

**Information for District Education Council  
Election Candidates**



**M 04 311**  
(2026-02-04)

This information is a general guide to the election process for those interested in becoming candidates in District Education Council elections. If you have questions that are not answered here, contact either the Municipal Returning Officer for your area or the main office of Elections NB in Fredericton, at 1-888-858-8683 (VOTE), or the Elections New Brunswick website at <https://www.electionsnb.ca>.

For information on the role of district education councils, contact your local school district office, or the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, at 506-453-3678, or their website at <http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education.html>.

Unless otherwise indicated, section references here refer to the *Municipal Elections Act* when dealing with a particular matter.

***Who Can Be a Candidate? (Sections 1, 36.41 of the Education Act, and section 18 of the Municipal Elections Act)***

*General Requirements:* To be a candidate in a District Education Council election, a person must be:

- 18 years of age on or before election day;
- a Canadian citizen; and
- a resident of the school district in New Brunswick for at least six months before election day; and
- a resident of the relevant school district *and* subdistrict or zone when nominated.

*People Who Cannot Be Candidates:* The following school personnel are not eligible to be a candidate for any District Education Council election:

- superintendents, directors of education and other administrative and supervisory personnel;
- school bus drivers;
- building maintenance personnel, including custodians;
- secretaries and clerks;
- teachers or a district supervisor of instruction;
- persons other than teachers engaged to assist in the delivery of programs and services to pupils;
- other persons engaged in support areas such as social services, health services, psychology and guidance; or
- employees of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Others ineligible to run include:

- a judge,
- an election officer, or

- a person who has been disqualified from holding an elected office under federal, provincial, or municipal election laws.

Note: An individual employed at a school by a third-party vendor (e.g., a cafeteria catering company, a cleaning company) is eligible to run as a district education council candidate.

*People Who May Not Be Able To Be Candidates:* Some public sector employees are restricted from engaging in political activity, even at a local level, or may need prior approval from their employer before filing nomination papers. If you work in the federal or provincial public service, check with your employer before filing nomination papers. It is the responsibility of a candidate to obtain any approval required by his or her employer; the Municipal Returning Officer will not require or confirm such approval in processing nomination papers.

### ***Nomination Papers (Section 17)***

Nomination papers can be obtained from any Municipal Returning Office, or can be printed from the Elections NB website.

Nomination papers must be completed and returned to the office of the Municipal Returning Officer for the school subdistrict where the person will be a candidate (not local government or school offices) on or before the day fixed for the close of nominations.

Nominations close at 2:00 p.m. on the Friday, the thirty-first day before polling day. If this day is on a holiday, nominations will close on the Thursday, the thirty-second day before polling day.

**Do not leave filing to the last minute**, in case corrections or additions are needed in your papers, as **no nomination papers can be accepted after the deadline under any circumstances**.

The Nomination Paper must be filled out completely, and must include:

- the name and civic address of the candidate;
- the school district and electoral zone or subdistrict for which the candidate is offering;
- optional email, phone, website and service address information to be posted on the Elections NB website for the candidate's campaign;
- the candidate's certification of their name, civic address and address for service as shown on the nomination paper is correct as stated;
- The candidate's certification that they:
  - are a Canadian citizen;
  - will be eighteen years of age or more as of the day of the election;
  - will have been ordinarily resident in the school district for at least six months immediately before the election; and
  - expect to be ordinarily resident in the Province and in the school district on election day,
  - are resident of the subdistrict or electoral zone when they are nominated;
  - are not ineligible to be a candidate;

- are willing to discharge the duties of the office of councillor in the official language on the basis of which the school district is organized, for which the candidate is offering;
- the consent of the candidate and the signature of the witness to the consent of the candidate;
- the signatures of at least ten (10) nominators who:
  - are qualified voters in the school district and electoral zone or subdistrict where the candidate is offering; and
  - are the parents of a pupil enrolled in a school in the school district (but not necessarily the subdistrict of the candidate) for which the candidate is offering. Parents of children who are being home schooled are not eligible to be a nominator; and
- a completed declaration of the witness who obtains the nominators' signatures.

The candidate, a family member of a candidate, or any other person may collect and be the witness to the nominator signatures. The person collecting nominator signatures must be present and witness the elector signing the form. A person cannot sign as a nominator and be their own witness to that signature. Each witness who collects signatures must complete a separate declaration. The Municipal Returning Officer will check the list of nominators on the list of electors to determine if they are qualified to vote in your area. If a nominator has moved recently, ask them to call the returning office to update their information to ensure they are listed at their current address.

The name of a candidate will appear on the ballot as it is spelled on the Nomination Paper. No prefixes (e.g., Mr, Mrs, Dr) are used on the ballots. A nickname is permitted if it is in brackets and is printed on the Nomination Paper as the candidate wishes it to appear on the ballot.

