

PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS

Provided by Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita



A roadmap for Hoosier parents and caregivers to exercise their legal right to have a voice in their children's education



ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Elkhart Schools Parents/Guardians & Community,

The partnership between families and the school system is one rooted in trust, and it is the foundation of any efforts to educate the community's children. In June 2021, Indiana's Attorney General Todd Rokita released a guide for parents and caregivers about their rights in educating their children. A copy of the Bill of Rights is available [here](#).

Elkhart Community Schools wants to provide parents with additional information about how our policies and practices align with this Bill of Rights. In the document below, alongside each page of the Attorney Generals' guide, we have provided links to school district policy or by-laws from the district website, or we have included links to resources providing further explanation as to how the Bill of Rights connects to ECS. All board policies can be found at [this link](#).

Our goal in providing this information is to let you know that we understand that parents and guardians and families are our students' first teachers, and our goal is to come alongside and support them in each child's development and promise.

Dr. Steve Thalheimer, Superintendent
& the Board of School Trustees



Preamble

It is of utmost importance that parents of young children understand their legal rights to participate in their children's education. Indiana parents possess certain rights and responsibilities when it comes to overseeing the education of their K-12 students. State and federal law afford certain protections and guarantees under the First Amendment to assure children's fundamental rights are not infringed.

Indiana parents also have the right and expectation that their children will receive a proper and accurate understanding of our nation's history and governmental institutions, consistent with state and federal law. The Office of the Indiana Attorney General ("OAG") recognizes how the current national discourse regarding political and social issues has created negative and polarizing effects on teachers, administrators, students, and families. Ideologies founded on divisive teachings and narrow interpretations of U.S. history run contrary to established Indiana educational requirements. As such, the Office of the Indiana Attorney General recognizes the importance of advising parents on how to engage in meaningful civic process and conversation that will ultimately benefit Indiana schools, parents, and our children. Education policy and curriculum should accurately reflect the values of Indiana families while meeting the mandatory requirements set by Indiana law.

Parental participation in children's education is the single most essential factor in assuring school accountability under the law. This Parent Bill of Rights provides a roadmap for parental engagement and serves as an educational resource for parental participation in their child's educational experience.

If our Office can provide further assistance on these Rights, contact us by calling (317) 232-6201 or visiting www.in.gov/attorneygeneral/.

Very truly yours,

Todd Rokita
Attorney General of Indiana

Elkhart Schools Policies Related to Student and Parental Rights and Responsibilities

<u>PO2261.01</u>	Parent Participation in Title I Programs
<u>PO2281</u>	Family Involvement
<u>PO3213c</u>	Student Supervision and Welfare
<u>PO3213S</u>	Student Supervision and Welfare for Support Staff
<u>PO2416</u>	Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information
<u>PO5200</u>	Student Attendance
<u>PO5223</u>	Absences for Religious Instruction
<u>PO5420</u>	Reporting Student Progress
<u>PO5500</u>	Student Conduct
<u>PO5540</u>	The Schools and Governmental Agencies
<u>PO5780</u>	Parent Rights and Responsibilities
<u>PO8310</u>	Public Records
<u>PO8330</u>	Student Records
<u>PO8350</u>	Confidentiality
<u>PO8462</u>	Child Abuse and Neglect
<u>PO9250</u>	Parent/School Cooperation
<u>PO9900.02</u>	Welfare



Parent Education Bill of Rights

1.

You have the right and expectation to question and address your child's school officials and school board members at publicly designated meetings with proper notice of the meeting provided.

2.

You have the right and expectation to question and review the curriculum taught in your child's school by questioning local school board and school administrators.

3.

You have the right and expectation that the academic curriculum taught in your child's school aligns with Indiana and federal law.

4.

You have the right and expectation to participate in the selection and approval of academic standards for the State of Indiana.

5.

You have the right and expectation to obtain educational materials and curriculum taught to your child in the classroom.

6.

You have the right to run as a candidate for your local school board.

These Rights are the first publication of a forthcoming series of education rights which will cover a variety of topics including medical rights, religious rights, and school choice rights.

