

School board Elections

Online Voting factsheet

This factsheet provides information to support school communities in online voting for school board elections. This factsheet is a supplement to the [School Board Handbook – Selection and Appointment of Board Members](#).

Overview

The *Education Act 2004* allows for school communities to implement online voting because it does not specify the way that votes are to be done. The information in this factsheet overrides relevant handbook statements including the position 'submission of votes via email or use of online survey tools is not permitted'. The Directorate uses the Qualtrics system to run the votes as this is an established system used for the School Climate and Satisfaction Survey.

The Qualtrics system for online voting supports:

- Simplicity for voters and schools;
- Secret voting (only the voter knows how they voted);
- Checking eligibility;
- Voters only voting once;
- Data security;
- Privacy; and
- Allowing people without an email to vote.

Process

The Education Support Office has setup an online voting system using the Qualtrics system.

Nominations

Nominations will continue to be done through the existing process with nominees completing the form and sending it back to the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) in their school.

After the close of the nomination period, the AROs will check the eligibility of each nominee, whether there is a need for an election to be held (i.e. more than one nominee for a vacancy) and submit eligible

nominees from their school to the School Boards team. The School Boards team will put those nominees into the voting system and notify the AROs once that is complete.

The order of candidates on ballot papers will be randomised so that each voter sees them in a different order. This means that the order of candidates is not selected by the ARO but will be in a different and random order each time the ballot is accessed for voting. This removes any advantage to the first candidate on a ballot paper from “donkey” voting (where people just number from the top down in order). This also means that a scrutineer will not be required at the ballot paper preparation point in the process.

Voting instructions

AROs will then arrange for voting instructions to be sent to all eligible people in their school community at the beginning of the voting period through SAS. This will include the login details for each person and a link to the online survey.

The small number of people who do not have an email address registered with their school will be able to contact their ARO to arrange an opportunity to vote either online using their own device or by using a device at the school.

Voting

Voters will click on the link from their email (or navigate to the URL) and login using the details provided. Once logged in the system does not store the identifying information with their vote.

The voter will select their preferred candidate from the list of candidates and click submit. Once they have voted they will no longer be able to login and vote again during that election.

Counting the votes

At the end of the voting period the Qualtrics system will automatically count the votes and provide a report to the School Boards team to arrange appointment of successful candidates.

AROs will be provided with a copy of the results of the ballot for their records.

Candidates can still appoint a scrutineer (at the Candidate’s discretion) who can receive a copy of the results of the vote at their school through the ARO. They will not be able to notify others of those results (unless they are raising a dispute). Scrutineers can also receive information on the operation of the voting system to ensure integrity.

Appointments and notification

The School Boards team will arrange the appointment of the successful candidates by the Returning Officer through the existing process. Once appointments have occurred the School Boards team will notify the AROs and Principals of appointments who will inform the candidates and their school community.

More information

Other information is also included in the [School Board Handbook – Selection and Appointment of Board Members](#). For more information or assistance, please contact your ARO in the first instance and they can



contact the Governance Branch of the Education Directorate for support by email EDUSchoolBoards@act.gov.au or phone 6207 6846.

SCHOOL BOARDS FACT SHEET – SCHOOL BOARD ONLINE VOTING was published on 01/02/2024. It is the responsibility of the user to verify that this is the current and complete version of the document, available on the Directorate's website at: https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies/A-Z



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