



Prepared by the Office of  
Iowa Secretary of State

## Candidate's Guide School Election September 13, 2011

### Where to Get Nomination Papers

Candidate's nomination petitions and affidavits of candidacy are available on the Secretary of State's website: [www.sos.state.ia.us/elections/electioninfo/SchoolElections.html](http://www.sos.state.ia.us/elections/electioninfo/SchoolElections.html)

### Candidate Qualifications

Any person seeking an elective school office must be an eligible elector at the time of the election at which the person's name appears on the ballot. A candidate who is seeking election from a director district within the school district must be an eligible elector residing in the director district.

**An Eligible Elector is** a U.S. citizen who is at least 18 years old and is a resident of the appropriate district and who has not been disqualified from voting. An eligible elector meets all of the requirements to register to vote, but does not have to be registered to vote.

### Signature Requirements – School Board

For candidates for school board, the minimum number of signatures is between 10 and 50 signatures, depending on the number of registered voters in your school district. It is always wise to file more than the required minimum number of signatures. Ask the school secretary for the minimum number needed in your school district. For school districts with fewer than 1,000 registered voters, the minimum is 10 signatures. For districts with more than 1,000 registered voters, the minimum signature requirement is 1% of the number of registered voters in the school district (as determined on May 1<sup>st</sup>), which never needs to be more than fifty (50). Signature requirements for candidates who are elected only by the voters of a director district are based on the number of registered voters in the director district (as determined on May 1<sup>st</sup>).

### Signature Requirements – Community College Boards

Candidates for community college boards must be eligible electors of the director district they seek to represent. Each candidate must file at least 50 signatures.

### Where to File

With the School District Secretary or Community College Board Secretary.  
Candidates cannot file at the county auditor's office.

### When to File

**First Day** -Monday, July 11, 2011

**Last Day** -Thursday, August 4, 2011, no later than 5 p.m.

**There are no filing fees.**

# The Affidavit of Candidacy

All candidates must complete and file an affidavit of candidacy. Nomination papers (affidavits of candidacy and nomination petitions) must be filed together or they will be rejected.

The following information must be provided on affidavits of candidacy. Affidavits lacking required information will be rejected and will need to be replaced by the candidate. The numbers next to each required field correspond to the numbered fields on the affidavit of candidacy form.

**1. Candidate's Name:** The candidate's name should be printed or typed exactly as the candidate wishes the name to appear on the ballot. Only the candidate's name may be used; no parentheses, quotation marks, or titles (e.g. Mrs., Dr., etc.) may be included. Nicknames are acceptable.

Candidate's name sounds like: The phonetic (sounds like) spelling of the candidate's name is necessary to produce audio ballots for voters who are visually impaired. **Please note:** The people producing the audio ballots may have never heard the candidate's name before so please be as clear as possible with the description. Example: Eisenhower = "EYES-in-how-er"

**2. Office Sought:** The name of the office for which the candidate is seeking election must be provided.

**3. District or Ward (if any):** The director district number must be provided, if applicable.

**4. Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office-holder?** For offices in which the term does not end this year, if an incumbent office-holder resigned, died, or was removed from office before the end of the term and another officer was not *elected* to fill the remainder of the unexpired term, the office must appear on the ballot at the 2011 School Election as "To Fill Vacancy". You must check the "yes" box if you are running to fill the remainder of an unexpired term.

\*\*If a vacancy occurred in an office whose term is up in 2011, the office will be on the ballot, but not to fill a vacancy.

\*\*\*Contact the auditor if you are unsure about the vacancy status of the office.

**5. Type and Date of election:** The 2011 School Election will be held on Tuesday, September 13.

**6. Candidate's Affiliation:** Leave this space blank. This is a required field for partisan offices only. School offices are nonpartisan.

**7. Candidate's Home Address:** The candidate must provide his or her residential (street) address on the affidavit including the name of the county in which the candidate resides.

**8. Candidate's Mailing Address:** A post office box may only be provided if it is in addition to a residential address.

**9. Phone and Email:** This information is optional but it assists the filing officer and members of the public with contacting the candidate.

**10. Candidate's Affirmation and Signature:** The affidavit of candidacy must be notarized. A notarial officer (notary public or other officer legally authorized to administer oaths) must be present when the candidate signs the affidavit. The notary must complete the verification on the bottom of the affidavit which includes providing the name of the state the notary is commissioned by, the name of the county in which the notarization is taking place (not necessarily the county the candidate is from), the date of the notarization, the name of the candidate, and the seal, signature, and commission expiration date of the notary.