Elkhart Community School Policies

PO0123	Philosophy of the Board
PO131.2	Policies
PO0142	Election/Appointment of Members and Eligibility to Serve
PO0142.1	Term
PO0142.3	Vacancies
PO0144.2	Board Member Ethics
PO0164.1	Regular Meetings
PO0164.2	Special Meetings
PO0164.3	Emergency Meetings
PO0164.4	Meeting of the Board Defined (UR)
PO0164.5	Member Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means of Communication (UR)
PO164.6	Meetings During Declared Disaster Emergencies (UR)
PO0165	Notification of Board Meetings
PO0165.1	Notice of Regular Meetings
PO0165.2	Notice of Special Board Meetings
PO0165.3	Notice of Emergency Meetings
PO0165.4	Notice Requirements Established by Other Statutes
PO0165.5	Series of Meetings (Gatherings)
PO0166	Agenda
PO167.1	Voting (UR)
PO0167.2	Executive Session
PO0167.3	Public Participation at Board Meetings
PO0168.1	Open Meeting
PO0168.2	Executive Session



Indiana School Curriculum and Academic Standards

Q: How are Indiana academic standards and curriculum established?

A: Established by the Indiana General Assembly, the State Board of Education ("SBOE") oversees K-12 education policymaking in the State of Indiana. Pursuant to Ind. Code § 20-19-2-14.5, SBOE is responsible for adopting college and career readiness educational standards.

The Indiana Department of Education ("IDOE") implements and executes the education chapter concerning Indiana school curriculum. IDOE "[e]stablish[es] the educational goals of the state, developing standards and objectives for local school corporations." Ind. Code § 20-19-2-14(1); see also Ind. Code § 20-19-2-14.5. IDOE, among other things, shall "perform the duties required by statute," and "implement the policies and procedures established by the state board." Ind. Code § 20-19-3-4(1)-(2). The General Assembly intended for IDOE to carry out the duties outlined in statute and any "policies and procedures established by the state board in the manner set forth in statute." Ind. Code § 20-18-3-1.

Q: Can Indiana academic standards and curriculum be changed?

A: Yes. Indiana academic standards are diverse and developed over time through IDOE standards revision committees. Pursuant to Ind. Code § 20-31-3-4, IDOE shall appoint an academic standards committee composed of subject area teachers, higher education representatives with subject matter expertise, *and parents* (emphasis added) during the period when a subject area is undergoing revision. Pursuant to Ind. Code § 20-31-3-3, parents can provide comments and suggestions when academic standards are proposed for adoption, typically every six-years. Under Indiana law, parents do not have a right to individual notice of these adoption meetings and committees but are urged to consult IDOE's website and subscribe to the Indiana Secretary of Education's weekly update letters (see attached "Additional Parent Resources"). This proactive approach is crucial for parents to hold school boards, school administrators, and legislators accountable to assure oversight in reviewing standards. In addition, parents can be appointed to committees and provide input regarding how a particular standard may affect curriculum related to controversial theories, social groups, and political topics.

DIRECT LINKS

[State Board of Education Newsroom site](#)

[State Board of Education Academic Standards site](#)

[State Board of Education Rules/Administrative Code](#)



Questions and Answers

Q: What is the difference between an academic standard and academic curriculum?

A: Generally, academic standards reflect benchmarks for student achievement and what students should learn at each grade level. Standards may be used as the basis for curriculum, but Indiana Academic Standards are not curriculum. Rather, curriculum includes the textbooks, digital content, and materials selected by a school district and adopted by a local school board.

The General Assembly has established certain mandatory curriculum under Ind. Code § 20-30-5-5 and Ind. Code § 20-30-5-6 to include morals and good citizenship instruction aimed at promoting qualities of honesty, morality, respect for others, respect for authority, obedience to the law, respect for the national flag and Constitution, and lessons that tend to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry.

Q: How else are academic standards changed or modified?

A: Curriculum changes relating to citizens' participation in organizations concerning social reform can be affected by collaborating with IDOE with an emphasis on updating and tailoring the current Academic Standards to reflect a holistic approach that is balanced and representative of all viewpoints. School instruction already includes various civic and morals instruction requirements, as well as certain instruction on ethnic and racial groups. However, these standards may be reviewed and altered as necessary, and consistently need to reflect the educational values and interests of Indiana parents. As discussed above, parents should take every opportunity to join IDOE committees and provide comments in response to IDOE solicited parent feedback when standards are revised or proposed for adoption, typically every six-years. Ind. Code § 20-31-3-3.

