

School Board Handbook



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Introduction

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 school 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.

We are St. Louis Park Public Schools

St. Louis Park Public Schools is a nationally recognized suburban school district serving approximately 5,000 students in a vibrant, diverse community. The district includes four elementary schools (Grades K–5), one middle school (Grades 6–8), and one high school (Grades 9–12).

In addition to K–12 education, the district provides comprehensive Early Learning programs for children ages 0–5 and their families. It also provides school-age childcare and a wide range of adult enrichment programs through its Community Education department. A nationally recognized senior program offers engaging activities and essential services for older adults.

The district shares nearly identical boundaries with the City of St. Louis Park, a first-ring suburb just west of Minneapolis. This alignment fosters a strong partnership that benefits residents of all ages.

Additionally, the district is a member of Intermediate District 287 and provides educational services at Park Nicollet’s Melrose Center.

In compliance with state law, we also offer certain services to private and charter schools within our boundaries.

District enrollment has shown patterns consistent with broader statewide and national trends in public education. Like many school systems, St. Louis Park Public Schools has experienced shifts influenced by a range of factors - including lower birth rates, pandemic-related disruptions, and changing family dynamics.

District History

Founded in the late 19th century, St. Louis Park Public Schools has a longstanding tradition of educational excellence. The district’s first high school graduating class was in 1914, and it has continued to grow and adapt to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Key milestones in the district’s history include the construction of the current high school in 1966 and the early adoption of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in the 1990s. Throughout its history, the district has remained committed to academic achievement, equity, and inclusion while adapting to meet evolving needs of its increasingly diverse student body.

Points of Pride

Academic Excellence: Students consistently score above state averages on standardized assessments.

Recognition for Equity Work: The district has been nationally recognized for its ongoing work in racial equity and culturally responsive education.

Student Voice & Leadership: Students are empowered to lead change, with active involvement in initiatives focused on equity, mental health, and sustainability.

Athletics and Arts: Numerous athletic championships, award-winning music and theater programs, and strong student participation in extracurriculars.

International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools: IB programming is offered from elementary through high school, cultivating global citizenship and academic rigor.

Programming

Early Learning Programs: High-quality Pre-K programming to ensure school readiness.

Personalized Learning: Focus on meeting each student where they are through differentiated instruction and student-centered teaching practices.

Mental Health Supports: Comprehensive services including social workers, licensed therapists, and school-linked mental health providers.

STEAM and Career Pathways: Emphasis on hands-on, inquiry-based learning in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

K-12 International Baccalaureate Continuum: One of few districts in Minnesota to offer Primary Years, Middle Years, and Diploma Programs.

Community Partnerships

St. Louis Park Public Schools thrives through strong partnerships with local organizations, families, and businesses:

St. Louis Park Community Education offers lifelong learning opportunities for all ages.

Partnership with Park Nicollet Foundation supports student mental health services.

Collaborations with local nonprofits (e.g., STEP, Perspectives, Jewish Family and Children's Service) help meet students' basic needs and provide enrichment opportunities.

Active Family & Community Involvement: The district regularly engages families through advisory councils, listening sessions, and collaborative planning.

QUICK FACTS 2025

St. Louis Park Public Schools

5,110

Number of students in grades E-12

135

Years since the St. Louis Park School District was founded.



6

Number of schools including 4 elementary, 1 middle, and 1 high school

70.46%

Percentage of voters who supported the 2022 referendum

49+

Different languages spoken at home by families

18.4%

Percentage of students who qualify for Special Education services



7.1

Miles from the District Office to Downtown Minneapolis

26

Varsity athletic teams offered at the high school

289

teachers with advanced degrees

690

Number of school district employees

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

White	50.3%
Black/African American	20.6%
Hispanic/Latino	14.1%
Multiracial	10.5%
Asian	2.9%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	>1%



For more information, visit: slpschools.org



St. Louis Park Public Schools

Leadership Directory

	Name & Position	Email Address
School Board	C. Colin Cox - Chair	cox.colin@slpschools.org
	Virginia Mancini - Vice Chair	mancini.virginia@slpschools.org
	Celia Anderson - Clerk	anderson.celia@slpschools.org
	Taylor Williams -Treasurer	williams.taylors@slpschools.org
	Abdihakim Ibrahim - Director	ibrahim.abdihakim@slpschools.org
	Sarah Davis - Director	davis.sarah@slpschools.org
	Anne Casey - Director	casey.anne@slpschools.org
Superintendent's Office	Dr. Carlondrea Hines Superintendent	hines.carlondrea@slpschools.org
	Jazmin M. Hankerson Executive Assistant - Superintendent & School Board	hankerson.jazmin@slpschools.org
	Dr. Quennel Cooper Assistant Superintendent	cooper.quennel@slpschools.org
	Storm Rivers Administrative Assistant	rivers.storm@slpschools.org
Cabinet	Dr. Silvy Lafayette Executive Director of Assessment, Research & Evaluation	lafayette.silvy@slpschools.org
	Patricia Magnuson Executive Director of Business Services	magnuson.patricia@slpschools.org
	Ashley Sukhu Executive Director of Communications	sukhu.ashley@slpschools.org
	Patrice Howard Executive Director of Community Education	howard.patrice@slpschools.org
	Jason Loewe Executive Director of Human Resources	loewe.jason@slpschools.org
	Tom Marble Executive Director of Information Services	marble.thomas@slpschools.org
	Dr. Constance Robinson Executive Director of Student Services	robinson.constance@slpschools.org

District Facilities

<u>Site</u>	<u>Address & Phone Number</u>
Aquila Elementary School	8500 West 31st Street St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6500
Park Spanish Immersion Elementary School	9400 Cedar Lake Road St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6555
Peter Hobart Elementary School	6500 West 26th Street St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6600
Susan Lindgren Elementary School	4801 West 41st Street St. Louis Park, MN 55416 (952) 928-6700
St. Louis Park Middle School	2025 Texas Avenue S St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6300
St. Louis Park High School	6425 West 33rd Street St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6100
Central Community Center	6300 Walker Street St. Louis Park, MN 55416 (952) 928-6000
Lenox Community Center	6715 Minnetonka Boulevard St. Louis Park, MN 55426 (952) 928-6444
Park Central Operations Center	3481 Library Lane St. Louis Park, MN 55416

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030



St. Louis Park
Public Schools

MISSION

St. Louis Park Public Schools sees, inspires, and empowers each student to achieve academic excellence and live their brilliance in a racially equitable learning environment that centers student voice and experience to energize and enhance the spirit of our community.

