

Regular Meeting and Work Session
Monday, August 24, 2026 5:00 PM

District Office Training Room
West St. Paul/Mendota Heights/Eagan Area
Schools
1897 Delaware Avenue
Mendota Heights, Minnesota 55118

Agenda

1. Call Meeting to Order and Recite Pledge of Allegiance - 5:00 p.m.
Presenter: Sarah Larsen, School Board Chair
2. Approval of the Agenda
Presenter: Sarah Larsen, School Board Chair
3. Approval of the Consent Agenda
Presenter: Sarah Larsen, School Board Chair
 - 3.A. Approval of Minutes of the August 10, 2026 School Board Meeting
 - 3.B. Approval of Personnel Recommendations
 - 3.C. Approval of TRHS Boys' Soccer Field Trip
 - 3.D. Approval of TRHS Girls' Soccer Field Trip
 - 3.E. Approval of TRHS Girls' Swimming/Diving Field Trip
 - 3.F. Administrative Review of Policy 502, Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person
4. Comments to the School Board - 5:05 p.m.
Presenter: Sarah Larsen, School Board Chair
5. First Reading of Policy 106, Equity - 5:10 p.m.
Presenter: Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent
6. Presentation of Referendum Update: Community Information Timeline and the Permanent School Fund Amendment - 5:20 p.m.
Presenter: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent
7. Approval of 2026-2027 School Board Goals - 5:50 p.m.
Presenter: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent
8. Approval of 2026-2027 Superintendent Goals - 6:05 p.m.
Presenter: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent
9. Adjournment - 6:20 p.m.
Presenter: Sarah Larsen, School Board Chair

School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 10, 2026
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held on Monday, August 10, 2026 beginning at 6:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

The meeting was called to order by current School Board Chair Larsen at 6:00 p.m. The following School Board members were present: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present.

Also present for the meeting were: Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Sara Lein, Director of Special Programs; Brian Schultz, Director of Finance; Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; Mark Fortman, Director of Operations.

Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the agenda as presented.

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz
Nay: none*

The motion carried (6-0).

Consent Agenda

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

- Approval of the June 15, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Approval of Gifts to the District
- Approval of May 2026 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of May 2026 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of June 2026 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of June 2026 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of June 2026 Wire Transfers Report
- Approval of July 2026 Wire Transfers Report
- Administrative Review of Policy 402, Disability Nondiscrimination
- Approval of 2026-2027 Girls' Hockey Co-Op Team
- Approval of 2026-2027 Non-Public Nursing Services for St. Thomas Academy

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz
Nay: none*

The motion carried (6-0).

Listening Session Report

There were no attendees to the listening session.

Recognitions

The School Board recognized Liam Sahli, a recent Friendly Hills Middle School graduate and incoming Two

Rivers High School ninth grader, for winning the national championship in extemporaneous speaking at the National Speech and Debate Association Middle School National Tournament in June. The Board congratulated Liam on this significant achievement and acknowledged his talent, hard work, and dedication. Coach Ben Geiger was also recognized for his guidance and support throughout Liam's journey.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented highlights of summer learning and enrichment opportunities across the district, including Summer STARS Academy, Minds in the Middle, Credit Recovery, Community Education programs, School-Age Care, and performances by the Two Rivers High School Marching Band and Winterguard. The Board also recognized Liam Sahli, an incoming Two Rivers High School ninth grader, for winning the national championship in extemporaneous speaking at the National Speech and Debate Association Middle School National Tournament. An update was provided on a new student-designed mural at Two Rivers High School depicting the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers and incorporating the district's land acknowledgment, with additional context to be provided through a plaque inside the school. The report concluded by noting preparations underway for the start of the new school year and the district's anticipation of welcoming staff, students, and families back in the coming weeks.

Approval of Resolution Relating to the Election of School Board Members and Calling the School District General Election

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented a resolution calling for the School District 197 general election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, in conjunction with the State General Election, for the purpose of electing three School Board members to four-year terms. The resolution authorizes the District Clerk to complete all statutory election requirements, including required notices, ballot preparation, and coordination with county and municipal election officials.

