

REFERENCE TITLE: school district governing boards; training

State of Arizona  
House of Representatives  
Fifty-seventh Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2026

## **HB 2379**

Introduced by  
Representatives Gress; Gillette; Senator Angius

### AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-302, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 3, ARTICLE 3, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-349; AMENDING SECTION 15-421, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-302, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:

4 15-302. Powers and duties

5 A. The county school superintendent shall:

6 1. Distribute all laws, reports, circulars, instructions and forms  
7 that the county school superintendent may receive for the use of school  
8 officers.

9 2. Record all official acts.

10 3. Appoint governing board members of school districts to fill all  
11 vacancies, but the term of the appointment shall be until the next regular  
12 election for governing board members, at which time a successor shall be  
13 elected to serve the unexpired portion of the term. ~~A person who is  
14 subject to registration as a sex offender in this state or in any other  
15 jurisdiction is ineligible for appointment under this paragraph.~~ Within  
16 thirty days after notification of a vacancy, the school district governing  
17 board may submit up to three names to the county school superintendent for  
18 consideration of an appointment to fill the vacancy. The county school  
19 superintendent is not required to appoint a governing board member from  
20 the list of names submitted by the governing board. The county school  
21 superintendent, if the county school superintendent deems it in the best  
22 interest of the community, may call a special election to fill the  
23 vacancies. If an election is called, the newly elected member shall serve  
24 for the remainder of the unexpired portion of the term. **A PERSON IS  
25 INELIGIBLE FOR APPOINTMENT UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH IF EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING  
26 APPLIES:**

27 (a) **THE PERSON IS SUBJECT TO REGISTRATION AS A SEX OFFENDER IN THIS  
28 STATE OR IN ANY OTHER JURISDICTION.**

29 (b) **THE PERSON IS INELIGIBLE TO BE A CANDIDATE FOR APPOINTMENT TO  
30 THE OFFICE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER PURSUANT TO SECTION  
31 15-349, SUBSECTION E.**

32 4. Make reports, when directed by the superintendent of public  
33 instruction, showing matters relating to schools in the county as may be  
34 required on the forms furnished by the superintendent of public  
35 instruction.

36 5. Have such powers and perform such duties as otherwise prescribed  
37 by law.

38 6. On or before October 1 of each year, report to the  
39 superintendent of public instruction the amount of monies received from  
40 state school funds, special school district taxes and other sources, the  
41 total expenditures for school purposes and the balance on hand to the  
42 credit of each school district at the close of the school year.

43 7. Contract with the board of supervisors for the board of  
44 supervisors to conduct all regular school district elections.

1           8. Be responsible, in cooperation with the school district  
2 governing boards and the board of supervisors, for all special school  
3 district elections.

4           9. Maintain teacher and administrator certification records of  
5 effective dates and expiration dates of teachers' and administrators'  
6 certificates in compliance with guidelines prescribed in the uniform  
7 system of financial records for those school districts for which the  
8 county school superintendent is the fiscal agent. The county school  
9 superintendent shall not draw a warrant in payment of a teacher's,  
10 substitute teacher's or administrator's salary unless the teacher,  
11 substitute teacher or administrator is legally certified during the fiscal  
12 year in which the term for payment is demanded.

13           10. Notify a school district three years before the expiration of a  
14 revenue control limit override that the school district's budget must be  
15 adjusted in the final two years of the override pursuant to section  
16 15-481, subsections P and Q, if the voters do not approve another  
17 override.

18           11. In collaboration with the department of education and other  
19 state agencies, assist school districts, charter schools, county free  
20 library districts, municipal libraries, nonprofit and public libraries,  
21 tribal libraries, private schools and tribal schools on using student  
22 data, staff development, curriculum alignment and technology to improve  
23 student performance.

24           12. Assist schools in meeting yearly adequate progress goals as  
25 defined by criteria established by the state board of education and  
26 implemented by the department of education.

27           B. At the request of school districts and charter schools, the  
28 county school superintendent may provide discretionary programs in  
29 addition to the programs prescribed in subsection A of this section.

30           C. The county school superintendent may:

31           1. Provide the services prescribed in subsections A and B of this  
32 section in the county or jointly with two or more counties pursuant to  
33 title 11, chapter 7, article 3.

34           2. Review the operations and finances, including expenditures, of  
35 any school district that is located in the county.

36           D. Each county school superintendent may establish an advisory  
37 committee to the office of the county school superintendent.

