LET TEACHERS TEACH COALITION

TEACHER TOOLKIT | Let Teachers Teach Coalition

Understanding Your Local School Board

School boards make decisions that affect your classroom, paycheck, workload, and safety. Understanding how they operate—and how to make your voice heard—can help you advocate for policies that let teachers teach.

What Does Your Local School Board Oversee?

While responsibilities vary by state and district, school boards generally oversee:

- ★ Teacher compensation and employment: Salaries, raises, bonuses, professional development, hiring practices, union agreements, and employee protections.
- ★ District budgets and leadership: Spending priorities, administrative positions, outside consultants, and superintendent oversight.
- ★ Academic policies: Curriculum adoption, grading standards, graduation requirements, and student achievement.
- ★ Classroom management: Student discipline, behavioral expectations, cellphone policies, and teacher authority.
- ★ School safety: Security protocols, emergency procedures, and protective measures available to educators.

How Can Teachers Engage With Their School Board?

1. Find your school board members:

School board members' names, contact information, and districts are typically available on the school district's website. If that information is not listed, contact the district office. Identify the board member representing your community and review any committees focused on instruction, finance, personnel, or school safety.

2. Review meeting agendas and supporting documents:

School board agendas often include proposed policies, budget decisions, contracts, curriculum changes, personnel matters, and student discipline updates. Look for proposals affecting:

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- ★ Teacher compensation, administrative requirements, and union contracts.
- ★ Grading standards, cellphone policies, and ideological training or instructional mandates.
- ★ School security, student discipline, and classroom safety.

3. Attend meetings and provide public comment:

School board meetings generally include opportunities for public participation, although procedures vary by district. Before attending, confirm:

- ★ Whether advance registration is required and when public comments are accepted.
- ★ How much time speakers receive and whether comments must address agenda items.
- ★ Whether written comments are also permitted.
- ★ **Sample public comment:** "Good evening. My name is [Name], and I teach [Subject/Grade] at [School]. I am asking the board to review [specific policy] because it prevents teachers from [explain the impact]. I urge the board to [specific action] so educators can focus on instruction and student achievement. Thank you for your time."

4. Meet directly with school board members:

Board meetings are often structured around formal agendas and limited speaking time. Scheduling a separate meeting allows you to discuss your concerns in greater detail. When requesting a meeting:

- ★ Identify the policy and explain how it affects teachers and students.
- ★ Share relevant examples without disclosing confidential student information.
- ★ Recommend a practical solution and ask what action the board can take.

5. Review district spending:

District budgets can reveal whether resources are reaching classrooms or funding unnecessary bureaucracy. Look for spending on:

- ★ Administrative positions, outside consultants, union agreements, and ideological
- ★ training or programming.
- ★ Teacher compensation, professional development, classroom materials, and
- ★ instructional technology.
- ★ School security, emergency preparedness, and disciplinary support.

6. Join an advisory committee or working group:

Many districts have committees that review budgets, curriculum, school safety, professional development, and other policy issues. Ask your school board or district office:

- ★ Which committees include teachers, and how are representatives selected?
- ★ Can teachers participate without union membership or representation?
- ★ When do committees meet, and how are recommendations shared with the board?

7. Follow up and document next steps.

After a meeting or public comment:

- ★ Send a written summary of your concern.
- ★ Restate your proposed solution.
- ★ Ask when the board expects to review or address the issue.
- ★ Share relevant information with other board members when appropriate.
- ★ Monitor future agendas, meeting minutes, and policy proposals.

Sample Questions

Teacher Compensation and Professional Development

- ★ Does the district offer performance-based raises or bonuses tied to measurable student achievement?
- ★ Can effective teachers advance professionally without leaving the classroom?
- ★ What training is available to help teachers use AI to improve instruction and reduce administrative work?

Administrative Burdens and Medical Freedom

- ★ Which reporting requirements are required by law, and which are imposed by the district?
- ★ What steps is the district taking to eliminate unnecessary paperwork and duplicative administrative tasks?
- ★ Are teachers subject to vaccine mandates or other employment requirements that restrict their medical freedom?

Classroom Authority and Academic Standards

- ★ What protections exist for teachers who refuse to pass students who have not earned a passing grade?
- ★ Can teachers restrict cellphone use during class when devices are not required for instruction?
- ★ Are teachers required to promote gender ideology, critical race theory, or other political content?

Union Accountability

- ★ How does the board gather input directly from teachers rather than relying exclusively on union representatives?
- ★ What transparency exists regarding union agreements and political spending?

- ★ What protections are available to teachers who decline union membership or disagree with union leadership?

School Safety and Discipline

- ★ What happens when a student becomes violent or repeatedly disrupts instruction?
- ★ What authority do teachers have to remove disruptive students from their classrooms?
- ★ What safety training and protective measures are available to educators?