (Audit report must be approved by board no later than five months after the end of the previous school year.)
- Review and/or approve Technology Plan

DECEMBER

- Review budget priorities, ensure planned purchase of materials and curriculum development support student achievement
- Negotiations begin if teachers contract ends in June of upcoming year

* Required