38           Sec. 2. Title 15, chapter 3, article 3, Arizona Revised Statutes,  
39 is amended by adding section 15-349, to read:

40           15-349. Governing board members; biennial training  
41           requirements; ineligibility; auditor general  
42           approval

43           A. AT LEAST ONCE IN EVERY TWO-YEAR PERIOD, EACH GOVERNING BOARD  
44 MEMBER OF EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THIS STATE SHALL COMPLETE A TRAINING  
45 PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES INSTRUCTION ON ALL OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- 1           1. SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE.
- 2           2. THE FIDUCIARY DUTIES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS.
- 3           3. HOW TO DEVELOP, ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING
- 4 BOARD POLICIES.
- 5           4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.
- 6           5. STUDENT OUTCOME-FOCUSED SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE.
- 7           6. THE LEGAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT
- 8 GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS.
- 9           7. ANY OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOPICS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO
- 10 SERVICE AS A SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER.
- 11           B. ON COMPLETING THE TRAINING REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION A OF THIS
- 12 SECTION, EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER SHALL NOTIFY THE
- 13 COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS
- 14 LOCATED THE DATE ON WHICH THE GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER COMPLETED THE
- 15 TRAINING. IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS LOCATED IN MORE THAN ONE COUNTY, THE
- 16 GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER MAY NOTIFY THE COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE
- 17 COUNTY IN WHICH THE GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER RESIDES.
- 18           C. A COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT MAY PROVIDE A TRAINING PROGRAM
- 19 THAT IS APPROVED BY THE AUDITOR GENERAL AND THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS
- 20 PRESCRIBED BY SUBSECTION A OF THIS SECTION FOR GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS OF
- 21 ANY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THIS STATE.
- 22           D. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE A TRAINING PROGRAM
- 23 THAT IS APPROVED BY THE AUDITOR GENERAL AND THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS
- 24 PRESCRIBED BY SUBSECTION A OF THIS SECTION FOR EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT
- 25 GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER WHO HAS NOT COMPLETED A TRAINING PROGRAM THAT IS
- 26 OFFERED BY A COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION C OF THIS
- 27 SECTION DURING THE CURRENT TWO-YEAR PERIOD. THE DEPARTMENT MAY CHARGE
- 28 EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE COST OF PROVIDING THE TRAINING PROGRAM TO THE
- 29 SCHOOL DISTRICT'S GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION.
- 30 EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL PAY FOR ANY COSTS INCURRED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO
- 31 PROVIDE THE TRAINING TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS.
- 32           E. IF A GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER FAILS TO NOTIFY THE COUNTY SCHOOL
- 33 SUPERINTENDENT PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION AND THAT COUNTY
- 34 SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT DETERMINES THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER HAS
- 35 FAILED TO COMPLETE THE TRAINING REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION A OF THIS SECTION,
- 36 THE GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER IS INELIGIBLE TO BE A CANDIDATE FOR NOMINATION,
- 37 ELECTION OR APPOINTMENT TO THE OFFICE OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER IN ANY
- 38 SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THIS STATE.
- 39           F. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EACH COUNTY SCHOOL
- 40 SUPERINTENDENT WHO PROVIDES A TRAINING PROGRAM PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION C OF
- 41 THIS SECTION SHALL CONSULT WITH THE AUDITOR GENERAL WHEN DEVELOPING THE
- 42 TRAINING PROGRAM AND SHALL SUBMIT THE TRAINING PROGRAM TO THE AUDITOR
- 43 GENERAL, IN A FORM AND MANNER PRESCRIBED BY THE AUDITOR GENERAL, FOR
- 44 APPROVAL BEFORE PROVIDING THE TRAINING PROGRAM TO ANY GOVERNING BOARD
- 45 MEMBER.

1           Sec. 3. Section 15-421, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
2 read:

3           15-421. Governing boards; members; qualifications;  
4                           prohibitions; candidate statements; definitions

5           A. The governing body of a school district shall be a governing  
6 board. There shall be three governing board members, except as otherwise  
7 provided by this section and section 15-425, subsection A.

8           B. The governing body of a high school district shall be a  
9 governing board composed of:

10           1. In a single district, the governing board members of the common  
11 school district.

12           2. In a union high school district, five members.

13           C. A person is eligible for election to the office of governing  
14 board member if all of the following apply:

15           1. The person is a registered voter of this state.

16           2. The person has been a resident of the school district for at  
17 least one year immediately preceding the day of election.

18           3. The person is not subject to registration as a sex offender in  
19 this state or in any other jurisdiction.

20           4. **THE PERSON IS NOT INELIGIBLE TO BE A CANDIDATE FOR NOMINATION OR**  
21 **ELECTION TO THE OFFICE OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER PURSUANT TO SECTION**  
22 **15-349, SUBSECTION E.**

23           D. An employee of a school district, including a person who  
24 directly provides certified or classified services to the school district  
25 as an employee of a third-party contractor, or the spouse of such an  
26 employee may not hold membership on the governing board of a school  
27 district by which the employee is employed.

28           E. Notwithstanding subsection D of this section and title 38,  
29 chapter 3, article 8, a small school district may employ, including  
30 employment through a third-party contractor that provides services to the  
31 small school district, a substitute teacher who is related to a member of  
32 the governing board as immediate family and who has had the same household  
33 of residence within the preceding four years. If a small school district  
34 employs a substitute teacher pursuant to this subsection, the member of  
35 the governing board who is related to the substitute teacher shall be  
36 recused from voting on any matter relating to substitute teachers.