Q: What civics practices or curriculum are required in schools?

A: Indiana law requires patriotism to be taught in multiple instances in schools. In Indiana, the United States flag shall be displayed in each classroom of every school in a school corporation. Indiana law also mandates that the governing body of each school corporation provide a daily opportunity for students to voluntarily recite the Pledge of Allegiance in each classroom. A student is exempt from participation in the Pledge of Allegiance and may not be required to participate if the student chooses to not participate or the student's parent chooses to have the student not participate. Ind. Code § 20-30-5-0.5. Moreover, code requires that each governing body procure a 4 feet by 6 feet United States flag for schools to display every day the school is in session. Ind. Code § 20-30-3. Indiana law provides schools discretion to place a poster or framed picture of the national motto of the United States, "In God We Trust" and a representation of the United States flag and Indiana state flag.

Elkhart Community School Policies

PO2210	Curriculum Development
PO2220	Instructional Program Development
PO2221	Mandatory Curriculum
PO2270	Religion in the Curriculum
PO2330	Homework
PO2510	Adoption of Curriculum Materials
PO2520	Selection of Instructional Materials and Equipment
PO8800	Religious/Patriotic Ceremonies and Observances

DIRECT LINK

[ECS Instructional Cycle Guidance Document with Process for Curriculum Review and Materials Adoption](#)



In regards to curriculum, Indiana law instructs schools to provide education to students on the Constitution, American history, and American writings and documents. Specifically, in grades 6-12, every school must provide instruction on the Constitution of Indiana and the United States. Ind. Code § 20-30-5-1. Courses on the Constitutions should encompass the historical, political, civic, sociological, economical, and philosophical aspects of the Constitutions. A school corporation cannot censor American protected writings and documents and must allow those to be displayed or read by teachers and principals. Ind. Code § 20-30-5-3. Within two weeks following a general election, all students in grades 6-12 shall have five class period discussions concerning the system of governing in Indiana and the United States, methods of voting, party structure, election laws, and citizenship participation.

The Indiana General Assembly recently passed a law requiring a semester of civics education in grades 6, 7, or 8. Ind. Code § 20-30-5-7.3. SBOE will establish standards for civics education before July 1, 2022. Ind. Code § 20-19-2-14.7. The law establishes The Indiana Civic Education Commission to provide recommendations to IDOE and SBOE on implementation and review of best practices, pedagogy, and policy for civics education. Ind. Code § 20-19-10.



Parental Consent and Educational Curriculum Not Aligned with Indiana Academic Standards

Q: Can my child be taught certain curriculum or instruction without parental consent?

A: No. Pursuant to Ind. Code § 20-30-5-17(b), certain curriculum cannot be taught without parental consent. Curriculum and instruction related to a personal analysis, evaluation, or survey that is not directly related to academic instruction and that reveals or attempts to affect the student's attitudes, habits, traits, opinions, beliefs, or feelings aimed toward human sexuality, religious practices, and political affiliations, are all examples of curriculum needing prior parental consent. Parental consent determinations on curriculum not directly related to academic instruction will first be made by the school corporation. Parents should work directly with school officials to discuss curriculum concerns. If a parent is dissatisfied with a school district's determination on curriculum, it may request a further determination by contacting the Indiana Department of Education ("IDOE") (see attached "Additional Parent Resources").

Q: Are controversial political and social groups discussed in my child's classroom?

A: Students cannot be asked to participate or express their personal feelings regarding controversial political groups and politically affiliated social groups unrelated to academic instruction in a K-12 classroom without parental consent. Politically affiliated groups will always require parental consent. However, flawed ideologies that distort history and create controversy cannot be appropriately aligned with approved Indiana academic standards and student achievement. This is partly because they lack the highest evidence-based practices as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"). 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq. The ESSA requires that schools receiving certain grant funds use evidence-based practices in the classroom. Controversial social groups often contain political undertones and solicit politically affiliated classroom discussion. As such, parents should utilize their voice and contact their child's school district when controversial political and social ideologies are brought into Indiana classrooms. This Office is committed to supporting the rights of Indiana parents and the expectation that their children will receive an evidence-based education not contrary to Indiana or federal law.

