

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

A. Definition and Occurrence of a Vacancy. A vacancy on the School Board or other District office is defined in RSA 652:12, and occurs when subsequent to election but prior to the expiration of that person's term, the office holder/office holder elect, either:

- i. Resigns (see Board policy BBBC for resignation process);
- ii. Dies;
- iii. Ceases to have domicile in the district or town from which he/she was elected;
- iv. Is determined by a court to be mentally incompetent;
- v. Is/has been convicted which disqualifies him/her holding office (e.g., bribery, willful violation of election laws) or sentenced while in office after conviction for a felony;
- vi. Has the election voided by a court or the ballot law commission; or
- vii. Fails to take the oath of office within 30 days of the election, or fails to give/renew a bond required by law.

Although a formal resignation best serves the district when possible, many of the reasons cause a vacancy to occur by operation of law (e.g., death or relocation). In circumstances that are unclear (e.g., relocation out of district), the Superintendent and/or Board Chair should consult with counsel. A temporary absence does not constitute a vacancy.

1. **Vacancy on School Board.** In the event of a vacancy on the school board the remaining school board members representing the same town or towns as the departed member shall fill the vacancy, provided that there are at least 2 such members. At-large seats and members are considered to be "representative(s) of the same town or towns." If there are less than 2 remaining members on the cooperative school board representing the same town or towns as the departed member, or if the remaining members are unable, by majority vote, to agree upon an appointment, then the Select Board or Select Boards representing the same town/towns as the departed member may make the appointment, failing which the District Moderator will make the appointment. RSA 671:33, II(b).

For Cooperative School Board: Vacancies on the Cooperative School Board will be filled in accordance with the provisions of RSA 671:33. Appointees will serve until the next Cooperative School District election.

2. **Moderator Vacancy.** Vacancies in the office of moderator shall be filled by vote at a school meeting or election, provided that, until a replacement is chosen, the school District Clerk shall serve as moderator or shall appoint a moderator pro tempore. See RSA 671:33, III and RSA 197:20.

B. Duration of Appointment. For positions normally elected by the voters, a person appointed to fill a vacancy will serve only until the next election, at which point the voters will vote for a replacement to serve for the remainder of the original holder's term. For non-elected positions (i.e., those ordinarily appointed by the board), the person appointed to fill the vacancy will serve until the expiration of the original holder's term. See RSA 671:33.

C. Vacancy Arising During Filing Period. Other than a seat that is already open (for election or re-election) as of the beginning of the filing period, a vacancy which occurs between the beginning of the filing period and the district election shall be filled by appointment. See RSA 671:33, V.

D. Process to Fill Vacancies by the Board. The Board will generally employ the following process when there is a vacancy on the Board, or in other office for which the Board has authority to fill the vacancy. Except as required by RSA 91-A:2 and 3, the Board reserves the right to waive, supplement or otherwise amend any part of the process.

Discussion by the Board of the process to be used to fill a vacancy, and the appointment process itself, including candidate interviews, shall occur in public session during a duly noticed meeting. The only possible exception could be a limited discussion regarding a potential candidate wherein that part of the discussion is likely to adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a board member. See RSA 91-A:3, II(c).

Once the Board has confirmed or acknowledged the vacancy, the Board will advertise/post notice of the vacancy on the District web-site and in such other manner as the Board deems appropriate. Among other things, the notice shall invite interested persons to submit a letter of interest to the Board Chair, with a copy to the Superintendent. All such letters shall be included in the public meeting materials for the meeting at which the appointment is to be considered.

Interviews of candidates for vacant positions will take place in a meeting open to the public.

After motion and second, vote shall occur by voice or hand in public session (secret ballots are not allowed under RSA 91-A:2, II).

Legal References:

New Hampshire Constitution, Pt 1, Art. 11, Elections and Elective Franchises

RSA 197:20, Clerk

RSA 197:26, Vacancies

RSA 607-A:2, Rights Lost

RSA 652:12, Vacancy (definition)

RSA 671:33, School District Elections: Vacancies

(b) In a cooperative school district, the remaining school board members representing the same town or towns as the departed member shall fill a vacancy on the school board, provided that there are at least 2 such members. If there are less than 2 remaining members on the cooperative school board representing the same town or towns as the departed member, or if the remaining members are unable, by majority vote, to agree upon an appointment, the selectmen of the town or towns involved shall fill the vacancy by

majority vote in convention. If the selectmen are unable to fill the vacancy then the cooperative school district moderator shall make the appointment. A member appointed to fill a vacancy under this subparagraph shall serve until the next district election when the voters of the district shall elect a replacement for the unexpired term.

First Reading: September 10, 2007

Second Reading: November 5, 2007

Adopted: November 5, 2007

Amended: August 24, 2020

Amended: September 23, 2021