

# Faribault Public Schools

## 2026 School Board Handbook

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# Introduction

## Navigating This Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the board’s operating procedures and norms. It also includes important information on policies, meetings, committees, partnerships, and communication. Its ongoing guidance is meant to enable each board member to fulfill essential governance duties and to exercise their responsibilities as a board member, while also providing expectations and standards of behavior for the conduct of the board.

## Handbook Maintenance and Review Procedure

- Annually, the handbook will undergo a review by the board. As part of this review, the board will:
  - Review mutual expectations of board norms;
  - Seek input and feedback regarding best practices, as needed;
  - Check the MSBA website for suggested handbook updates;
  - Adopt the updated handbook by a majority vote of the board.
- Board members may propose additions/revisions to the handbook by sending an email to the chair and superintendent requesting to add “handbook discussion” as a topic for an upcoming working session.
- The handbook may be updated to reflect adopted policy changes without further board action;
- Hyperlinks within the handbook may be updated without further board action;
- The date this handbook was last reviewed, updated, and/or revised, is included on the cover page of this handbook.

# District Information

Faribault Public Schools is more than just a school district—we're a community dedicated to empowering every student to reach their full potential. Serving approximately 3,100 students, we offer a wide range of learning opportunities, including an early learning center, two elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, an alternative learning center, an online 7-12 school, and adult education programs. Our diverse student body reflects the real world, fostering a welcoming environment where all backgrounds, cultures, and learning styles are valued. With high expectations, strong support systems, and a deep connection to our community, we ensure that every child receives the tools and encouragement they need to succeed.



# District Identity

## History of the District

Faribault Public Schools serves the educational needs of the Faribault community and have evolved over time to respond to changes in enrollment, facilities, and instructional priorities. The district remains committed to providing high-quality public education while adapting to the needs of students and families.

## Demographics

The district serves a diverse student population representing a range of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Multiple languages are spoken across the district, and staff provide targeted supports to ensure equitable access to learning and student success.

## Points of Pride

Faribault Public Schools demonstrates success across academics, athletics, fine arts, and extracurricular activities. The district values strong school culture, student engagement, and continuous improvement, supported by dedicated staff and community involvement.

## Programming

The district offers comprehensive academic programming along with extracurricular and enrichment opportunities. Instruction is guided by evidence-based practices, with a focus on academic achievement and preparing students for college and career readiness.

## Community Partnerships

Faribault Public Schools collaborates with families, community members, and local organizations to support student learning and well-being. These partnerships strengthen educational opportunities and reinforce the district's connection to the community it serves.

# Leadership Directory

## Board Members

Name	Board Position	Phone Number	Email Address
John Bellingham	Chair	507-412-9429	<a href="mailto:jbellingham@faribault.k12.mn.us">jbellingham@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Chad Wolff	Vice Chair	612-716-1757	<a href="mailto:cwolff@faribault.k12.mn.us">cwolff@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Casie Steeves	Clerk	507-491-6175	<a href="mailto:csteeves@faribault.k12.mn.us">csteeves@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Lynda Boudreau	Treasurer	651-402-0804	<a href="mailto:lboudreau@faribault.k12.mn.us">lboudreau@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Jerry Robicheau	Director	507-330-4524	<a href="mailto:jrobicheau@faribault.k12.mn.us">jrobicheau@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Linda Moore	Director	507-330-3364	<a href="mailto:lmoore@faribault.k12.mn.us">lmoore@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Candace Knudson	Director	507-210-0007	<a href="mailto:cknudson@faribault.k12.mn.us">cknudson@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>

## Superintendent's Office

Name	Position	Phone Number	Email Address
Jamie Bente	Superintendent	507-333-6016 (office) 507-456-3053 (mobile)	<a href="mailto:jbente@faribault.k12.mn.us">jbente@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Jami Kenney	Administrative Assistant	507-333-6010	<a href="mailto:jkenney@faribault.k12.mn.us">jkenney@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>

## Leadership Cabinet

Name	Position	Phone Number	Email Address
Julie Hull	Director of Teaching & Learning	507-333-6008	<a href="mailto:jhull@faribault.k12.mn.us">jhull@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Barbie Roessler	Finance and Operations Director	507-333-6059	<a href="mailto:broessler@faribault.k12.mn.us">broessler@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Nicole Yochum	Human Resources Director	507-333-6006	<a href="mailto:nyochum@faribault.k12.mn.us">nyochum@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Rob Dehnert	Special Services Director	507-333-6002	<a href="mailto:rdehnert@faribault.k12.mn.us">rdehnert@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>
Cassie Riopelle	Community Education and Engagement Director	507-333-6033	<a href="mailto:criopelle@faribault.k12.mn.us">criopelle@faribault.k12.mn.us</a>

# District Facilities

Building	Address	Phone Number
Faribault Public Schools District Office	710 17 <sup>th</sup> Street SW, Faribault, MN, 55021-5338	507-333-6000
Faribault High School (Gr. 9-12)	30 SW 9th Avenue, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6100
Faribault Middle School (Gr. 6-8)	704 17th St SW #5518, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6300
Jefferson Elementary School (Gr. 1-5)	922 Home Pl, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6500
Lincoln Elementary School (Gr. 1-5)	510 Lincoln Ave NW, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6600
Roosevelt Early Learning and Kindergarten School (PreK--K)	925 Parshall St, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6700
Falcon Online Academy (Gr. 7-12)	330 9th Ave SW, Faribault, MN 55021	(507) 333-6190
Faribault Area Learning Center (Gr. 9-12)	2855 1st Ave NW, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6187
Faribault Education Center (Adult Basic Education)	340 9th Ave SW, Faribault, MN 55021-5338	(507) 333-6472
Buildings & Grounds	1051 Faribault Rd, Faribault, MN 55021	(507) 333-6032

## Schedule a Facility Visit or Tour

You have the same right as a parent or community member to visit the schools in your district as long as you adhere to the procedures the district has for visitors. You may also visit the schools in an official capacity with the board's authority or to fulfill a specific duty required of you as a board member. In any event, be sure to communicate with the superintendent and building administrator to schedule your visit.

You should use school visits to build good working relations with building principals and staff, to celebrate the positive accomplishments of the schools, and to show your pride as a member of the board. Look for opportunities to visit when a school is hosting a special event or recognition program for students and staff.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 903: Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites

# Strategic Framework

## Mission Statement

“Faribault Public Schools partners with families and the community to educate, elevate, and empower every student to achieve their full potential. Every Falcon. Every Day.”

## Strategic Plan

The Faribault Public Schools Strategic Plan is a guiding document created by staff and community stakeholders to help the school district successfully serve the needs of our community. The Strategic Plan is reviewed and refined regularly to reflect on progress made and address changing needs.

## Core Values

- **Integrity:** We align our actions and words with our mission.
- **Respect:** We value the differences in each other.
- **Excellence:** We commit to continuous learning and improvement.
- **Adaptability:** We engage in flexible, continuous, and purposeful change based on data.
- **Collaboration:** We leverage resources and talents among all stakeholders as a way to advance our mission.
- **Responsibility:** We use our human, financial, and physical resources in support of our mission.
- **Engagement:** We follow our values and act with purpose to achieve our mission.