Elkhart Community School Policies

[PO2240](#)

Controversial Issues

[PO9700](#)

Relations with Special Interest Groups



Q: What is Critical Race Theory ("CRT")?

A: The General Assembly has provided that the policy of the State is to provide equal and nondiscriminatory education opportunities to students. As such, children should expect a welcoming learning environment, nondiscriminatory teachings, equal protection under the Constitution, and equal educational opportunity under the law.

CRT and the 1619 Project are deeply flawed and controversial teachings. CRT is an ideological construct that analyzes and interprets American history and government primarily through the narrow prism of race. Like CRT, many related ideologies purport to teach diversity and inclusion but in reality, promote exclusionary tenets under the guise of euphemisms commonly referred to as "culturally responsive teaching," "intersectionality theory," "radical genderism," "microinequities," and "diversity and equity" initiatives. The 1619 Project aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the center of the United States narrative. Both teachings are widespread, and its principles not rooted in American history or deep historical fact. Rather, CRT, The 1619 Project and other similar ideologies attempt to create their own truths through historical concepts and Marxist ideologies, seeking to abolish individual rights and redistribute wealth. As such CRT's teachings have a discriminatory effect against students who are inappropriately defined as having "privilege" or being "oppressors" based solely on their race. Classroom instruction rooted in CRT teachings clearly runs afoul of broad non-discrimination protections, equal protection, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and well-established Indiana law.

Now more than ever, controversial political groups and theories, including whether CRT should be taught in schools, has become a source of controversy. Here in Indiana and all across the country, CRT has a polarizing effect on education instruction. Several states have proposed and passed legislation designed to limit controversial theories such as CRT from classroom instruction.

Q: Is CRT instruction permissible under Indiana academic standards?

A: Regarding Indiana academic standards, CRT is not expressly mentioned or aligned with any IDOE approved civics, history, or social study standard. See <https://www.doe.in.gov/standards/social-studies#SStudies>.

Elkhart Community School Policies

[PO2260](#) Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity
[PO2266](#) Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities (Title IX)

DIRECT LINKS

[School District Statement on Critical Race Theory and video July 27, 2021](#)

[Secretary of Education Dr. Katie Jenner's advisory letter to administrators about Critical Race Theory](#)



Indiana standards should reflect a holistic approach that is balanced and representative of all viewpoints, and consistent with the curriculum approved by the General Assembly. Traditional U.S. history and civics curriculum should not be diluted with controversial and radical teachings of CRT in a K-12 classroom. Standards reflecting various civic and morals instruction must be crafted in ways that reflect equality, inclusivity, and diversity, while not maligning parents, students, and educators.

Q: What are Social-Emotional Learning Competencies (“SELs”)?

A: SELs involve teaching and facilitating skills that students need to be successful at home, at school, and in the workplace. Indiana SELs focus on five core social emotional learning standards to foster the development of the following cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains: Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. In addition, Indiana adds two competencies built on an educational neuroscience foundation: Sensory Integration and the Mindset.¹

Q: Can CRT or other controversial theories be taught using SELs?

A: No. However, discriminatory teachings such as CRT and the 1619 Project are consistently being backdoored into Indiana classrooms, contrary to state and federal law. Indiana schools have witnessed an influx of SEL model practices utilized as a means of introducing distorted theories and activities aimed at making students feel bad about themselves. These methods are impermissible, encourage unequal treatment of students under the law, and are misaligned with the educational policy goals established by the General Assembly. At its core, SELs should teach students social and emotional skills promoting self awareness, professionalism, personal management, and taking responsibility for student learning. As such, theories that denigrate a class of students have no place in the classroom.

Elkhart Community Schools Policies

[PO2411](#)

Guidance and Counseling

¹ <https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/sabw/sel-competencies-final.pdf>, last visited June 21, 2021.



Access to Public Records and Indiana's Open Door Law

Q: How do I obtain a copy of my child's school curriculum?