The nomination of a candidate is completed when the Municipal Returning Officer indicates it has been accepted by dating and signing or initialling the papers.

### ***After Nomination***

*Withdrawal of a Candidate (Subsection 17(4)):* After nomination, a candidate who decides not to run may withdraw their nomination at any time not later than 5:00 p.m. on the third day after nominations close. A person withdraws by giving the Municipal Returning Officer a written statement that they are withdrawing as a candidate, signed by the candidate and two witnesses who are qualified voters in the relevant subdistrict. Any votes cast for a candidate who has so withdrawn are null and void.

*Death of a Candidate (Subsection 17(5)):* If a candidate dies after the close of nominations and before the closing of the polls on election day, the Municipal Electoral Officer for the Province will countermand the election for the affected subdistrict or electoral zone, and fix new dates for the nomination of candidates and a postponed election. The new election day will be not more than three months after the original election date. Candidates already nominated do not need to resubmit nomination papers, but additional candidates may be nominated.

*Acclamations (Subsection 17(4.1)):* If no more candidates than can be elected in a subdistrict or electoral zone are nominated, each candidate is deemed elected by acclamation at the close of nominations, and declared elected by acclamation on election day without holding the poll.

*Contested Elections (Subsection 19(2)):* If more candidates than can be elected to an office are nominated, polls will be held to elect candidates for that office.

### ***Inspecting Candidate Nomination Papers***

In many elections, there may be persons who wish to verify that candidate nomination papers have been properly completed, determine a candidate's ordinary residence so as to confirm their eligibility to offer as a candidate, etc. As a matter of transparency in the electoral process, Elections NB will allow inspection of information on a candidate's nomination paper from the time it has been accepted by a Municipal Returning Officer until the time it is returned to Elections NB in Fredericton.

Any person resident in the electoral region where a candidate is offering may contact the Municipal Returning Officer to apply to view the information on that candidate's nomination paper. They may only view the information in person at the returning office during normal business hours.

Because of the personal information contained on it for the candidate, their agents and nominators, Elections NB will not provide copies of nomination papers either digitally or on paper, nor send such information to external addresses. No one may make copies or take photos of the document. The person may take their own notes to record any information they wish. No marks may be made on the original nomination paper.

### ***Election Advertising and Campaigning (Sections 31.2, 54, and 55 and Section 30 of the Governance Structure Regulation - Education Act)***

There are no restrictions on how much money candidates for District Education Council elections may spend on campaigning, and no requirements for filing any statements of donations received or money spent. However, there are some restrictions on campaign activity:

*No Use of School Resources:* No school or school system or Department of Education and Early Childhood Development resources may be used to support any individual candidate or group of candidates for a District Education Council election.

#### ***Restricted advertising period:***

The *Municipal Elections Act* provides:

*55(2) Any person who, on the ordinary polling day or on the day immediately preceding it,*

*(a) broadcasts over any radio or television station,*

*(i) a speech,*

*(ii) any entertainment, or*

*(iii) any advertising program; or*

*(b) publishes or causes to be published in any newspaper, magazine or similar publication,*

*(i) a speech, or*

(ii) any advertising; or  
(c) transmits, conveys or causes to be transmitted or conveyed by any means to telephones, computers, telecopier machines or any other device capable of receiving unsolicited communications,  
(i) a speech,  
(ii) any entertainment, or  
(iii) any advertising;  
in favour of or on behalf of any candidate commits an offence, but this subsection shall be deemed not to prohibit a bona fide news broadcast or news publication referring to or commenting upon a speech or containing any excerpts from a speech.

Examples of communications that are prohibited under paragraph (c) include SPAM emails, Robocalls, bulk or anonymous texts, etc.

Note that these provisions do not prevent a candidate's campaign from distributing printed materials in person or by Canada Post during the restricted advertising period, nor does it prevent additional signs from being placed in the electoral district.

*Use of social media during the restricted advertising period:*

In the case of social media accounts held by a candidate (e.g. X, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, etc.), the candidate may post to their account. Persons following the candidate then receive an electronic "newsfeed" of the post for their information. Since the "followers" have already requested such information from the candidate, any such communication are considered solicited communications that are not prohibited by subsection 55(2) of the *Municipal Elections Act*. Some platforms allow an account to pay to boost social media posts to only the account's followers. As long as the boosting is limited to followers, this is permissible activity during the restricted advertising period.

Algorithms and other behaviours of social media have evolved such that a candidate's posts may be suggested to persons who do not follow the candidate. Campaign communications from a candidate's social media accounts are permitted during the restricted advertising period if the original post:

- is not advertising,
- has not been boosted or otherwise paid to reach users who do not follow the account, and
- has not been intentionally prepared using hashtags, tags, etc. so that the post reaches users who do not follow the account.