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the Resolution Calling the School District General Election as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Approval of the School District Election Ballot Language for a Capital Project Levy

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the final ballot language and resolution for a proposed capital project levy to be placed before voters on November 3, 2026. The levy would equal 4.027% of the District's net tax capacity, generating approximately \$4.6 million annually for ten years beginning with taxes payable in 2027, with revenue supporting eligible costs including safety and security, textbooks and instructional materials, transportation, facility maintenance, cybersecurity, utilities, and other operating capital purposes. The Minnesota Department of Education issued a positive Review and Comment for the proposed projects, and the estimated tax impact for a \$400,000 home is approximately \$14 per month. The Board was asked to approve the final ballot resolution so the question may proceed to voters at the general election.

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the Capital Project Levy Ballot Language as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Presentation of 2026-2027 Board Committee and Building Assignments

School Board Chair Larsen presented the 2026-2027 Board Committee and Building Assignments as an informational resource for the school year ahead.

Presentation of 2026-2027 School Board Goals

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the 2026-2027 School Board Goals. After drafting and revising their goals between February 2026 and present, the School Board Planning Committee established a preliminary draft of the 2026-27 School Board Continuous Improvement Goals, which would guide the Board's work from September 2026 through June 2027. The proposed goals focus on clarifying the school liaison role and communication expectations, conducting an evaluative review of the "197 School Board" webpage, and participating in educational sessions regarding the district's current use of technology. The goals align with district strategic priorities related to connection and trust, communication and collaboration, and innovation, with desired outcomes that include clearer understanding of the liaison role, consistent and accurate Board communications, and increased Board understanding of technology use within the district. The Planning Committee requested input from the full Board and will use that feedback to prepare a final draft for future review and approval.

Presentation of Public Summary of 2025-2026 Superintendent Evaluation

Byron Schwab, Chair of the School Board Results Committee, presented a public summary of the School Board evaluation of Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog, conducted in closed session on June 15, 2026, as required by Minnesota law. The evaluation addressed three goals related to implementation of strategic plan priorities, long-term fiscal stability, and increased staff engagement, and the Board rated the Superintendent highly effective in each goal area. The Board also rated his overall performance highly effective, recognizing his steady leadership, transparent communication, fiscal planning, advocacy, and commitment to engaging staff and keeping district priorities moving forward. The Board expressed strong confidence in Superintendent Olson-Skog and appreciation for the stability, trust, and direction his leadership has provided across the district.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Hill to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be Monday, August 24, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. It will be held in the School District 197 District Office Training Room, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights. *Please refer to the district website for possible changes to any meeting times/locations.*

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

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Personnel Recommendations

The following personnel items are recommended for approval at the School Board Meeting on August 24, 2026.

Licensed Employment

- D'averill, Karlyn - 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher at Somerset Elementary School at a salary of \$80,130.84 effective August 31, 2026.
- Lonigro, Allison - 1.0 FTE Social Studies Teacher at Heritage ESTEM Middle School at a salary of \$55,524.73 effective August 31, 2026.
- Sorensen, Maria - 1.0 FTE Psychologist at Friendly Hills Middle School at a salary of \$50,089.96 effective August 31, 2026.

Non-Licensed Resignation, Retirements, Terminations

- Brenne, Rachel - Special Education Paraprofessional, resignation effective July 21, 2026.
- Lew, Samantha - Special Education Paraprofessional, resignation effective August 3, 2026
- Meza-Rodriguez, Britney - Administrative Assistant, resignation effective August 11, 2026
- Shepard, Noah - Behavioral Specialist, resignation effective August 17, 2026.

Licensed Resignation, Retirements, Terminations

- Koch, Andrea - Physical Education Teacher, resignation effective June 5, 2026.
- Messer-Nilles, Lora - Counselor, retirement per agreement, effective June 5, 2026.

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

Form 1 must have been completed and **approved** before submitting Form 2
Submit to Principal/Administrator and Superintendent's Office no less than two months
prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel.