## District Commitments

- **Readiness:** Ensure all students are equipped with effective literacy and numeracy skills. Increase the percentage of Faribault Public Schools students meeting grade-level benchmarks by expanding access to high-quality education programs, enhancing community partnerships,

implementing targeted growth, and increasing program capacities.

- **Reading Growth:** Significantly increase student reading growth across all grade levels. Improve student outcomes by adopting evidence-based literacy curricula, comprehensive professional development aligned with the Science of Reading, and implementing targeted instruction tailored to diverse learner needs. Aim to substantially raise growth scores on assessments.
- **Math Growth:** Improve mathematics achievement and growth district-wide by aligning Tier 1 instruction with current math standards, integrating evidence-based instructional strategies and problem-based learning, and enhancing educator effectiveness through professional development and instructional coaching. Focus on raising student growth across all grade levels as measured by assessments.
- **Graduation and Post Secondary Success:** Increase graduation rates and ensure all students are well-prepared for college, careers, and life. Expand differentiated learning pathways, strengthen career and technical education opportunities, enhance student support programs, and implement comprehensive attendance and engagement strategies. Aim to significantly raise the percentage of students graduating within four years.



# Our Playbook

## OUR PLAYBOOK

**Why do we exist?**

We elevate and empower **each student, every family,** and **our entire community** to achieve their full potential.

**How do we behave?**

**We are professional**

- We have high expectations.
- We are present and fully engaged.
- We are solutions-oriented.
- We are motivated to learn and grow.

**We are compassionate**

- We listen to understand.
- We are kind, honest, and respectful.
- We acknowledge and celebrate successes.

**We act with integrity**

- We follow through on our commitments.
- We assume positive intent.
- We have courageous conversations.

**We are advocates for our students and families**

- We do what is best for kids.
- We remove barriers.
- We take initiative.

**What do we do?**

We provide a high-quality, equitable education that **nurtures, inspires, challenges,** and **empowers** all students to engage and grow as learners and citizens.

**We will succeed by:**

- Becoming a district of destination for students, families, and staff because **#WeAreFaribault**
- Committing ourselves to our **strategic district goals**
- Establishing trust through building **relationships** and **partnerships,** clearly **communicating,** and **listening** to understand those who walk through our doors
- Establishing a unified system based on **data-driven decisions**

# References for Further Information

- [District Policy Manual](#) (\*)
- [District Vision Plan](#)
- [Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report](#)
- Results of District Stakeholder Surveys
- School Improvement Plan
- Student Performance Data
- [District Report Card](#)
- [District Budget and Financial Reports](#)
- District Technology Plan
- District Emergency Plan
- Facilities Assessments
- [Student Handbooks](#)
- [Chain of Communication](#)
- [Employee Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) (\*)
- [District](#) and [Board Meeting Calendar](#)
- [Minutes of board meetings over the last year](#)
- List of curricular and extracurricular programs
- Reports on recent projects, programs, or initiatives

# Board Membership

When considering your governance role, embracing the procedural steps that underpin the integrity of the democratic process is paramount. From post-election procedures to the establishment of board offices, each action reflects your commitment to transparency and accountability. By being diligent in these duties, you acknowledge the trust placed in you by constituents. Prioritizing effective governance ensures you serve the community and prioritize the needs of students.

## Post-Election Procedures

### Canvass and Declaration of Results

Between the third and tenth days after a district election, the board must canvass the returns and declare the results of the election. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

### Certification of Results

The district clerk shall certify the results of the district election to the county auditor. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

### Issuance of Certificate of Election

After canvassing the election and the time for contesting an election has passed (seven days after the canvassing board has declared the result of the election), the board shall issue a certificate of election to the candidate for each office who received the largest number of votes cast for the office. If there is a contest, the certificate of election to that office must not be issued until the outcome of the contest has been determined by the proper count. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3](#); [Minn. Stat. 204C.40, Subd. 2.](#)

### Campaign Financial Report Certification of Filing

The Certification of Filing is due no later than seven days after the general election. [Minn. Stat. 211A.05.](#)

### Taking Office

Board members take office the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#)

### Official Oath of Office

The official oath of office is administered once elections have been canvassed, the candidates have turned in their certificate of campaign filing report, and the seven-day contest period has ended. When the contest period ends, the school election officer should give each winning candidate the certificate of election. Each winning candidate then has thirty days to sign the official oath and acceptance of office form in front of a notary. By signing this document, the individual officially becomes a board member on the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 358.05.](#)

## Ceremonial Oath of Office

The ceremonial oath of office is usually administered at the organizational meeting on the first Monday in January (or as soon thereafter as practicable). While the official oath of office is required, the ceremonial oath of office is optional.

## Organizational Meeting

On the first Monday in January (or as soon as practicable thereafter) each year, newly elected board members' terms of office begin, and boards must meet to organize for the year. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#) During this meeting, ceremonial oaths of office may be administered, officers are elected, committee assignments are established, and meeting schedules are adopted. This process lays the groundwork for the board's operations, emphasizing collaboration and effective governance to serve the district and its stakeholders.

*For more regarding organizational meetings see, [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook.](#)*

## District Intake Paperwork

The administrative assistant to the superintendent, and the school board will assist you in the onboarding process by:

- Providing a copy of the board handbook
- Providing a copy of school calendar and board meeting schedule
- Providing access to BoardBook
- Collecting contact information including home address and cell phone number and a photo for the website.
- Scheduling a meeting with the Technology Department for setting up a district email
- Scheduling a one-on-one meeting with the superintendent
- Scheduling a one-on-one meeting with the board chair
- Providing MSBA login information
- Providing MSBA's contact information (Phone: 507-934-2450; [Online Inquiry Form](#))

The Human Resource Department will connect with you about with the following topics:

- Badge Picture
- Direct Deposit Enrollment Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- Federal W-4 Form
- Federal I-9 Form
- Hepatitis B Vaccine Consent Decline Form
- MN Emp. Withholding Allowance
- Request for Employee Social Security Number
- Minnesota Paid Leave Notice
- Completing a background check

# Board Organization

## Eligibility Requirements

To run for a board seat, you must be (1) at least 21 years old, (2) an eligible voter, (3) a district resident for at least 30 days prior to election/appointment, and (4) not convicted of a felony. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#); [Minn. Stat. 204B.06, Subd. 1.](#)

## Term of Office

Board members are elected to four-year terms and take office on the first Monday in January. The term of a member who has been appointed to fill a vacancy will be for the remainder of the predecessor's term until the date of the district's next general election. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a board member can serve. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)

## Filling Vacancies

A vacancy on the board can occur for a number of reasons including when a member dies, resigns, or ceases to be a resident of the district. All vacancies will be filled according to [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)

*For more information, regarding filling vacancies see: [Steps to Fill a School Board Vacancy with Sample Application and Interview Questions.](#)*

## Board Composition

School boards in Minnesota are made up of either six or seven members. Some exceptions have been created by special legislation, often for consolidated districts. The superintendent is an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the board. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)

## Board Offices

Officers of the board include chair, vice-chair (optional), clerk, and treasurer. These positions are determined annually at the organizational meeting. All board members, regardless of office, maintain equal rights and equal voices. See the Election of Board Officers section on page 27 for information regarding nominating and voting procedures.

