

Township and School Board Office Descriptions

Township Trustee

Sample #1

The trustee is the chief executive officer of the township and must reside in the township. Residents of the township elect the trustee for a term of four years. The trustee's salary is established by the township board. The trustee is required to attend all township board meetings.

The trustee prepares the annual township budget for submission to the township board and has general control over all property belonging to the township. Where applicable, the trustee also serves as chief administrative officer for township schools. Other responsibilities of the trustee relate to township assistance, recreation, cemetery maintenance, eradication of weeds, and fire protection.

The trustee must keep accurate and current accounts describing the activity of all funds received and expended. The trustee is required to submit an annual township statistical report to the State Board of Accounts.

Term: 4 years

Sample #2

The trustee is the chief executive officer of the township and must reside in that township. Residents of the township elect the trustee for a term of four years. The trustee's salary is established by the township board.

The trustee prepares the annual township budget for submission to the township board and has general control over all property belonging to the township. Where applicable, the trustee also serves as chief administrative officer for township schools. Other responsibilities of the trustee relate to poor relief, recreation, cemetery maintenance, and fire protection.

Poor Relief

Every township trustee has a primary obligation of caring for destitute people who appeal for aid. When a person or family claiming to be poor and in distress seeks aid, the township trustee is obliged to grant relief if the need is verified and residency or intent to establish residency is verified. Such relief includes food, shelter, clothing, utility bills and school lunches.

Summer Recreation Programs and Community Services

The trustee has the authority, either independently or in cooperation with a school board, School Corporation, city, town or other governmental unit, to establish and sponsor summer recreation programs. The cost is to be paid from civil township funds.

Within funding capabilities, the trustee has wide authority to establish or maintain a variety of community services as well. These include, but are not limited to, programs for the elderly, as well as parks.

Fire Protection

The trustee, with the consent of the township board, may purchase firefighting equipment and employ firefighters or may join with the trustee of one or more adjoining townships in providing joint fire protection. The trustee may contract with cities, towns or volunteer firefighting companies to supply fire protection, ambulance service and paramedic programs.

Township Board

Sample #1

The township board has three members and are elected to four-year terms. Duties of the board include:

- adopting the annual budget
- fixing the tax rate
- imposing property tax levies
- authorizing the incurring of indebtedness
- approving township contracts
- overseeing bonds and warrants
- serving as a township board of finance
- fixing salaries of elected and appointed officers and employees

The township trustee is required to attend the township board meetings. Each January, the trustee presents to the board an annual budget for approval which must be submitted to the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance for additional approval. The board must keep a record of it proceeding, which remains in the custody of the chairperson of the board.

Term: 4 years

Sample #2

The township trustee is assisted by a Township Board whose members are elected to four-year terms. Duties of the board include adopting the annual budget, serving as a board of finance and approving township contracts. In January of each year, the trustee presents to the board an annual report showing the receipts, expenditures, investments, and debts of the township. The township board is also able to authorize a tax levy rate necessary to generate the amount the township board determines is needed for township functions.

School Boards (Check the websites of the school corporations in your county for other text)

Sample 1

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1. Determine school district's mission and purpose
2. Establish policies to accomplish the district's stated mission and ensure that policies are being followed
3. Select the Superintendent
4. Support the Superintendent and assess performance
5. Ensure effective organizational planning
6. Ensure adequate resources:
 1. Financial
 2. Facilities
 3. Human
 4. Time
7. Assure effective management of resources
8. Determine, monitor, and strengthen the district's programs and services
9. Enhance the school district's public standing
10. Ensure legal and ethical integrity, maintaining accountability
11. Provide support and orientation for new board members

Sample 2

They **establish the vision and goals for the public schools in their district**, and they set standards for the performance of schools and superintendents. Most school board members are elected by people in their community to represent their values, views, and desires for the public schools in their district.

Sample #3

(South Bend) Members of the Board of School Trustees are elected for four years. Five members are elected by voting district, and two are at-large. The board is responsible for the approval of purchases, contracts, curriculum adoptions, budgets and appropriations; and makes policy in open public session.

When required, the board convenes in a closed session. By authority of Indiana law, the board may convene in executive or closed session for discussion of collective bargaining; purchase or lease of real property; possible litigation; appointment, employment or dismissal of employees; student discipline cases; and matters related to students in special education programs.

Formal action on those matters discussed in executive session must be taken in an open public session.

Sample #4

(Tippecanoe County Schools) The Board of School Trustees exists as a governing body and is dedicated to the corporation's mission to educate all students and inspire them to reach their academic potential in a safe environment. The Board of School Trustees is composed of seven elected citizens who serve four-year, staggered terms. Candidates from each district are elected on an at-large, non-partisan ballot in the November general election. Each member must be 21 years of age; a registered voter; a high school graduate; and a resident of the district she/he represents for two years immediately preceding the election.

The school board is responsible for developing policies that guide our school system. Based on recommendations made by the superintendent and staff, the board authorizes spending, reviews curriculum, and acts on personnel issues. For a motion to become enacted, most of the board must vote for it in an official session. A quorum of at least four board members must be present to conduct official business.

Sample #5

(Lafayette School Corporation) The Board is committed to the education of all students as appropriate for their individual abilities; to an awareness of the concerns and desires of the entire community regarding the quality and performance of the school system; and to the employment of a superintendent of schools who will ensure that the Lafayette School Corporation maintains a position as an outstanding school system and under whose leadership school personnel will carry out the policies of the board.

The board commits itself to the following goals:

1. To place the best interests of the students first and foremost when making any policy.
2. To interpret the educational needs of the community, and to meet them through the formulation of policies that stimulate the learner and the learning process.
3. To concentrate the board's effort on its policy making and planning responsibilities.
4. To provide direction in order that the goals and objectives of the school system shall be effectively implemented.
5. To maintain effective two-way communication with the various publics served by the schools.
6. To develop, review, and analyze data appropriate for planning, evaluating, and implementing sound policies.
7. To conduct board business openly, soliciting and encouraging broad-based involvement in the board's decision-making processes.

Sample #6

An effective school board has a few important responsibilities—from policymaking to leadership decisions—to ensure that their school is the best that it can be. Some of these responsibilities include:

- **Policymaking:** It is the school board’s responsibility to design and implement policy for their school district, such as creating performance markers for student achievement, and making sure a school’s procedures comply with federal laws and state laws. This is done in collaboration with their local communities, with the school board hosting regular board meetings that are open to the public where citizens can attend to ask questions.
- **Hiring the Superintendent:** A school’s Superintendent is the chief executive officer of the school board and oversees the implementation of the board's vision for district schools. The school board also hires the Assistant Superintendent, who supports the Superintendent in their role of managing educators and other school staff members.
- **Approving budgets:** The school board controls the annual budget allocated to their district from the state government and decides how to spend that money. They’re responsible for compiling and approving the annual budget and delegating funds towards school day operations.
- **Approving curriculums:** The school board is responsible for approving a school's curriculum, as well as deciding the textbooks that the district will use.
- **Assessing compliance with policy standards:** A school board is expected to monitor local school’s performance, measured against the board's performance markers, and report when schools fail to adhere to district policies.
- **Setting the school calendar:** The school board of a given district sets the calendar for the school year, including beginning and end dates. They also decide school closures in the event of inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances.
- **Community advocacy:** The school board is considered a leader in their community and should advocate for the community's educational needs. To do that, the school board should engage with the staff, students, and parents from local elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as from the wider community.