VISION

St. Louis Park Public Schools – Where each student is seen, valued, and inspired to reach their full academic potential as they become their best selves as racially conscious, globally minded contributors to society.

WE BELIEVE IN

THE BRILLIANCE OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS



We believe everyone has the capacity and responsibility to inspire and nurture the growth and potential of our students and each other.

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



We are collectively responsible for partnering with our staff, families, and communities to support and enhance each learner's growth and success.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS



We will raise the bar and build a legacy. We believe in setting and reaching achievement goals that help each student and staff achieve their full potential.

ADVOCACY FOR EQUITY



We stand for the dignity of each student and staff and actively work to remove barriers so everyone can succeed.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY



We collectively share the responsibility to create educational opportunities for each student by removing barriers to create an equitable and welcoming learning environment where everyone feels they belong.

PERSISTENT EFFORT



We are committed to building a cohesive, culturally responsive, data-driven educational system where all students and staff can thrive and adapt to the changing needs of learners and society.

RACIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE



Recognizing and valuing our different backgrounds strengthens our ability to inspire and engage each student and staff member to reach their full academic potential and cultivate a sense of belonging.

OUR COMMITMENT

1

We Are One St. Louis Park

We foster a welcoming and inclusive environment where every person belongs, feels valued, supported, and connected.

We commit to:

- Cultivating a thriving, inclusive, and empowered learning environment.
- Encouraging unified leadership and cross-department collaboration.
- Strengthening transparency, community pride, and stakeholder engagement.



2

Investing in our Staff to Transform Student Outcomes

We will invest time, resources, and allocated funding to develop our staff to encourage and support a healthy work environment that promotes continuous growth and meaningful collaboration.

We Commit To:

- Building a legacy of academic success by becoming a destination district.
- Advancing equity and excellence through professional development.
- Expanding access, engagement, and morale around professional learning.



3

Build Trust and Community

We will evaluate and redesign our communication processes to ensure clear, timely, and accessible updates, building trust and promoting transparency with our students, families, staff, and community.

We Commit To:

- Establishing clear, consistent, and transparent communication practices.
- Strengthening communication to build community and shared understanding.
- Building trust and cultivating relationships.



St. Louis Park
Public Schools

Becoming a Board Member

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 and Onboarding Procedures

<u>Process</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Timeline/Relevant Statute</u>
Canvass and Declaration of Results	The board must canvass the returns and declare the results of the election.	Between the 3rd and 10th day after the election; Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3
Certification of Results	The district clerk certifies the election results to the county editor.	Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.
Issuance of Certificate of Election	Certificate is issued to each candidate with the most votes after the contest period (7 days post-canvass) ends. If a contest is filed, the certificate is delayed until it is resolved.	Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3; Minn. Stat. 204C.40, Subd. 2.
Campaign Financial Report Certification of Filing	Candidates must file a Certification of Filing.	Due no later than 7 days after the general election; Minn. Stat. 211A.05
Taking Office	Elected board members officially take office.	First Monday in January; Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1
Official Oath of Office	Administered after the election is canvassed, certificate of election is issued, and contest period ends. Must be signed within 30 days before a notary.	Minn. Stat. 358.05
Ceremonial Oath of Office	Optional ceremonial oath, typically taken at the organizational meeting.	First Monday in January or as soon thereafter as practicable
Learning to Lead Workshop Series (Phase I, II, III, IV)	Sessions cover all aspects of school board service. Learn more at https://mnmsba.org/workshops-events/msba-school-board-workshop-series/	Can be taken in any order.

District Intake Paperwork

All newly elected board members will be processed as new hires and must complete the onboarding process with Human Resources prior to beginning their roles in January.

As part of the intake process, the following steps and resources will be provided:

- **Board Handbook** - provided by the Executive Assistant to the School Board
- **School and Board Calendars** - provided by the Executive Assistant to the School Board
- **One-on-One Meeting with the Superintendent** - scheduled by the Executive Assistant to the School Board
- **MSBA Login Information** - provided by the Executive Assistant to the School Board
- **BoardBook Login Information** - provided by the Executive Assistant to the School Board
- **Chromebook, Employee Badge, and District Email Setup** - coordinated by the partnership of the Human Resources and Information Services department

Providing MSBA's contact information (Phone: 507-934-2450; [Online Inquiry Form](#))

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.

[Board Governance Video](#)

Board Organization Overview

Eligibility Requirements

To serve on a school board in Minnesota, a candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Reside in the school district for at least 30 days prior to the election
- Be eligible to vote in Minnesota
- Not be convicted of an offense requiring registration as a predatory offender under Minn. Stat. § 243.166

Additional requirements may apply under Minnesota election law or local district policy.

Term of Office

School board members are elected to four-year terms unless otherwise specified by statute or special legislation. Terms begin on the **first Monday in January** following the election and continue until a successor qualifies.

Filling Board Vacancies

Board vacancies are filled in accordance with **Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 5b**:

- The board may appoint a qualified individual to serve until the next general election.
- If the board fails to act within 30 days, the appointment authority may shift to the county board or commissioner.

