

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BOARD MEMBERS

The board of education places a high priority on the importance of a planned and continuing program of in-service education for its members. The central purpose of the program is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public school governance in our community. The board shall plan specific in-service activities designed to assist board members in their efforts to improve their skills as members of the policy-making body; to expand their knowledge about trends, issues, and new ideas affecting the continued welfare of our local schools; and to deepen their insights into the nature of leadership in a modern democratic society.

Funds may be budgeted annually to support the program. Individual board members shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred through participation in approved activities. The board, as a whole, shall retain the authority to approve or disapprove the participation of members in planned activities. The public shall be kept informed through the news media about the board's continuing in-service education and about the programs anticipated for short- and long-range benefits to our schools.

The board regards the following as examples of the kinds of activities and services appropriate for implementing this policy:

1. Participation in school board conferences, workshops, and conventions held by the state and national school boards associations.
2. District-sponsored training sessions for board members.
3. Subscriptions to publications addressed to the concerns of board members.

In order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the board establishes these principles and procedures for its guidelines:

1. A calendar of school board conferences, conventions, and workshops shall be maintained by the superintendent. The board will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school district.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the board will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to board members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel expense policy for staff members. (See policy DEE and DEE-R.)
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full board, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations, and materials acquired at the meeting.
5. The superintendent, or designee, will maintain records of each board member's training accomplishments and will notify any board member of the need for the board member to accomplish any additional training. The superintendent will notify the State Department of Education of any changes in board membership.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: BOARD MEMBERS (Cont.)

School board members are encouraged to attend workshops presented by the county, state, and national school boards associations. Professional journals and books in the school libraries shall be made available to every board member. The Superintendent shall provide information to the full school board as to the status of school board member training credits under an appropriately worded agenda item. The report shall include the number of new or incumbent credits, as well as the number of continuing education credits each board member has earned. This report shall be provided to the members of the board of education at the August and February regular meetings of the board of education.

Board members who are newly elected, re-elected or who plan to seek re-election are required by state law to participate in instruction on education issues, including school finance, Oklahoma education laws, and ethics, duties, and responsibilities of district board of education members. Board members may attend a variety of workshops to be held within the state by the State Department of Education, or other workshops, seminars, or classes presented by any SDE approved organization, including institutes of higher education and the Oklahoma State School Boards Association (OSSBA). The required new board member training must be accomplished during the first 15 months of each board member's tenure. The board will insure that new members are notified of the date and time of such workshops. Certificates of completion received by the district will be entered into board minutes.

Board members who attend and successfully complete such workshops as required by state law, which are presented by the OSSBA, the State Board of Education, or an organization or association approved by the SDE, shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred, not to exceed \$25.00 per day and actual expenses for lodging, meals, registration fees, and transportation to and from the place of the workshop.

By March 1, the Oklahoma State Department of Education will notify school board members who have not yet completed training requirements that they are required to do so. If the board member fails to earn training credits in the timeline set by statute, the Oklahoma State Department of Education will notify by certified mail the school boards and the superintendent that a board member has failed to earn the required training credits. The board of education will then have thirty (30) days to declare the seat vacant.

**REFERENCE: 70 O.S. §5-110
70 O.S. §5-110.1**

CROSS-REFERENCE: Policy DEE, Travel and Expense Reimbursement