

# **Welcome to a Northwestern School Corporation School Board Meeting**

## **Welcome**

The Board of School Trustees and the Superintendent of Schools for the Northwestern Corporation welcome you to a school board meeting. Your presence at this meeting shows your interest in the education of the children of our community. Decisions made at board meetings establish direction, content and timing for most all issues that affect the education of our children and in the long run impact the future of our community. Thank you for your interest and attendance at this meeting.

## **What is the Board of School Trustees?**

The Board of School trustees is a creation of the State of Indiana legislature and is charged with providing schools and educational opportunities for children in the school corporation. The board is comprised of five elected members. Members serve overlapping terms of three years. Members represent specific townships areas, in which they must be a resident, while two members are elected at-large.

## **What is done at School Board Meetings?**

The Board of School Trustees has responsibility for establishing policies by which the Northwestern School Corporation is operated. The Board acts upon recommendations made by the Superintendent of Schools (the chief executive officer) and staff on a wide variety of matters from personnel to adopting an operating budget and authorizing the spending of budgeted money. Although any topic relating to the operation of the schools may come before the Board, most matters are routinely handled through administrative channels.

No one person or groups of persons may act in the name of the school board. For an item to become official, it is necessary that a majority of board members present at either a regular or special board meeting vote in favor of a motion. No fewer than three school board members shall be present to conduct official business.

## **School Board Meetings**

The Board of School Trustees meets regularly on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. Meetings are in the Northwestern High School library. All meetings are published in the advertised public notice. In addition, when special meetings are called, public notice is given prior to the meeting. Executive sessions are held for the purpose of discussing matters of personnel, collective bargaining, litigation, purchase of property and related other topics. However, all decisions requiring board action will be acted upon in public session.

## **Public Participation At Board Meetings**

Regular and special meetings of the Board of School Trustees are open to the public. The Board of School Trustees, as an elected representative body of the school district, wishes to provide an opportunity for citizens to express interests and concerns related to the school district. The public is cordially invited to attend Board meetings.

Board meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying on the official business of the school district. The meetings are not public forum meetings, but are meetings held in the public. All meetings, except executive sessions, will be open to the public. The minutes of each meeting will record the action taken at each meeting. The journal of minutes is open and available to the public during normal business hours, in accordance with state law.

Orderly conduct of a meeting does not permit spontaneous discussion from the audience. Individuals or organizations desiring to make requests, presentations or proposals to the Board will be provided that opportunity. In order that the Board may fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibility, citizens desiring an item to be placed on the agenda for a specific Board meeting should direct requests to the Superintendent of Schools.

Requests for an item to be placed on the agenda will be submitted in writing to the Superintendent ten days prior to the scheduled meeting of the Board. That request will state the name of the individual or group submitting the request, the address, the purpose of the request and the topic to be addressed.

The Superintendent will confer with the Board President concerning approval to place the requested item on the agenda, and to determine the appropriate meeting for such discussion. The requesting party will be advised of the meeting at which the item will be a part of the agenda.

Presenters may be scheduled by the Superintendent of Schools to address subjects, which are already included on the agenda. The meeting of the School Board in public for the purpose of conducting the School Corporation's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. The Northwestern School Corporation welcomes public participation at board meetings. Up to thirty minutes at the end of each meeting will be allotted for public comments regarding subjects not on the agenda. Individuals are requested to speak for no more than three minutes; however, a person may speak for a second time after everyone who wishes has had an opportunity to speak. In addition, the board provides an opportunity for public communication during the discussion of individual agenda items; however, public comment with regard to an item on the agenda is limited to the discussion period during that agenda item. Again, individuals are requested to speak for no more than three minutes.

Individuals or groups desiring additional information about any item on the agenda should direct such inquiries to the Office of the Superintendent and the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee will initiate an appropriate response.

Persons making presentations at a Board meeting will address remarks to the Board President, and may direct questions or comments to Board Members or other officers of the school corporation only upon approval of the Board President. Members of the Board and the Superintendent may have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board. The Board President will be responsible for maintaining proper order and adhering to established time limits.

It is the intent of the School Board to allow a fair and adequate opportunity for the public to be heard, to allow the Superintendent of Schools to take action when policies have been established by the Board on the subject, and to see that time so devoted to the discussion does not interfere with the fulfillment of the scheduled agenda of the Board.