**Using social media is generally considered to be solicited communication that may occur during the restricted advertising period. However, it is prohibited during the restricted advertising period to advertise on social media and to boost or intentionally use other methods to spread speeches or entertainment beyond a candidate's followers.**

## Social Media Summary – Restricted Advertising Period

### ✔ Allowed

- Candidate posts on their own social media accounts
- Posts received by followers
- Posts boosted to followers
- Unpaid posts suggested by algorithms to non-followers

### ✘ Not Allowed

- Paid social media advertising targeting the general public
- Posts boosted to non-followers
- Tagging and other methods to spread speeches or entertainment beyond candidate's followers

*Election Day:* On Election Day, no advertising or campaigning of any kind may be done on or from any moving motor vehicle. In addition, there may be no advertising or campaign material of any kind placed within thirty metres (100 feet) of any premises in which a polling station is located. "Polling station" means a building, or a portion of a building, secured by a Municipal Returning Officer for the taking of the votes of electors on the ordinary polling day or an advance polling day. Candidates and one appointed scrutineer per polling station - but not their other agents, representatives or family members -- are allowed to be in any poll at any time on any polling day (ordinary or advance), as long as they do not engage in any kind of campaigning or interfere with voters or the polling process.

*Advance Poll Days:* There may be no advertising or campaign material within thirty metres (100 feet) of the premises in which an advance poll is being held. In addition, any advertising or campaigning using loudspeakers from a motor vehicle must not be able to be heard within thirty metres of the premises where an advance poll is being held.

*Printed Advertising:* All election signs, posters, handbills or other printed materials must include the name and address of the printer and publisher on the face of the document. Note: If a candidate prepares and copies their own printed advertising materials, it is acceptable to simply add the phrase "Prepared and printed by [Candidate name]". It is an offence to not include this information.

*Placement of Election Signs:* The Department of Transportation controls where or if signs may be placed on highway rights-of-way. Under the *Highway Advertisements Regulation-Highway Act*, election signs are not permitted on Level I and Level II access controlled highways (four-lane or two-lane). However, they are permitted within the highway right-of-way of other highways. In the interest of safety, any signs that are attached to a DOT sign, guard rail or bridge, installed within the median, or installed such that they reduce sight lines or visibility, will be removed immediately.

Local Governments may also have sign by-laws that control where or when election signs may be placed.

Both Aliant and NB Power ask candidates not to use utility poles to post campaign signs. While the practice may seem harmless, there are some potential safety concerns:

- The signs themselves present a safety hazard for employees who must climb poles to complete their work;
- The metal staples or clamps used to put up the signs often remain in the poles long after the election is over. These items could cause an employee to lose their footing while climbing and could also be a hazard for the general public who may happen to brush the pole while walking by.
- Staples or clamps will cause a pole to degrade faster than it should, therefore making them more susceptible to damage, requiring maintenance or possibly replacement.

*No Media at the Polls:* No media representatives are allowed in any polling stations in respect of District Education Council elections.

### ***Lists of Electors (Subsection 12.1(2))***

Using form M 04 101, *Application for a Copy of the List of Electors*, once a candidate's nomination papers have been accepted, a candidate may request a copy a copy of the voters' lists for their subdistrict or electoral zone from the Municipal Returning Officer. They will identify a list agent (who may be the candidate) to whom an account will be provided to download the information from Elections NB's candidate portal system. Candidates must ensure that the list will only be used by themselves or persons acting on their behalf for legitimate campaign purposes during the current election, will not be used by themselves or anyone acting on their behalf for any purpose after the election, and that any copies of the list will be destroyed after the election. Under subsection 12.1(6) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, it is an offence to use the list for a purpose other than specifically provided.

### ***Scrutineers / Candidate Representatives (Section 23)***

A candidate may appoint one qualified voter to be a scrutineer at each polling station where the candidate is on the ballot (including advance polls), to be present while the votes are cast and counted. Scrutineers are not paid by the Province, and there must not be more than one scrutineer for a candidate at a polling station at any time. A scrutineer must be appointed in writing, using the *Appointment of Candidate's Representative* form. Elections NB provides an *Information for Scrutineers* booklet on its website containing information about the electoral process.

### ***Reporting Results and Declarations of Election (Section 41)***

Voting results determined and reported after the polls close on election day are "unofficial results". On the second day following the election, the Municipal Returning Officer will determine the official number of votes for each candidate and any plebiscite question, and declare the official results of the elections by completing a *Declaration After the Poll Has Been Taken* for each election for which the Municipal Returning Officer is responsible. A copy of the *Declaration* will be given or mailed to each candidate and the original returned to Elections NB.

### ***Tied Votes (Section 41(3))***

If there is a tie in the number of votes for two or more candidates for the same office, the Municipal Returning Officer will recount the votes cast for such candidates in the presence of not less than two qualified voters (normally the affected candidates) and declare a winner.