### Role of the Chair

- The chair, when present, shall preside at all meetings of the board, countersign all orders upon the treasurer for claims allowed by the board, represent the district in all actions, and perform all duties a chair usually performs.
- In case of absence, inability, or refusal of the clerk to draw orders for the payment of money authorized by a vote of the majority of the board to be paid, the chair may draw the orders, or the office of the clerk may be declared vacant by the chair and treasurer and filled by appointment.

### Role of the Vice-Chair

- The vice-chair shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's temporary absence.

## Role of the Clerk

- The clerk shall keep a record of all meetings in the books provided.
- Within three days after an election, the clerk shall notify all persons elected of their election.
- On or before September 15 of each year, the clerk shall:
  - file with the board a report of the revenues, expenditures, and balances in each fund for the preceding fiscal year.
  - make and transmit to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (Commissioner) certified reports, showing:
    - revenues and expenditures in detail, and such other financial information required by law, rule, or as may be called for by the Commissioner;
    - length of school term and enrollment and attendance by grades; and
    - other items of information as called for by the Commissioner.
- The clerk shall enter into the clerk's record book copies of all reports, the teachers' term reports, the proceedings of any meeting, and keep an itemized account of all expenses of the district.
- The clerk shall furnish to the county auditor, on or before September 30 of each year, an attested copy of the clerk's record, showing the amount of proposed property tax levy voted by the district or the board for school purposes.
- The clerk shall draw and sign all orders upon the treasurer for the payment of money for bills allowed by the board for salaries of officers and for teachers' wages and all claims, to be countersigned by the chair.
- The clerk shall perform such duties as required by the Minnesota Election Law or other applicable laws relating to the conduct of elections.
- The clerk shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's and the vice-chair's temporary absences.
- By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasurer in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

## Role of the Treasurer

- The treasurer shall deposit the funds of the district in the official depository.
- The treasurer shall make all reports which may be called for by the board and perform all duties a treasurer usually performs.
- In the event there are insufficient funds on hand to pay valid orders presented to the treasurer, the treasurer shall receive, endorse, and process the orders in accordance with [Minn. Stat. 123B.12](#).
- By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasurer in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 202: School Board Officers

## Board Compensation

The clerk, treasurer, and superintendent of any district shall receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. Unless otherwise provided by law, the other members of the board shall also receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. All members of the board may receive reimbursement for

transportation at the rate provided for in [Minn. Stat. 471.665](#). No board member or district employee shall receive any compensation or benefits based on incentives or other money provided to the district by or from a source of group insurance coverage referenced in [Minn. Stat. 471.6161, Subd. 1](#), except for a refund provided under [Minn. Stat. 123B.75, Subd. 10](#), or a wellness plan that is mutually agreed upon by the district and the exclusive representatives of employees.

- The board fixes compensation at the organizational meeting in January.
- School board salaries are set at \$325.00 per month for directors and \$400.00 per month for board chairpersons.
- Paydays will be on the fifteenth and the last day of each month. When the fifteenth or last day of the month is a holiday, a Saturday or a Sunday, the payday shall be moved to the preceding business day.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 730: Payroll Periods

## Expense Reimbursement

- Requests for reimbursement must be itemized on the official school district form and are to be submitted to the designated administrator.
  - Travel and Mileage Reimbursement Form
  - Employee Vendor Voucher Request
- Receipts for lodging, commercial transportation, registration, and other reasonable and necessary expenses must be attached to the reimbursement form.
- Automobile travel will be reimbursed at the mileage rate set by the school board.
- Amounts to be reimbursed shall be within the school board's approved budget allocations, including attendance at workshops and conferences.
- ALL reimbursements will be processed through PAYROLL. Typically, reimbursement requests submitted by the 18th of the month are paid at the end of the month, and requests submitted by the 3rd of the month are paid on the 15th of the month.
- Sales tax will not be reimbursed.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 212: School Board Member Development, Policy 214: Out-of-State Travel by School Board Members, and Policy 412: Expense Reimbursement.

# Learning the Job

## Learning from Board Colleagues

One of the most valuable resources at your disposal, outside of this handbook, is the wealth of experience and knowledge possessed by your fellow board members and district staff. Engaging with them can significantly enhance your understanding of board operations, policies, and educational best practices. Your colleagues on the board bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives that can provide invaluable insights. Here are a few ways to leverage their experience:

**Workshops and Retreats** – Participate actively in board workshops and retreats. These sessions are designed not only to address key issues but also to foster team building and collective learning.

**Committee Participation** – Request to join board committees that align with your interests and expertise. Working closely with other members on specific topics will deepen your understanding and contribute to your professional growth.

**Informal Meetings** – Work with the superintendent to schedule informal meetings with key staff members to discuss specific areas of interest. These one-on-one interactions can offer a more personalized learning experience and help you build strong working relationships.

## Mentorship

The district recognizes the importance of supporting new board members as they transition into their roles. To facilitate this, the district has implemented a mentorship program designed to provide guidance, support, and valuable insights. Each new board member will be paired with an experienced mentor who will help them navigate their responsibilities and become effective contributors to the board. This mentor will be a seasoned board member with a deep understanding of the district's operations, policies, and culture. The assignment will be made by the board chair in consultation with the superintendent to ensure a good match based on experience and areas of expertise.

To support you in this transition, you and your mentor will use the [MSBA New Board Member Orientation Year At-a-Glance](#) to guide you through your first year. This program aims to provide you with the knowledge, tools, and support necessary to become an effective and confident board member. Mentor and mentee should schedule a time before each school board meeting to check-in regarding the upcoming agenda, policies, and procedures.

Our orientation program is structured to ensure you receive a balanced combination of printed materials, hands-on training, and personal mentorship. Throughout the year, you will engage in various learning sessions, attend MSBA training events, and participate in board meetings and district activities. These experiences are designed to deepen your understanding of board operations, district policies, and educational goals. By the end of your first year, you will have a solid foundation to effectively contribute to the board's mission of providing quality education for all students. Mentors are encouraged to attend the workshops and trainings with the mentees to make the information more relevant and specific to the district.

## Ongoing Professional Development

Continuous learning is crucial for effective governance. Board members are encouraged to participate in school board and related workshops and activities sponsored by local, state, and national school boards associations, as well as in the activities of other educational groups. Each board member shall receive training in school finance and management developed in consultation with the Minnesota School Boards Association. [Minn. Stat 123B.09, Subd. 2](#). Below is a full list of MSBA's Learning to Lead Phase Workshops.

- [Learning to Lead – School Board Basics: Phase I Workshop](#)
- [Leadership Foundations – School Finance and Management: Phase II Workshop](#)
- [Building a High-Performance School Board Team: Phase III Workshop](#)

- [Representing Your Community Through Policy and Engagement: Phase IV Workshop](#)

**Other MSBA Professional Development Opportunities** – To learn more about these opportunities, see the [Workshops and Events](#) section of the MSBA website.

In District Workshops	Events
Mutual Expectations Workshop	Leadership Conference
School Board Self-Evaluation Workshop	Summer Seminar
Superintendent Search Workshop	Delegate Assembly
Superintendent Evaluation Workshop	Day at the Capitol
Regional Workshops	Advocacy Tour
Officers’ Workshop	Coffee and Conversation Series
Negotiations Seminars	Board Chair Chat
	Monthly Webinars

If interested in signing up for any of the MSBA events or workshops, please email Jami Kenney, at [jkenney@faribault.k12.mn.us](mailto:jkenney@faribault.k12.mn.us) or call (507) 333-6010.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 212 – School Board Member Development

**MSBA Series of Publications** – New board members automatically receive the following publications to stay current on education related news.

