

How to Navigate Running for School Board

Petition Circulation

October 7, 2026



Panelists

**Sandra Kwasa, Training Development Director
Illinois Association of School Boards**
skwasa@iasb.com

Scott F. Uhler, Partner, Klein, Thorpe and Jenkins
sfuhler@ktjlaw.com

Upcoming Livestreams

09/23/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Understanding the Board Member's Role**

10/07/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Petition Circulation**

10/21/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: The Statement of Economic Interests**

11/04/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Petition Filing**

Today we will share:

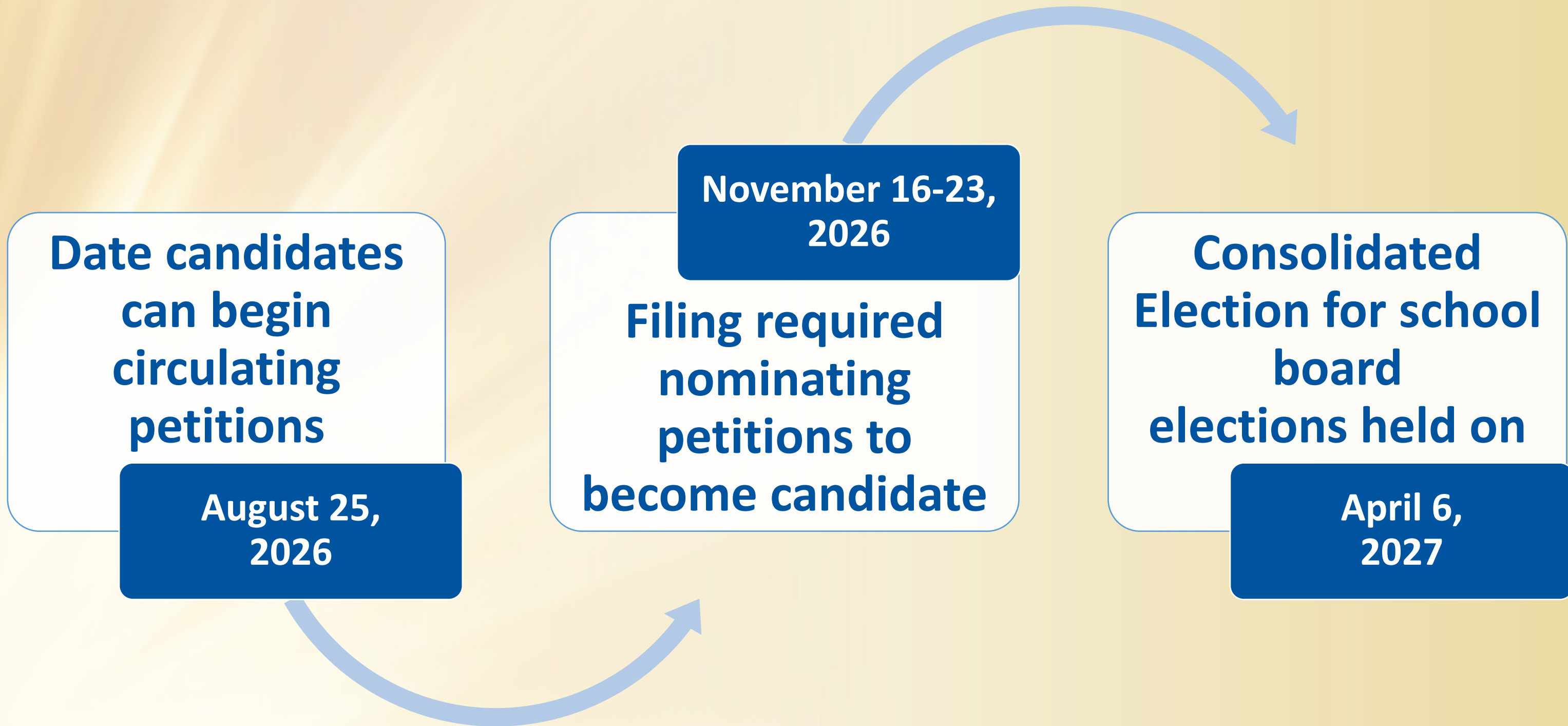
- Guidelines/Timelines/Deadlines to Navigate the 2027 School Board Election
- Resources available
- Issues to Consider

Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

1. The board clarifies the district's purpose.
2. The board connects with the community.
3. The board employs a superintendent.
4. The board delegates authority.
5. The board monitors performance.
6. The board takes responsibility for itself.



School Board Election Timetable



Basics for School Board Member Candidacy

Who is eligible to run as a candidate for election to a school board?