Trip Leader/Staff Member Name: Terence Doud

Did you complete **FORM 1** for this trip and receive the required approval? Yes

TOUR CHECKLIST	RESPONSE
1. Dates of travel	Aug 27 - Aug 28
2. Trip destination	Cloquet and Grand Rapids
3. SUBMIT: Complete roster of travelers. Include a link to your roster in the response. Link to roster template: TOUR ROSTER	Will submit after fall try-outs
4. SUBMIT: Detailed Itinerary, including hotel names, addresses and phone numbers. Include a link or attach a document with these details in your response.	Attached
5. Final number of student travelers	TBD
6. Final number of adult travelers who are paying their own way/fare.	None
7. Final number of adults travelers who are traveling with a free or reduced fare. [If any, include the amount by which their fare is reduced]	4 coaches
8. Final number of district employees (also include in #6 and #7 counts)	4
9. Ratio of adults to students	1:16
FINAL TOTAL of Number of Travelers (Adults and Students)	
12. Have parents received detailed information about the cancellation policies and fees?	No
13. Is travel insurance through the tour company required OR optional for your travelers?	No
15. Has the district completed background checks for <u>all</u> adults?	Yes

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

Form 1 must have been completed and approved before submitting Form 2
Submit to Principal/Administrator and Superintendent's Office no less than two months
prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel.

16. Is this a private tour, or will you be traveling with students from other schools? If so, please include the full roster of the adjoining group.	Private
17. How will you communicate with travelers while on tour?	Talk to them
18. How will you communicate with families back home/not on tour?	Email or Call if necessary
19. What is your plan for those requiring medication?	I will be responsible



Staff Member's/Group Leader's Signature

6/09/26

Date

Required Approvals:

 AD

Principal Signature

6/10/26

Date



Superintendent/Designee Signature

8/19/26

Date

School Board Approval

Date Approved

Once this form has been signed by your site administrator, submit it to the Superintendent for review and approval. It will then require School Board approval. Once approved, a signed copy will be returned to you for your records.

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

Form 1 must have been completed and approved before submitting Form 2
 Submit to Pnnicipal/Administrator and Superntendent's Office no less than two months
 prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel

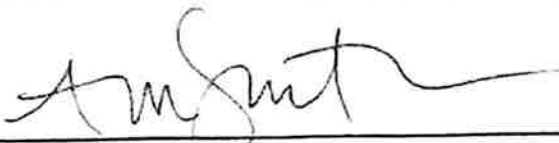
Staff Member Name and school. Amy Smith / Two Rivers HS
 Date of Trip/Destination/Who trip is for: August 28th / 29th Girl Soccer /
Varsity / Junior Varsity
 Did you complete FORM 1 for this trip and receive the required approval? yes

TOUR CHECKLIST	RESPONSE
1 Dates of travel	Friday Aug 28th / Sat. Aug 29th
2 Trip destination	Claguet / Duluth
3. SUBMIT: Complete roster of travelers Include a link to your roster in the response or attach a document Link to roster template <u>PARTICIPANT ROSTER</u>	Paste your copy of the roster template here do not override the link to the left
4. SUBMIT: Detailed Itinerary including hotel names, addresses and phone numbers Include a link or attach a document with these details in your response	Country Inn & Suites Duluth Claguet - Friday Duluth Friday evening → Sat Came on Marshall
5 Final number of student travelers	36
6 Final number of adult travelers who are paying their own way/fare.	3
7 Final number of adults travelers who are traveling with a free or reduced fare. [If any, include the amount by which their fare is reduced]	3
8 Final number of district employees (also include in #6 and #7 counts)	3
9 Ratio of adults to students	1-6
10. FINAL TOTAL of Number of Travelers (Adults and Students)	42
11 Have parents received detailed information about the cancellation policies and fees?	Yes
12 Is travel insurance through the tour company required OR optional for your travelers?	NO

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

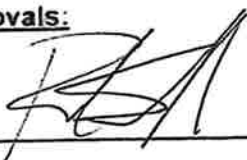
Form 1 must have been completed and approved before submitting Form 2
Submit to Principal/Administrator and Superintendent's Office no less than two months
prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel

13 Has the district completed background checks for <u>all</u> adults?	NO
14 Is this a private tour, or will you be traveling with students from other schools? If so, please include the full roster of the adjoining group	Private Tour
15 How will you communicate with travelers while on tour?	VIA TEAMSNAP, in person and through CAPTAIN'S
16 How will you communicate with families back home/not on tour?	through team snap
17 What is your plan for those requiring medication?	We will have the parents contact us to provide instructions on how to administer


Staff Member's/Group Leader's Signature

6/5/2024
Date

Required Approvals:

 AD
Principal Signature

6/15/26
Date


Superintendent Designee Signature

8/19/26
Date

School Board Approval

Date Approved

Once this form has been signed by your site administrator, submit it to the Superintendent for review and approval. It will then require School Board approval. Once approved, a signed copy will be returned to you for your records.