Board Composition

Most Minnesota school boards are composed of six or seven elected members, depending on district structure or special legislation. The **superintendent serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member** of the board per **Minn. Stat. § 123B.09**.

Board Officer Roles and Responsibilities

Election of Officers

Board officers—**Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, and Treasurer**—are elected annually during the Board’s Organizational Meeting in January.

- Elections are conducted **by open vote** (secret ballots are prohibited under Minn. Stat. § 13D.01, Subd. 4).
- Each board adopts and communicates its election procedures in advance, which may be amended by majority vote.

All board members, regardless of officer status, hold equal voting rights.

Reference: MSBA’s *First Monday in January Handbook*

Officer Role Descriptions

Role	Key Responsibilities	Additional Notes
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presides over meetings ○ Ensures Open Meeting Law compliance ○ Sets agendas with Superintendent ○ Sign checks electronically (business office guides this work with bank) ○ Sign financial documents and contracts as required (guided by Exec. Dir. of Busn. Services) ○ Main contact for search firms 	Estimated 10-12 hours/month beyond standard duties
Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Acts in chair’s absence ○ Supports delegated tasks 	
Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintains official records (via executive assistant) ○ Issues post-election notices ○ Certifies tax levies (guided by Executive Director of Business Services) ○ Oversees elections ○ Sign checks electronically (business office guides this work with bank) ○ Sign financial documents and contracts as required (guided by Exec. Dir. of Busn. Services) 	May act as chair if both chair and vice chair are absent
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sign financial documents and contracts as required (guided by Executive Director of Business Services) ○ Serves on Finance Advisory Committee ○ Sign checks electronically (department of business services guides this work with bank) 	May share responsibilities with the Clerk if approved by the school board.

Board Compensation and Reimbursement

Compensation

Board compensation for board members, the Clerk, Treasurer, and Superintendent is established by board resolution.

- Paid as an **annual stipend**, distributed over 23 pay periods (15th and last day of each month) from January 30 - December 31.
- **Additional stipends** may be granted for:
 - Officer roles (Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, Treasurer)
 - Attendance at special meetings outside the regular calendar (via [Payroll Vouchers](#))

Annual adjustments to stipends reflect changes in the State of Minnesota’s K-12 public education funding formula (July 1 - June 30).

Note: No compensation may be based on insurance incentives unless allowed under Minn. Stat. § 123B.75, Subd. 10 or through a district-approved wellness plan.

Board Compensation Table	
<u>Type & Details</u>	<u>Authority/Notes</u>
Annual Stipend - Paid over 23 pay periods (15th and last day of the month from January 30-December 31)	Set by board resolution
Officer Stipends - Additional pay for Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk and Treasurer	Set annually by board resolution
Special Meeting Attendance - Additional compensation for attending meeting outside the regular board meeting calendar	
Annual Adjustments - Based on the % change in Minnesota’s K-12 funding formula (July 1 - June 30)	Adjusted yearly
Insurance Incentives - Prohibited unless part of Minn. Stat. § 123B.75, Subd. 10 or an approved wellness plan	Compliance required

Expense Reimbursement

Eligibility

Board members may be reimbursed for reasonable, necessary expenses incurred during official district business.

Reimbursement Process

- Submit an **Expense Reimbursement Form** within **30 days** of the expense or travel return.
- Submit to the Superintendent’s Office or designated administrator.
- Include **original itemized receipts**
- **Incomplete submissions** may result in delays

Expense Reimbursement Table	
Reimbursable Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel (in-state/out-of-state) for conferences, training, or board-related events • Lodging and meals within per diem limits • Professional development aligned with board goals • Board-related materials and registration fees
Non-Reimbursable Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal items • Entertainment or alcohol • Companion travel • Expenses beyond approved rates without prior authorization
Processing & Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursements issued within 30 days of complete submission • Managed through the district's business office
Limits and Caps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to board-approved budgets • Per diem/mileage rates align with IRS or state guidelines • Pre-approval is strongly encouraged for high-cost travel
Denied Requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written notices with explanation provided if request is denied • Member may respond in writing or request board-level review • Final decisions rest with the full board

[Additional Information on Expense Reimbursements:](#)

[Travel, Conference and Workshop Information](#)

[Payroll Voucher Instructional Materials](#)

Conference Attendance and Approval Process

To ensure equitable participation and budget oversight, all board member attendance at conferences, training, or similar events must be approved in advance.

Request Process

Before registering for any conference or event:

- Submit a request including:
 - Event name and date/s
 - How the conference/event is relevant to your board role
 - Estimated costs (registration, travel, lodging, etc.)

Approval

- The **Treasurer** , or a designated Executive Board member, will review and approve requests based on budget availability and relevance to board work.
- Only pre-approved expenses will be eligible for reimbursement.

Post-Event Follow-Up

- Board members who attend conferences are encouraged to share key takeaways at a board meeting or via written summary.

Board Member Responsibilities

Ethical Responsibility and Governance

Serving as a School Board member is both a privilege and a significant responsibility. Board members are entrusted by the public to uphold the highest ethical standards in support of student success and district integrity. A steadfast commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability builds public trust and strengthens the Board's capacity to shape effective and equitable educational policies.

District 283 Board members are expected to:

- Collaborate constructively with the superintendent
- Model excellence in governance and decision making
- Support effective district management without overstepping into administrative roles
- Foster inclusive and respectful relationships with staff, students, families, and the community

Board effectiveness depends on maintaining focus on the big picture: setting strategic goals; establishing policy, which includes working collaboratively with the cabinet to establish the budget; and engaging with the community - all with the overarching aim of improving student outcomes. While the board has a vital role in policy, its purview does not extend to dictating specific curriculum decisions. When boards deviate into these day-to-day operations or micromanagement, progress can be hindered and trust may erode within the district and community.

Let the District's Code of Ethics ([Policy 209](#)) guide your decision-making. Your individual actions influence not only the work of the Board but the future of our schools and community.

