

## **Guide To Interviewing/Recommending Candidates for School Board**

Once the candidate filing deadline has passed, your Association will need to determine which candidates to support. This is accomplished by conducting an interview session with the candidates. The screening interviews should be scheduled as soon as possible after the filing deadline in order to give your local sufficient time to:

- 1 Form an Interview or screening team
- 2 Conduct the interviews
- 3 Reach a decision on which candidates to recommend
- 4 Communicate that decision to members
- 5 Inform the recommended candidates of the Association's support.
- 6 Write letters to the other candidates informing them of the Association's decision

### **Preparing For the Interview Process**

The Association should begin by seeking volunteers for the interview committee. Likely persons for this committee would be Association governance (e.g., PAC Chair) and members looking to take on more leadership roles. A chairperson should be chosen as well.

The interview team should initially meet to set a date, time, place, and schedule for the interviews. Ideally, the interviews are conducted in one setting with the same Association members present for all interviews. The team should plan on each interview lasting 45 minutes to an hour. Time should be built into the schedule between interviews for debrief and break. Contingency arrangements, such as an alternative date, phone interview or other arrangements should be considered for any candidate who is unable to attend the interview.

A personal letter should be sent to each candidate thanking them for their decision to run for the school board and informing the candidate of the screening process including the date, time and place of the interview. The candidate should return the personal candidate data sheet. You may also decide to send the interview questions with the invite letter.

The interview team must also decide at the first meeting which questions it will ask the candidates during the interview. The questions should be specific to the district and reflect current local and state situations. Using the Template of School Board Questions, it is recommended to select up to 15 questions including all four of the campaign assessment topics and any questions you may develop locally.

### **Conducting the Interview**

The interview site should be readied to enhance seating comfort for both the candidate and the interview team. Water, soft drinks and/or coffee should be provided.

Prior to the arrival of the first candidate, the team should review the questions and scoring and decide who will ask the questions. Another person should assume the role of the host and be

prepared to meet the candidates and usher them into the room. The role of the other committee members during the interview is to listen and take notes for use during the committee's deliberations.

As each candidate arrives, welcome them and provide introductions to the group. It may also be helpful to provide nametags or nameplates for the interview committee. Make sure you ask the candidate all five campaign questions as well as what they desire from the Association if they receive the recommendation.

At the conclusion of the interview, inform the candidate of the process of arriving at a recommendation and an approximate date when they might expect to hear from the committee.

**At all times during the interview, be gracious and courteous to the candidates.** Remember, the person elected may not be the candidate that the committee recommends for support to the membership, and a good impression during the screening process is key to any future interactions with that School Board member should they be elected.

#### **After the Interviews**

After the candidate has left, the interview team reviews the summaries and discusses the results. Often times, factors such as an incumbency or elect-ability of the candidate make a decision subjective and easier or more difficult to reach; therefore, all factors must be considered before drawing a conclusion about which candidate to recommend for endorsement. Reaching consensus is clearly the best decision; however, a majority vote of the team may be needed in order to arrive at a conclusion.