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

Form 1 must have been completed and approved before submitting Form 2
Submit to Principal/Administrator and Superintendent's Office no less than two months
prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel.

Staff Member Name and school: Christopher Almen-Sjogren - Two Rivers

Date of Trip/Destination/Who trip is for: 8/29-8/30 - Duluth - Girls Swim and Dive

Did you complete **FORM 1** for this trip and receive the required approval? Yes

TOUR CHECKLIST	RESPONSE
1. Dates of travel	8/29-8/30
2. Trip destination	Duluth
3. SUBMIT: Complete roster of travelers. Include a link to your roster in the response or attach a document. <i>Link to roster template:</i> <u>PARTICIPANT ROSTER</u>	TBD
4. SUBMIT: Detailed Itinerary, including hotel names, addresses and phone numbers. Include a link or attach a document with these details in your response.	☒ Duluth Itinerary
5. Final number of student travelers	TBD
6. Final number of adult travelers who are paying their own way/fare.	0
7. Final number of adults travelers who are traveling with a free or reduced fare. [If any, include the amount by which their fare is reduced]	3-4 (paid for through the Booster Club)
8. Final number of district employees (also include in #6 and #7 counts)	3-4
9. Ratio of adults to students	10:1 10:1 or less
10. FINAL TOTAL of Number of Travelers (Adults and Students)	TBD
11. Have parents received detailed information about the cancellation policies and fees?	They will at the team meeting on August 17th
12. Is travel insurance through the tour company required OR optional for your travelers?	No

DISTRICT 197 OVERNIGHT OR EXTENDED TRIP REQUEST- FORM 2

Form 1 must have been completed and approved before submitting Form 2

Submit to Principal/Administrator and Superintendent's Office no less than two months prior to domestic travel and no less than 4 months prior to international travel.

13. Has the district completed background checks for <u>all</u> adults?	Yes, prior to season beginning
14. Is this a private tour, or will you be traveling with students from other schools? If so, please include the full roster of the adjoining group.	Private
15. How will you communicate with travelers while on tour?	The team uses the GroupMe App to communicate
16. How will you communicate with families back home/not on tour?	GroupMe App
17. What is your plan for those requiring medication?	There will be a medical bag for those who require medication

Christopher Almen-Sjogren
Staff Member's/Group Leader's Signature

8/11/26
Date

Required Approvals:

 AD
Principal Signature

8/12/26
Date


Superintendent/Designee Signature

8/19/26
Date

School Board Approval

Date Approved

Once this form has been signed by your site administrator, submit it to the Superintendent for review and approval. It will then require School Board approval. Once approved, a signed copy will be returned to you for your records.



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Administrative Review of Policy 502, Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person

BACKGROUND

An administrative review of Policy 502, Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person, has been performed. This policy was last updated in September of 2023. The district's current policy was reviewed against MSBA's model policy and continues to match that language.

School District 197 reviews its policies on a 3-year cycle unless otherwise required by law. Typically, recommended policy changes are brought to the school board for three readings, with approval at the third reading. However, when the administration is recommending minor or no changes to the policy, it is labeled as an "administrative review." Consistent changes the board has asked to be applied to policies are considered minor. One example is using more inclusive language such as using "parent/guardian" instead of just "parent."

When labeled an "administrative review" the policy is placed on the consent agenda for a single reading with a recommendation to approve the policy as presented. As a reminder, board members always have the opportunity to remove a policy from the consent agenda to discuss it as part of the main agenda.

This policy was also reviewed using the district's Four-Way Equity Test. The policy does not inherently create barriers or limit opportunities and access for historically underserved or disadvantaged groups. We are committed to and engaged in work to reduce bias and prioritize equity so that this and other policies are not implemented in inequitable ways.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of School District 197 to approve Policy 502, Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person, as presented.



OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

ISD 197 School Board

Students

Contact: Assistant Superintendent

502 SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS, AND STUDENT'S PERSON

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for a safe and healthful educational environment by enforcing the school district's policies against contraband.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker

Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

B. Desks

School desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials

for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

C. Personal Possessions and Student's Person

The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

- D. A violation of this policy occurs when students use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. A violation occurs when students carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. It includes, but is not limited to, weapons and "look-alikes," alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and "look-alikes," overdue books and other materials belonging to the school district, and stolen property.
- B. "Personal possessions" includes, but is not limited to, purses, backpacks, bookbags, packages, and clothing.
- C. "Reasonable suspicion" means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of school district policy, rules, and/or law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official's personal observation, a report from a student, parent/guardian or staff member, a student's suspicious behavior, a student's age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.
- D. "Reasonable scope" means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g., to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. School officials may inspect the interiors of lockers and desks for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- B. School officials may inspect the personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person based on a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. A search of personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.
- C. As soon as practicable after a search of personal possessions within a locker pursuant to this policy, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose possessions were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.
- D. Whenever feasible, a search of a person shall be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex. A second school official of the same sex shall be present as an observer during the search of a person whenever feasible.
- E. A strip search is a search involving the removal of coverings or clothing from private areas. Mass strip searches, or body cavity searches, are prohibited. Strip searches will be conducted only in circumstances involving imminent danger.
- F. A school official conducting any other search may determine when it is appropriate to have a second official present as an observer.
- G. A copy of this policy will be printed in the student handbook or disseminated in any other way which school officials deem appropriate. The school district shall provide a copy of this policy to a student when the student is given use of a locker.

V. DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

School administration may establish reasonable directives and guidelines which address specific needs of the school district, such as use of tape in lockers, standards of cleanliness and care, posting of pin-ups and posters which may constitute sexual harassment, etc.

VI. SEIZURE OF CONTRABAND

If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

VII. VIOLATIONS

A student found to have violated this policy and/or the directives and guidelines implementing it shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline Policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, or expulsion, and the student may, when appropriate, be referred to legal officials.

Legal References: U. S. Const., amend. IV
Minn. Const., art. I, § 10
Minn. Stat. § 121A.72 (School Locker Policy)
New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325, 105 S.Ct. 733, 83 L.Ed.2d 720 (1985)
G.C. v. Owensboro Public Schools, 711 F.3d 623 (6th Cir. 2013)

Cross References: School District Policy 417 (Chemical Use and Abuse)
School District Policy 418 (Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School)
School District Policy 501 (School Weapons)
School District Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

POLICY ADOPTED: October 16, 2006
POLICY REVIEWED/REVISED: January 17, 2017; January 21, 2020; September 18, 2023
Monitoring Method: Administrative Review
Monitoring Frequency: Once every three years



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: First Reading of Policy 106, Equity

BACKGROUND

A review of Policy 106, Equity, has been performed and the policy adheres to the district's processes and procedures currently in place. This district-specific policy was established in 2023 and mandated for annual review in 2025 and beyond.

Upon review, the only recommendation is for the policy to be revised from an annual review to a triennial review, in alignment with the majority of the other School District 197 policies.

This policy was reviewed using the district's Four-Way Equity Test, to which it is highly aligned because the policy itself is designed to establish equity as a guiding principle for governance, resource allocation, instruction, staffing, family engagement, and student outcomes. In fact, the policy explicitly incorporates the Four-Way Equity Test as a required framework for future policy review and decision-making.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

None at this time. This policy will be brought back for a second reading during a future meeting.



OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

ISD 197 School Board

School District

Contact: Assistant Superintendent

106 EQUITY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure equity and inclusion for every student, staff, and family member in School District 197. Additionally, this policy establishes equity as an essential value in our governance, leadership, policies, programs, operations, and practices.

As our District strategic framework states, we believe:

People thrive when they feel connected, trusted and affirmed.

To that end, this policy will make it a priority to create the conditions so that every student, staff, family and School District community member feels a sense of belonging, and that they are valued and heard.

Our diversity makes us stronger.

To that end, this policy serves to affirm this belief by recognizing the value of a wide range of perspectives and lived experiences and their important contributions to our School District community.

We are all accountable for removing barriers and creating equitable systems.

Through this policy, the school board recognizes the historical legacy and compounding impact of the systems, structures and practices that have created and continue to afford advantages to some groups while further marginalizing and perpetuating inequities for others.

Therefore, we seek the elimination of inequity in our systems, structures and practices as a School District. We recognize that the responsibility for ensuring equitable access, opportunities, participation and outcomes falls on the adults in the system.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

School District 197 is on an equity journey. While there has been work done previously and

some progress has been made, there remains much to do.