Legal Obligations

The School Board functions as a policy-making body and operates as a local extension of the State of Minnesota, representing the citizens of the district. The Board holds jurisdiction over the district and its employees and is responsible for adopting policies, entering into agreements, and overseeing district governance in alignment with state and federal law.

The Minnesota Constitution mandates a "uniform system of public schools" and authorizes taxation to ensure a thorough and efficient educational system. The Minnesota Legislature enacts laws to support that system and delegates certain authorities to local school boards.

Throughout this handbook, you'll find references to relevant Minnesota Statutes and school district policies, which provide the legal framework for your role as a Board member. These references support your compliance with both state and federal constitutional obligations.

Individual Board Membership

Board Time Commitment

Board service requires a meaningful investment of time that varies throughout the year, depending on current issues, meeting schedules, and committee assignments. While average monthly commitments range from 9-12 hours, leadership roles or involvement in special processes—such as superintendent searches or contract negotiations—can require significantly more.

Estimated Time Commitments:

- Board leadership role: 1-2 hours/week
- Board and committee meetings: 6–8 hours/month
- Preparation and professional learning: 1–2 hours/week
- Liaison and membership assignments (e.g., Intermediate District 287, Brightworks, AMSD, school liaison roles): Approximately 4-8 hours per month. This may include attending meetings and optional school site visits
- Constituent engagement: 1–2 hours/month
- Attendance at co-curricular, academic, arts, and athletic events
- Community visibility and participation in local events (as determined by individual members)
- Superintendent search: 40–60 additional hours
- Chair/vice-chair roles on negotiation teams: approximately 100 hours (biennially)
- Graduation ceremony (typically in June): One main high school graduation event, approximately 4 hours. All board members are strongly encouraged to attend, as historically we distribute the diplomas to students.
 - GED Graduation: Shorter in duration, with no formal role for board members, but attendance is welcome.

Time demands fluctuate based on the district’s priorities and community engagement levels, and each member is encouraged to budget their time accordingly.

Conflict of Interest

Board members must maintain the public trust by avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest. You may not be personally financially involved in district transactions—such as contracts, sales, or leases—if you have oversight or influence over the matter. If a potential conflict arises, full disclosure is required, and you must recuse yourself from related decisions.

Board Policy ([Policy 210](#)) outlines strict procedures to ensure any exceptions are handled with full transparency, unanimous consent, and proper documentation. Adhering to these principles safeguards the district’s integrity and ensures all actions are taken in the best interest of students and stakeholders.

Data Privacy

As a School Board member, you are entrusted with safeguarding the privacy rights of students, families, and employees. A clear understanding of data privacy laws—both educational and employment-related—is essential to fulfilling your responsibilities lawfully and ethically.

While open and transparent dialogue is a cornerstone of public board meetings, reasonable restrictions must be observed to ensure orderly proceedings and to protect the privacy and due process rights of individuals. These protections apply to all district stakeholders:

- **Employees:** Personnel data is considered private and must remain confidential under state and federal laws.
- **Students:** Educational records are protected, and student privacy must be preserved at all times.

To uphold these rights, St. Louis Park Public Schools (District 283) has established clear procedures for managing agenda items and complaints. Board members are expected to be familiar with and follow these procedures to ensure compliance, maintain public trust, and protect the rights of all individuals involved.

Associated Policy – [406 – Public and Private Personnel Data](#) and [515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#).

Fiduciary Responsibilities

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Details</u>
Accountability	The board is accountable to taxpayers and the state for responsible stewardship annually.
Budget Role	Sets an annual budget parameters and approves the overall annual budget.
School Finance	Complex, governed by Minnesota state statute formulas. Board members need a strong understanding of: revenue sources, major expenses, and fund categories.
Budget Administration	Delegated to superintendent and finance department.
Audit	An independent public accounting firm conducts the annual audit.

Description of Funds

Fund Name & Type	Purpose
General Fund <i>Governmental Fund</i>	All resources not required in another fund. Includes sub-accounts: Operating, Transportation, Capital, Quality Compensation, and Special Education. Student activity accounts are reported in a restricted area as required.
Building Construction Fund <i>Governmental Fund</i>	Financial resources for capital facilities via bond issues or project levies.
Debt Service Fund Governmental Fund	Resources for long-term debt principal, interest, and related costs.
Food Service Special Revenue Fund <i>Governmental Fund</i>	Accounts for the child nutrition program.
Community Service Special Revenue Fund <i>Governmental Fund</i>	Services for recreation, civic activities, nonpublic pupils, early childhood, etc.
Internal Service Funds <i>Proprietary Fund</i>	For interdepartmental services on a cost-reimbursement basis. <u>Includes:</u> severance benefits, self-insured dental, and self-insured health.
Trust Funds <i>Fiduciary Fund</i>	Administers employee benefit resources. Includes the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Irrevocable Trust (est. 2018). This is a trust set up to offset the costs for retiree medical benefits for those who retire with continuing benefits through the age of medicare. These benefits were removed from contracts several years ago, put employees who had benefits at the time were “grandpersoned” to continue these benefits. Over time these benefits will no longer exist.

School District Budgeting is a Five-Step Process

Each step outlined below requires Board approval and is open to public inspection and comment. Since the process spans multiple school and calendar years, the district can be in various phases at any time.

- Step 1 Property Tax Levy**
Begins mid-July with estimated submission to Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The board certifies the final levy by the end of the year.

- Step 2 Preliminary Budget**
Includes enrollment projections, 5-year forecast, staffing guidelines, and assumptions. Approved before July 1.

- Step 3 Final Budget**
Prepared in fall using October 1st enrollment data and new finance laws. Reviewed and approved in December and January.

- Step 4 Budget Assumptions**
Spring updates, mainly for new grant funding. Helps inform the next year's preliminary budget.