Any person who is a U.S citizen, at least 18 years old, an Illinois resident, a registered voter and resident of the school district for at least one year preceding the election.

Basics for School Board Member Candidacy

Three forms will be required for a proper filing as a candidate for member of a school board:

- 1. Your signature Petition Sheets** (SBE Form P-7 or P-7A, State of Illinois 2027 *Candidate's Guide*, p. 48)
- 2. Your Statement of Candidacy**, (SBE Form P-1A, State of Illinois 2027 *Candidate's Guide*, p. 48) and
- 3. Your Statement of Economic Interests.** (Statement of Economic Interests forms can be obtained from your county clerk's office.)

2027 Candidate's Guide, Illinois State Board of Elections, available at:

<https://www.elections.il.gov/NewDocDisplay.aspx?%2fM0cs48zOKVZyk9eAbpEoxjoGz9b5YaGE%2bEuf7JVd2Tlx2Mybp2RbacEJVh848tnFOLoTd3G4cRsCxSj%2bcrL1MmhG9QsYgJ9OQfN8tD1KknB7HN47ScJ1zCvgZwednY2RQa%2fu4zdH0PSahyfGP1jLQ%3d%3d>

Terminology in the forms (non-partisan vs independent) and elections can be confusing.

There are also rules which we will discuss which must be followed regarding the collection of voter signatures and completion of the above 3 forms.

Prepare Petition Sheets for Circulation

In the heading at the top of your signature petition sheets (all of your petition sheets must be the same):

1. Insert the full name and number of your school district
2. Fill in the minimum number of residents required to sign your petitions in the blank (i.e. 50 or 10% of voters, whichever is less, or 25 and 5% of voters, whichever is less, depending on type of district)
3. “Print” or type your name and residence address in the school district on candidate’s petition sheet
4. State the office correctly on all petition sheets as a candidate for the office of “member” of the Board of Education (or director on Board of Directors)
5. State the term of office correctly – full term or unexpired term of vacant seat on school board
6. Fill in the election date of “April 6, 2027” in the blank “for the Consolidated Election to be held on _____ (date of election).”

Basic Petition Form

Petition

We, the undersigned, being (50 or 10% or more) (25 or 5% or more) of the voters residing within said district, hereby petition that _____ who resides at _____ in the City, Village, Unincorporated Area of _____ (If unincorporated, list municipality that provides postal service) in Township _____ in said district shall be a candidate for the office of _____ of the Board of Education (or Board of Directors) (full term) or (vacancy) to be voted for at the Consolidated Election to be held on April 6, 2027.

Voter Name (Signature)	Voter Name (Printed)	Street Address	City/Village	County
1				
2				
3				

I, (Circulator’s Name) do hereby certify that I reside at _____, in the City, Village, Unincorporated area of _____ (if unincorporated, list municipality that provides postal service) (Zip Code) _____, County of _____, Illinois, that I am 18 years of age or older (or 17 years of age and qualified to vote in Illinois), that I am a U.S. citizen, and that the signatures on this sheet were signed in my presence, not more than 90 days preceding the last day of filing of the petitions and are genuine and that to the best of my knowledge and belief the persons so signing were at the time of signing the petition registered voters of the political division in which the candidate is seeking elective office, and their respective residences are correctly stated, as above set forth. (Circulator’s Signature)

Subscribed and sworn to by _____ before me this __ day of _____, 2026.

SEAL

(Signature-Notary Public)

SHEET NO. _____

Properly Collect Qualifying Signatures

1. Circulator must witness each person sign the Petition Sheets
2. Each Petition Sheet can only be circulated by one person collecting the signatures for that Sheet
3. Illegible voter signatures – have signers print and sign Petition Sheets
4. A person cannot sign a nominating petition sheet for another voter
5. Not enough valid signatures - collect more than minimum
6. Unqualified voters signing petition sheets - signers must be registered voters in the school district

Completing a Statement of Candidacy Form

Each candidate must complete and file a Statement of Candidacy

1. The form of the candidate's name, as printed and signed, should match the name as printed in the heading of the candidate's signature Petition Sheets.
2. The candidate's address and the office of "member of the board of education" [or "director", if district has school directors] should also be the same as printed in the heading of the Candidate's signature Petition Sheets.
3. After completing the form, the candidate must sign the Statement of Candidacy before a notary public.
4. The Statement of Candidacy is filed with the signature Petition Sheets as the nomination papers of the candidate.
5. The recommended Statement of Candidacy form for school board member candidates is the "Non-Partisan" State Board of Election form P-1A. in the State of Illinois 2027 *Candidate's Guide*, p. 48.

