



Meeting Date: 1/24/2023

Title: Board Level Student Leadership Opportunities

Type: Information/Discussion

Presenter(s): Governance Committee

Description: One of the Board's 2022-2023 goals is to explore student leadership opportunities at the board level to elevate student voice to the board, with the measurable impact being seeking more student voice at the board level. The board tasked the governance committee with collecting information about this topic to help facilitate a board conversation about student voice and leadership at the board level. This attached report is divided into different sections: background information, existing student voice opportunities at the district level, examples and models of student leadership at the board level and some additional information from MSBA. This work session will be utilized to review information about the topic and discuss reactions to the information.

Recommendation: Review and bring any questions or comments.

Primary Issue(s) to Consider:

- The board needs to discuss and come to consensus on **why**, what **time and resource commitment** the board is interested in dedicating to student leadership at the board level.
- If the board is interested in moving forward, what **type of model** should the board pursue.

Attachments: Student Voice/Student Leadership Information



Student Voice/Student Leadership Information

Overview

The Edina School Board set goals for the 2022-2023 school year that align with our strategic plan and are consistent with the priorities of Edina School District stakeholders. Two of these goals were the following:

1. Ensure students, staff, families and other members of the community experience a positive school climate with a deliberate focus on student, teacher and staff mental health and wellness.
2. Board explores student leadership opportunities at the board level to elevate student voice to the board.

As such, the board is exploring opportunities to bring student voice and leadership opportunities to the board level. Before exploring **how** the board could bring more voice and leadership opportunities to the board level, the board needs to discuss and come to consensus on **why**, what **time and resource commitment** the board is interested in dedicating to this, and if the board is interested in moving forward, what **type of model** the board should pursue.

Please read the following background materials to prepare for our conversation.

Background Information from the National School Board Association

- Fourteen states reported that having students serving on local school boards was not their practice. Many of the states are in the southern region, such as Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, South Carolina, and Texas.
- The 31 states that reported having student board members as a local option are mostly in the Northeast and Midwest.

Existing Student Voice Opportunities

There are many different student leadership levels at the **site and district level** that offer potential opportunities for the board to tap into in order to gather student voice.

Examples of Current Site Level Student Voice Opportunities

- Student Senate
- Student Council

- Project Earth
- Various Clubs and Activities

Examples of Current District Level Student Voice Opportunities

- **Student Activities Advisory Committee**
 - Board member serves on this committee along with student representatives
 - Meetings held 4x a year
- **Ed Fund**
 - Board member serves on this committee along with student representatives
 - Meetings held monthly
- **Community Education Services Advisory**
 - Potentially adding student voice in future

Board Level Student Voice Opportunities

- **Edina School Board Legislative Action Committee**
 - Three (3) EHS students currently serve on the LAC (term: 1 year; July 2022- June, 2023)
 - Commitment for students include: monthly meetings (1 hour), additional special events (3x) during legislative session (December - May)
 - Student perspective used in development of priorities for district, student has direct contact with legislators advocating why of priorities, student leadership opportunities for presentation to School Board, officials (representatives, city officials, district admin)

Models In Student Voice Opportunities

There are multiple examples and models of school boards elevating student voice and providing student leadership opportunities at the board level, ranging from board member presence on student committees, to gathering student voice to student presence on the board. Below are some examples of different models of student voice and student leadership at the board level.

Owatonna School District

In order to enhance communications and collaboration between the Governing Board and the student body and to teach students the importance of civic involvement, the Board supports the participation of high school students in district governance. The Student Board member is the liaison between MDUSD students and the governing body.

- Chosen in May of Sophomore year to serve two year term- Junior and senior year.

- Only attend regular meetings and work sessions
- Must meet extracurricular eligibility requirements
- Principal, Superintendent and one board member choose.

<https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1636051758/owatonnak12mnus/uhyuladz7xm9vd3pi1t/220StudentSchoolBoardRepresentatives.pdf>

Placer Union High School District

In order to enhance communication between the Governing Board and the student body and to engage students in the district's educational programs and operations, the Board encourages the involvement of high school students in district governance. The inclusion of one or more student representatives on the Board shall be ordered upon receipt of a student petition in accordance with Education Code 35012 or may be ordered at any time at the discretion of the Board.

Selection of Student Board Member Eligibility

The role of the student board member is reserved for junior and senior students only. Interested students at any schools in the PUHSD, who meet the criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities, and in good standing in their academics, community and with their social peers may apply.

