



Foundations of School Board Governance

Congratulations on becoming a School Board Member! This course is designed to provide a well balanced overview of the role of a school board member, and provide the basics on a broad variety of topics. We encourage you to complete this certification within the first 24 months of becoming a board member, or if you would like a refresher on Board Governance.

Required Courses

GOV 102: How To Foster a Positive Relationship between the School Board and the Board of Supervisors

GOV 103: Building a High Impact Board/Superintendent Relationship

GOV 104: Communication Tips for School Board Members

LEG 101: The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

LEG 105: School Boards and the First Amendment

ADV 101: Advocacy: A Must for School Board Members

Choose One

Choose any one course from the Legal/Policy Topic track to complete.

Choose One

Choose any one course from the Hot Topics track to complete.

Upon Completion

Once you have completed all components above, complete this form and send it to tom@vsba.org to request verification and receive credit for completing the Foundations of School Board Governance Certificate.

All courses must be completed within 24 months to earn the Certificate.

Course Descriptions

GOV 102: The school board and the board of supervisors/city council must work closely together to advance the needs of our students. Learn best practices for how to enhance the communication lines between you and your counterparts in local government. Good relations rely on shared expectations and proper communication to determine who makes what decisions. When we understand and agree with each other then we can play our roles properly.

GOV 103: Hear real life examples and exercises that illustrate key aspects of the board-superintendent partnership. You will be provided detailed, practical, thoroughly tested guidance on building and maintaining a close, productive, and enduring board-superintendent partnership. As well as up-to-date information on significant developments in the rapidly changing field of K-12 governance. Workshop Topics include: • A detailed description of the actual work involved in governing a school district • The characteristics of really board-savvy superintendents • Practical ways to strengthen the board's accountability for its governing performance • Development of board structure and processes for actively engaging board members in key governing processes such as strategic planning and performance monitoring • Management of the board-superintendent working relationship

GOV 104: Communication is a skill that every board member should have in their toolbox. Attend this webinar to learn and discuss the importance of communication, how to communicate as a board member and ways to communicate strategically through various methods. Helpful hints and tips for interviews, social media, and general communication methods will be discussed.

LEG 101: The Freedom of Information Act has the laudable purpose of ensuring that citizens have ready access to public records and to the meetings in which the business of the public is conducted. To the members of a public body, however, FOIA may sometimes seem like a hindrance to smooth operation. The webinar will help school board members understand the purposes and requirements of FOIA and how to best meet those requirements in a legally defensible, efficient and fair manner.

LEG 105: Join Stacy Haney and Pakapon Phinyowattanachip for this webinar covering current First Amendment "hot topics" facing school boards today, including confederate flags, student protests, social media, and more. Participants will gain valuable insights on how to ensure compliance with the First Amendment.

ADV 101: As school board members, you are the front-line advocates for your district's students, parents, staff, and administration in voicing support or concern for proposed legislation and regulations under consideration by the Virginia General Assembly, Board of Education, United States government, and local governing bodies. Join Virginia School Boards Association Government Relations Specialist J.T. Kessler for this webinar that will focus on the important role that school board members play in informing federal, state, and local policymakers of the impact their decisions have on local school divisions. Participants will gain insights into strategies they can use to engage policymakers and learn best practices on how to be an effective advocate.