



Regional School Unit 63 Clifton, Eddington, and Holden

RSU 63 is a community of learners dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and challenging academic environment. Our students are respectful citizens and responsible stewards of our world. They are well prepared for high school with skills and a work ethic that enables them to succeed.

RSU 63 BOARD OF DIRECTORS INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES

CONGRATULATIONS!

We are glad you are considering running for a seat on RSU 63's Board of Directors!

We are current school board members who want to encourage you to complete nomination papers and work towards your election and service to the school community. We have found our service not only to be an essential and important benefit to the community's children, but a rich and rewarding experience for ourselves personally. We have terrific students, teachers, administrators, and staff and it is a pleasure to try to serve them. We also realize that our communities are extremely generous toward and supportive of our schools. We greatly value the sacrifices they make and the trust that they have placed in our schools. We strive to continue to make their support warranted.

Because the job of a school board also requires a considerable amount of work to be a success, we offer this information to you to help you realistically assess what the job of a school board member might involve and to help you determine if now is the right time for you to serve. However, in no way do we want to "scare you off". It is good work and our board needs you.

SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

Our responsibilities all derive from State law and regulation. First and foremost, we are responsible for setting the over-all policies for our schools. These policies range from curriculum standards and assessment requirements to codes of conduct for students and staff. Increasingly, the policies we adopt are dictated by state or federal mandates, so we must also attempt to understand those and respond to them in the way we deem best for our students. We are responsible for preparing and advocating for an annual budget for the schools. We are responsible for hiring and firing the Superintendent and responding to recommendations for hiring other staff. We are responsible for negotiating employment contracts with our teachers and administrators. We are responsible for providing, improving, and maintaining the physical plant of the schools. We are responsible for dealing with serious disciplinary matters, including possibly expelling and re-admitting students to school. In sum, we are elected to see that our schools provide each and every student with the best possible educational opportunity, knowing that a well-educated population is essential for the successful future of each individual as well as our town and country.

Although these are serious responsibilities, don't worry. We have lots of help! Our administrators and staff are the ones who do the real work, like preparing budgets and developing the specifics of our children's education. We hire them to do that. In fact, one of the things we are NOT elected to do is deal with day-to-day school challenges. That is sometimes called "micro-managing" and we have found that is almost always not helpful. We work hard to hire competent administrators and staff, create meaningful expectations for their job performance, and then provide them the support they need to do the job we expect from them.



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When you join a board, you will be joining experienced board members. There definitely is a “learning curve” and you are not expected to come on board “knowing it all”. We are all there to help one another. If you have not previously attended board meetings, we encourage you to attend any or all of our meetings between now and Election Day. The meetings are, of course, public meetings and you are always encouraged to attend. Attending will explain a lot more than this information ever could.

Also, feel free to ask any current board member any questions you now have about service. You can find out who is now on the board by checking the RSU 63 website or by calling the Superintendent’s office. There are also helpful materials on the MSBA (Maine School Board Association website <https://www.msmaweb.com>)

SCHOOL BOARD STRUCTURE

Many people do not understand the structure of the school boards. It is largely determined by the state legislation.

Once you are elected, you become part of an eight-member school board. Four are elected from Holden, three from Eddington, and one from Clifton. You will be meeting once a month for our regular board meeting. We usually have a rotation between the three schools.

Like any other board, there are committees and work groups that we each participate in. Some of the recent or on-going committees have included policy review, budget & finance, student success, facilities, and contract negotiations. Yes, serving on these committees does mean extra meetings and work, but we have found that serving on these committees often strengthens our school, and broadens and deepens our knowledge of and appreciation for our schools.

WHY WE SERVE

You might choose to run for school board for many reasons. Usually, it is because you have or have had a child in school and wish to support your school. However, sometimes it is because you have had what you feel is a negative experience with some aspect of your school. Or perhaps there is one issue in particular that you feel passionate about. Some people refer to that as “having an agenda”. While wanting to make change in our government’s policy or practice is a valuable and valued motivator, we offer a word of caution about being significantly moved by anger on a single issue to seek this job. The board has so many diverse responsibilities that whatever issue you have at the moment is likely to quickly pass and you will be left needing to be responsible for many other issues, which may not be what you had in mind. You need to be willing to “buy” the whole package.

Being on a school board is an act of volunteerism. It is an essential part of our representative democracy. Serving on the school board helps to ensure that the “control” of our schools stays local and strong.

We hope that we have been able to answer some of your questions about the responsibilities and rewards of service on our school boards. We hope you will consider offering yourself as a candidate from your town, and we wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.