

Aromas-San Juan Unified School District
2300 San Juan Highway
San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
831-623-4500 x 1215

June 24, 2021

RE: Board Member Vacancy

Dear Applicant or Nominee:

Enclosed with this packet of information you will find information pertaining to school board leadership as well as an application for filling the vacancy on the Governing Board of the Aromas-San Juan Unified School District created by the resignation of Board Member Briana Allan. The term for the candidate who is provisionally appointed will expire December 2022.

Regular board meetings are generally held the second Wednesday of each month, with special meetings scheduled as needed. Some personal time is required individually for study and growth. If you have any questions about what being a member of the board might require in terms of time and responsibility please contact District Superintendent, Michele Huntoon at 831-623-4500 x 1213 or by email at mhuntoon@asjUSD.k12.ca.us. You may also contact me at cpowers@asjUSD.k12.ca.us

Every candidate will be required to follow the application process so that the Board can make its selection as carefully and objectively as possible. If you are interested in serving as a school board member and meet the eligibility requirements listed herein, please complete and submit the application by mail or in person to the Aromas-San Juan Unified School District at 2300 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA prior to 4:30 p.m. on July 22, 2021. Postmarks will not be accepted for deadline submission. Interviews for eligible candidates will be held at the Board's August 18, 2021, regular board meeting.

Thank you for your interest in serving as a school board member.

Sincerely,

Casey Powers, LCSW

Casey Powers, Board of Trustees President
Aromas-San Juan Unified School District

School Board Leadership

School board members are locally elected public officials entrusted with governing a community's public schools.

What is the school board's role and what are its responsibilities?

It is easy to say that school boards "govern" their schools. But what does that mean in everyday practice? The role of the board is to be responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of its community. The board fulfills this role by performing five major responsibilities:

1. Setting the direction for the community's schools

Of all the responsibilities of governing boards, none is more central to the purpose of local governance than ensuring that a long-term vision is established for the school system. The vision reflects the consensus of the entire board, the superintendent and district staff, and the community as to what the students need in order to achieve their highest potential. The vision should set a clear direction for the school district, driving every aspect of the district's program.

2. Establishing an effective and efficient structure for the school district

The Board is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organizational structure that supports the district's vision and empowers the professional staff. Although the board doesn't implement policies or programs, the board is responsible for:

- Employing the superintendent and setting policy for hiring other personnel;
- Overseeing the development of and adopting policies;
- Setting a direction for and adopting the curriculum;
- Establishing budget priorities, adopting the budget, and overseeing facilities and issues; and
- Providing direction for and adopting collective bargaining agreements.

3. Providing support

Through its behavior and actions, the board has a responsibility to support the superintendent and staff as they carry out the direction of the board. This involves:

- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision;
- Making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals;
- Upholding district policies the board has approved;
- Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists; and
- Being knowledgeable enough about district efforts to explain them to the public.

4. Ensuring accountability to the public

As community representatives, the board is accountable to the public for the performance of the community's schools. The board establishes systems and processes to monitor results, evaluates the school system's progress toward accomplishing the district's vision and communicates that progress to the local community. In order to ensure personnel, program and fiscal accountability, the board is responsible for:

- Evaluating the superintendent and setting policy for the evaluation of other personnel;
- Monitoring, reviewing, and revising policies;
- Serving as a judicial and appeals body;
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated;
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances;

- Monitoring the collective bargaining process; and
- Evaluating its own effectiveness through board self-evaluation.

5. Acting as community leaders

The board has a responsibility to involve the community in appropriate, meaningful ways and to communicate clear information to the community about district policies, educational programs, fiscal condition and progress on goals. As the only locally elected officials chosen solely to represent the interests of schoolchildren, board members also have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of those children. Board members are advocates for students, the district's educational programs, and public education. They build support within their communities and at the state and national levels.

These five responsibilities represent the functions that are so fundamental to a school system's democratic society, they can only be performed by an elected governing body. Authority for these roles is granted to the board as a whole. Therefore, board members fulfill these roles by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that will best serve all the students in the community.

What Makes an Effective School Board Member?

An individual board member:

- Keeps learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus;
- Values, supports, and advocates for public education;
- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents, and the community;
- Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior;
- Keeps confidential matters confidential;
- Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader;
- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff; and
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.

Furthermore, working with the superintendent as a "governance team," the board must have a unity of purpose and must:

- Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students;
- Communicate a common vision;
- Operate openly, with trust and integrity;
- Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect;
- Govern within board-adopted policies and procedures
- Take collective responsibility for the board's performance;
- Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness; and
- Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.

Who is eligible to serve on a school board?

To be eligible to serve in this voluntary capacity, candidates must be 18 years of age or older, a citizen of the state, a resident of the District, a registered voter, and not disqualified by the constitution or laws of the state from holding a civil office.