

Why School Boards?

Five Reasons for Local Control of Public Education

Are school boards necessary?

Should the present governance structure of our nation's public schools remain in place?

The answer to both questions is, unequivocally, yes.

No one questions why planning boards, municipal governments, and state legislatures exist. And yet, some people advocate turning over control of school governance to those same bodies, saying we should let someone else take charge of the future of our children's future.

School boards, elected or appointed by their communities, represent the community's beliefs and values. Who better than these community representatives to shoulder the responsibility for preparing children to live productive and satisfying lives?

Consider these five reasons that the school board, which represents your community's beliefs and values, should be the decision maker in today's schools:

1. Your school board looks out for children – first and foremost. Education is not a line item in your school board's budget – it is the *only* item.
2. Your school board is the advocate for your community when decisions are made about your children's education. The school board represents the public's voice in public education, providing citizen governance for what the public schools need and what the community wants.
3. Your school board sets the standard for achievement in your district, incorporating the community's view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. Your school board also is responsible for working with the superintendent to establish a valid process for measuring student success and, when necessary, shifting resources to ensure that the district's goals are achieved.
4. Your school board is accessible to you and accountable for the performance of the schools in your district. If the schools are not

producing, it is your right as a voter to select new board members who will see to it that your students and your schools succeed.

5. Your school board is your community's education watchdog, ensuring that taxpayers get the most for their tax dollars. Public education is a \$423 billion business. In the majority of districts, school boards have taxing authority. That direct oversight – and responsibility – should not be given to politicians whose first priority is something other than education.

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