- Step 5 Audit & Financial Report**
Books are closed, audit conducted, and comprehensive financial report (typically in November).

Learning the Job

Learning from Board Colleagues

Beyond this handbook, one of your most valuable resources is the wealth of experience and knowledge held by your fellow board members, district staff, and board members from other districts. Engaging with them can significantly enhance your understanding of board operations, policies, and educational best practices. Your colleagues bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives that can provide invaluable insights and support your growth as a board member.

In addition, connecting with board members from other school districts can be beneficial. These peers can share different approaches, challenges, and successes that broaden your perspective and inspire new ideas. Organizations such as the **Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)** and the **Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)** provide excellent opportunities to build these connections and engage in ongoing learning.

Below are some effective ways to learn from the experience of others:

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 – 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.

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.

Before attending any external conference or event that requires district funding or reimbursement, board members must follow the **Conference Attendance and Approval Process**. See the **Board Compensation and Reimbursement** section for full details on how to request approval and submit expenses.

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.

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.

Engaging with the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)

Participation in **AMSD** provides board members with key insights into legislative advocacy, education policy trends, and shared metropolitan-area priorities. Active engagement with AMSD helps board members stay informed on regional issues and strengthen their voice in state-level decision-making.

Opportunities to engage with AMSD include:

- **Monthly AMSD Meetings** - Regularly scheduled meetings featuring guest speakers, legislative updates, and policy discussions relevant to metro-area school districts. These are valuable opportunities to learn and collaborate across districts.
- **Executive Committee and Legislative Committee Participation** - Board members may serve on AMSD's Executive or Legislative Committees to help shape the organization's strategic direction and legislative platform.
- **Board of Directors** - Serving on the AMSD Board of Directors, as one of the designated board members for District 283, enables deeper engagement with the organization's mission and broader education policy efforts.
- **AMSD Day at the Capitol** - An annual advocacy event where board members and superintendents meet with legislators to discuss key education issues. Participation in this event helps elevate district priorities at the state level.

AMSD Publications

To stay informed, board members can subscribe to:

- **AMSD Connections Newsletter** - Monthly updates on legislative activity, education policy, and AMSD initiatives.
- **Legislative Session Summaries** - Comprehensive overviews of legislative outcomes and their impact on school districts.

Board Leadership and Team Dynamics

Working as a Board Team

At the core of educational excellence is a committed, collaborative School Board. Charged with responsibilities defined by law and inspired by a shared vision for student success, the Board plays a vital role in shaping the district's future. This work depends on strong team dynamics—built on mutual respect, trust, and a unified commitment to serving all students.

By working together effectively, Board members can harness their collective strengths to address challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and support the district's mission. A high-functioning board team values open communication, shared leadership, and accountability in pursuit of equitable, high-quality education for every student.

Duties and Authority of the Board

The School Board derives its powers from Minnesota statute, including both explicit and implied authority. Its responsibilities include administrative, legislative, and quasi-judicial functions. These official duties are carried out in close coordination with the superintendent, who provides professional recommendations and informs the board when official action is required.

In general, the Board is tasked with:

- **Governing and overseeing** district operations, including facilities, property, and educational programs
- **Authorizing the employment and contracting of qualified staff**, including decisions related to hiring and dismissal, based on superintendent recommendations
- **Providing** for facilities, transportation, school health services, and insurance
- **Managing financial responsibilities**, such as levying taxes, approving budgets, and authorizing payment of expenses
- **Adopting** policies, rules, and curriculum
- **Engaging in legal actions**, approving contracts, and managing district property

Discretionary powers include establishing adult and continuing education programs, approving extracurricular activities, accepting donations, and entering cooperative agreements with other districts.

Associated Policy – [Policy 201 – Legal Status of the School Board](#).

Board Governance Model

The [Minnesota School Board Association \(MSBA\) Governance Model](#) clarifies the respective roles of the Board and the Superintendent. It emphasizes that:

- The **Board governs** through policy, goal setting, budgeting, and strategic oversight focused on student achievement.
- The **Superintendent manages** day-to-day operations, ensures implementation of Board policies, and provides educational leadership.

This model reinforces accountability, effective decision-making, and a results-driven focus.

Standards for Board Leadership

Effective governance requires Board members to lead with vision, integrity, and accountability. The [MSBA Standards for School Board Leadership](#) outline best practices, emphasizing:

- Clear understanding of Board roles and responsibilities
- Strategic focus on student success and equity
- Continuous self-evaluation and improvement
- Strong community engagement and advocacy

Attributes of High-Performing Board Teams

- Shared understanding of the Board's mission, goals, and roles
- High trust among members and respectful, constructive dialogue
- Balanced participation, without dominance by individuals or sub-groups
- Effective procedures for decision-making, conflict resolution, and meetings
- Future-focused decision-making aligned with long-term goals
- Regular self-assessment to improve performance

Role of the Superintendent

The Superintendent is the Board's sole employee and serves as the district's Chief Executive Officer. As a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board, the Superintendent is responsible for the overall management and leadership of the district. Specifically, the Superintendent:

- Manages all district operations and staff
- Administers Board policies and directives
- Oversees educational programming and district leadership
- Evaluates cabinet members annually
- May delegate responsibilities as needed, while remaining accountable for all decisions made

When the Superintendent is absent from the district, they will appoint an Acting Superintendent and communicate the name of the designee and the expected duration of the absence to the Board. In the event no communication is made, it will be assumed the designee aligns with the [Superintendent's Emergency Succession Plan](#).

Legal Reference: [Minn. Stat. 123B.143](#).

Hiring a Superintendent

Selecting a Superintendent is one of the most significant decisions a School Board will make. The Superintendent's leadership directly influences student achievement, school culture, and district success. A thorough, strategic hiring process should assess candidates' experience, leadership style, values alignment, and vision for equity and excellence.

This decision sets the tone for the district's future and should be made with care, transparency, and broad stakeholder engagement.