A: Contact your local school district. Indiana's Access to Public Records Act ("APRA"), Indiana Code §5-14-3-1 et seq., also provides the framework for requesting information from a governmental agency. Moreover, APRA states that, "it is the public policy of the state that all persons are entitled to full and complete information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those who represent them as public officials and employees." Generally, school curriculum can be requested through your child's school district. School officials should provide you with a copy of approved curricula and address any concerns. You may also direct public record requests related to K-12 school academic standards to IDOE. However, some public records may not be disclosed under various exemptions or may be disclosed at the discretion of the Department. Some records are confidential by statute, while others may be protected by state or federal law. School districts have a statutory responsibility to tell you whether the records requested are "disclosable" or "nondisclosable." You have the right to view and copy all disclosable records. Schools must properly reference a statutory basis for non-disclosure of all or part of a public record to you.

Q: How else can I inquire about the curriculum taught to my child?

A: As a parent, you may have the opportunity to provide comments and express concerns at public school board meetings. A "meeting" is a public forum accessible under Indiana law to any interested member of the public. The Open Door Law, under Indiana Code 5-14-1.5-1, states that government agencies must hold official meetings of a majority of their governing body, such as council or board meetings, publicly. This includes local school boards.

Meetings occur whenever a majority of the school board meets for the purpose of taking "official action upon public business." "Official action" includes receiving information, deliberating, making recommendations, establishing policy, making decisions, and taking final action. Often local school boards encourage public participation and consider public comments before taking official board action.

Parents can also participate and provide comment at advisory committees created by statute to advise the school board. Committees appointed directly by the school board or its president must follow the Open-Door law requirements.



Parent Participation, Procedural Rights, and Remedies

Q: How can parents impact academic standards and content?

A: The standards revision process is a collaborative one. As such, parents interested in serving on IDOE committees should contact IDOE via their website (links provided at the end of this guide). School curriculum should reflect this balanced approach, so students are exposed to contrasting or opposing viewpoints. Parents can also comment on academic standards by commenting at school board meetings, expressing concerns to school officials, contacting IDOE, and contacting local lawmakers. Intrinsic to the legislature's duty to enact mandatory and optional curriculum studies is a duty to review and refine those standards, as well as identify subject matter requiring prior consent for a student's participation under Ind. Code § 20-30-5-17(b). The legislature has the power to prescribe the courses of study and system of instruction that must be pursued and adopted in the public schools of the state.

Of particular note, effective April 8, 2021, the state board must coordinate with IDOE to establish standards for civic education not later than July 1, 2022. Ind. Code § 20-19-2-14.7. The civic standards established may only be changed by the express authorization of the general assembly. As such, it is imperative that parents discuss civics curriculum with their children and contact their local lawmakers with questions and concerns. Parents are also encouraged to visit the resources at the end of this guide and visit the IDOE website regularly for updates to state standards and opportunities to apply for membership on IDOE standards committees.

Q: What are the roles of local school boards, superintendents, and principals?

A: All of these educational stakeholders share the goal of ensuring that curriculum aligns with state law and that it meets state standards. Local school boards are widely regarded as the principal body capable of representing citizens in local educational decisions, including adopting curriculum presented to them by the superintendent. School boards have a duty in deciding what educational content is included in curriculum and what is left out. As such, it is of extreme importance for parents to voice their concerns when curriculum deviates from approved academic standards. The superintendent is the executive for the school corporation. The principal is the administrator of individual schools.

Elkhart Community Schools Policies

PO132.1	Selection of Superintendent
PO132.2	Administrative Authority
PO1210	Board-Superintendent Relationship
PO1220	Employment of the Superintendent
PO1230.01	Development of Administrative Guidelines
PO1240	Evaluation of the Superintendent



Questions and Answers

Q: What are some ways I can hold my local school board accountable regarding curriculum and content?

A: Follow their social media accounts, review their public comments, and review school board meeting minutes. Contact your school board members directly and ask them their position on CRT and other discriminatory teachings, and how they are preventing these teachings from entering the classroom. Attending your local school board meetings and getting your elected officials on the record is helpful, however it is imperative to understand the political undertones resonating within a school board itself. Grow your network of other parents and attend school board meetings as a group to share unified concerns. If your school board has publicly opposed CRT and other controversial theories, continue to reach out and work with your school board to review curriculum so that CRT teachings cannot be introduced or masked in other materials or competencies. Parents should also continue to request copies of curriculum and classroom content by contacting their child's teacher or school administrator.

