



## **Township of Franklin Board of Education FAQs**

### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

The Township of Franklin Board of Education members are responsible for setting the course of the school district and strive to make informed decisions. The Board of Education meetings provide an opportunity for the community to witness the board members discussing and voting on matters directly affecting the Township of Franklin Public Schools. Listed below are some *Frequently Asked Questions and Answers* to help residents better understand the role and responsibilities of the Board of Education.

- ***What are the primary responsibilities of the Board of Education?***  
The stated mission is to develop the unique potential of each individual student and create global learners through a challenging and diverse curriculum in a positive learning climate that promotes the development of the whole child and fosters respect for all students. To that end, the Township of Franklin Board of Education sets district policy which is then implemented by the superintendent of schools and administrators. The board also develops the annual school budget, sets district goals, and reviews curriculum changes.
- ***When and where are Board meetings held?***  
The Board of Education approves the annual meeting calendar at the January reorganization meeting. The annual meeting calendar is advertised in the local newspapers and can be found on the district website under the BOE tab. [www.franklintwpschools.org](http://www.franklintwpschools.org)
- ***What is the composition of the Board?***  
The Board consists of nine community members elected by township residents for three-year terms. The superintendent of schools is also considered a non-voting member of the Board of Education.
- ***What transpires at Board meetings?***  
There are two types of meetings: work session and regular session. At the work sessions, the board often reviews reports from school administrators and discusses general school district matters. At regular sessions, the board has an opportunity to formally vote on agenda items.
- ***What role does the public play at Board meetings?***  
The public is able to witness what takes place at Board of Education meetings since all meetings are open to the public as required by the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act of 1975. The public has the opportunity to offer comment during the public portion of the board meeting. Typically, the public comment portion occurs at the beginning of the meeting. Please note that the board will listen to members of the public during the public comment portion of the board meeting, but may be limited by law in its ability to respond.
- ***Are there any guidelines for addressing the Board?***  
When addressing the board, individuals are asked to state their name and address, and, if representing a group or organization, identify it by name. Speakers are also asked to focus their discussion on school programs, be brief and to the point so others can address the board, and refrain from commenting on individuals and school personnel.



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- ***Can I bring concerns about a classroom situation to the Board of Education?***

There is a chain of command within the district that helps ensure that all concerns, requests, and questions are handled efficiently. The chain begins with the classroom teacher, moves to the building principal, and then to the superintendent of schools. If the issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction, the Board of Education is a last resort. This chain enables concerns to be solved by the person closest to the situation who can generally provide the quickest and most accurate answer.
- ***Does the Board ever meet in smaller committees?***

The Township of Franklin Board of Education works as a committee as a whole. There are occasions when the board needs to create Ad Hoc committees. Ad Hoc committees generally focus on one specific topic and will report back to the whole board. Employee negotiations is a good example of when the board will work in a smaller committee format.
- ***Is the Board permitted to meet privately?***

There are occasions when the full Board meets privately in executive session. Scheduled Executive Sessions are indicated in the Board Agenda. Board members are “honor bound” not to disclose executive session information. Among the topics that executive session discussions usually entail are: personnel issues, labor negotiations, legal matters, and items of a confidential nature.
- ***How long do Board members serve?***

Board members serve overlapping three-year terms. As a result, three members are typically elected each year on the same date as the annual general election in November.
- ***What happens if a member moves away or decides to step down from the Board?***

In the event of a mid-term vacancy, the public is invited to apply to fill the opening. The existing board members interview the candidates and then appoint one to the open seat.
- ***What are the requirements necessary to run for the Board of Education?***

Board candidates must meet specific legal qualifications. Candidates must also submit a notarized nominating petition endorsed and signed by registered voters. For additional information, the New Jersey School Boards Association publishes a “School Board Candidate Kit,” which is available on the NJSBA website [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org)
- ***What kind of time commitment should Board members anticipate?***

Board members can anticipate attending at least two Board meetings a month, several and various school functions. A significant amount of time for reviewing written materials is also required.