

Bylaw 9223: Filling Vacancies

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 09/01/1989 | Last Revised Date: 06/01/2024 | Last Reviewed Date: 06/01/2024

Events Causing a Vacancy

A vacancy on the Governing Board may arise from any of the following events:

1. The death of an incumbent (Government Code 1770)
2. The adjudication pursuant to a quo warranto proceeding declaring that an incumbent is physically or mentally incapacitated due to disease, illness, or accident and that there is reasonable cause to believe that the incumbent will not be able to perform the duties of the office for the remainder of the term (Government Code 1770)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5090, a vacancy resulting from a resignation occurs when the written resignation is filed with the County Superintendent of Schools having jurisdiction over the district, except where a deferred effective date is specified in the resignation so filed, in which case the resignation shall become operative on that date. Upon being filed with the County Superintendent, a written resignation, whether specifying a deferred effective date or otherwise, shall be irrevocable. Pursuant to Education Code 5091, a Board member may not defer an effective date of resignation for more than 60 days after the date the resignation is filed with the County Superintendent.

3. A Board member's resignation in accordance with Board Bylaw 9222 - Resignation (Government Code 1770)
4. A Board member's removal from office by recall (Elections Code 11000-11386; Government Code 1770)
5. A Board member's ceasing to be a resident of the district (Government Code 1770)

CSBA NOTE: The following paragraph is for use by districts that have established trustee areas. In 105 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen 182 (2022), the Attorney General has opined that when the boundaries of a district's trustee areas are adjusted or the district changes from "at-large elections" to "by-trustee area elections," and a vacancy then arises in a seat held by a Board member whose term of office began prior to the change in boundaries or election method, the vacancy should be filled using the boundaries or election method by which the incumbent Board member was elected. See BB 9220 - Governing Board Elections.

6. A Board member's ceasing to inhabit the trustee area represented by the Board member (Government Code 1770)
7. A Board member's absence from the state for more than 60 days, except in the following situations: (Government Code 1064, 1770)
 - a. Upon district business with the approval of the Board
 - b. With the consent of the Board for an additional period not to exceed a total absence of 90 days or, in the case of illness or other urgent necessity and upon a proper showing thereof, for more than 90 days
 - c. For federal military deployment, not to exceed an absence of a total of six months, as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the California National Guard

If the absence of the Board member for this purpose exceeds six months, the Board may approve an additional six-month absence upon a showing that there is a reasonable expectation that the member will return within the second six-month period, and the Board may appoint an interim member to serve during the absence. If two or more Board members are absent by reason of these circumstances, and those absences result in the inability to establish a quorum at a regular meeting, the Board may immediately appoint one or more interim members as necessary to enable the Board to conduct business and discharge its responsibilities. The term of an interim member appointed in these circumstances shall not extend beyond the return of the absent Board member or beyond the next regularly scheduled election for that office, whichever occurs first.

8. A Board member's ceasing to discharge the duties of the office for the period of three consecutive months, except when prevented by sickness or when absent from the state with the permission required by law (Government Code 1770)

CSBA NOTE: Board members forfeit office and, in some cases, are disqualified from holding public office upon conviction of designated crimes as specified in the Constitution and various other state laws. Examples of crimes that result in forfeiture of office include, but are not limited to, convictions for felonies, offenses that involve a violation of official duties, bribery, selling appointments, intoxication in the discharge of official duties, misuse of public funds, conflict of interest violations, and a false claim of receipt of any military decoration or medal.

9. A Board member's conviction of a felony or any offense involving a violation of official duties or conviction of a designated crime resulting in a forfeiture of office (Government Code 1770, 3000-3003)
10. A Board member's refusal or neglect to file the required oath within the time prescribed (Government Code 1770)
11. The decision of a competent tribunal declaring void a Board member's election or appointment (Government Code 1770)
12. A Board member's commitment to a hospital or sanitarium as a drug addict, dipsomaniac, inebriate, or stimulant addict by a court of competent jurisdiction, in which case the office shall not be deemed vacant until the order of commitment has become final (Government Code 1770)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5090, a vacancy is declared when there has been a "failure to elect," meaning that the County Registrar of Voters has determined that an election will not be held because either no candidate or an insufficient number of candidates have filed to run for a Board seat(s). Education Code 5328 authorizes the Board to make an appointment in such circumstances.

