

Question: Now that the election is over and it's time to move forward, what is the process for onboarding the newly elected board members?

Answer: The process begins to onboard new members shortly after the election results are announced. One of the board goals this year, knowing that we would have new member(s) and a new central office staff, was to define a clear process and resources for training new members as well as for continuing education and information of the veteran membership. We have created a board information "binder" outline through researching onboarding materials used by other boards and modified that to fit our needs in WL.

The new members have already been added as members to the Indiana School Board Association so as to have access to reading materials. They have been registered for the ISBA new member academy in January. They have been encouraged to attend our regular meetings prior to January and ask questions. It has also been suggested that they read the board bylaws. They are not obliged to do any of this advance work of course, but have been gracious in doing so. An onboarding meeting is scheduled for mid-December with the board chair, superintendent, and key members of the central office staff. In that meeting, the new members will receive the board binder which includes comprehensive information on: Role of a board member, General information, Strategic plan, Communication, Employee contracts, etc. They will also be assigned their mentor for the first year; their mentor will be a veteran board member who will meet with them regularly to work through training and serve as an ongoing resource for questions. They will start working with the new members on both the binder and the January regular meeting materials as they are developed. It is fair to say that any new member will take up to two years to fully onboard. While each has excellent personal and professional experience and will contribute their perspective immediately, the work of a school board is unique and dependent upon the ability of the board to work constructively and collaboratively together within the authority of a board. This takes time and must be done with care. Each January the board holds an organizational meeting. This year the meeting is January 9th. The first order of business is to swear in new and re-elected members. At that time, the new members will be seated and will formally begin their work on the board.