The term of student Board member(s) shall be one year, commencing on July 1. Student Board member(s) shall have the right to attend all Board meetings except closed sessions. The estimated time commitment required for the Student Board Member will be at least one evening per month (generally held the first and/or third Tuesday of each month) to attend Board meetings. (Education Code 35012) Sufficient time to study the agenda materials in advance of the meeting which may include consultation with Board/staff, for background information related to agenda issues; additional time for handling Board-related business; and time to attend the Superintendent's Voice Council, student meetings, workshops and the California School Boards Association's (CSBA) Annual Education Conference and/or other conferences the Board and/or Superintendent deem appropriate.

The PUHSD Board of Trustees will officially appoint four (4) students who will take on the official role of Student Board Members, the students shall be assigned a rotation schedule/calendar of meetings to attend with two student board members attending each meeting.

St. Paul Public Schools

The Student Engagement and Advancement Board (SEAB) is a team of 13 SPPS students who develop and implement strategies that amplify student voice.

The SEAB works on multiple initiatives each year to increase student voice in the decision making at the board and Administration level. The Board, Administration, staff and students may

choose to submit a project proposal for SEAB to work on or to work on collaboratively. SEAB works as a group to determine what they want to work on during the year, and they also design their own projects with input from the student body.

Hopkins School District

“Student School Board Representatives are the voice of Hopkins High School and are responsible for sharing that perspective with the Board. Although not allowed to vote as members of the Hopkins School Board, Student School Board Representatives are encouraged to be engaged at the Board table.

The main responsibilities of Student School Board Representatives include:

- Attend School Board meetings and present a student report that reflects the news and events of the grade level represented.
- Review Board packets prior to meetings.
- Participate in School Board meetings by providing input and asking questions.
- Share information from the School Board meeting with Student Government.

Benefits of Being a Student School Board Representative

Student Board Representatives have the opportunity to work closely with the Hopkins School Board, provide input, and share their student perspectives. It is a clear leadership position that will enhance future college applications. Students also have the ability to build important relationships with leaders of the Hopkins Public Schools District.

History of the Student School Board Program

The Hopkins School Board began its Student School Board Representatives program in 1991. At that time, two students were appointed to serve as advisory members to the School Board. In 2000, the Board asked to increase the number to three students — one to represent each grade level — and asked each student to serve for three years. That format remains in place today.

Program Supervision

A staff facilitator at Hopkins High School is responsible for managing the Student Board Representatives. The role of the facilitator is to guide the students and help them navigate roles and expectations. The facilitator works with students to grow their organization, leadership, and public speaking skills.

Application Requirements

Students who would like to be considered for the Student School Board Representative program must be involved in Student Government. They need to be mature and responsible enough to

handle the public speaking elements of the job. Ideally, students will begin their terms as sophomores and continue on, representing their respective grade levels, for three years.

Feedback from a former Student Board Member (Howard County, Maryland)

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/video-students-and-school-boards-the-value-of-student-engagement/2021/09>

Additional Information From MSBA

Issues to Consider:

- Compensation – MSBA thinks student representatives should not receive compensation for their school board service.
- Expense reimbursement – MSBA believes this is a local decision, but, if student representatives are allowed expense reimbursement, they should seek preapproval from a designated person or group.
- Voting authority – We believe student representatives should not be given the right to vote.
- Closed Meetings – The Board decides who attends its closed meetings. MSBA believes attendance by student representatives at closed sessions would almost never be appropriate.
- Board Training – Students can be involved in the board training components offered by MSBA subject to Board approval. The budget impact would likely be minimal. Often the travel costs would be shared with other attending board members.
- Agenda items – Student representatives can have the ability to submit an agenda item, but students should not be given the authority to demand that items be included on the agenda. The student representatives can submit items for consideration according to the board's process/procedures on developing the agenda. The board should offer the student representative(s) the opportunity to speak to agenda items on which they have knowledge to provide input, but this is not likely to include all agenda items.
- Student representative selection process – Whether the student representative(s) are selected by the school board or the high school student body is a local decision. Whether the student representative is required to be an officer in the student council is also a local decision.
- Number of Students – MSBA believes the number of student representative(s) is a local decision. Some school districts have a student representative from each high school on the school board.
- Orientation - Some type of orientation should be provided for the student representative(s) and school board.
- Length of term - The term of the student representative(s) is a local decision.
- Adult Mentor/Coach – Whether the student representative is provided with a mentor/coach is a local decision. However, we would recommend that an adult mentor be used.

- Attendance expectations - Student representative(s) should be expected to attend all school board meetings and working group sessions (i.e., any sessions that are deemed public). Be mindful of the student representative's outside commitments.
- Committee membership - Whether student representative(s) will be expected to be a member of the board committees is a local decision, but it makes sense that student representative(s) only participate in those committees that pertain to student issues (not employee issues).
- Improved board functioning - School boards have anecdotally reported better functioning boards. Student representative input makes board members more aware of the needs of the students. As a result, board members make more informed decisions.