Board-Superintendent Relationship

A productive relationship between the Board and Superintendent is essential for effective governance. MSBA's [17 Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship](#) provides a framework for building mutual respect, shared goals, and clear communication. These principles guide the collaboration needed to meet district goals and support student success.

Evaluating the Superintendent

Superintendent evaluation is a key governance responsibility. It ensures accountability, clarifies leadership expectations, and supports continuous improvement. Evaluations should be:

- Based on agreed-upon goals and job responsibilities
- Informed by stakeholder input, data, and district priorities
- Conducted according to contractual terms and legal requirements

A high-quality evaluation fosters transparency, strengthens Board-Superintendent collaboration, and promotes shared commitment to the district's success.

Communication Protocols for School Board Members

Board Communication Guidelines

Key Principles and Summary

<u>Key Principle</u>	<u>Summary</u>
Open Meeting Law (OML)	Avoid discussions of district business with a quorum of board members outside of properly noticed public meetings
Effective Collaboration	Work to understand different perspectives. Strive to collective solutions with the goal of serving students.
Address Dysfunction	If communication or teamwork breaks down, consider working directly with the individual or schedule a workshop to review and adjust board operation and policies. MSBA can assist with facilitation.

Communication Between Board Members

- **Avoid Quorum Discussions Outside Meetings:** Conversations that include a quorum of board members discussing board business violate the Open Meeting Law.
- **Informal Communication:** Keep discussions non-substantive and relationship-focused.
- **Be Respectful in Disagreement:** Debate an issue, not the individual.

Guidelines for Interacting Outside a Board Meeting

<u>Guidelines</u>	<u>Details</u>
Do Not Discuss Board Business	Stick to non-board topics (education trends, training, personal updates).
Caution with Written Communication	Avoid group texts, emails, or social media threads involving board business.
Be Transparent	Clarify when a meeting is social or educational. Avoid decision-making outside official meetings.
Public Perception	Consider how informal meetings could be viewed by the community.

Associated Policy – [Policy 205 – Open Meetings and Closed Meetings](#)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Guidelines</u>
Communication with the Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be Proactive: Call or meet before board meetings with questions, especially concerns or controversial topics. ● Respect Boundaries: Be mindful of time demands and avoid excessive requests. ● Debate Respectfully: It's okay to disagree but maintain professionalism.
Communication with District Administrators and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow the Chain of Command: Send complaints or requests through the superintendent. ● No Direct Authority: Individual board members cannot direct staff work. ● Board Member as Parent: Follow normal parent protocols; avoid using your board role to influence outcomes.
Communication with Constituents (Staff, Parents, Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be Respectful but Neutral: Don't promise to resolve issues. Understand the concern and redirect as needed. ● Avoid Confidentiality Promises: Don't make commitments that it will stay between you. ● Monitor for Patterns: Inform the superintendent of repeated issues. ● Alert Board Chair: When issues may impact board governance or public perception.
Engaging with the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be Proactive: Engage stakeholders in committees, panels, and forums. ● Use Diverse Channels: Combine social media, print, surveys, and in-person outreach. ● Prepare for Criticism: Address negative feedback openly and constructively. ● Know Your Audience: Tailor communication to the varying needs of parents, students, and non-parent taxpayers.
Communication with the Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unified Voice: Represent the board's collective decisions. Avoid giving personal opinions on board matters. ● Communication about school board related information: The school board chair serves as the designee with the media, and should avoid personal opinions. ● Communication about district-wide issues: Information should be shared with the media through the superintendent or communications director
Communication on Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay Professional: Avoid venting, personal attacks, or confidential content.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't Conduct Business: Use social media for listening, updates, and engagement - not deliberation. ● Avoid Representing the District: Speak personally unless officially designated. ● Follow Laws and Policies: Ensure compliance with data privacy and harassment laws.
Using District Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Always Use District Email or official district related communication tools: Keep public records accessible and separate from personal or work email. ● Public Data Law Compliance: Assume all board-related emails are public unless legally exempt. ● Avoid Open Meeting Law Violations: Email exchanges among a quorum discussing board business are illegal. <p>Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep emails factual, professional, and concise. ● Avoid replying to “reply-all” chains involving board discussions. ● Don't mix personal, business, and board matters in one inbox.
Addressing Questions & Concerns	<p>Best Practice</p> <p>Clear and consistent responses to questions or concerns help build community trust and ensure the board operates within its legal and ethical responsibilities. Board members should not attempt to investigate or resolve concerns directly but rather follow sound governance practices.</p>

Associated Policy – [Policy 612.1 – Development of Parent and Family Engagement Policies for Title I Programs](#)

How School Board Members Address Questions and Concerns

<u>Situation/Example</u>	<u>Sound Governance: How a High-Functioning School Board Responds</u>
Concern from a staff member, student, parent, or caregiver	<p>Encourage the individual to contact the appropriate person:</p> <p>Staff member: Redirect to their supervisor. Notify the superintendent's office. Do not engage in personnel or contractual issues.</p> <p>Student: Redirect to the teacher and notify the superintendent's office.</p> <p>Parent/Caregiver: Redirect to the teacher, principal, or administrator. Do not engage with parents representing organized groups. Maintain confidentiality and safety at all times.</p>
Concern received via email	<p>This guidance applies to messages sent directly to an individual School Board member (not to schoolboard@slpschools.org):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's helpful to acknowledge receipt with a brief thank-you to sender. • Let the sender know that their message has been forwarded to the Superintendent and the Board Chair for appropriate follow-up. • Avoid engaging in detailed discussions or attempting to resolve the issue independently. <p>Note: Emails sent to the full Board email address (schoolboard@slpschools.org) will be responded to by the Board Chair or their designee on behalf of the full Board.</p>
False or misleading information about you, the Board, or district on social media	<p>Avoid engaging directly in online debates or criticisms.</p> <p>Instead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Contact the Board Chair and superintendent to make them aware. → Let district staff assess whether a factual response is needed. → If necessary, legal counsel can review the situation for potential privacy or safety concerns → Encourage the district to cultivate a network of community advocates who can respond to misinformation appropriately.
Disagreement with a report or presentation to the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Submit your questions or concerns to the superintendent privately and in advance. → Request a meeting to discuss further if needed. → Be collaborative: advance notice allows administrators and fellow Board members to prepare and respond constructively. → Discuss unresolved issues with the Board Chair.