- **eClippings** – Receive daily links to K-12 news from around the state.
- **Leader Newsletter** – Monthly updates regarding MSBA news and events, topical news items, administrative topics, and much more.
- **Journal Magazine** – Bimonthly magazine includes school features, exploration of leadership issues, in-depth stories on education trends, and a directory of vendors.

# Individual Board Membership

## Duties as an Individual Board Member

The position of board member carries with it a profound responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards. A commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability will not only enhance the effectiveness of educational policies but also strengthen the community's confidence in the board's decision-making. Remember that your actions and decisions will help shape the future of our students, schools, and community. Let the Code of Ethics in District Policy 209 guide you in navigating the complexities of governance with unwavering moral clarity and purposeful dedication.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 209 – Code of Ethics

## Board Time Commitment

The time required to complete your board responsibilities will most vary by time of year. It will depend on how many meetings are scheduled, which committees you serve on, what issues are going on in the district at the time, and how much time you need to prepare for upcoming meetings. For example, if the

district is going through a building project, hiring a superintendent, or developing the district budget, the time needed for board meetings may be more extensive. On average, however, you can anticipate spending at least 12 to 15 hours a month on board service.

## Conflict of Interest

As a board member, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity by actively avoiding any conflicts of interest in your official capacity. This means refraining from any personal financial involvement in district transactions such as sales, leases, or contracts you oversee or participate in. If a potential conflict arises, you must fully disclose your interests and abstain from decision-making processes related to those interests. You will operate under stringent guidelines to ensure that any exceptions to this rule are handled transparently, with unanimous consent and clear documentation. This approach maintains the community's trust and ensures all decisions are made solely in the best interest of the district and its stakeholders.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 210 – Conflict of Interest

## Working as a Board Team

At the heart of educational excellence lies the steadfast commitment of the board, entrusted with duties that shape the very fabric of our district's future. Defined by statute, yet driven by a passion for progress, the board's responsibilities encompass a profound dedication to nurturing thriving learning environments and supporting the endeavors of our administration. Crucial to fulfilling these responsibilities is the collaborative spirit of board teamwork, where collective wisdom and shared vision pave the path toward transformative change. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and collaboration, the board can harness its collective strength to address challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and ultimately, advance the educational journey of every student in our district.

## Duties of the Board

- The board has powers and duties specified by statute. The board's authority includes implied powers in addition to specific powers granted by the legislature.
- The board exercises administrative functions. It also has certain powers of a legislative character and other powers of a quasi-judicial character.
- The board shall superintend and manage the schools of the district; adopt rules for their organization, government, and instruction; prescribe textbooks and courses of study; and make and authorize contracts.
- The board shall have the general charge of the business of the district, its facilities and property, and of the interest of the schools.
- The board, among other duties, shall perform the following in accordance with applicable law:
  - provide by levy of tax, necessary funds for the conduct of schools, the payment of indebtedness, and all proper expenses of the district;
  - conduct the business of the schools and pay indebtedness and proper expenses;

- employ and contract with necessary qualified teachers and discharge the same for cause;
- provide services to promote the health of its pupils;
- provide school buildings and erect needed buildings;
- purchase, sell, and exchange district property and equipment as deemed necessary by the board for school purposes;
- provide for payment of claims against the district, and prosecute and defend actions by or against the district, in all proper cases;
- employ and discharge necessary employees and contract for other services;
- provide for transportation of pupils to and from school, as governed by statute; and
- procure insurance against liability of the district, its officers, and employees.
- The board, at its discretion, may perform the following:
  - provide library facilities, public evening schools, adult and continuing education programs, summer school programs, and intersession classes of flexible school year programs;
  - furnish school lunches for pupils and teachers on such terms as the board determines;
  - enter into agreements with one or more other independent districts to provide for agreed upon educational services;
  - lease rooms or buildings for school purposes;
  - authorize the use of school facilities for community purposes that will not interfere with their use for school purposes;
  - authorize cocurricular and extracurricular activities;
  - receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose; and
  - perform other acts as the board shall deem to be reasonably necessary or required for the governance of the schools.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 201 – Legal Status of the School Board

## Board Governance Model

The [MSBA Board Governance Model](#) delineates the distinct roles and responsibilities of the board and the superintendent, ensuring both governance and management functions are clearly articulated and understood. It outlines the board's role in setting expectations and parameters through policy adoption, budgeting, contracting, and focusing on student achievement for all. It also highlights the superintendent's responsibilities in providing leadership and supervision, thus ensuring policies and strategies set by the board are effectively implemented.

## Standards for Board Leadership

The board is responsible to the community to govern efficiently and lead effectively to provide students an equitable education that results in high achievement. To assist in this journey, see the [Standards for](#)

[School Board Leadership](#) developed by the MSBA. This document outlines best practices for board members and provides the standards we should strive to meet as part of a high-performing board team.

## Attributes of High-Performing Board Teams

1. Everyone clearly understands the mission, goals, and role of the board; everyone knows who is, and who should be, doing what.
2. Board members are skilled in group leadership and/or membership functions.
3. Board members have a high degree of trust in one another.
4. Interaction occurs in a supportive atmosphere. Suggestions, comments, ideas, information, and criticism are all offered in a manner that is helpful. Respect is shown for varying team viewpoints.
5. Expectations for the group and its members are high. Goals are stretched.
6. The board is not dominated by an individual or sub-group; everyone participates and has the opportunity to influence the discussion.
7. The board has established procedures for operation including decision-making, conflict resolution, and meeting management.
8. The board is future focused. Decisions are made with long-term consequences and benefits in mind.
9. The board evaluates its performance periodically.

## School Board Self-Evaluation

School Board self-evaluations can be an invaluable tool for assessing and enhancing the effectiveness of our governing body. This process allows us to reflect on our collective performance, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Engaging in a self-evaluation enables us to gain insights into individual contributions and understand the dynamics and overall functioning of the board. It also fosters open communication, promotes accountability, and strengthens teamwork among board members. By participating in the process, we can gain insights that will empower us to make informed decisions, enhance our effectiveness in serving the community, and contribute to the continuous improvement of the board's performance and impact.

# Role of the Superintendent

The board employs a superintendent to lead and manage the district. The superintendent is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board and the chief executive officer of the school system. The superintendent's duties and responsibilities are derived largely from three sources: statute, the employment contract, and the job description. Superintendents are responsible for the management of the schools, the administration of all board policies, and are directly accountable to the board. The superintendent must annually evaluate each principal assigned responsibility for supervising a school building in the district. Also, the superintendent may delegate responsibilities to other district personnel but shall continue to be accountable for actions taken under such delegation. [Minn. Stat. 123B.143.](#)

## Hiring a Superintendent

One of the most critical responsibilities of the board is the hiring of a superintendent. The selection of the superintendent is a decision that shapes the future of the district, influencing the quality of education, the effectiveness of school management, and the overall success of students. The importance of this decision cannot be overstated. The superintendent's vision and leadership directly impact educational outcomes and the district's ability to achieve its strategic goals. Therefore, it is imperative that the board conducts a thorough and meticulous search process, considering candidates' experience, leadership style, and alignment with the district's values and objectives. This decision requires careful deliberation and a commitment to finding a leader who will foster a positive educational environment, promote innovation, and address the diverse needs of the school community. In essence, the hiring of a superintendent is not just a routine administrative task but a defining moment that sets the course for the district's future.

