



How to Run for the City of Buffalo School Board

Next Election: May 7, 2013

1. Identify an Open Seat

The Buffalo School District is broken down into six subdistricts: Central, East, Ferry, North, Park, and West. The nine-member School Board consists of one member from each subdistrict, who serve three-year terms, and three Members-at Large, who represent the entire district and serve five-year terms.

This year, all six of the Member Subdistrict seats are up for reelection. There are no Member-at-Large seats up for reelection.

2. Determine Your Eligibility

To sit on the Buffalo School Board, you must be a qualified voter of the school district *and* a resident of the district for minimum of three years. In addition to this, Member Subdistricts must have been a resident of the subdistrict they seek to represent for one year¹.

3. Get Petitions Signed

Petition format

Petition sheets must be printed on legal-size (8.5" x 14") paper. Each sheet of the petition must include²:

- the date of the election;
- your name;
- the office/position that you are seeking;
- the address of your residence and mailing address (if different);
- information about the signing voter (date of signature, residence address, town or city); and
- information about the person witnessing the signatures

You may also designate three people on the petition to serve as your Committee to Fill Vacancies. If for some reason you are unable to or do not wish to accept nomination, one of these people will be voted to take your place.

A sample petition is available for download at the [Erie County Board of Elections](#) website. Petitions must substantially follow this format.

Needed signatures

To be put on the ballot, you need either 500 signatures or signatures equal to 5% of enrolled voters in your subdistrict, whichever is greater. Since the subdistricts are relatively small, it is likely that you will need a minimum of 500 valid signatures. It is advisable to get more than the minimum required in case the validity of some of the signatures on your petition is disputed.

The voter only needs to sign on the appropriate line next to their address and signature date on the petition; all other information may be filled in by a third party. However, by signing the petition, voters are affirming that the information next to their name is accurate. Voters are not allowed to sign petitions for more than one candidate for the same seat.

Eligibility

Only qualified voters *residing in the subdistrict that you wish to represent* can sign your nominating petition. You can obtain walking maps and lists of the voters in your subdistrict by contacting the Erie County Board of Elections:

134 West Eagle Street
Buffalo, NY 14202
Phone: 716-858-8891
Fax: 716-858-8282

Subscribing witness

The person who carries your petition sheets door to door and witnesses voter signatures is called the subscribing witness. This person must be a registered voter in Erie County and is responsible for signing the petition sheet certifying that he or she witnessed each voter's signature. Once the subscribing witness has signed a petition sheet, only he or she is allowed to make alterations or corrections to that sheet, and they must initial each correction.

Important dates

For 2013, the first day for signing petitions is **February 26th**.

4. Submit Petitions

Submission format

Petitions should be submitted to the Erie County Board of Elections. Sheets must be sequentially- numbered and securely-fastened. If a petition includes more than 10 pages, you must include a cover sheet, which **must** indicate the following³:

- name, residence address, and mailing address if different, of the candidate;
- the subdistrict seat you are seeking; and
- a statement that the petition contains a number of signatures equal to or greater than the minimum required

If your petition has very many pages, you should break it up into smaller volumes. When doing so, you must also include:

- the volume number OR identification number of that volume; and
- the total number of volumes in each petition OR the identification number for each volume of the petition

The following information is **optional**:

- the name, residence address, (and mailing address if different) telephone number, and fax number of a person for the Board of Elections to contact in case of problems with the
- cover sheet or petition binding

A sample cover sheet is available at the [Erie County Board of Elections](#) website.

Important dates

For 2013, the **first day** to file petitions is **April 2nd**. The **last day** to file petitions is **April 9th**.

5. Accept or Decline Nomination

After nominating petitions with the appropriate number of signatures have been received, you must file a statement with the Erie County Board of Elections either accepting or declining nomination. If you decline nomination and you have included a Committee to Fill Vacancies on your petition sheets, one of the members will be voted to take your place on the ballot.

