



GET ON
BOARD

Maintaining Your Community's Trust

Legal & Ethical Campaigns for the School Board

Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2025



Meet Your IASB Facilitator



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Goals for Today

- Review key dates.
- Master the basics of filing.
- Learn about conflict of interest.
- Discover three 'must know' campaign finance laws.
- Explore an ethical scenario.
- Hear cautionary tales.

QUICK POLL



Who is participating?

1. I am thinking about running for the school board.
2. I have decided to run for the school board.
3. I am not running; I'm learning about work of the school board.
4. I am a current school board member.
5. I am a superintendent.
6. I am a school business manager and/or a board secretary.



Key Dates



Key Dates and Deadlines

Sept. 18: Candidate Filing Deadline, 5 p.m.

Sept. 23: Withdrawal Deadline, 5 p.m.

Nov. 4: Election Day

Nov. 12: Tier 1 Canvass of Votes for all Districts

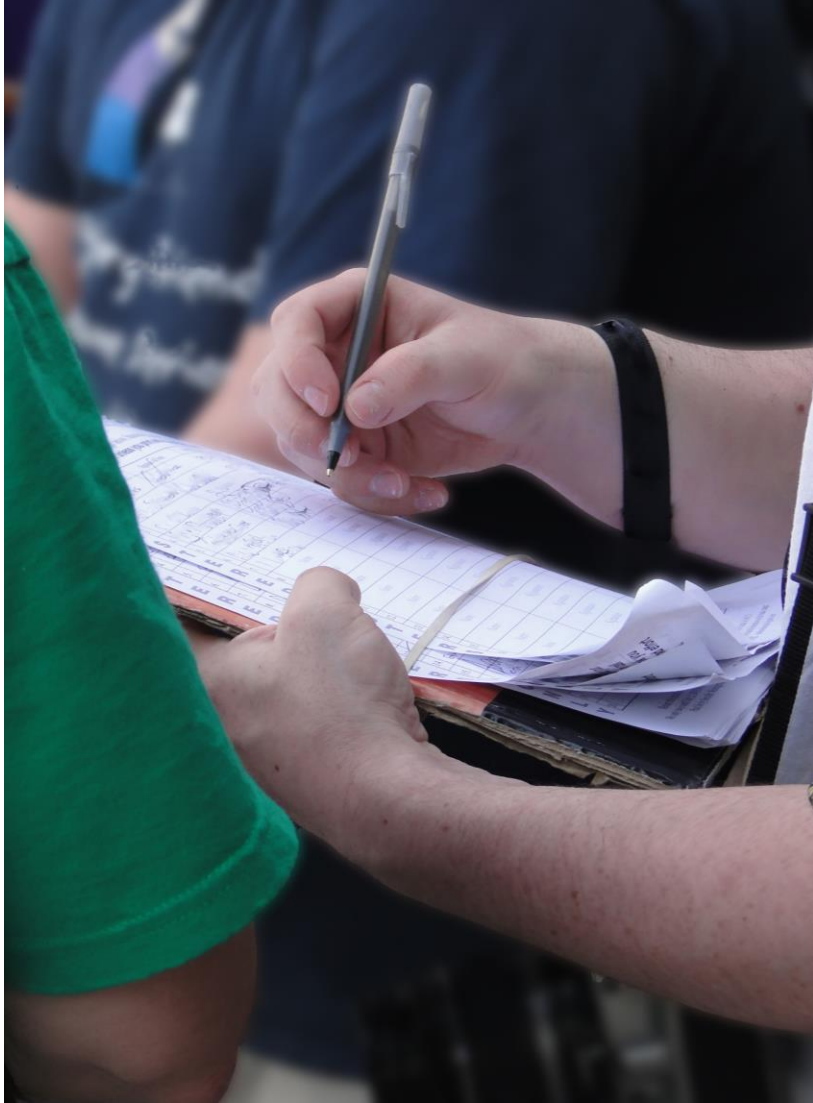
Nov. 18: Tier 2 Canvass of Votes for Districts within Multiple Counties



Getting Started: Filing 101 & Conflicts of Interest



Filing 101: Tips and Reminders



- File both the affidavit and nomination petitions together.
- Notarize your affidavit.
- File paperwork with your board secretary by 5 p.m. on Sept. 18.
- Adhere to signature requirements.
- <https://sos.iowa.gov/school-elections>

QUICK POLL



Where are you at in the filing process?

- Already turned in paperwork
- Collecting signatures now
- Haven't decided yet if I'm running
- Other



Conflict of Interest Laws

Board members are excluded from:

- Receiving more than \$20,000 in compensation from the district (279.7A).
- Appointing a relative within the 3rd degree to a paying position unless first approved by the board (71.1).
- Taking official action or performing an official duty on an outside employment or activity (68B.2A).
- Receiving gifts from people who may be financially impacted by actions of the board (68B.22).
- Expending or permitting the expenditure of public moneys to expressly advocate in favor or against a candidate or ballot issue (68A.505).