Q: What other legal rights can I assert on behalf of myself or my child?

A: Three important legal rights exist for all Indiana parents: 1) The First Amendment right to protect your child from compelled government speech in a school setting, 2) The Fourteenth Amendment right for all students to receive equal protection under the law, and 3) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits public institutions from discriminating on the basis of race.

In addition, Indiana law prohibits segregation, separation, or discrimination by a public school against any of its students on the basis of race, creed, or color. Ind. Code § 20-33-1-5.

Q: What if I have a complaint about the curriculum taught at my child's school?

A: Parents or community members having questions, concerns, and complaints about any aspect of the operation of a school corporation, including curriculum, may contact the person having knowledge or responsibility of a particular situation. In most cases this would be the teacher first, followed by the school administrator. A school administrator may address a complaint related to curriculum by examining teacher lesson plans, written materials provided to students, and classroom discussion. Ultimately, a school administrator is determining whether classroom curriculum is aligned with approved IDOE academic standards.

If a satisfactory response is not received, then the parent or community member should take the issue to the next highest level of administration at the district level. After exhausting efforts to find a satisfactory response at the administrative level, the individual may bring the matter in writing to the attention of the school board



president. The school board will then determine whether or not the matter shall be heard by the full board and whether that hearing will be a public regular board meeting or in a closed executive session of the Board. IDOE implements and oversees Indiana law related to Indiana school curriculum. Standards may be reviewed and altered as needed. Accordingly, interested parents may advocate through local school officials, board members, legislative representatives, and IDOE officials why standards should be reviewed or modified. Written complaints of a violation of approved Indiana state standards can also be addressed directly to IDOE after exhausting the above referenced steps.

Q: How can I run for my local school board? ²

A: Accountability in our schools requires each parent to examine what content is being presented to children in the classroom and what elected officials and school administrators are doing to maintain the best interests of our children. Parents interested in running for their local school boards should be educated on CRT and other controversial theories, and work to hold school officials accountable for the content being taught in their schools.

The ability to run for local school board depends on the local school corporation. The procedures for selecting school board members are usually set forth in the "school corporation organization plan" adopted by the school corporation during the school consolidation process of the 1950s and 1960s, and as subsequently amended. Ind. Code § 20-23. In certain school corporations, all or some of the school board members are appointed rather than elected by the voters. Ind. Code § 20-23-4-28. All school corporations that elect school board members elect those members at the same time as the general election. Some school board members are elected "at large" for the entire school corporation, while others are elected to represent specific districts that are only part of the school corporation territory. In all cases, candidates for school board appear on the ballot without a party designation. Ind. Code § 20-23-4-29.1.

Candidates for school board in certain jurisdictions must consult state statute for specific and detailed candidate qualifications and election procedures: Gary, Hammond, Indianapolis, Lake Station, South Bend, Mishawaka, East Chicago. See generally Ind. Code §§ 20-23-12 through 17.2. In all other cases, candidates must 1) reside in the school corporation for at least one year before the election; 2) be registered to vote; and 3) not have committed a felony (with certain exceptions). See Ind. Code § IC 3-8-1. A candidate has numerous filing requirements outlined explicitly in the Indiana Election Division's Candidate Guide.

² This answer was, in part, taken from and credited to the Indiana Election Division.
<https://www.in.gov/sos/elections/files/2020-Candidate-Guide.MOVEDPRIMARY5.pdf>, last visited June 21, 2021.

DIRECT LINK

[Elkhart County Clerk's Office website for candidates](#)

Elkhart Community Schools By-Laws & Policies

[PO0142](#)

Election/Appointment of Members and
Eligibility to Serve

[PO0142.1](#)

Term

[PO0151](#)

Organizational Meeting

[PO0152](#)

Officers



Q: What is the Secretary of Education's Role?