Sample acceptance and declination letters are available at the [Erie County Board of Elections](#) website.

Important dates

For 2013, the **last day** for accepting or declining nomination is **April 12th**.

6. File Sworn Statements Detailing Your Campaign Expenses⁴

Per New York State law, you must file a sworn statement detailing your campaign expenditures three times over the course of your campaign: once 30 days before the election, once 5 days before the election, and once 30 days after the election.

For each of the three filings, two copies must be submitted: one to the School District Clerk, and another to the NYS Commissioner of Education.

Commissioner of Education
Room 876 EBA
Albany, NY 12234

James M. Kane, Chief of Staff
801 City Hall
Buffalo, NY 14202

Financial statement format

While there is no prescribed format for these filings, they must include information regarding “all monies or other valuable things which [have been] paid, given, expended, or promised⁵,” either by you or on your behalf by a third party (with your approval), such as a person, firm, association, or corporation.

Examples of personal expenses directly incurred by you would include:

- expenses related to travel
- expenses for writing, printing, and preparing documents such as letters, circulars, or special publications detailing your positions on public or other issues
- expenses for stationary, postage, telephone, telegraph, and other public message services

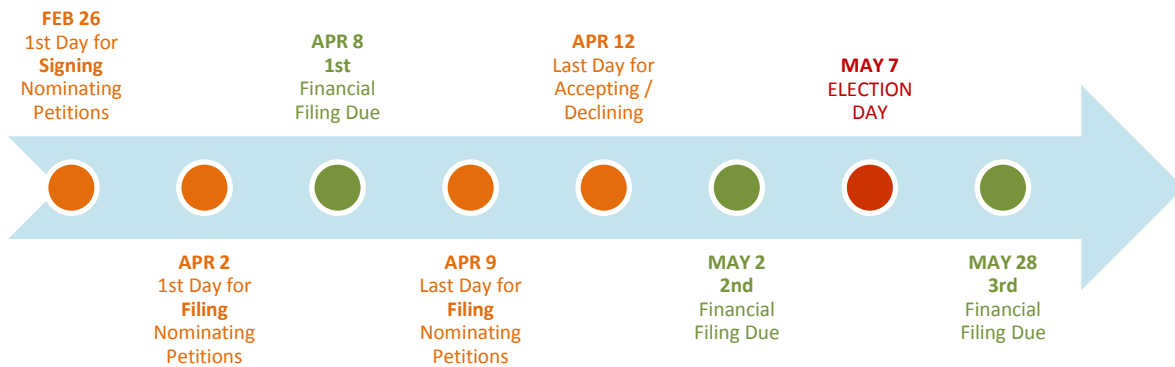
Expenses over \$500 must be itemized; expenses \$500 and under require a sworn statement indicating that they did not exceed this amount. If expenditures were made without your approval by a third party, that third party must file a sworn statement with both the clerk and the Commissioner indicating this. These expenditures do not count toward the \$500, but cannot be greater than \$25.

Important dates

For 2013, the financial filing dates are:

First filing:	Apr 8, 2013
Second filing:	May 2, 2013
Third filing:	May 28, 2013

2013 Election Process Timeline





Partnership for the Public Good
www.ppgbuffalo.org
237 Main St., Suite 1200, Buffalo NY 14203

¹ Erie County Board of Elections, Residency Requirements for City of Buffalo School Board. Available for download at <http://www.erieboe.com/content.aspx?id=176>

² Erie County Board of Elections, Residency Requirements for City of Buffalo School Board. Available for download at <http://www.erieboe.com/content.aspx?id=176>

³ Erie County Board of Elections, Running for Buffalo School Board. Available at <http://www.erieboe.com/content.aspx?id=176>

⁴ Erie County Board of Elections, Finance Questions and Answers. Available for download at <http://www.erieboe.com/content.aspx?id=176>

⁵ Erie County Board of Elections, Residency Requirements for City of Buffalo School Board. Available for download at <http://www.erieboe.com/content.aspx?id=176>