Board Meetings and Governance

Overview

Board meetings are essential for shaping the direction of educational policy and decision-making. Governed by Minnesota’s Open Meeting Law (OML) and parliamentary procedure, school board meetings are structured to promote **transparency, accountability, and public participation**. This guide outlines the types of meetings, legal requirements, procedural expectations, and governance norms followed by the St. Louis Park School Board.

Types of Meetings

Meeting Type	Purpose	Notice Requirements
Regular Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 1	Recurring meetings on an established schedule to conduct official board business.	No additional notice unless date, time, or location changes.
→ Business Meeting	A type of regular meeting where the board takes formal action on contracts, personnel, budgets, and more.	Part of regular schedule
→ Study Session	A type of regular meeting used for in-depth discussion or review of specific topics; no formal action taken.	Part of regular schedule
Special Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 2	Held outside the regular schedule to address specific issues.	3-day posted notice with details; also published or mailed to those requesting notice.
Emergency Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 3	Called to address urgent issues requiring immediate board attention (e.g., safety crisis)	Good faith effort to notify media; use only if special meeting notice is not feasible.
Committee Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 1	Meetings of board committees. If a quorum is present or board members are involved, OML applies.	Notice as part of regular or special meeting procedures.
Organizational Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1	Annual meeting held in January to set board structure, schedule, and designations	Notice as part of regular or special meeting procedures.
Remote Meeting <i>Legal Reference:</i> Minn. Stat. 13D.02	Meetings conducted using interactive technology, under defined conditions.	Must comply with remote meeting requirements in state law.

Regular Board Meeting

Regular meetings are scheduled in advance and published annually.

Held at:

District Office

6300 Walker Street, St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Types of Regular Meetings

- **Study Sessions:** Generally held as the first meeting of the month, these are designed for collaborative discussion and deep dives into key topics. No formal votes or actions are taken.
- **Business Meetings:** Typically held as the second meeting of the month, these are focused on formal board actions, such as approving policies, contracts, and personnel decisions.

Organizational Meeting

Held annually in January (or as soon as practicable thereafter), the Organizational Meeting sets the foundations for the Board's work for the coming year. Topics may include:

- Seating newly elected members (ceremonial oath of office)
- Electing board officers
- Setting meeting schedule, locations, and compensation
- Establishing standing committees
- Approving [Resolution for Combined Polling Places](#)
- Determining format for public comment
- Designating legal counsel, official newspaper, and depositories
- Recommending committee memberships, liaison assignments, and memberships for organizations such as AMSD, Intermediate District 287, and [others](#).

Attendance at Meetings

Board members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. Absences due to illness or extended circumstances are addressed under [Minn. Stat. 123B.09, Subd.4](#).

Open Meeting Law

The Open Meeting Law ([Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D](#)) ensures that the public can observe the decisions and deliberations of elected officials.

Key Provisions:

- Applies to board meetings, study sessions, committee meetings (with quorum), and most subcommittees
- Meeting notices must be posted at the district office and on the district website
- All meetings are open to the public unless they meet criteria for closure

Closed Meetings

Meetings may only be closed under specific legal circumstances (e.g., labor negotiations, legal advice, or student discipline). The following steps must be taken:

1. Begin in open session
2. State legal basis for closure and subject matter
3. Vote to close the meeting
4. Announce time and location on record before closing.

Legal Reference: [Minn. Stat. 13D.05](#) For more information regarding closed meetings, see [MSBA's Closed Meeting Law Chart](#).

Remote Meetings

Under [Minn. Stat. 13D.02](#), meetings may be conducted using interactive technology if:

- All members of the body can hear and see one another and can see all discussion and testimony
- All participants can hear and be heard
- At least one board member is present at a publicly accessible location
- Conditions outlined in statute are fully met

Public Comments to the Board

The St. Louis Park School Board values open communication and welcomes input from the community. To support transparency and engagement. The Board provides an opportunity for public comment during regular business meetings, typically held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Public Comment Process

- Public comment occurs near the beginning of each regular meeting, following approval of the agenda.
- Community members may address the Board during this time on issues related to the School District

Sign-Up Procedure

- Individuals wishing to speak must complete the **Public Comment Sign-Up Form** prior to the start of the meeting
- A **paper form** will be available at the meeting location.
- When available, an **online sign-up form** can be accessed through the District website in advance of the meeting.

Speaking Guidelines

- The Board Chair will invite speakers in the order of sign-up.
- Speakers must approach the microphone when called and state:
 - Their **name**
 - **Address**
 - The **topic** of their comment
- Comments must be directed to the **Board as a whole**, not to individual members or attendees.

Time Limit

- Each speaker is allotted up to **three (3) minutes**.
- Additional time may be granted at the discretion of the Board Chair.

Privacy and Conduct

- To protect individual privacy, speakers must refrain from naming specific staff or students.
- Comments should be respectful, focused on district-related issues, and free from personal attacks or defamatory language.
- If multiple individuals wish to address the same topic, one person should be designated as a spokesperson.

Meeting Decorum and Enforcement

- The Board reserves the right to:
 - Mute speakers
 - End public comment
 - Remove individuals from the meeting for disruptive or inappropriate behavior
- The Board Chair may rule a speaker out of order for violations of conduct expectations or time limits.

