

HB 1453 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2872

12/09

HOUSE BILL **1453**

AN ACT relative to student school board members.

SPONSORS: Rep. Thibault, Merr. 25; Rep. Harvey-Bolia, Belk. 3; Rep. Litchfield, Rock. 32;
Rep. Wheeler, Hills. 33; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17

COMMITTEE: Education Policy and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill modifies the existing election procedure for high school students serving on school boards as well as expands such members' responsibilities. The bill also establishes a penalty for any school personnel causing interference with the election of high school students to the school board.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to student school board members.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 High School Student as School Board Member; Amended. Amend RSA 194:23-f to read as
2 follows:

3 194:23-f High School Student as School Board Member. The provisions of this section shall
4 apply to all public high schools maintained by the local school board as provided in RSA 189:1-c.

5 I. In addition to the school board members authorized in RSA 671:4, a high school shall
6 select, in accordance with the directives of paragraph II and the provisions of RSA 189:1-c, one or
7 more students from among its members to be nonvoting members of the school board for the district
8 in which the high school is located. A student member shall have all the rights of a regular school
9 board member regarding school board business, ***including the right to propose agenda items,***
10 except the right to vote.

11 II. A student board member shall be chosen by a simple majority vote of the high school
12 student body. ~~[The student government of the high school shall establish procedures for the~~
13 ~~nomination and election of candidates. The student government shall also establish a procedure for~~
14 ~~any public high school student in the school district to petition a student board member to present~~
15 ~~proposals and opinions to the school board.] ***Elections shall be held 30 school days after the***
16 ***first day of the school year. All students in good academic and behavioral standing who***
17 ***will not graduate within the term shall be eligible to run. Students shall declare their***
18 ***intent to run to building administrators no later than 15 days before the election and every***
19 ***declared candidate's name shall be printed on the ballot. Should more than 2 students be***
20 ***running, whichever candidate receives the most votes shall be declared the winner. Ties***
21 ***shall be decided by a recount followed by a drawing of lots if the tie holds. Paper ballots***
22 ***shall be utilized and shall be distributed during students' second class of the day. The***
23 ***school principal shall designate one or more members of the faculty to count the ballots***
24 ***and the results shall be announced within 24 hours. The newly-elected member shall take***
25 ***office at the first regularly scheduled school board meeting following the election.***
26 ***Students within the school district may communicate their concerns to the student member***
27 ***in writing, which the member shall then be obligated to share with the board.***~~

28 III. A student board member shall serve for a term of one ***academic year and may seek***
29 ***reelection.*** ~~[The school board shall decide the date at which the term shall begin.] Any student who~~
30 will graduate during the term's duration is not eligible to be a candidate ~~[and is not eligible to vote.~~
31 ~~The student government of the high school shall establish a procedure for filling any vacancy that~~

1 ~~may occur in this position~~. *The school or district shall not deprive any eligible student of the*
2 *opportunity to seek election. If a student member misses 3 consecutive regularly scheduled*
3 *monthly board meetings or 4 total regularly scheduled monthly board meetings in a school*
4 *year, without justified cause, such as illness or academic obligations, the seat shall be*
5 *declared vacant. Should a vacancy be created in this position, a new election to complete*
6 *the term shall be held after 21 days using the same provisions described in paragraph II. A*
7 student board member shall serve without pay.

8 IV. The duties of a student school board member shall include:

9 (a) Attending *all regularly scheduled monthly* school board meetings except
10 *portions* as specified in paragraph V. *Every regularly scheduled board meeting agenda shall*
11 *have a student member report from each school represented as separate agenda items*
12 *which shall include student concerns. Student members shall be encouraged to attend*
13 *special meetings as they are called, but shall not be required to;*

14 (b) Representing all public high school students within the district, *including*
15 *communicating the thoughts, desires, and concerns of students to the board as they are*
16 *presented to the student members;*

17 (c) Presenting to the school board specific proposals and opinions from students as
18 directed in paragraph II; and, when appropriate, placing proposals on the school board agenda *and*
19 *bringing forward amendments* in accordance with the board procedures;

20 (d) Serving as a liaison between students and the principal, other faculty, student
21 government advisors, and appropriate outside agencies;

22 (e) Keeping public high school students informed of the business of the school board.

23 V. A student school board member shall be excluded from discussions and procedures of the
24 school board involving subjects which are confidential under RSA 91-A.

25 VI. *Any school board member, school administrative unit faculty, building*
26 *administration, or any other member of faculty violating or attempting to violate any*
27 *portion of this section or to otherwise suppress student members' rights or mislead them*
28 *about their rights or duties shall be guilty of a violation. Any violation of this section shall*
29 *result in a formal complaint being issued to the school superintendent, who within 5 days*
30 *of receipt of the complaint shall determine the complaint's validity. If the superintendent*
31 *finds the complaint constitutes a violation of this section, the superintendent shall issue*
32 *the following penalties:*

33 (a) *For a first violation of this section, a warning shall be issued to the*
34 *perpetrator of the offense.*

35 (b) *For a second violation of this section, the superintendent and local school*
36 *board shall determine and issue a disciplinary action against the perpetrator of the*
37 *offense.*

1 (c) *For a third violation and any additional violation of this section, the*
2 *superintendent shall report the violation to the state board of education, which shall have*
3 *the authority to issue penalties in accordance with 21-N:11, VI.*

4 ***VII. A copy of this section shall be distributed to each student member before their***
5 ***first school board meeting.***

6 2 New Paragraph; State Board of Education; Duties of the Board; Penalties. Amend RSA 21-
7 N:11 by inserting after paragraph V the following new paragraph:

8 VI. Issue monetary penalties relative to violations of RSA 194:23-f, not to exceed \$1,000 per
9 violation.

10 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.