# Nomination Petitions

The following instructions apply to all school election candidates who circulate nomination petitions for the school election. Candidates who circulate petitions will file the petitions with an affidavit of candidacy (the combination of the two making up “nomination papers”).

## Checklist for Circulating Nomination Petitions

### Before Anyone Signs the Petition

Fill in all the information requested in the header of **every** petition page. Signatures will not be counted on pages of nomination petitions that are missing required information. You may wish to fill in one petition page and make copies of that page to assure that all page headings are identical. You may also wish to print the header and signature section of the petition on the front and back of each petition page you circulate. Signatures written on the back of a petition page without a header will not be counted. The instructions below are for completing sections of the petition header and appear in the same order as the sections appear on the petition header.

### The Petition Header

- Name of Candidate:** The candidate’s name should be printed or typed exactly as the candidate wishes their name to appear on the ballot. Nicknames are acceptable.
- Office Sought:** The name of the office for which the candidate is seeking election must be provided.
- Candidate’s County of Residence:** The candidate must provide the name of the county in which the candidate lives.
- Candidate’s City of Residence:** The candidate must provide the name of the city in which the candidate lives.
- Type and Date of election:** The 2011 School Election will be held on Tuesday, September 13.
- Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office-holder?** In offices with terms that do not end this year, if an incumbent office-holder resigned, died, or was removed from office before the end of the term and another officer was not elected to fill the remainder of the unexpired term, the office must appear on the ballot at the 2011 School Election as “To Fill Vacancy”. You must check the “yes” box if you are running to fill the remainder of an unexpired term.  
\*\*\*Contact the auditor if you are unsure about the vacancy status of the office for which you are seeking election.
- School District:** The candidate must provide the name of the school district in which the candidate lives.
- School Director District (if any):** Be sure that the correct director district number (if any) is on each page of the nomination petition. Signatures on petition pages that do not provide the applicable director district number (if any) cannot be counted. Contact the school secretary or the county auditor if you are unsure of the district in which a seat lies.

## Who May Sign A Nomination Petition?

Eligible electors of the appropriate school district and director district (if applicable) may sign nomination petitions. Candidates may sign their own petitions assuming they are eligible electors of the school district and director district (if applicable).

**Eligible Elector Defined:** An eligible elector is a person who meets all of the qualifications to register to vote. However, an eligible elector is not required to be a registered voter.

An eligible elector must:

- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be a resident of Iowa
- Be at least 18 years old.

An eligible elector may not:

- Be a convicted felon (unless voting rights have been restored by the president or governor)
- Be currently judged incompetent to vote by a court
- Claim the right to vote in any other place.

## What Information Must The Signer Provide On The Petition?

- All signers of nomination petitions must include:
- A signature (the signature may be printed).
- The address of their residence (house number and street name or rural route). Providing a post office box only is not sufficient. If an elector is homeless, the elector should describe where he or she lives (i.e. where the elector spends most of his or her time) or write “homeless” in the space provided.
- The name of the city in which they live.
- The date of signing.
- (Community college petitions only: signers must include the name of the school district where they live).

### Important Notes:

- Signature lines lacking signatures and/or residential addresses cannot be counted.
- There is no limit on the number of nomination petitions one elector may sign for different candidates.
- **“Ditto” Marks:** Petition signers often use “ditto” marks when appropriate (e.g. when the name of a city or the date of signing the petition is the same as the previous signer). The use of ditto marks alone does not invalidate a signature.

## When Can I Start Collecting Signatures?

You may begin collecting signatures at any time. However, the signers must still be eligible electors when the papers are filed in order for the signatures to count.

## How Many Signatures Do I Need?

### Minimum Number of Signatures:

See page 1 of this guide for signature requirements for school board candidates and community college board candidates.

## Preparing to File Nomination Papers

- Make a copy** of your nomination papers for your records.
- Count the signatures.** It is recommended that you file more than the required number of signatures; it is possible for signatures to be challenged. If there are signatures on your petition that you know should not be there, simply draw a line through the name. Those signatures will not be counted.
- Be sure you are ready.** After nomination papers have been accepted for filing, nothing can be added to them and they cannot be returned. Papers will only be returned if they have been rejected.
- Bind the nomination papers together.** Nomination papers may not be accepted if they are not bound together. Fasten all petition pages together to form one bundle. Petitions that are not bound can be rejected without examination. Staples are preferred. If the papers cannot be stapled, please use a 3-ring binder to securely bind the petitions. Please do not use paper clips, rubber bands, or metal clamps.
- File as early as possible.** Nomination papers will be inspected for completeness before they are accepted for filing. If the papers do not meet minimum filing requirements, they will not be accepted for filing and will be returned to the filer. If you file early, you may have time to correct any errors and resubmit your papers. Nomination papers may be filed in person or by mail.