13. A "failure to elect" in which no candidate or an insufficient number of candidates have filed to run for a Board seat(s) (Education Code 5090, 5326, 5328)

Timelines for Filling a Vacancy

When a vacancy occurs, the Board shall take the following action, as appropriate:

1. When a vacancy occurs within four months of the end of a Board member's term, the Board shall take no action. (Education Code 5093)
2. When a vacancy occurs between six months and 130 days before a regularly scheduled Board election at which the vacant position is not scheduled to be filled, the vacancy shall be filled by a special election consolidated with the regular election. The person so elected shall take office at the first regularly scheduled Board meeting following the certification of the election and shall serve only until the end of the term of the position which the person was elected to fill. (Education Code 5093)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5091, when a vacancy occurs outside of the statutory time windows identified in Items #1 or #2 above or when a deferred resignation has been filed four or more months before the end of a Board member's term, the Board shall take action, as specified below. In the event that the Board fails to make a provisional appointment or order an election within 60 days, the County Superintendent must call an election to fill the vacancy.

3. When a vacancy occurs any time outside of the statutory time windows identified in Items #1 and #2 above, the Board shall either order an election or make a provisional appointment within 60 days of the date of the vacancy or the filing of the member's deferred resignation, whichever is sooner. (Education Code 5091, 5093)

Eligibility for Appointment

CSBA NOTE: Persons applying or nominated to be appointed to fill a Board vacancy are required to meet the legal qualifications for serving as elected Board members. See BB 9220 - Governing Board Elections.

In order to be appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board, a person must meet the eligibility requirements specified in law and Board Bylaw 9220 - Governing Board Elections.

Provisional Appointments

CSBA NOTE: The following optional paragraph should be modified to reflect district practice. While the Board is authorized to make a provisional appointment to fill a vacancy pursuant to Item #3 in the section "Timelines for

Filling a Vacancy" above, the law does not specify procedures for making provisional appointments for vacancies; however, such procedures must comply with the requirements of the Brown Act. (Government Code 54950-54963)

See CSBA's publication, "Filling a Board Vacancy," for additional information about provisional appointments, including sample questions for interviewing and evaluating candidates.

When, as authorized by law, the Board has opted to make a provisional appointment to fill a vacancy, the Board, by resolution, may approve the procedures for selecting the person to be provisionally appointed to fill the vacancy. These procedures may, but are not required to, include the following:

1. Advertising in the local media to solicit candidate applications
2. Establishing a committee consisting of less than a quorum of the Board to ensure that applicants are eligible for Board membership and announce the names of the eligible candidates
3. Interviewing the candidates at a public meeting

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5092, once the Board has filled a vacancy by provisional appointment, the Board is required to post a notice. The notice is required to be posted in three public places in the district in addition to other notice requirements. Districts with trustee areas may want to post the notice in three public places within the trustee area of the vacant seat. Boards for districts with trustee areas are advised to consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel regarding the requirement to post in three public places.

Pursuant to Education Code 5092, as amended by AB 1326 (Ch. 68, Statutes of 2023), the notice is also required to be posted on the district's website.

Within 10 days after the Board makes a provisional appointment to fill a Board vacancy, the Superintendent or designee, on behalf of the Board, shall post a notice of the actual vacancy, or the filing of a deferred resignation, and the provisional appointment. The Superintendent or designee shall post the notice as follows: (Education Code 5092)

1. In three public places in the district or, if applicable, trustee area
2. On the district's website
3. In a newspaper of general circulation published in the district, if such a newspaper exists

The notice shall contain: (Education Code 5092)

1. The fact of the vacancy or resignation
2. The date of the occurrence of the vacancy or the date of the filing of, and the effective date of, the resignation
3. The full name of the provisional appointee to the Board and the date of the provisional appointee's appointment
4. A statement notifying the voters that unless a petition calling for a special election pursuant to Education Code 5091 is filed in the office of the County Superintendent of Schools within 30 days of the provisional appointment, the appointment shall become effective

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5091, an appointed Board member may only hold office until the next regularly scheduled district Board election. Thus, if a person is appointed to a board with three years remaining in their term, then it is likely that they will only serve through the second year as there typically would be a regularly scheduled district Board election at that point. There would need to be a special election concurrent with the regularly scheduled district Board election and final two years of the vacant term would be filled by the person elected in the special election.