37           F. A school district may employ, including employment through a  
38 third-party contractor that provides services to the school district, a  
39 person who served as a member of the school district's governing board  
40 during the preceding two years only in a position in which the person will  
41 provide services directly to students, including as a certificated  
42 teacher, a substitute teacher and an employee or contractor who provides  
43 transportation, instructional support or student support services. A  
44 school district may increase the time period prescribed in this subsection  
45 to be more than two years.

1 G. A member of one governing board is ineligible to be a candidate  
 2 for nomination or election to or serve simultaneously as a member of any  
 3 other governing board, except that a member of a governing board may be a  
 4 candidate for nomination or election for any other governing board if the  
 5 member is serving in the last year of a term of office. A member of a  
 6 governing board shall resign the member's seat on the governing board  
 7 before becoming a candidate for nomination or election to the governing  
 8 board of any other school district, unless the member of the governing  
 9 board is serving in the last year of a term of office.

10 H. Notwithstanding section 15-511, each county school  
 11 superintendent shall publish on the superintendent's website the statement  
 12 of each certified candidate for membership on a school district governing  
 13 board located in the county. The county school superintendent shall list  
 14 each school district on the superintendent's website from which a link  
 15 shall be established to the candidate's name, which shall link to the  
 16 candidate's statement and photograph. The candidate shall submit the  
 17 statement to the person at the county school superintendent's office  
 18 assigned to manage candidate statements, after notice of certification  
 19 from the county school superintendent's office but not later than  
 20 twenty-one days before the date that general election early ballots are  
 21 allowed to be mailed. The person shall post each candidate's statement on  
 22 the county school superintendent's website not later than fourteen days  
 23 before the date that general election early ballots are allowed to be  
 24 mailed. If a candidate does not submit a statement, the county school  
 25 superintendent's website shall state "no response submitted" for the  
 26 candidate. The candidate statements shall be posted on the website  
 27 alphabetically by each school district and by candidate. The candidate  
 28 statement shall be typewritten or electronically submitted. The county  
 29 school superintendent shall post the statements verbatim as they are  
 30 received unless a candidate requests in writing that typographical errors  
 31 be corrected. The candidate statement shall contain the following items  
 32 in the same size and format for each candidate:

- 33 1. A recent photograph of the candidate.
- 34 2. A statement not to exceed five hundred words.
- 35 3. A disclosure of any relationships by affinity, by consanguinity  
 36 or by law to the third degree that exist between the candidate and any  
 37 current governing board members or other candidates for election to the  
 38 same governing board.

39 I. Persons related as immediate family who have the same household  
 40 of residence within four years prior shall not serve simultaneously on the  
 41 governing board of the same school district if the governing board is  
 42 composed of five members. For a school district with a student count of  
 43 at least two hundred fifty that is located in a county with a population  
 44 of more than five hundred thousand persons, not more than two persons  
 45 related by affinity, by consanguinity or by law to the third degree shall

1 serve simultaneously on the governing board of the same school district if  
2 the governing board is composed of five members. A qualified elector who  
3 resides in the school district may bring an action in superior court to  
4 enforce this subsection.

5 J. A person related as immediate family who has the same household  
6 of residence within four years prior to a member of the governing board of  
7 the same school district is ineligible to be a candidate for nomination or  
8 election to that governing board if the governing board is composed of  
9 five members, except that a person related as immediate family who has the  
10 same household of residence within four years prior to a member of a  
11 governing board may be a candidate for nomination or election to the  
12 governing board of the same school district if the member is serving in  
13 the last year of a term of office. For a school district with a student  
14 count of at least two hundred fifty that is located in a county with a  
15 population of more than five hundred thousand persons, not more than two  
16 persons related by affinity, by consanguinity or by law to the third  
17 degree shall be eligible to be a candidate for nomination or election to a  
18 governing board that is composed of five members. A qualified elector who  
19 resides in the school district may bring an action in superior court to  
20 enforce this subsection.

21 K. Persons related as immediate family who have the same household  
22 of residence within four years prior are ineligible to be simultaneous  
23 candidates for nomination or election to the governing board of the same  
24 school district if the governing board is composed of five members. For a  
25 school district with a student count of at least two hundred fifty that is  
26 located in a county with a population of more than five hundred thousand  
27 persons, not more than two persons related by affinity, by consanguinity  
28 or by law to the third degree shall be simultaneous candidates for  
29 nomination or election to a governing board that is composed of five  
30 members. A qualified elector who resides in the school district may bring  
31 an action in superior court to enforce this subsection.

32 L. For the purposes of this section:

33 1. "Household of residence" means the place of abode during  
34 applicable time periods or the residence address used by an individual for  
35 voter registration or property tax purposes.

36 2. "Immediate family" means individuals who are married to each  
37 other and any children of those individuals.

38 3. "Small school district" has the same meaning prescribed in  
39 section 15-901.