

# TURKEYFOOT VALLEY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

**SECTION: 000**

**TITLE: Membership**

**ADOPTED: April 2010**

**REVISED: November 18, 2019  
October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019  
January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

PURPOSE	
AUTHORITY	<p><u>Number</u></p> <p>The Board shall consist of nine (9) members.<a href="#">[1]</a></p> <p>The Superintendent shall have a seat on the Board and the right to speak on all matters, but not the right to vote.<a href="#">[2]</a></p>
DEFINITION	<p><u>Qualifications</u></p> <p>Each school director shall meet the following qualifications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.<a href="#">[3]</a></li><li>2. Shall not have been removed from any office of trust under federal, state or local laws for any malfeasance in such office.<a href="#">[4]</a></li><li>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.<a href="#">[5]</a><a href="#">[6]</a></li><li>4. Shall take and subscribe to the oath or affirmation prescribed by statute before entering the duties of the office.<a href="#">[7]</a></li><li>5. Shall file a statement of financial interests with the Board Secretary or designee at the following times:<a href="#">[8]</a><a href="#">[9]</a><a href="#">[10]</a><a href="#">[11]</a><a href="#">[12]</a><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Before taking the oath of office or entering upon duties.</li><li>b. Annually by May 1 while serving on the Board.</li><li>c. By May 1 of the year after leaving the Board.</li></ol></li></ol>
GUIDELINES	<p><u>Election</u></p>

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 Somerset 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 Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District or the region s/he represents, 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.**

{ } **The school community shall be kept informed about the Board's continuing in-service education and training and the anticipated short and long-term benefits to the district and its schools.**[24]

***In-service 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 Superintendent shall inform **school directors**, in a timely manner, of upcoming conferences, workshops and conventions.
  - b. The Board shall periodically decide which meetings appear to offer the most direct and indirect benefits to the district.
  - c. 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 two (2) out-of-state meetings in one (1) 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 authorizes student representation on the Board in order to facilitate effective communication and to provide an opportunity for students to participate in school governance.

**Code of Ethics**

As a member of my local Board of Education, representing all the citizens of my school district, I recognize:

- a. That my fellow citizens have entrusted me with the educational development of the children and youth of this community.
- b. That the public expects my first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each and every one of these young people without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
- c. That the future welfare of this community, of this state, and of the nation depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education we provide in the public schools to fit the needs of every learner.
- d. That my fellow Board members and I must take the initiative in helping all the people of this community to have all the facts, all the time, about their schools, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff, and school facilities.
- e. That legally, the authority of the Board is derived from the General Assembly which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the school district and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
- f. That I must not neglect my personal obligations to the community and my legal obligation to the state, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization; but that, beyond these, I have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as public schools in the United States of America are kept free and strong.

In view of the foregoing considerations, it shall be my constant endeavor:

- a. To devote time thought and study to the duties and responsibilities of a School Board member so that I may render effective and creditable service.
- b. To work with my fellow Board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arises during vigorous debate of points at issue.
- c. To base my personal decision upon all available facts in each situation; to vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind; thereafter, to abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.

- d. To remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and to conduct my relationships with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communication on the basis of this fact.
- e. To resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a School Board member to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the school district.
- f. To recognize that it is as important for the Board to understand and evaluate the educational program.
- g. To bear in mind under all circumstances that the primary function of the Board is to establish the policies by which the schools are to be administered, but that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the employed Superintendent of Schools and the professional and non-professional staff.
- h. To welcome and encourage active cooperation by citizens, organizations, and the media of communication in the district with respect to establishing policy on current school operation and proposed future developments.
- i. To support my state and national School Board associations.
- j. Finally, to strive step by step toward ideal conditions for most effective School Board service to my community, in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our respective democracy.

#### Legal References

- 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

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|  | <p>13. 24 P.S. 301 et seq<br/>14. 24 P.S. 315<br/>15. 24 P.S. 316<br/>16. 24 P.S. 317<br/>17. 24 P.S. 318<br/>18. 24 P.S. 319<br/>19. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq<br/>20. 24 P.S. 407<br/>21. 65 P.S. 91<br/>22. Pol. 006<br/>23. Pol. 011<br/>24. Pol. 901<br/>25. 24 P.S. 516<br/>26. 24 P.S. 328<br/>27. 24 P.S. 516.1<br/>24 P.S. 519<br/>Pol. 331</p> |
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