Board Response

- The Board and Administration will listen to all comments but typically do not respond during the meeting as the agenda has already been set and making changes could violate open meeting laws. Furthermore, decisions and definitive actions should not be made in haste.
- Follow-up may occur after the meeting by a Board member or the Superintendent if clarification or further discussion is needed.

Additional Ways to Engage

We encourage community engagement beyond board meetings. Other opportunities include:

- Attending Principal Coffees
- Participating in PTO Meetings
- Engaging in other District-sponsored events/activities.

These opportunities offer additional platforms for ongoing dialogue between the community and school leadership.

Associated Policy – [Policy 206 – Public Participation in School Board Meetings/Complaints About Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations.](#)

Meeting Operations

Voting

Each elected Board member will have one vote. A [roll call vote](#) will be taken as required by law or when any Board member requests it. Board decisions are based on [Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised](#).

Quorum of the Board

A quorum of Board members must be present for a meeting to be official before the Board can take any action. A quorum is defined as a majority of the eligible voting members.

Can a few Board members meet informally?

Board members may communicate informally; however, as an elected body, the Board is expected to conduct its work in public. Discussions outside 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 business is discussed, to be conducted in public, and notice must be provided to ensure transparency. 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.

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.

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.

Board Committees and Assignments

Committee Purpose and Function

To support effective governance, committees may be established to address the recurring or specific needs of the School Board. These committees are intended to make the Board’s work more efficient and effective by serving in advisory roles—bringing forward recommendations to the full Board, which retains final decision-making authority. Committees should meet only when there is substantive work to be done and as often as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

Standing and Advisory Committees

The Board currently maintains one standing committee: the Policy Review Committee. This committee meets as needed to review new or revised policies before they are presented to the full Board for consideration.

Community and Statewide Assignments

The School Board also assigns individual members to represent the district on various school and community organizations, including advisory councils and statewide educational bodies. These assignments ensure that Board perspectives are shared in broader discussions and that community and stakeholder input is brought back to inform Board decisions.

Assignments are made during the Board’s annual organizational meeting each January and may be adjusted throughout the year by the Board chair as new needs arise. Advisory councils typically include representatives from a range of constituencies, and assigned Board members participate alongside other appointed or elected members.

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.

Agenda Formation

The Superintendent and School Board Chair are responsible for preparing and organizing the tentative agenda for each board meeting. They determine the order and prioritization of items based on current district needs, board goals, and legal requirements.

Adding or Amending Agenda Items

- Individuals (including board members, staff, or the public) who wish to propose an agenda item must contact the Superintendent or Board Chair in advance of the agenda's finalization.
- Requests should include relevant background information, desired outcomes, and supporting documentation if applicable.
- During a board meeting, items may only be added or amended by a majority vote of the board. Any such changes will be documented in the official meeting minutes.

Distribution of Agenda and Supporting Documents

- The tentative agenda and related materials are distributed to all board members by the Friday prior to the meeting, typically via the board's digital document management system.
- Materials are also made available to the public via the district website or upon request, in accordance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and Data Practices Act.

Submitting Questions About Agenda Items

- Board members are encouraged to direct any clarifying questions about agenda topics or materials to the Superintendent prior to the meeting.
- This ensures staff can provide timely, accurate information and helps meetings run more efficiently.

Addressing Clerical Errors

- If typographical or factual errors are identified in the agenda or supporting documents the Superintendent's Office is responsible for correcting the materials and notifying board members of the changes.
- Revised versions will be shared with the board and, if appropriate, updated on public platforms.

Notification of Agenda Changes

- If changes to the agenda occur after the initial distribution, the Superintendent or their designee will inform board members as soon as possible, including a brief explanation of the change and any new or updated documentation.

Associated Policy – [Policy 203.5 – School Board Meeting Agenda.](#)

Consent Agenda

The superintendent and cabinet, in collaboration with the board chair, may place items on the consent agenda. The consent agenda includes routine items approved together in a single motion.

Common examples include:

- Meeting minutes
- Routine reports
- Personnel appointments
- Standard administrative matters

Using a consent agenda allows the Board to streamline its meetings and devote more time to substantive discussion and decision making.

If a Board member wishes to discuss or vote separately on an item listed in the consent agenda, they may request that the item be removed and placed under “Other Action” for individual consideration during the meeting. It is recommended that Board members notify the superintendent of such requests prior to the meeting when possible.

Board members also have two formal opportunities to propose changes to the agenda by motion:

1. During approval of the full agenda
2. During approval of the consent agenda

Associated Policy – [203.6 – Consent Agendas](#).

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes serve as the official public record of all actions taken and votes cast by the School Board. They are carefully documented by the executive assistant to the School Board, under the direction of the clerk or designee. Minutes do not include board member discussion, personal opinions, or editorial commentary.

Typical Contents of Meeting Minutes:

- Date, time, and location of the meeting
- Names of board members present and absent
- Recognition of students, staff, or community members
- Approval of prior meeting minutes
- Summaries of reports, old business, and new business
- Motions proposed and seconded
- Results of votes and actions taken
- Time of adjournment

District-Specific Practices

- **Adoption Process:** Minutes are adopted by the Board during regular business meetings as part of the consent agenda.
- **Public Access:** Once approved by the Board, minutes are published on the district website for public access.
- **Record Preservation:** The Office of the Superintendent is responsible for archiving the official minutes, which are maintained at the district office.

References for Further Information

- [2025-2026 School Board Liaison Roles, Member Roles and City Commission Assignments](#)
- *Intermediate District 287: A cooperative public school district in Minnesota's west metro area that serves learners from multiple member districts by offering specialized education programs - including special education, alternative learning centers, and early childhood services - with a trauma informed, inclusive approach and small class sizes.*
- [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](#)
- [MSBA School Finance Guide](#)
- [MSBA Election Manual](#)
- [MDE – School Finance Reports](#)
- [MN House Research – Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators](#)