

## **School Board FAQs**

### **Who is on the school board?**

The school board is made up of five local citizens who are elected from five different areas or districts within Los Alamos County (two districts are in White Rock and three are on the Hill). Being on the school board is a volunteer job and board members don't get paid for what they do. A board member can be any person who is registered to vote and lives within the school district. They may be parents with students at LAPS, retired citizens or people with full time jobs. Board members can't be employed by the school district, though, so teachers and staff at schools can't be on the board, unless they are retired.

### **Is the school board the boss of everyone at LAPS?**

Not exactly. The board employs a superintendent to oversee all the schools in the district. The superintendent, along with an assistant superintendent, is over all of the principals at the schools, and in turn, the principals supervise the staff at the schools. The superintendent also oversees all of the other district personnel such as maintenance and IT. So, the superintendent is the boss and the board oversees and evaluates how the superintendent is doing his or her job. They work together as a team to make our schools great.

### **What does the board do exactly?**

The school board adopts a vision, mission and goals for our school district that promotes student learning and success.

The school board also approves a budget for the school district. The budget is a plan for how money is going to be spent for the next school year.

The board is responsible for developing educational policies, which cover a lot of different issues like school discipline, technology use, and the use of school facilities, among many others. Every school in the district has a big notebook in the office with all of the school board policies. They are also on the LAPS website. It's a lot of information. The school board develops the policies for the school district and the superintendent administers those policies.

The school board also plays an active role in the community by developing relationships with government, community and business leaders and also by communicating the vision, mission and goals of the school district to the community.

### **Why does the school board have so many meetings and what happens at a school board meeting?**

The school board meets twice a month, one regular meeting and one work session. Sometimes issues come up and the school board has to meet more than that as well. Anything the board does (with a few exceptions) has to be done at a public meeting because of a law called the Open Meetings Act which the school board has to follow. At a regular meeting, the board makes decisions about issues like how money is spent, whether to adopt or amend policies, and approving contracts for services the school district needs. The board also invites people to make presentations about things going on at the schools and recognizes students and teachers for achievements, like science fair awards and sporting accomplishments, to name a few. The Board is not allowed to take any action in work sessions. They are held primarily as informative sessions or to receive updates on issues that will be acted upon at a later date.

### **Why is the school board interested in hearing from students?**

A big part of what the school board does is listening. Board members want to hear how things are going at the schools; they listen to ideas about how things could be better; and they also listen to complaints sometimes. They use what they hear to help with decision-making and also to help work with the superintendent to lead the school district. The school board wants to hear about how things are going at the schools from students too. After all, the students are the ones experiencing school, and they have a unique perspective that no one else can provide.