School board members are a vital part of a strong community and excellent schools. But we need more of them—now more than ever! Here are just a few reasons why we need more people to run for their local school board.

[Examples you may choose to use depending on your perspective]:

* At any given time there are dozens of vacated seats on school boards around the state. When a small board–say of five members–has one vacant seat, that is 20% of the board that is missing. This has a direct impact on the board’s ability to get its work done.
* There is a large number of uncontested (single candidate) school board races every year, and races with no candidates. This necessitates an appointment to the board, rather than using the electoral process.
* Schools are being required to provide solutions to increasingly complex problems, many of them driven by difficult societal problems and trends in reduced student enrollment.  We need all hands on deck!
* We have an unprecedented opportunity for improvement of equitable educational outcomes in our state and we need school boards to provide this leadership.
* There is an increasing number of threats and challenges to public education; thereby requiring more people to advocate for the values that are important to your community.
* School boards uphold the great American tradition of a strong, free public education for all, which in turn strengthens the foundation of our representative democracy: a well-informed citizenry.

These are both exciting and challenging times in education in Vermont. Consider serving on behalf of our students and taxpayers, and make a difference to the future of Vermont.

To learn more, visit the Vermont School Boards Association’s website at <https://www.vtvsba.org/prospective>. While there, register for the webinar on December 12th,“Get on Board! Pre-Candidate Training”, which will give you an opportunity to learn more from current school board members and get your questions answered about both running and leading your district to success.

Ready to be a candidate? If you live in a district that uses the Australian ballot, you must submit a petition with signatures and a consent of candidate form, which can be picked up from your school district or supervisory union office. These completed forms are due to the municipal clerk by **5:00 p.m.** on **Monday, January 29, 2024**. If you live in a district that votes during Town Meeting, you can be nominated from the floor at the meeting. Check with your district to confirm what is required by its charter.