



# **Niskayuna Central School District**

## **2008 Information sheet for candidates for Board of Education**

### **2008 Budget Vote and Annual Election Dates**

Board nominating petitions available in District Clerk's office:	February 11, 2008
Deadline for board nominating petitions to be filed in District Clerk's office:	5 pm April 21, 2008
Drawing for ballot positions in District Clerk's office:	TBA
Meet the Candidates Night ( <i>Van Antwerp Auditorium</i> )	May 5, 2008 7 p.m.
Public Hearing on Budget	May 6, 2008 7 p.m.
Annual Budget Vote and Election ( <i>Niskayuna High School</i> )	May 20, 2008 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

### **State law requirements for membership on a school board**

To qualify for membership on a school board in New York State, an individual must be able to read and write, must be a qualified voter of the district, that is, a citizen of the United States who is at least 18 years of age, and must be a resident of the district for a continuous and uninterrupted period of at least one year immediately before the election. The individual may not be a current district employee, nor live in the same household with a family member who is also a member of the same school board.

### **Procedures for Filing Nominating Petitions**

Candidates must file a nominating petition in the office the District Clerk located in the District Office at Van Antwerp School, 1239 Van Antwerp Road, Niskayuna. The petition must be signed by at least 25 qualified district voters or 2 percent of the number of voters who voted in the previous annual election, whichever number is greater. For the 2008 election, the petition must have fifty (50) signatures. The petition must include the candidate's name and residence. For more information or to obtain a copy of a board nominating petition, contact the District Clerk, Matt Bourgeois, at (518) 377-4666, extension 50712.

## **Meet the Candidates Night - Monday, May 5, 2008**

The Niskayuna Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Council annually hosts a “Meet the Candidates Night.” All board candidates are invited to participate and respond to questions from the audience, through a moderator, on a wide range of educational issues.

### **Number of Board Members and Term of Office**

The Niskayuna Board of Education consists of seven members who serve without pay. The term of office for board members is three years, beginning on July 1 in the year of their election. Board members run at-large, that is, there are no specific seats based on geographical representation, and they are elected by a plurality of the votes cast. For the 2008 election, two board seats will be filled by the candidates receiving the highest number of votes. Newly elected board members will be sworn in at the Organizational Meeting tentatively scheduled for July 14, 2008 and serve a term of office ending on June 30, 2011.

### **Campaign Expenses**

State law requires board candidates whose campaign expenditures exceed \$500 to file a sworn statement with an itemized list of expenditures with both the District Clerk and the Commissioner of Education. If less than \$500, the statement must only be submitted to the District Clerk. Regardless of the campaign expenditure amount, a preliminary statement must be filed with the District Clerk at least ten days before the election and a final statement within twenty days after the election.

### **Mandated Fiscal Oversight Training**

State law requires all board members taking office on or after July 1, 2005 to complete at least six hours of training in the financial, oversight, accountability and fiduciary responsibilities of board members. This training must be completed in during the first year in office, and courses taken must be those approved by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the State Comptroller. Board members usually have the option of attending workshops for one full day or two part-days, or participating on-line. Workshops are offered by the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA), BOCES and other entities.

### **Board Meetings and Preparation**

The Niskayuna Board of Education meets approximately 26 times per year, usually on the first and third Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. During late February and most of

March, the board meets every week to work on budget development for the next fiscal year. In July and August there are fewer meetings and the starting times vary.

On the Friday prior to each board meeting, board members receive a board packet. The packet includes the agenda for the meeting, and the attachments necessary for each planned board action.

## **Typical Board Meeting Agenda**

Board meeting agendas are collaboratively developed in advance by the Superintendent of Schools and the President and Vice-President of the board. Meeting agenda items typically include:

- a) District update by Superintendent
- b) Reports by individual board members
- c) Comments from the community
- d) Special presentations and/or recognitions
- e) A consent agenda of items requiring board action, but not requiring discussion, such as approval of minutes and routine personnel.
- f) Instruction
- g) Business
- h) Personnel
- i) General - discussion on other matters
- j) Executive Session (not open to the public, to discuss specific special education matters, personnel issues, contract negotiations, legal matters, real estate matters, etc.)
- k) Public session to take any actions resulting from Executive Session
- l) Adjournment

## **Liaison Assignments**

Each board member serves as the Board Liaison for a specific school in the district. When possible, board liaisons attend the PTO meetings of the school and related activities and events. In addition, board members attend district-wide and specific school events, fairs, forums, meetings, presentations, concerts, dinners, receptions, and sporting events.

## **NYSSBA and CAPSBA**

Niskayuna Central School District is a dues paying member of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA). In addition to participating in periodic NYSSBA workshops and training sessions, board members often attend the annual statewide school

boards convention. The 2008 annual convention will be held October 16-19 in New York City.

Our district is also a member of the Capital Area School Boards Association (CAPSBA) which hosts about six dinner meetings during the school year, featuring speakers on a variety of topics of current interest to board members.

## **Superintendent of Schools**

The Superintendent of Schools is appointed by the board of education and serves a specific contractual term of between three and five years. The superintendent serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the district and manages the day-to-day activities of the school district. The Superintendent works closely with the board in implementing and supporting board policy and long-term goals.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kevin Baughman can be reached at (518) 377-4666, extension 50706.

## **Board Retreats**

In the setting of an annual board retreat, usually on a Saturday, board members work informally with the superintendent, school district counsel or other consultants in enhancing board and superintendent effectiveness, long range school district planning, or other priorities as determined by the board.

## **Important links:**

**[www.niskayunaschools.org](http://www.niskayunaschools.org)**

**[www.nyssba.org](http://www.nyssba.org)**

**[www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov)**

**[www.capregboces.org](http://www.capregboces.org)**

**[www.osc.state.ny.us](http://www.osc.state.ny.us)**