

## Your Question:

You requested information on school board training requirements.

## Our Response:

Education Commission of the States tracks legislation related to school boards in our [State Education Policy](#) database. You can see a list of bills related to school boards by filtering for Issue Area “K-12 Governance”, then sub-issue “School Boards.”

Approaches to school board member training programs vary by state, including the number of training hours, training over a member’s term and required content. Below is information related to various state approaches and requirements for local school board member training.

### Statutory Requirements for School Board Members

**Arkansas** [requires](#) a local school district board member to obtain no less than six hours of training and instruction each calendar year. Members elected for an initial or non-continuous term are required to meet additional training opportunities during their tenure.

**Georgia** [requires](#) (O.C.G.A. 20-2-230) the state board of education in the department of education to craft and oversee local school board member training. In 2009, the state board of education convened a task force to, among other things, develop and recommend [standards](#) for local school boards and [guidelines](#) for member training. The task force established a new lexicon around central themes to reflect local education priorities and maintain student achievement. The themes identified in the state standards for local education board focus include governance structure, strategic planning, board and community relations, policy development, board meetings, personnel, financial governance and ethics. The state standards may include an expectation on the knowledge, skill or performance.

Starting on July 1, 2021 (as enacted by [S.B. 68](#) in 2020), financial management is included in local school boards' roles and responsibilities and must be included in member training. The training must include:

- Guidance on the local school system's most recent audit findings and the local school system's risk status as determined by the department of audits and accounts or the department of education.
- An overview of the local superintendent's role concerning financial management and financial governance of a local school system.

If the state designates a high-risk school within the local board of education's purview, the members must complete additional training.

**Illinois** [requires](#) that each voting member of a school board must complete four hours of professional development training within the first year of their first term. Topics of the training must include financial oversight and accountability, labor law and fiduciary responsibilities of a school board member.

**Louisiana** [requires](#) each local public school board member to receive a minimum of 16 hours of training and instruction during the first year of service on the board to receive the "Distinguished School Board Member" designation. Each member must receive a minimum of six hours of training and instruction annually beyond the first-year requirements. If a school district is deemed "academically unacceptable or in need of academic assistance" by the state board, at least two hours must focus on school improvement. The training topics currently include state school laws, governing the powers, duties, and responsibilities and educational trends, research and policy. The Louisiana School Board Association provides the [training programs](#).

**Mississippi** [statute](#) states that, "Each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association."

**Nevada** implemented training requirements in [2016](#). In the first and third year of a member's term, they must complete a minimum of six hours of instruction in public records laws, open meeting laws, local government relations, the K-12 education system, ethics, violence and sexual violence prevention, financial management, fiduciary duties and employment and contract laws.

**New Jersey** [requires](#) first-year school board members to complete a training program that includes instructional program, personnel, fiscal management, operations and governance. In subsequent years, board members must complete a school district governance training on school law and other information to enable the board member to serve more effectively.

The [New Jersey School Board Association](#) is charged with providing school board member training, and outlines the training schedules [based on four topic areas](#).

- Governance I, provided to new board members during new member orientation, focuses on various topic areas.
- Governance II, provided during the second full year of service of a member's first term, focuses on school finance.
- Governance III, provided during the third full year of service of a member's first term, focuses on student achievement.
- Governance IV, provided in the first year of any succeeding term to members re-elected or reappointed to the board, focuses on legal updates.

**North Carolina** [requires](#) all local boards of education members to receive a minimum of twelve hours of training every two years. The training must include public school finance in addition to public school law and duties and responsibilities of local boards of education.

**Oklahoma** [requires](#) all elected school board members to undergo training. The law indicates that [training hours](#) depend on the length of term served by the board member. [Training requirements](#) include one hour each of finance training, open records/meetings training and ethics training. New members must complete nine hours of continuing education (three for incumbent members). Instruction is provided by the Oklahoma School Boards Association or the Oklahoma Department of State.

**Pennsylvania** [enacted](#) an omnibus education bill in 2017 requiring the department of education to provide a training program for new school directors (board members). The training must consist of a minimum of four hours of training that addresses instruction and academic programs, personnel, fiscal management, operations, governance, ethics and open meetings. Additional training requirements for reelected or reappointed school directors, as well as charter school trustees are also included.

**South Carolina** [requires](#) all elected or appointed members of a school district board of trustees to complete an orientation program covering the powers and duties of a board member within one year of taking office. The orientation, which must be approved by the state board of education, must include training on “policy development, personnel, superintendent and board relations, instructional programs, district finance, school law, ethics and community relations.”

**Virginia** [requires](#) its state board of education and local boards of education to participate in professional development. The state board must participate in professional development on “personnel, curriculum and current issues in education.” For local boards of education, members must participate annually in professional development at the state, local or national levels of governance, including “personnel policies and practices; the evaluation of personnel, curriculum, and instruction; use of data in planning and decision making; and current issues in education as part of their service on the local board.”