



# SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE RESEARCH GUIDE

Ohio Primary Election • Tues, May 6, 2025

Ohio General Election • Tues, Nov 4, 2025

Every odd year, Ohio holds school board elections for K-12 public school districts across the state. These nonpartisan elections are an important opportunity for Ohioans to elect candidates who reflect their values and priorities for public education. From campus culture, curriculum, funding, student safety, and policy, each school board member plays a vital role in shaping how and what our children learn and experience in Ohio schools.

**YOUR INFORMED VOTE MATTERS!** This year, it's more important than ever to understand each candidate's values, core competencies, and work experiences. Do they champion honest education? Prioritize inclusive, affirming schools? Center a Whole Child approach to education? Believe in fully funded public education? Understand multi-million dollar operating budgets, staffing, and facilities maintenance?

Use this research guide to help evaluate your candidates and elect the best leaders for your district.

## Research your SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES in 5 easy steps!

### STEP 1: Find Your Candidates

Use these options to find a list of school board candidates in your area.

- Voter Guides: [OhioVoterGuide.org](https://ohiovoterguide.org) • [Vote411.org](https://vote411.org) • [SchoolBoardSchool.org](https://schoolboardschool.org) (Cincinnati area)
- Local Board of Elections website
  - Find your Board of Elections website at [VoteOhio.gov](https://voteohio.gov)
  - Select **What's on My Ballot** and enter your address for a list of candidates or a sample ballot

### STEP 2: Research Your Candidates

Use this checklist to research key information about the candidates.

- Campaign website and social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, etc.)
- Campaign endorsements and affiliations (these groups can have strong influence on a candidate's values)
- Candidate interviews: Visit [Vote411.org](https://vote411.org) to read unedited responses to candidate questions
- News coverage (TV, radio, newspapers, letters to the editor, blogs, podcasts, candidate profiles, etc.)
- Place of employment
- Resume or curriculum vitae
- Lawsuits, litigation, criminal background, registries
- Personal social media accounts and blogs
- Personal affiliations (boards, committees, memberships, volunteer work, etc.)

Helpful considerations:

- What are their values and priorities? What education issues are most important to them?
- Does the candidate understand the role of the local school board?
- Would their work, expertise, or experiences add value?
- What do their endorsements and affiliations reflect about their beliefs?

### STEP 3: Attend Candidate Events

Engage with candidates at in-person, voter education events.

- Candidate forums, debates, and town halls hosted by nonpartisan groups, including League of Women Voters, NAACP, Urban League, Equality Ohio, PTO/PTA, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
  - Find local candidate forums by entering your address at [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)
- Meet and Greets hosted by candidates or supporting organizations
- Bring these helpful **candidate questions** at [bit.ly/H4OE\\_GOTVSchoolBoards](http://bit.ly/H4OE_GOTVSchoolBoards)

### STEP 4: Attend School Board Meetings

Attend school board meetings to learn about district priorities and issues, and observe incumbent candidates.

- Find meeting dates and times on your district’s website or call the administration office
- Watch live and recorded meetings on your district website, YouTube, or other social media
- Review board meeting documents, including agendas, minutes, proposed policy changes, curriculum updates, and budgets

### STEP 5: Assess Candidates & Create a Sample Ballot

Almost done! Use all of your research to evaluate and select the best candidates for your district.

- Make a table comparing *your* priorities with the candidates, and select your final candidates (sample below)
- Finally, use your final list to create a personalized sample ballot at [OhioVoterGuide.org](http://OhioVoterGuide.org) • [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)  
Bring your personalized ballot with you to vote!

**SAMPLE COMPARISON TABLE**

<i>List your priorities</i> →	Whole Child Framework	Student Wellness	Honest Education	Fully Funded School Districts
<b>Candidate A</b> <i>Name</i> <b>Endorsements</b> <i>Names</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>
<b>Candidate B</b> <i>Name</i> <b>Endorsements</b> <i>Names</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>	<i>Candidate's position</i>

**Do your homework to elect the best school leaders for your community. #YourInformedVoteMatters**  
*Share this guide with family, friends, schools, groups, organizations, and communities.*

## 2025 OHIO GENERAL ELECTION DATES

More info at [bit.ly/H4OE\\_OhioElections](http://bit.ly/H4OE_OhioElections)

Voter Registration Deadline: **October 6**  
Military & Overseas Voting: **Sept 19 - Nov 3**  
Early In-Person Voting: **Oct 7 - Nov 2**

Absentee Ballot Mail-In Voting: **Oct 7 - Nov 3**  
Absentee Ballot Drop-Off Voting: **Oct 7 - Nov 5**  
Election Day Voting: **Nov 4, polls open 6:30am-7:30pm**