If the vote remains tied after the recount, if the candidates agree, the Municipal Returning Officer will resolve the tie by putting the two names in a box and drawing one out, with the candidate whose name is drawn being declared elected. If the candidates do not agree on this method to resolve the tie, the Municipal Returning Officer will make a request to a judge for a recount.

### ***Initial Recounts at the Returning Office (Section 41.1)***

If there is a difference of not more than 25 votes between the votes for a candidate elected and a candidate not elected, the candidate who was not declared elected may apply to the Municipal Returning Officer for a recount of the votes. The application must be filed within ten days after the election. There is no charge for such a recount.

If this recount results in a tied vote, if the candidates agree, the Municipal Returning Officer will resolve the tie by putting the two names in a box and drawing one out, with the candidate whose name is drawn being declared elected. If the candidates do not agree on this method to resolve the tie, the Municipal Returning Officer will make a request to a judge for a recount.

If the returning office recount does not result in a tie, and the candidates agree on the results, the Municipal Returning Officer shall either confirm the initial *Declaration*, if the result (in terms of the candidate elected) has not changed, or issue a new *Declaration* if the recount determines that a different candidate was elected.

If the returning office recount does not result in a tie, and the candidates do not agree on the results, the candidate not declared elected may apply for a judicial recount. The candidate may request a recount of all the ballots cast, or a recount only of ballots on which the candidates could not agree as to whether or how they should be counted.

### ***Judicial Recounts***

A candidate who has participated in a recount at the returning office but is not satisfied with the results, or a candidate who has lost an election by more than twenty-five votes but has reasons to believe the results as reported may not be correct, may apply to a judge of The Court of King's Bench for a judicial recount. The application must be made within ten days of completion of the returning office recount or within ten days of the election, as applicable. The candidate may request a recount of all the ballots cast, or a recount only of ballots on which the candidates could not agree as to whether or how they should be counted.

If satisfied that there is reason to hold a recount, the judge will notify the affected candidates and election officials, and the recount will be conducted as soon as possible, normally within two

weeks of the election. If the final result is a tie, it will be resolved by drawing one of the candidate's names out of a box.

Where the recount changes the election results so that a different candidate is declared elected than was originally declared elected, the costs of the recount are paid by Elections New Brunswick. If the recount does not change the candidate declared elected, the costs of the recount are paid by the candidate requesting the recount.

## ***Information for Scrutineers/Candidate Representatives***

*Role of Scrutineers:* A scrutineer ensures for a candidate that voting at a given poll is properly carried out.

A scrutineer must be appointed in writing, using the M 04 201, *Appointment of Candidate's Representative* form. This form is provided to each candidate and is available on the Elections NB website. Each scrutineer must bring their Appointment of Scrutineer form to the polling station, and give it to the Poll Supervisor in charge of that polling station, who will take their Oath of a Scrutineer. A Scrutineer may be present any time the poll is open or the votes are being counted, and if present at least fifteen minutes before the poll opens, may examine the ballot papers and any other materials or equipment relating to the poll. Each candidate may have only one scrutineer at each polling station in the subdistrict or electoral zone where they are on the ballot.

At the polling station, a scrutineer may object to a person's voting if they have reason to believe the person is not qualified to vote, is voting under someone else's name, or is otherwise not acting in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*. **The scrutineer must direct any concerns or questions to the election officer dealing with an elector.** If a scrutineer believes that a person is not entitled to vote, an objection should be made to the election officer **before** the person is given a ballot. The election officer will then require the person to take an oath as to their qualifications to vote. If the person refuses to take the oath they will not be allowed to vote, but if they take the oath they must be allowed to vote. The Voter List Officer or Poll Revision Officer will note any such objection in a Record of Objections, which remains with the Lists of Electors after the poll.

All ballots are counted by vote tabulation machines, but in exceptional cases, ballots may be counted by hand. Where ballots are counted by hand, the Municipal Electoral Officer will issue instructions on how to count ballots, and a scrutineer may object to any ballot, or part of a ballot, on the grounds that the counting process does not follow the instructions.

A scrutineer who has concerns about the conduct of activities in a polling station should make the Municipal Returning Officer aware of such concerns as soon as possible.

*Scrutineer Behaviour:* A scrutineer may not:

- wear any clothing showing logos or messages indicating any candidate affiliation;
- wear or carry anything to indicate any candidate affiliation (i.e., no pins or badges);
- enter into discussions with voters in the polling area, either before or after they have voted;
- do anything that would impede the voting process; nor
- use a telephone, cellular telephone, or other telecommunications device in the room where the poll is held.

A scrutineer not following these rules may be removed from the polling station by the Poll Supervisor at the polling station.