**Please note:** When filing nomination papers by mail, **postmark dates do not count.** The correct filing officer must receive your papers before 5 p.m. on the filing deadline. You may wish to call before the filing deadline and ask whether your papers have been received. If you would like to be contacted when your nomination papers have been received, please indicate that when you mail your papers and include a daytime phone number so the filing officer may honor your request.

It is the **responsibility of the candidate** to ensure nomination papers are filed by the deadline. Papers presented after 5 p.m. on the final filing date must be rejected.

- File all papers at the same time!** Nomination papers (affidavits of candidacy and nomination petitions) must be filed together or they will be rejected.

A candidate may send the notarized affidavit of candidacy to the filing officer by fax if necessary **BUT:**

- The faxed copy of the affidavit must arrive before the filing deadline.
- The candidate must also mail the original notarized affidavit of candidacy to the county auditor who is the control county auditor for the school district or community college. The affidavit must be postmarked before the filing deadline to be considered on time.
- The auditor must receive the affidavit no later than 7 days after the filing deadline, regardless of the postmark.
- Nomination petitions **cannot** be faxed and must be filed before the filing deadline even if the affidavit of candidacy was faxed.

If a candidate needs to fax an affidavit, it is recommended the candidate contact the office of the filing officer prior to faxing the document to discuss filing the rest of the nomination papers. If the original affidavit arrives late or is postmarked after the deadline, the nomination papers are void.

# School Election Calendar - 2011

Date	Event
Monday, July 11	<b>Candidate Filing Begins</b> First day to file nomination petitions with the secretary of the school board.
Saturday, July 30	<b>Last Day for Vacancies</b> Vacancies on school board occurring on or before today must be filled at the school election.
Thursday, August 4 5 p.m.	<b>Candidate Filing Deadline</b> Last day to file nomination papers with the school secretary. Deadline is 5 p.m. School secretary or designee must have office open until 5 p.m.
Tuesday, August 9 5 p.m.	<b>Withdrawal Deadline</b> Last day for candidates to withdraw by filing a written request with the school secretary. Deadline is 5 p.m.
Tuesday, August 9	<b>Objection Deadline</b> Last day to file written objections to nomination papers or eligibility of candidate with school secretary.
Monday, August 29	<b>Worry-Free Postmark Date</b> Correctly completed voter registration forms post marked by today are considered timely even if received after September 2.
Friday, September 2 5 p.m.	<b>Voter Pre-Registration Deadline</b> All voter registration forms must be received by the county auditor no later than 5 p.m. unless postmarked on or before August 29th.
<b>Tuesday, September 13</b>	<b>School Election Day – 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.</b> <b>Exception:</b> The polls may be opened at noon for any school district election unless a petition objecting to shortened hours is received by the county auditor.
Friday, September 16	<b>Canvass of Votes</b> Canvass of votes by the board of supervisors.
Monday, September 19 5 p.m.	<b>Recount Request Deadline</b> Written request for a recount must be filed in the office of the county auditor by 5 p.m. County auditor's office must be open until 5 p.m.
Monday, September 26	<b>Canvass For Community Colleges</b> Canvass of county abstracts for community colleges by board of supervisors of control county.  Canvass may also be conducted at the last regular board of supervisors' meeting in September.
Thursday, October 6 (school districts) Monday, October 17 (comm. colleges)	<b>Contest Notice Deadline</b> Statement of intent to contest election must be filed in the office of the county auditor within 20 days after the day the apparent winner was declared elected.

**For more information please contact:**

The School Secretary's Office  
(In the district where you live)

Or

The County Auditor  
(The control county auditor for your  
school district or community college)

The Elections Division  
Iowa Secretary of State's Office  
Lucas State Office Bldg. 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
OR 321 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
(515)281-0145 (voice or TDD)  
Toll Free 1-888-SOS-VOTE (888-767-8683)  
Website: [www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us)  
Email: [sos@sos.state.ia.us](mailto:sos@sos.state.ia.us)

**Note:** The information provided in this guide has been compiled in the Iowa Secretary of State's Office to assist candidates and the public in meeting the requirements of Iowa's election laws. If any errors in compilation or computation have occurred, or if there have been amendments to the *Iowa Code* or *Iowa Administrative Code*, the provisions of the *Iowa Code*, *Iowa Administrative Code*, and the session laws shall prevail.