- The link for the form is available at:
[https://www.elections.il.gov/agencyforms/3%20Statement%20of%20Candidacy%20Forms/Statement%20of%20Candidacy%20\(Nonpartisan\)%20P-1A.pdf](https://www.elections.il.gov/agencyforms/3%20Statement%20of%20Candidacy%20Forms/Statement%20of%20Candidacy%20(Nonpartisan)%20P-1A.pdf)

Completion and Filing of the Statement of Economic Interests

Mandatory: One of the 3 documents required to be filed by a candidate.

Form: Statement of Economic Interests forms can be obtained from your county clerk's office.

Filing the Form: The completed Statement of Economic Interests form must be filed with the county clerk in the county in which the principal office of the school district is located. (5 ILCS 420/4A-106)

- A candidate must file their statement in physical form with the County; cannot use the internet or electronic systems to file their Statement of Economic Interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-108) When filing, you should receive a physical receipt of your filing.

Filing the Receipt: Each candidate must file this receipt as part of their nominating petition filing indicating that they have filed a Statement of Economic Interests as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. (10 ILCS 5/10-5; 5 ILCS 420/1- 101, et seq.)

A candidate who filed a Statement of Economic Interests for the same unit of government within the same calendar year does not need to re-file.

NOTE: The receipt is not required if the Statement of Economic Interests is filed with the same officer with which the nominating papers are filed (i.e. county clerk).

Guidance for completing the form:

https://www.ilsos.gov/content/dam/publications/pdf_publications/i276.pdf

Preparation and Filing Nominating Petitions

After you and/or your circulators have gathered the required number of signatures:

1. Have each person(s) who collected the signatures on each Petition Sheet appear before a notary public and sign the Circulator's Affidavit at the bottom of each signature Petition Sheet.
2. Securely fasten your original Statement of Candidacy and Petition Sheets together.
3. Consecutively number each page of the signature petition sheets at the bottom of each sheet, starting with "1". Do not number the Statement of Candidacy.
4. Make copies and fasten a second set of all your documents and have the clerk give you a "receipted", stamped copy when you file.

Reminders & Mistakes to Avoid

Petition Filing

Filing? Consult the Candidate Checklist Page 15, 2027 Candidates Guide

1. Securely fasten **Statement of Candidacy** and your **Petition Sheets** and consecutively number the Petition Sheets
2. File **Statement of Economic Interests** properly with the County Clerk

Spending Money on the Campaign & Receiving Contributions?

- You may have to file disclosure reports. Page 23, State of Illinois 2027 Candidates Guide

Petition Filing *Post-filing Procedures*

2027 SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION DEADLINES



Last day to file
**objections to
nominating petitions**
(December 2, 2026)



Last day to file a
**withdrawal of
candidacy form**
(January 28, 2027)



Last day to file a
**declaration of intent
as a write-in candidate**
(February 4, 2027)



Candidates for the April 6, 2027 school
board election **signed nominating
petitions** due to the county clerk's office or
the county board of election commissioners
between November 16 and 23, 2026.

Other Issues to Be Aware of

At large vs. congressional township seat residency qualifications

Vacancies

Vacancy timelines – unexpired term is filled at election *unless* vacancy occurs:

- Less than 868 days remaining in term OR
- Less than 88 days before next regularly scheduled election

Write-In Candidates

Timing is everything! See the *2027 Candidates Guide*, page 13.

Questions? Refer to Illinois State Board of Elections Resource Guide

State of Illinois 2027 *CANDIDATE'S GUIDE* Issued by the Illinois State Board of Elections 7/7/2020, pp. 48-49 (Bd. of Ed.) & 50-51 (Director) available at:

<https://www.elections.il.gov/NewDocDisplay.aspx?%2fM0cs48zOKVZyk9eAbpEoxjoGz9b5YaGE%2bEuf7JVd2Tlx2Mybp2RbacEJVh848tnFOLoTd3G4cRsCxSj%2bcrL1MmhG9QsYgJ9OQfN8tD1KknB7HN47ScJ1zCvgZwednY2RQa%2fu4zdH0PSahyfGP1jLQ%3d%3d>

www.iasb.com

- Resources and information
- Board candidates, new board members, veteran board members
- Elections, calendars, training, roles and responsibilities

Upcoming Livestreams

09/23/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Understanding the Board Member's Role**

10/07/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Petition Circulation**

10/21/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: The Statement of Economic Interests**

11/04/2026

- **How to Navigate Running for School Board: Petition Filing**