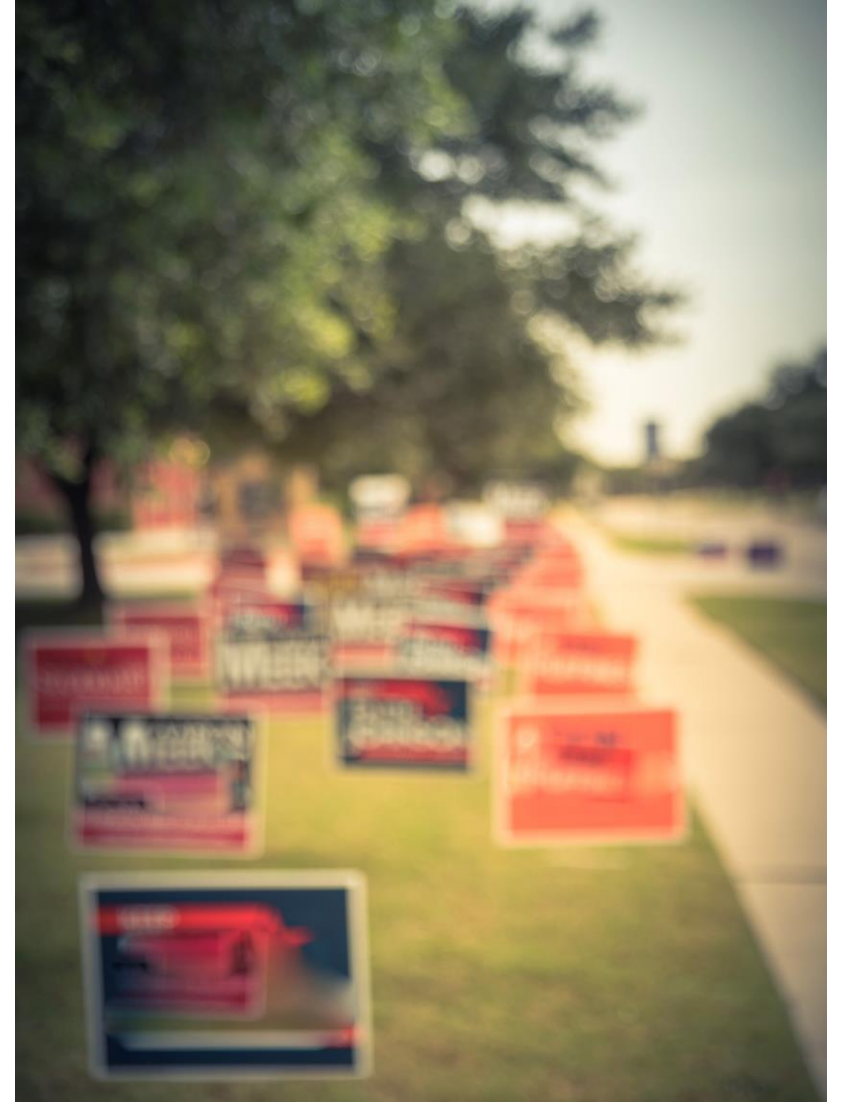
Considerations for Candidates



3 Must-Know Campaign Finance Laws



- **Candidate Committees:** Committee requirement if you spend more than \$1,000.
- **Attribution Statements:** 'Paid for by,' identification of who paid for the ad, etc.
- **Campaign Signs:** Prohibited locations, permissions, etc.
- <https://ethics.iowa.gov/contact-us/report-concern>



Why Is it Important to Comply?



PENALTY!

Scenarios & Cautionary Tales





Scenario

A citizen in your district is also running for an open seat on the same board. They ask you to run as a 'block' or a group... to share brochures and signs, and to campaign together at events.



Scenario

What would you do in this scenario?

- Yes, I'll run as a candidate block, this seems easier than running on my own!
- No thanks, I'd prefer to run my own separate campaign.

Is it Legal?

- Candidates may not use campaign funds to make a monetary or in-kind contribution to another candidate.
- Candidates may engage in joint campaign activities. However, each candidate should pay for their own share of the costs.
- If one candidate pays all the costs of a joint advertisement or fundraiser, that would be a prohibited in-kind contribution to another candidate.
- If possible, get the vendor to bill each campaign for their individual share, so it may be paid separately.

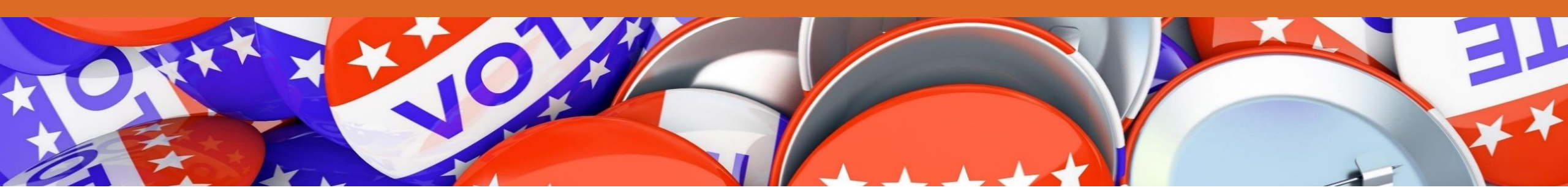


- Think beyond the campaign:
 - What happens if you win, but other candidates in your block don't?
 - Running as a block sets expectation that if elected, the block of candidates will vote in a certain way on issues.
 - When candidate blocks are formed, it sends a message to your constituents. What you say and do as a candidate remains in the public eye.



CAUTIONARY TALES

- Collect more signatures than you need.
- Turn in paperwork to the board secretary.
- Don't send campaign emails to school emails.
- Don't use teacher mailboxes for campaign mail.



RESOURCES

IASB Tools and Info: www.ia-sb.org/getonboard

Ethics Board: ethics.iowa.gov/campaigns/candidates

Secretary of State's Office:
sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/schoolelections.html



Vision & Voice for Public Education

www.ia-sb.org

