

School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Meeting and Work Session
Tuesday, January 21, 2025
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at the ISD 197 District Office, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, MN, beginning at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

Chair Larsen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The following School Board members were present: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, and Randi Walz. Board members Morgan Steele and Jon Vaupel were absent. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present. Student Representatives Patrick Bohmbach and Nawal Hassan were present.

Also present for the meeting was Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent; Sara Lein, Director of Special Services; Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Jason Stegeman, Director of Finance; Mark Fortman, Director of Operations; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; and Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education.

Agenda

The first reading of Policy 416, Drug and Alcohol Testing, and the first reading of Policy 418, Drug Free Workplace/Drug Free School, were removed from the main agenda.

It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the main agenda as amended.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Randi Walz. Nay: none.

The motion carried (5-0).

Consent Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Hill and seconded by Mr. Aune to approve the consent agenda items as presented:

- Approval of Minutes of the January 6, 2025 Regular School Board Meeting
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Approval of November 2024 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of November 2024 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of December 2024 Wire Transfers Report
- Approval to Submit Pay Equity Implementation Report
- Approval of Gifts to the District
- Approval of Field Trip for Two Rivers High School Girls Wrestling Team
- Approval of Field Trip for Two Rivers High School Chamber Choir
- Approval of Joint Powers Agreement between Dakota County and School District 197 for School Wellness

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Randi Walz. Nay: none.

The motion carried (5-0).

Comments to the School Board

No one was in attendance to provide comments to the School Board.

First Reading of Policy 601, School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals

Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, presented a first reading of Policy 601, School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals. The district's current policy was reviewed against MSBA's model policy. Based on this review, several changes were recommended. Throughout the policy, "world's best workforce" has been changed to "comprehensive achievement and civic readiness" per changes in Minnesota Statutes. All references to a "read well by grade 3" have been removed based on statute change. The legal references were updated. This policy will be brought back to the February 3 board meeting for a second reading via the consent agenda.

First Reading of Policy 604, Instructional Curriculum

Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, presented a first reading of Policy 604, Instructional Curriculum. Administration recommended adopting MSBA's model policy as is. Per the MSBA model policy, much of the content has been rearranged and is not actually new language. One area was updated per new Minnesota statute language. The district, in alignment with the strategic implementation targets, is currently reviewing the college and career planning scope and sequence at Two Rivers High School. The new middle school schedule provides opportunities for students to meet the new fine arts requirements. This policy will be brought back to the February 3 board meeting for a second reading via the consent agenda.

Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System Update

Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, presented an update on the Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS) program. New state statutes, no later than the 2025-2026 school year, require that school districts include a rubric of performance standards for teacher practice that is based on professional teaching standards established in rule, includes culturally responsive methodologies, and provides common descriptions of effectiveness using at least three levels of performance. Staff have connected with other districts about their approach and reviewed other rubrics. In June of 2024, the ATPPS Oversight Committee decided to take the following approach to meet the new requirement.

- In domains 1b, 2a and 4e add the "attributes" that make up those components as they exemplify the district's work and commitment to equity
- Review the rubric descriptions and compare them to the suggested language in the revised Danielson and make updates as necessary
- Danielson is only providing a single rubric, we recommend we create a general non-classroom rubric and get feedback from staff in those positions (i.e. counselor, media specialist, psych, TOSA)

Next steps include: February 2025 Federation vote on ATPPS/TDE and School Board approval of ATPPS/TDE; spring and summer 2025 build new forms and process in *Perform* to match new rubrics; August 2025 submit plan changes to MDE.

Mid-Year Update on 2024-2025 Superintendent Goals

Superintendent Olson-Skog and Associate Principal Dr. Jess Cabak presented a mid-year update on the 2024-2025 Superintendent goals.

- Goal 1: The superintendent will oversee the implementation of operational plans in support of the strategic plan.
 - Goal 1a: The superintendent will oversee the implementation of operational plans in support of the social and emotional learning focus area. A presentation on progress made in this focus area was

provided to the board on December 9, 2024. Objectives highlighted during the presentation included: SEL standards in health classes for grades 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10; integration of SEL learning targets into high school classrooms; training Academy Offerings; and implementation and refinement of the BARR (Building Assets Reducing Risks) program.

