



## ISD 197 Election Transition Plan

### Background

The West St. Paul/Mendota Heights/Eagan Area School District was formed in 1957. The school district has been conducting odd-year school board elections regularly over the years.

### Current List of School Board Members

NAME	YEAR ASSUMED OFFICE	YEAR CURRENT TERM ENDS
Tim Aune	2024	2027
Marcus Hill	2021 (appointed in Feb.2021, elected in Nov. of 2021)	2025
Sarah Larsen	2022	2025
Byron Schwab	2012	2027
Morgan Steele	2024	2027
Jon Vaupel	2022	2025
Randi Walz	2024	2027

### Switch from Odd to Even Year Election Considerations

- School District Cost** - In odd years, the school district election clerk is responsible for conducting all absentee voting, direct balloting, election judge hiring and training, equipment pick up/testing/delivery/return, Public Accuracy Test, ballot printing, ordering election precinct supplies, printing and publishing of all required notices, and all other miscellaneous costs associated with elections; A change to even year elections would allow the neighboring and affected City Clerks and staff to conduct the election and save the school district and taxpayers money.
- Voter Confusion** - Odd year elections are conducted at different locations/precincts than in even year elections; Absentee voting is available at the district office and Dakota County Service Centers (causing an additional cost for trained couriers to pick up absentee ballots); Election day voting is combined down to 5 precincts (22 precincts in even years throughout the various cities)
- Surrounding School Districts Changing to Even Years** - In May of 2023, surrounding school district superintendents and administrative assistants began meeting with Dakota County Election Officials to work on a Joint Powers Agreement to assist with odd year elections and the impact of new legislation surrounding election requirements (ex. Direct Balloting extended period, extending voting hours beyond normal hours, Health Care Facility requirements, etc.). It was highly recommended at that time to consider switching from an odd year to

even year election as there are not many remaining school districts on an odd year election cycle.

- **Time** - The school district election clerk assists with the administration of the election beginning in June through December. The amount of responsibility, lack of assistance, and stress causes significant strain, burn out, and time away from typical day-to-day duties.

<b>Timeline</b>
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- **January 2025** - Contacted Greg Abbott, Director of Communications, at MSBA for election guidance
- **January 2025** - Communicated election guidance from MSBA to school board members
- **January 2025** - Discussed a transition plan and resolution options to change to an even year elections, beginning in 2026
- **January 21, 2025** - Information Item at a Regular School Board Meeting
- **February 3, 2025** - Action Item at a Regular Meeting - *Resolution Providing that School Board Elections Held After 2023 Shall be held in the Even-Numbered Years; Establishing a Transition Plan*  
 The terms of office of school board members that would otherwise expire on the first Monday of January, 2026 if elections were held in the odd-numbered year (2025) shall be extended to expire on the first Monday in January, 2027. The terms of office of school board members that would otherwise expire on the first Monday of January, 2028 if elections were held in the odd-numbered year (2027) shall be extended to expire on the first Monday in January, 2029.

<b>What Extended Terms of School Board Members Would Look Like</b>
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<b>NAME</b>	<b>YEAR TERM ENDS EXTENDED 1 YEAR</b>
Tim Aune	From 2027 to 2028
Marcus Hill	From 2025 to 2026
Sarah Larsen	From 2025 to 2026
Byron Schwab	From 2027 to 2028
Morgan Steele	From 2027 to 2028
Jon Vaupel	From 2025 to 2026
Randi Walz	From 2027 to 2028

If the *Resolution Providing that School Board Elections Held After 2023 Shall be held in the Even-Numbered Years; Establishing a Transition Plan* is approved, the first even-year election would begin in November of 2026.