## Duties of the Superintendent

The superintendent shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the school board. The superintendent shall be the chief executive officer of the school district; shall direct and assign teachers and other school district employees under the superintendent's supervision; shall organize, reorganize, and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff, including instruction and business affairs, as best serves the school district subject to the approval of the school board; shall select all personnel subject to the approval of the school board; shall, from time to time, suggest policies, regulations, rules, and procedures deemed necessary for the school district; and, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the superintendent and such other duties as may be prescribed by the school board from time to time. The superintendent shall abide by the policies, regulations, rules, and procedures established by the school board and the State of Minnesota. The superintendent shall have the right to attend all school board meetings and all school board and citizen committee meetings, serve as an ex-officio member of the school board and all school board committees, and provide administrative recommendations on each item of business considered by each of these groups.

## Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship

Understanding and fostering a productive relationship between the board and the superintendent is critical for the success of our educational institution. [The 17 Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent](#)

Relationship provides a comprehensive guide outlining key principles and best practices for maintaining a collaborative and effective partnership. This document highlights essential responsibilities and expectations for both the board members and the superintendent, promoting a clear understanding of each party's role in governance and administration. By adhering to these tenets, our board can ensure decisions are made efficiently, communication remains open and transparent, and the strategic goals of our district are met.

## Evaluating the Superintendent

Evaluation of a superintendent's performance is one of the board's most important responsibilities. The evaluation of the superintendent is an inherent managerial right of the board. Each board member should review the superintendent's employment contract to determine the evaluation-related provisions, if any, that may be included. Done correctly, an evaluation is a useful governance tool that helps drive school improvement. In fact, a high-quality evaluation process enhances positive school-superintendent relationships, improves communication, clarifies leadership roles, creates common understandings, and provides a mechanism for accountability and communication.

- The Superintendent Evaluation Committee will set goals annually with the superintendent, and will write up the mid-year and final evaluation for public notice.
- **Superintendent Evaluation Timeline**
  - **June** – The committee presents the Superintendent Evaluation Process, Rubric, and Timeline to the School Board during a work session.
  - **Late June / Early July** – Board members provide feedback on progress toward goals through a survey. Survey results are shared and discussed with the superintendent in closed session with the full board. A summary of the results is presented at the next regular Board meeting.
  - **July–August** – New superintendent goals are discussed during a board work session.
  - **August** – Superintendent goals are formally approved at the August business meeting.
  - **January** - Board meetings with the superintendent for a mid-year review.
- [Superintendent Goals for the 2025-26 School Year](#)

# Board Communication Guide

## Communication Between Board Members

Adhering to guidelines for effective and lawful communication with your fellow board members is crucial. While open and collaborative communication is vital for the board’s success, remember that discussions outside of official board meetings must be handled carefully to avoid violating the Minnesota Open Meeting Law (OML). This law requires any gathering of a quorum of board members, where official business is discussed, must be conducted in public and notice must be provided to ensure transparency. (See exceptions in the Closed Meeting Chart.) Therefore, while informal discussions can be valuable for building relationships and exchanging ideas, avoid veering into areas of official board business unless they are part of a scheduled public meeting.



**Building Collaborative Relationships** – School governance is founded on the belief that a group of very different people representing various constituencies in their district can make better decisions than any one person alone. That diversity is the board’s strength. It’s best to be open-minded about the opinions of your fellow board members. Your goal should not be to change them to your point of view, but rather to determine the best solution to an issue by working together to try and accommodate all views. You want the students to be the “winners” — not one board member or another.

**Addressing Team Dysfunction** – Open communication is critical to the proper functioning of the board. If you feel the board is not functioning well, it may be appropriate to suggest a workshop where the board reviews its ground rules, board policies on board operations, and board/administrative relations that establish how the leadership team will function. If these ground rules and policies are not effective, then consider modifications to them. The board may want to hire a facilitator to assist with discussions to improve the board’s working relations. MSBA can help with a custom board in-service tailored to the board’s specific situation.

**Guidelines for interacting outside a board meeting**

- **Do Not Discuss Board Business.** Focus on topics such as general education trends, personal updates, or board training and development without steering into specifics of pending decisions or board business.
- **Be Cautious with Written Communication.** Exercise caution with emails, texts, and social media interactions among board members. Avoid group messages or email chains discussing board business that could be construed as a meeting.
- **Be Transparent with Your Intentions.** Always make the purpose of any gathering clear, ensuring it is social or educational in nature and not meant for making decisions or deliberations that should be reserved for official meetings.
- **Consider Public Perception.** When planning to meet outside of formal board meetings, consider how such gatherings might be perceived by the public. It’s crucial to remember any appearance of conducting board business or decision-making outside of the designated public meetings could undermine community trust and confidence.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 205: Open Meetings and Closed Meetings

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about board governance and/or operation.	Contact the board chair or superintendent.
I have a concern or questions regarding board governance.	Contact the board chair or superintendent.
I have a concern or questions regarding district operations.	Contact the superintendent.

## Communication with the Superintendent

You need to establish a productive working relationship with the superintendent. To do this, you need to communicate with that individual. If you have questions, it is better to call the superintendent and discuss them before the board meeting rather than surprise the superintendent at a public meeting. If the questions are concerns or relate to negative feelings from the community, superintendents appreciate knowing about them in advance of the board meeting so they can come prepared to address them. It is appropriate to call the superintendent, set up a meeting to discuss questions, or send an email for simple questions or requests. When emailing the superintendent, board members should copy the board chair. When contacting the superintendent, it is important for you to keep the scope of such contacts within reason, to permit adequate time to receive a response, and to generally remain cognizant of the superintendent’s other responsibilities and demands on their time.

**Disagreements with the Superintendent** – Always treat your fellow board members, the superintendent, and other administrators with respect. However, don't be afraid to disagree on an issue. In fact, a discussion about an issue that reflects two or more views usually results in a better decision than if everyone agrees with the first solution offered. Be certain to debate the issue, not the person, and maintain decorum in debate.

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about the district.	Contact the superintendent.
What if I disagree with a report or presentation to the board from the superintendent or other staff member?	Contact the superintendent.

## Communication with District Administrators and Staff

You will likely come in contact with district employees, including administrators, teachers, and other staff members. While there's nothing wrong with talking to district staff, keep in mind that complaints should follow the chain of communication. Additionally, understand individual board members do not have authority to direct the work of district staff members. Directing requests through the superintendent can assist with appropriate prioritization, identifying information that may be readily available, and determining when it may be appropriate to have the full board weigh in regarding certain requests and project ideas.

**Discussing Your Child with Staff** – This can be a tricky area. No matter what you say about “speaking as a parent, not a board member,” it may be difficult for some teachers to separate your role on the board from your role as a parent. Some board members have indicated their significant others frequently take the lead in speaking to their children's teachers. Make sure you're not using your position as a board member to secure special treatment for your child. If there are issues you wish to discuss with a teacher, you should follow the normal procedures for contacting your child's teacher to discuss them. Keep in mind that you do not relinquish your parental rights now that you're a board member.

