

February 14, 2023



Dear Alison,
With the approach of Town Meeting Day, there may be new members on your school board in the next month. We recommend welcoming and orienting new board members by using the best practices for onboarding. Learn more by attending VSBA's March 2 webinar (details below). The webinar is open to all central office staff as well as school board members. We hope to see you there!

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HOT TOPICS

Open Seat on State Board of Education

The State Board's [February 15 Agenda](#) includes recognition of Patrick Brown, whose term is expiring. This will create an open seat on the State Board of Education. If you are interested in applying, information and an online application process are [available here](#).

VSBA Seeks Director of Board Services - Application Deadline 2/15/23

VSBA has a job opening for a Director of Board Services. Please see the [VSBA home page](#) for the job description and more information about the application process.

GOVERNANCE TIPS

Clear, Shared, and Community-informed Governance Priorities

School Boards wanting to focus on effective governance will pay special attention to their priorities, protocols, and processes. If the board has not written down their priorities for the year and clearly communicated them to the superintendent and community, how can the superintendent be held accountable for making progress on the board's desires? Research shows a correlation between

1. boards having clearly defined goals for the district and superintendent,
2. communicating those goals to the community, and
3. using them as the basis for superintendent evaluation with the likelihood that student outcomes are improving in a school district.

There is also evidence to support that the more a board involves their community—including staff, families, students, and every constituent group—in establishing a vision and goals, the more likely the district is improving in student learning overall while at the same time closing gaps. Clear and shared (by all board members) governance priorities are the cornerstone for effective governance.

EQUITY

Affinity Group

As a reminder, VSBA is launching our first Affinity Group. This is exclusively for BIPOC School Board Members. The first meeting will be virtual to explore the direction and guidelines participants want to establish. Bonnie Johnson-Aten, a well-respected Vermont administrator and experienced facilitator, is helping get the group off to a great start. Affinity Groups are spaces where individuals can relate with each other, share ideas and suggestions, and receive mutual support to help them do their work. We know how important it is to provide support for BIPOC teachers and administrators. We believe it is also valuable for school board members. If you or one of your fellow board members meet the criteria and would like to participate in this group, please [click here](#) to be added to our contact list. We will reach out to you personally with more information.

FROM THE AGENCY OF EDUCATION

State Board of Education Meeting 2/15/23

The [agenda](#) for the State Board's February 15 meeting includes an Education Quality Standards Subcommittee update and possible approvals/renewals of five independent schools, among other items. The Board is meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams. The public can access the meeting through this call in number: 1-802-828-7667 (Conference ID: 797 989 079#).

SAVE THE DATE

2/24/23 Zoom Forum
Board Chairs & Vice Chairs
9:00 - 10:00am

We are convening a meeting for current board chairs and vice chairs on Friday, February 24 at 9:00am. The intent is to discuss common challenges and opportunities. You may be interested in sharing questions or suggestions for navigating uncertainties, running effective meetings, receiving public comments, or other aspects of your role. Come prepared to contribute and learn. [Click here to register](#) or for more information. This networking will not be recorded. Please register if you can attend live. Participation will be limited to the first 40 registrants.

3/2/23 Webinar

The New 2023 School Board: Onboarding New Board Members and Reorganizing the Board Noon - 1:00pm

"Town meeting day is coming quickly. Leave this webinar with key insights to ensure your district has excellent practices for onboarding and working well with new members. Too many boards leave this to hope and happenstance. Nearly no one automatically knows how to be an effective school board member. We have to be shown the ropes, coached along the way, learn from our mistakes, and know that we are part of a team that has the best interest at heart. The way you provide information, resources, and encouragement in the first sixty days to a new school board is critical for them to contribute meaningfully to the board and its work. Consider ways your board can be intentional about bringing new members onto the team and supporting the long term success of your board.

This webinar includes practical tips to consider when reorganizing your board including qualities to look for in board officers and mistakes to avoid.

This webinar is open to all central office staff as well as school board members.

[REGISTER HERE](#) FREE WEBINAR

3/3/23

BIPOC Affinity Group Meeting 3:30-5:00 pm

VSBA is launching our first Affinity Group, and this is exclusively for BIPOC School Board Members. The first meeting will be by Zoom and explore what direction and guidelines the participants want to establish. Bonnie Johnson-Aten, a well-respected Vermont administrator and experienced facilitator, will help get the group off to a great start. Affinity Groups are spaces where individuals can relate with each other, share ideas and suggestions, and receive mutual support to help them do their work. We know how important it is to provide support for BIPOC teachers and administrators. We believe it is also valuable for school board members. If you or one of your fellow board members meet the criteria and would like to participate in this group, please [click here](#) to be added to our contact list. We will reach out to you personally with more information.

3/6/23

Leading for Educational Equity Curriculum Pilot POSTPONED

VSBA has a newly developed curriculum for school boards on Leading for Educational Equity. We had a pilot of the curriculum scheduled for March 6 and need to postpone that due to schedule conflicts. If this topic is of interest to you or your board, please stay tuned for more information.

If you have any thoughts about the VSBA Weekly Updates, please let us know. We always welcome your feedback.

Thank you for your dedicated service as school board members. **What you do makes a difference!**

Sincerely,

Sue Ceglowski
VSBA Executive Director





Our mailing address is:
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You can [unsubscribe from this list](#).