- Goal 1b: The superintendent will oversee the implementation of operational plans in support of the equitable systems and support focus area. A presentation on the progress made in this focus area was provided to the board on January 6, 2025. Objectives highlighted during the presentation included: increase in activities fairs and advertising designed to increase inclusion in high school activities; Native American training for all licensed staff; new college credit course in the Ojibwe language under development for 25-26 school year; each site engaging with a DEI tool to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth; addition of two full-time Spanish-speaking cultural liaisons; and expansion of Parent Academy offerings.
- Goal 1c: The superintendent will oversee the implementation of operational plans in support of the career exploration and preparation focus area. A presentation on progress made in this focus area was provided to the board on November 4, 2024. Objectives highlighted during the presentation included: provide support for the implementation of the new middle school schedule; refine and develop sustainable procedures for students making transitions; prepare, implement, monitor, and adjust new middle school electives.
- Goal 2: The superintendent will increase staff engagement and feedback through one-on-one interviews with all district staff within 4-6 years. Each year, this will require approximately 150-200 interviews. Completed/scheduled 65 staff members during semester one. The focus has been on new staff to the district. During the second semester, approximately 100 staff will be interviewed, focusing on those celebrating a milestone in their years of service and those who have announced upcoming retirements.
- Goal 3: The superintendent will increase alignment and coordination among and between district and site leaders. Specific strategies include implementing the Principal Support Framework and increasing feedback cycles for district and site leaders. The Principal Support Framework (PSF) Team continues to lead the development of systems that increase strategic partnerships between principals and the district office along with leadership development initiatives to increase principals' skills as equity-driven instructional leaders. The team meets regularly both internally and with similar teams from other metro districts, supported by faculty from the University of Minnesota and the University of Washington. This work has led to a variety of initiatives that are intentionally co-created and/or co-selected with site and district leaders working collaboratively. Examples of those initiatives include: a new rubric for principals, embedding cultural competence into their instructional leadership; a refined Principal PLC/CT; summer day-long Professional Development events; Minnesota Instructional Leadership Academy; co-created plans to support the most critical principal tasks; designated trusted leads for on-demand feedback; "Speed Dating" feedback rounds; time studies; and increased presence of district leaders in buildings

Proposed FY 2025-2026 School Board Meeting Dates

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the proposed School Board meeting dates for FY 2025-2026. Scheduling these meetings early is beneficial to reserving meeting space and television scheduling. Generally, school board meetings will be on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month, with some exceptions. The first regular meeting of each month will begin at 6:00 pm, preceded by a 45-minute listening session from 5:00 to 5:45 pm at the Mendota Heights City Hall. The regular meeting will be televised and live-streamed. The second meeting of each month will begin at 5:00 pm. It will be held on the Two Rivers High School campus. It will typically be held in the District Office training room and is not recorded. Proposed meeting dates are: August 4 and 18, 2025; September 8 and 22, 2025; October 6 and 20, 2025. November 10 and 24, 2025; December 8, 2025; January 12 and 26, 2026; February 9 and 23, 2026; March 2 and 16, 2026; April 6 and 20, 2026; May 4 and 18, 2026; and June 1 and 15,

2026. This item will be brought back to the February 3 board meeting for approval via the consent agenda.

Preliminary Discussion about Election Cycles

Superintendent Olson-Skog stated that some local school districts have begun the process of switching their odd-year school district elections to the even-year cycle, mostly due to cost and voter confusion. Only 27 out of 331 Minnesota school districts still conduct elections on odd years. Of the 27, 4 are currently in the process of considering a move to the even year. The most common rationale for odd-year elections is the difficulty in communicating school district-level races amid state and federal elections. The reason it is more common in metro area districts stems from boundaries. Metro area school district boundaries are typically not contiguous with city boundaries. As a result, citizens in one city are often voting for school board members in different districts. However, with new forms of communication, the amount of misunderstanding is decreasing, while the reasons to move to even-year elections are increasing ranging from school district and taxpayer costs; voter confusion, time; everchanging legislation surrounding election requirements; and staff time.

Minnesota Laws 1994, Chapter 646, Section 26, Subdivision 1, states “that a political subdivision that initially chooses odd-numbered year elections and later determines to change to even-numbered year elections may do so by the adoption of a new resolution that contains an orderly plan for the transition.” If the School Board were to adopt a new resolution, the terms of office of school board members that would otherwise expire on the first Monday of January 2026 would be extended to expire on the first Monday of January 2027. The terms of office of school board members that would otherwise expire on the first Monday of January 2028 would be extended to expire on the first Monday of January 2029. This would not prohibit a school district from running a special election in an odd year and/or an off month from the General Election date.

Board members were in agreement to switch the odd-year school district elections to the even-year cycle. A resolution, transition plan and timelines will be brought back to the February 3, 2025 meeting for approval.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Aune and seconded by Mr. Schwab to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Randi Walz. Nay: none.

The motion carried (5-0).

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be on Monday, February 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. It will be held at the City of Mendota Heights Council Chambers, 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights, MN.

Upon approval by the School Board, official minutes will be available at the District Office, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, and on the district website. The full meeting materials are available for public inspection at the administrative offices of the school district and on the district website.

Sarah Larsen
School Board Chair

Jon Vaupel
School Board Clerk