## Communication with Constituents, Including Staff, Students, Parents, and Community

**Public Role vs. Personal Role** - Board members must understand that they cannot separate their public identity from their role on the board, *and as elected officials*, even when they claim to be speaking as private citizens, taxpayers, or community members, others will still perceive their comments as coming from someone in an official capacity. Community members and staff rarely distinguish personal viewpoints from an official role, and a board member's words carry significant weight. For this reason, board members must not use—or appear to use—their position to advance personal opinions or interests outside established board processes.

Identify the person contacting you and ensure you have their contact information. Seek to understand the situation or interest do not agree or commit to resolve it personally as that is not the role of individual board members. Here are some general expectations:

- Do not agree to confidentiality or commit to limit your options of notification.

- Do not get involved in staff employment or contractual issues.
- Do not attempt to work with a parent who is working on behalf of an organized group rather than on behalf of their own student.
- When applicable, redirect the person to the appropriate staff person or administrator to address the concern. Chain of Communication: [link](#)
- Be alert to patterns of like concerns and notify the superintendent’s office of the possibility.
- If the concern raises governance or public relations questions, contact the board chair in addition to the superintendent.
- Avoid forming and communicating opinions about a board decision before the board has discussed it in a board meeting.

Situation	District Protocol
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent with concerns regarding the district.	Ask them if they have contacted the individual directly involved, such as the teacher or staff member and then the principal. If so, then contact the superintendent
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent regarding the board’s decisions.	Appreciate them sharing their perspective; decision of the board.
If I get an email that is addressed to the entire board with concerns from a constituent.	Do not respond; forward the email to the board chair and superintendent.
There is a situation that requires the district’s legal counsel to be contacted.	Contact the chair and superintendent.

## Engaging with the Community

Be proactive. The board can engage key stakeholders by inviting and appointing them to participate in standing and ad hoc committees, advisory panels, focus groups, forums, and surveys to describe a vision for the district, set its goals, plan strategically, align resources with goals, and other actions offering them an opportunity to learn about public education and to influence governance decisions. Encourage all members of the community to visit their schools. Invite them to extracurricular activities, schedule a grandparents’ day, and offer tours. In public education, familiarity often breeds support.

Use a variety of means to engage community members, inform them about the district, and learn about their interests, priorities, and concerns. Print and electronic media, social media (be mindful of emerging trends for younger parents), the district’s website, and face-to-face conversations all play important roles in a year-round district campaign to inform and to be informed.

While accentuating the positive — student successes and district progress — don’t neglect the negative. Be the first to let the community know about clouds looming on the horizon, and what the board is doing to dispel them. The board should be ambassadors for the district by scheduling dialogues with a cross section of the community — preferably in their neighborhoods as well as in online forums. And be prepared to address negative comments and feedback in a positive, proactive manner.

In addition, consider the varying expectations of the district’s constituents. The parents of seniors may have far different expectations than the parents of kindergartners, and elderly community members with no students in the district may want completely different types of communication.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 612.1: Development of Parent and Family Engagement Policies for Title I Programs

## Communication with the Media

It's important to handle media interactions with care to maintain the veracity and unified voice of the board. Maintaining a unified voice is crucial as it ensures all board communications are consistent, clear, and reflect the collective decisions and strategic direction of the board. This unified approach helps to build trust and credibility with the community, stakeholders, and the media.

Situation	District Protocol
If I am approached by the media regarding a concern or board decision.	Direct the media to the superintendent and board chair and notify the communications coordinator.

## Communication on Social Media

Social media plays a significant role in board members' responsibilities. To use social media effectively while avoiding potential pitfalls, remember your posts should reflect well on your role and set a good example for students and the community. Be careful not to share personal, confidential, or legally protected information about students, employees, or board members. Opt for face-to-face or telephone conversations for private matters instead of using social media. Control your emotions and avoid posting in anger or frustration, as negative statements can have lasting consequences and may lead to legal issues. Always use polite language and refrain from abusive, profane, or offensive comments. Additionally, do not post on behalf of the district or share commercial messages linked to the district. Use social media for listening, making announcements, and gathering feedback rather than conducting board business. Finally, ensure you comply with all relevant laws and district policies, including those related to acceptable use, harassment, discrimination, and privacy. Your online actions should always reflect the values and responsibilities of your position within the district.

Situation	District Protocol
I know about an upcoming district event that should be featured on social media.	Notify the superintendent.
I saw a post containing false or misleading information regarding the board or district.	Notify the superintendent.

## Using a District Email

You should use a district email account for your board communications. While this creates another account to monitor, the extra effort is well worth it. As an elected official, your communications related to your office are presumed to be public data unless a provision of law makes part or all of the email private. Your emails may contain private personnel data ([Minn. Stat. 13.43](#)), private educational data ([Minn. Stat. 13.32](#)), correspondence with a private individual ([Minn. Stat. 13.601](#)), or protected medical information.

Members of the public may request access to public government data for any reason. Government entities must respond to these requests, and any work required to separate private data from public data, known as redaction, cannot be charged to the requester. The government entity must keep public data readily accessible, and redacting private data is its responsibility. Often, decisions about redaction need to be made by legal counsel, which adds to the expense.

If you use a personal or work email account, access to the public data may require you to turn over the personal or work device on which the emails are stored. If you use a district email address, the district's computer system can be searched to respond to public data requests. As a result, you do not have to worry about your personal or work devices being unavailable or about your personal or work information being shared with others.

Using a separate email account also separates your board work from personal or business correspondence. This reduces the number of emails that need to be searched in preparation for responding to a public data request, saving the district time and money.

Another reason this separation is helpful is in how you think about your emails related to board work. Remembering the presumed public status of what you write in emails to other board members, the superintendent, and other district personnel about board work can save you from explanations and embarrassment. Public data may end up on the local news or social media, so it is wise to keep this in mind as you compose emails related to board work.

A final consideration is the potential to violate the OML. If a two-way communication about board business occurs among a quorum of the board (or a quorum of a board committee), it results in an OML violation, and the emails create a record of the violation.

**Communicating with Board Members Via Email** – To ensure OML compliance, you are strongly discouraged from using email to communicate with other board members about issues within the board's realm of authority, except for procedural elements like establishing meeting dates and locations. Generally, you should use email only for one-way communications to and from the board chair or superintendent to distribute information.

Situation	District Protocol
I have questions regarding an email I received from the board chair or superintendent.	Contact the board chair and/or superintendent for clarification.
Another board member emailed me regarding board business.	Do not engage in back-and-forth email discussion. This can quickly become a serial meeting, which violates MN OML. Recommended response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keep it neutral.</li> <li>● Redirect the discussion to a properly noticed meeting.</li> <li>● Avoid "reply all" if others are copied and discussion could expand.</li> </ul>
I have important information that everyone on the board needs to know before the next board meeting.	Contact the board chair.