The person appointed shall only hold office until the next regularly scheduled election for district Board members. (Education Code 5091)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 5091, the County Superintendent is required to terminate a provisional appointment and order a special election if, within 30 days of the appointment, a petition requesting a special election to fill the vacancy is submitted by registered voters. Pursuant to Education Code 5091, any such petition for a special election must contain the county elections official's estimate of the cost of conducting the special

election, expressed on a per-student basis. Education Code 5091 also requires any such special election to be conducted not less than 88, nor more than 125, days following the County Superintendent's order of the election, unless the election may be consolidated with a regularly scheduled election that is to take place within 180 days after the issuance of the County Superintendent's order. For the conduct of Board elections, See BB 9220 - Governing Board Elections.

If within 30 days of the Board's appointment, registered voters of the district or, where elections are by trustee areas, of the trustee area, submit a petition for special election that the County Superintendent determines to be legally sufficient, the provisional appointment is terminated, and a special election shall be held in accordance with Education Code 5091 to fill the vacancy.

Appointment Due to Failure to Elect

CSBA NOTE: The following requirements apply when an appointment is being made because of a failure to elect pursuant to Education Code 5090, 5326, and 5328 (Item #13 in section entitled "Events Causing a Vacancy" above).

When a vacancy occurs because no candidate or an insufficient number of candidates have been nominated and a district election will not be held, the Board shall appoint a qualified person to the office. This appointment shall be made at a meeting prior to the day fixed for the election and the appointee shall be seated at the organizational meeting as if elected at the district election. (Education Code 5328)

When an appointment is being made because of a failure to elect, the district shall publish a notice once in a newspaper of general circulation published in the district, or if no such newspaper exists, in a newspaper having general circulation within the district. This notice shall state that the Board intends to make an appointment and shall inform persons of the procedure available for applying for the appointment. (Education Code 5328.5)

When, as authorized by law, the Board seeks to make an appointment because of a failure to elect, the Board, by resolution, may approve any additional the procedures for selecting the person to be appointed to fill the vacancy.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References

Description

Ed. Code 35107	School district employees
Ed. Code 35178	Resignation with deferred effective date
Ed. Code 5000-5033	Election of school district board members
Ed. Code 5090-5095	Vacancies on the board
Ed. Code 5200-5208	Districts governed by boards of education
Ed. Code 5300-5304	General provisions; conduct of elections
Ed. Code 5320-5329	Order and call of elections
Ed. Code 5340-5345	Consolidation of elections
Ed. Code 5360-5363	Election notice
Ed. Code 5420-5426	Cost of elections
Ed. Code 5440-5442	Miscellaneous provisions
Elec. Code 10600-10604	School district elections
Elec. Code 11000-11386	Candidates for recall
Gov. Code 1064	Absence from state
Gov. Code 1770	Vacancy of office
Gov. Code 3000-3003	Forfeiture of office
Gov. Code 3060-3075	Removal other than by impeachment
Gov. Code 54950-54963	The Ralph M. Brown Act
Gov. Code 6061	Manner of notice as prescribed in designated section

State References

Pen. Code 88

Description

[Crimes against legislative power](#)

Federal References

18 USC 704

Description

Military medals or decorations

Management Resources References

Attorney General Opinion

Attorney General Opinion

CSBA Publication

Website

Website

Website

Description

105 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 182 (2022)

58 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 888 (1975)

Filling a Board Vacancy, rev. 2022

[CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services](#)

[California State Attorney General's Office, Quo Warranto Applications](#)

[CSBA](#)

Cross References

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