A: The Secretary of Education is appointed by the governor and serves as the chief executive officer for the Department of Education. The individual appointed must 1) reside in Indiana for two years before the appointment, 2) demonstrate leadership and success in the administration of education, 3) possess an earned advanced degree, and 4) is or has been a teacher, principal, or superintendent.

The Secretary is a new administrative role as previously the Superintendent of Public Instruction served in this capacity as a statewide elected official. The Indiana General Assembly passed a law in 2017 to transition from an elected Superintendent of Public Instruction to an appointed Secretary of Education, but set the transition date at 2025. After the previous Superintendent announced not seeking a second term, lawmakers accelerated the timeline to 2021.

Q: How does an individual become a member of the Indiana State Board of Education?

A: The bipartisan board is composed of eleven members, including the Secretary of Education who sits as the Board's chair. Eight members are appointed by the Governor and must include: 1) at least six appointees with professional experience in the field of education; 2) not more than one appointee from a particular congressional district; and 3) not more than five appointees belonging to the same political party. The remaining two board members are appointed by the Speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Indiana Senate respectively.

Q: How can I participate in the Indiana State Board of Education meetings?

A: The State Board of Education shall, at its regular monthly business meetings, accept comments from any interested person on items that appear on the Board's agenda for that meeting as well as general public comment. A person who desires to speak must register on the day of the meeting, before the meeting begins. Statements on agenda items are limited to five minutes while general public comments are limited to three minutes in length. Written comments may be submitted to the Board.

DIRECT LINKS

[Indiana Department of Education homepage](#)

[Indiana State Board of Education members](#)

[Indiana State Board of Education meeting agendas and materials](#)

[Indiana State Board of Education public participation](#)



Q: My child's school receives Title I funding. What rights does this provide?

A: Title I funding from the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA") provides financial assistance to local education agencies for children from low-income families to ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. This federal funding is allocated at the district level in each state. School districts in the highest poverty quarter have the highest total Title I allocations per formula-eligible child.

ESEA, Section 1116, requires that parents be offered substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children, and explicitly mandates parent consultation in all required planning, including the development of Title I applications, school-wide plans, and improvement plans for low-performing schools. Indiana schools receiving Title I funding should hold an annual meeting advising parents of their right to be involved in flexible meetings and planning of programs. Parents will also have an opportunity to develop policy in collaboration with the Title I school. Interested parents should work directly with school officials to assure transparency and adequate opportunity for their voices to be heard.

DIRECT LINK

[Indiana Department of Education Title I information](#)

Elkhart Community Schools Title I Policies

[PO2261](#)

Title I Services

[PO2261.01](#)

Parent Participation in Title I Programs

[PO2261.02](#)

Parents' Right to Know



Additional Parental Resources

School Curriculum and Parent Rights

- Indiana academic standards information:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards> ³

- IDOE newsletters:

https://www.doe.in.gov/idoenewsletters?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

- Title I schools and parent rights information:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/grants/parental-involvement-presentation.pdf>

Parent Procedural Rights and Remedies

- Indiana Public Access Counselor contact:

<https://www.in.gov/pac/contact-us/>

- Indiana Election Division's candidate guide:

<https://www.in.gov/sos/elections/files/2020-Candidate-Guide.MOVEDPRIMARY5.pdf>

- IDOE standards committee application for parents (call-outs for committees are posted approximately a few weeks before committee formation): <https://www.in.gov/doe/about/news/newsletters/>

- IDOE standards home page for available committee membership: <https://www.doe.in.gov/standards>

- Indiana State Board of Education Meeting and Materials:

<https://www.in.gov/sboe/board-meetings-and-materials/board-meetings-and-materials/>

- Indiana State Board of Education meeting instructions:

https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/SBOE_Public_Comment_Procedures_08_05_15.pdf

DIRECT LINKS

[Indiana Academic Standards](#)

[Dr. Katie Jenner's Weekly Updates](#)

[Contact for Public Access Counselor](#) regarding Open Door Laws

[Indiana Election Division](#) candidate information

[Indiana State Board of Education meeting agendas and materials](#)

[Indiana State Board of Education public participation](#)

³ IDOE is undergoing a website migration. Website resources will be updated as necessary, last visited on June 21, 2021