# References for Further Information

- [All district policies regarding board operations](#) (200 series)
- A copy of most recent school board self-evaluation - Not available
- [The superintendent's employment contract](#)
- [The superintendent's job description](#)
- [MSBA's Board Development and Recognition Program](#)
- [MSBA Legal Requirements for School Board Members](#)
- [MSBA Common Acronyms Used in Education](#)
- [MSBA Glossary of Educational Terms](#)
- [MDE – School Finance Reports](#)
- [MN House Research – Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators](#)

## Board Meetings and Governance

Board meetings are pivotal gatherings that dictate the course of educational policies and decisions within a district. Governed by a structured framework, these meetings encompass various types, from regular sessions to emergency convenings, each serving distinct purposes and following legal mandates outlined in Minnesota statutes. Moreover, the operational norms, roles of board officers, and adherence to parliamentary procedures shape the conduct of these meetings, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability. In this comprehensive overview, we delve into the intricacies of board meetings, covering everything from meeting types and legal obligations to procedural guidelines and public participation protocols.

## Meetings of the Board

### Types of Meetings

**Regular Board Meeting** – Regular meetings of the board are held according to an established schedule. The schedule must be kept on file at the district office. No additional notice required unless the date, time, or place of the regular meeting is changed. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 1.](#)

**Special Meeting** – The board may hold a special meeting to conduct business as needed. A special meeting can provide extra time for presentations, such as review of building-level outcomes, or to deal with an issue that arises but is not likely to be ongoing. A special meeting requires three days' notice (posted on the district's main bulletin board and either published in the official newspaper or mailed/delivered to those persons requesting notice) of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Board discussion and action must fall within the posted purpose(s) of the meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 2.](#)

**Emergency Meeting** – The board may hold an emergency meeting called to deal with a situation that requires immediate board consideration and possible action, such as a response to a school fire, a school

safety issue, etc. The board determines when an emergency meeting is needed. Good faith effort must be made to notify the news media that have requested notice in the same manner as notice is given to board members. If the situation allows for a three-day notice, hold a special meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 3.](#)

**Work Session** – A work or study session is a meeting of the board with selected staff or presenters to study and discuss in depth matters which potentially will come before the board. This meeting may be a regular or a special meeting.

**Retreat/Workshop** – This is a leadership team meeting for board members and the superintendent, often led by a professional facilitator and dealing with evaluation and/or development issues. This is usually a special meeting.

**Board Committee meetings** are covered by the OML. Other committee meetings that include board members may also be covered by the OML. [Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 1.](#)

**Organizational Meeting** – The first meeting in January will be devoted to business required for the proper organization of the board. The agenda may include:

- Seating new members including administering the ceremonial oath of office
- Electing officers for chair, vice-chair, clerk, and treasurer
- Setting the dates, time, and location(s) for regular board meetings
- Setting board member compensation
- Establishing standing committees and committee members
- Determining time, place, and manner for public comments
- Designating district depositories
- Selecting the official newspaper and the district's legal counsel

## Open Meeting Law (OML)

The Open Meeting Law ([Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D.](#)) is intended to preserve the rights of the public to observe actions and decisions of its representatives. To satisfy this, all meetings of the board will be open to the public for attendance, and a schedule of the board's regular meetings and working sessions will include times and locations and shall be kept on file at the district office. (See the Closed Meeting Law Chart link below for exceptions). Additionally, the board will ensure a schedule of meetings is posted on the district's website. The OML applies to all meetings of the public body and, in general, meetings of its committees and subcommittees. For the law to apply, a quorum (a majority of the members of the board) must be present. Although the responsibility to ensure meetings are properly noticed lies with the board, this operational activity is typically carried out by the staff member who functions as the clerk to the board.

## Closed Meetings

Minnesota's OML requires all board meetings to be open to the public with few exceptions. A public body must begin in an open meeting and state on the record the specific grounds permitting the meeting to be closed and describe the subject to be discussed. A majority vote is needed to close the meeting, with the time and place announced at the public meeting before going into closed session.

Please review [Minn. Stat. 13D.05](#) before proceeding to close a meeting. For specific questions, consult with legal counsel.

For more information regarding closed meetings, see [MSBA's Closed Meeting Law Chart](#).

## Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology

In the ever-evolving landscape of governance, technology has become an indispensable tool for facilitating communication and collaboration. Section 13D.02 of the Minnesota Statutes acknowledges this reality by outlining the conditions under which meetings governed by section 13D.01 can be conducted using interactive technology.

For more information regarding remote meetings, see [Minn. Stat. 13D.02 Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology](#).

# Meeting Operations

## Attendance of Meetings

All board members are expected to attend all meetings. However, it is recognized that scheduling conflicts will occur.

Please email the board chair and copy the superintendent and administrative assistant if you are unable to attend a board meeting so we can plan accordingly.

## Acceptable Dress Code

Falcon gear, business casual or professional.

## Location of Meetings

Faribault School District Office  
710 17th Street SW  
Faribault, MN 55021

## Addressing Others

Addressing Officials during board meetings: Use Chair [Last Name], Superintendent Bente, and Director [Last Name].

## Presentations

- Presenters will address the board using Chair [Last Name], Superintendent Bente, and Director [Last Name].
- Board members should save their questions and comments until the end of the presentation.
- All questions and comments should pertain to the presentation and should go through the board chair.
- If you want to request a presenter to come speak to the board. send an email to the board chair and superintendent.

## Voting

Each elected member of the board will have one vote. A roll call vote will be taken when required by law, for resolutions, and or when requested by any board member.

The board primarily uses **voice vote** for agenda items requiring board action.

## Quorum of the Board

In order for a board meeting to be official and before any action can be taken by the board, at least a quorum of board members must be present. In the absence of a quorum, the only official action that the board may take is to adjourn the meeting. The gathering of a quorum constitutes a meeting if “members discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of the district.”

## Parliamentary Procedure During Meetings

The Faribault School Board uses Robert’s Rules of Order to efficiently and effectively conduct meetings.

**Associated Policies** – Policies 203: Operation of the School Board – Governing Rules and 203.1: School Board Procedures; Rules of Order

## Presiding Officer

The chair will preside over all board meetings. If the chair is unable to preside, the vice-chair (if one has been appointed), will perform the duties of the chair. Should both the chair and vice-chair be unable to preside, the clerk will perform the duties of the chair. In the unlikely event that the chair, vice-chair, and clerk are unable to preside, the treasurer will perform the duties of the chair.

## Superintendent’s Role in Board Meetings

The superintendent is a key person at all board meetings. The superintendent and chair commonly plan the meeting agenda together. The superintendent makes certain the meeting room is set up as required and all tools needed are available, such as audio or visual recording equipment, internet access, microphones, etc. Each item on the agenda is introduced by the chair; however, for discussion or action items, the superintendent or a designee is often asked to explain the issue. The superintendent’s recommendation should be solicited before a vote is taken.

## Board Committees

Committees may be established to address recurring needs of the board. Committees are in place to make the board’s work more efficient and effective. They serve in advisory capacities and bring recommendations to the full board for decision making. Board committees should meet as often as necessary to accomplish their work and should meet only when there is substantive work to be done.

Board committee assignments and board appointments are assigned by the board chair during the school board's Organizational meeting in January.

Click: [2026 Board Committee Assignments](#)

**Associated Policy** – Policy 213: School Board Committees

## Election of Board Officers

Minnesota law is silent on the method of electing officers, except that the election must be by open vote and not by any form of secret ballot. [Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 4](#). Subsequently, the board may establish its own procedures, including procedures for nominating officers and voting procedures. The board will establish procedures in advance of the meeting so that everyone will know what to expect from the outset. The board must follow the procedures, but the procedures can be changed if the majority of the board members agree.

*For more information regarding officer elections, see [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook](#).*

### Election Process

- Officers are elected one position at a time, beginning with the chair.
- Any Board member may nominate another board member. A second is not required.
- Nominations are closed after the chair provides three opportunities for nominations.

### Voting

- If only one person is nominated, that individual may be elected by acclamation.
- If more than one person is nominated, the board votes by voice (or roll-call vote, if needed).
- Each board member votes for one candidate only.
- A majority of the votes cast is required for election.

All votes are conducted in open session and recorded in the official minutes, in compliance with Minnesota's Open Meeting Law.

### Tie Votes

- If no candidate receives a majority, additional votes are taken until a majority is achieved.

## Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities

Effective management and clear understanding of roles are essential for the smooth operation of board meetings. The [Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities](#) provides a detailed outline of the duties and expectations for board members, the chair, the superintendent, and administrative staff before, during, and after meetings. This comprehensive guide helps ensure all participants are well-prepared, meetings are conducted efficiently, and follow-up actions are clearly defined. It covers everything from agenda preparation and legal advice to maintaining a positive meeting atmosphere and accurate record-keeping.

## Data Privacy

It's essential to understand how data privacy relates to board meetings. When discussing district matters in board meetings, we encourage open dialogue. However, we need reasonable restrictions to ensure orderly proceedings and protect individuals' privacy and due process rights. These rights extend to both employees and students of the district. For employees, this includes the privacy of their personnel data. Similarly, students have privacy rights concerning their educational data. To uphold these privacy rights, we have procedures in place for handling agenda items and complaints.

**Associated Policy** – Policies 406: Public and Private Personnel Data and 515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records (part 1) and (part 2)

## Public Comments to the Board

The board recognizes the value of participation by the public in deliberations and decisions on district matters. However, the board retains the right to determine whether and how public comment may occur.

**Guidelines for Public Comment at School Board Meetings** - Public Comment is an opportunity for residents, business and property owners, parents, students and employees of the Faribault Public School District to address the board. Speakers must sign up in person at the board meeting, and address the board from the presenters table. Members of the public will address their remarks with civility and respect. After being recognized by the chair, each individual will identify themselves and the group they represent, if any. Also, state their reason for addressing the board. Public Comment is not a time to debate an issue, but for the board to listen. Public comment is available at regular meetings. It is not permitted at work sessions, closed sessions or special meetings of the school board.

The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act prohibits comment about specific student or staff matters, even without naming them, in open session. This includes the public comment portion of our meeting. The Board respects and values input, but when it relates to a specific student, staff or to a specific matter, such input must be heard by the appropriate personnel, such as the building Principal or Superintendent, and not during an open meeting of the School Board.

Anyone interested in making a Public Comment will be asked to complete an information form before the meeting starts providing their name, address and topic of their comment. All comments must conform to School Board Policy 206 which is available for review on the district website at [www.faribault.k12.mn.us](http://www.faribault.k12.mn.us). Each speaker will have 3 minutes to make comments on one specific topic. Each topic will have a total of 15 minutes allowed for comments.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 206 – Public Participation in School Board Meetings/Complaints About Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations

# Agendas and Minutes

## Agenda Procedures

The board will conduct business during meetings through an adopted agenda that advances board work and district goals. The agenda serves as a roadmap for the meeting, outlining topics such as reports, presentations, discussions, and decisions. It is expected all board members will read the agenda and any supporting documents prior to the meeting. Each board member has the right to request additions, amendments, or revisions to the agenda prior to its adoption, and the board will determine if those changes are to be made.

## **Creating the Agenda**

- The administrative assistant prepares the tentative agenda and supporting materials in BoardBook.
- The chair and superintendent review and finalize the agenda.
- Board members are welcome to suggest agenda items; the chair and superintendent make the final decision on what is included.

## **Adding or Changing Agenda Items**

### ***Before the Agenda Is Sent Out***

- Requests to add an item should be sent to the chair or superintendent in a timely manner (10 days in advance if possible).
- The chair and superintendent decide whether the item is added.

### ***After the Agenda Is Sent / During the Meeting***

- Changes after distribution must be approved by the chair and superintendent.
- Items can only be added during the meeting by a motion approved by the board.

## **Sharing the Agenda and Materials**

- The tentative agenda and supporting documents are shared through BoardBook at least five (5) days before the meeting.
- Materials are available to the public as required by law, except for nonpublic or closed-meeting items.

## **Questions About Agenda Items**

- Board members are encouraged to send questions to the superintendent before the meeting when possible.
- More in-depth questions or discussion should take place during the meeting.

## **Fixing Clerical Errors**

- Minor clerical or typographical errors may be corrected administratively. Please notify the administrative assistant as soon as possible, preferably before the meeting.
- Any change that affects the substance of an agenda item follows the agenda change process.

## **Communicating Agenda Changes**

- If the agenda changes after it is sent out, the superintendent or administrative assistant will notify the Board through BoardBook or email.

## **Associated Policy – Policy 203.5: School Board Meeting Agenda**

## **Consent Agenda**

The superintendent, in consultation with the board chair, may place items on the consent agenda. A consent agenda is a part of the agenda that includes items typically approved together in one motion. These items may include meeting minutes, routine reports, personnel appointments, and other administrative matters. By grouping these items together, the board can streamline the meeting process

and focus on more substantive discussions. If any board member wishes to discuss or vote separately on an item listed in the consent agenda, they can request to have it removed for individual consideration.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 203.6: Consent Agendas

## Meeting Minutes

Minutes will be carefully recorded to include all actions of the board and all votes taken at a board meeting by the board’s clerk or designee. Minutes do not include discussion or editorial comments.

### Format and Content

- Minutes are prepared by the board clerk or designee and serve as the official record of board action.
- Minutes include:
  - Meeting date, time, and location
  - Members present/absent
  - Motions, names of the maker and seconder
  - How each member voted
  - Whether actions were approved or defeated

### Adoption of Minutes

- Draft minutes are prepared after each meeting.
- Draft minutes, shared in advance, are clearly marked “draft.”
- Corrections may be requested before or at the next meeting.
- Minutes are approved or amended by the board at a subsequent meeting.
- Approved minutes are posted in BoardBook and available through the district administrative offices.

### Record Preservation

- Approved minutes are maintained by the administrative assistant as permanent records.
- Records are stored in accordance with the District’s Records Retention Schedule at the administrative offices and/or warehouse.

### Public Access and Publication

- Minutes are available for public inspection during regular business hours.
- A summary of the official proceedings is published in the district’s official newspaper within required timelines.

**Associated Policy** – Policy 204: School Board Meeting Minutes

## References for Further Information

- [Copies of Meeting Minutes from the past year](#)
- [MSBA Sample Board Meeting AgendaMSBA School Board Ceremonial Oath of Office](#)

- [MSBA Guidelines with Meeting Minutes](#)
- [MSBA First Monday in January Booklet](#) (regarding the Organizational Meeting)
- [MSBA Parliamentary Procedure Overview](#)

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