The School District is committed to equitable access and opportunities for all members of our School District community, including students, families and staff.

Creating equitable access and opportunities is dependent upon having inclusive policies and practices that represent all students, and providing each student increased access to and creating meaningful participation in high-quality learning experiences where each student realizes positive outcomes. Educational equity benefits everyone and prepares all students to thrive in a racially and culturally diverse local, national and global community.

School District 197 is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools. The school board recognizes the history of academic, discipline, and social-emotional disparities that have occurred in many schools across our country based on race and ethnicity, language, immigration status, socioeconomic status, sex, and gender identity and sexual orientation (2SLGBTQ+ status). The academic and discipline gaps are contrary to the fact that all students can learn and succeed in our schools, and they are unacceptable if we are to meet our School District mission of caring relationships, equitable practices and high achievement for all. Student outcomes must not be predictable based on student demographics or school attended.

The school board also recognizes that it is the responsibility of its administration and staff to remove barriers and create systems to ensure educational equity, which will require the allocation and reallocation of resources. School District 197 will actively work to interrupt, dismantle, and eliminate racism and other forms of inequity by identifying, acknowledging, confronting and disrupting beliefs and systems that marginalize children and their families. This work will be informed by evidence, including research, data, and the voices of marginalized communities.

The school board further recognizes that every student deserves a responsive, affirming and inclusive learning environment in which their cultural norms and experiences are valued and contribute to successful academic and social-emotional outcomes. School District 197 recognizes the value in validating a student's own understanding of themselves, their identity, their culture, and their experiences in our schools.

III. DEFINITIONS

“2SLGBTQ+” is an acronym that stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning and additional sexual orientations and gender identities while the plus reflects the countless affirmative ways in which people choose to self-identify.

“Equity” means giving each person the (individualized) opportunities and access they need to be successful. This is different from equality, which means giving each person equal (the same) opportunities and access without recognition of their unique needs.

“Educational equity” means the condition of justice, fairness and inclusion in our systems of education so that all students (including those who are a part of traditionally marginalized communities) have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potentials.

“Culturally affirming” means treating others’ culture and experiences with respect and high regard in order to affirm their value. This is done through practices, behaviors and policies that thoroughly acknowledge and proactively seek to affirm students’ cultural identities and cultural assets as integral to their positive self-concept and their academic and social well-being.

“Culturally responsive” means having the ability to understand cultural differences, recognize potential biases, and look beyond differences to work productively with children, families, and communities whose cultural contexts are different from one’s own.

“Disparity” means a noticeable and usually significant difference or dissimilarity.

“Gender identity” means a person’s deeply held knowledge of their own gender, which can include being a man, woman, or another gender. Gender identity is an innate part of a person’s identity. One’s gender identity may or may not align with society’s expectations with the sex they were assigned at birth (male, female, or intersex). In School District 197, individuals are encouraged to use their self-identified name and pronouns.

“Institutional racism” means the biases that may be built into the policies, practices, and processes of institutions. These systemic biases discriminate against and disadvantage people of color through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or racial stereotyping. As a result, these systemic biases create different and predictable outcomes for different racial groups, typically maintaining an advantage for white individuals and simultaneously maintaining a disadvantage for individuals of color.

“Marginalize” means to treat as insignificant or unimportant or inferior. It involves social exclusion that results from a group having less access or opportunity than other groups.

“Racial consciousness” means understanding multiple theories of race and ethnicity, including but not limited to racial formation, processes of racialization, and intersectionality. Racial consciousness, in regard to intersectionality, means understanding the impact of the intersection of race and ethnicity with other forms of difference, including socioeconomic status, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation (2SLGBTQ+ status), religion, national origin, immigration status, language, ability, and age.

“School culture” means the shared beliefs, norms, and values among the members of the school which can be observed from the behaviors of the members.

IV. COMMITMENTS

- A. **Diverse Classrooms and Schools:** School District 197 commits to promoting equity in educational programs and extracurricular activities. Student representation in our classrooms and programs should reflect the diversity of our schools. This includes socioeconomic status, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, ability, and age.
- B. **Teacher and Leader Quality and Diversity:** School District 197 commits to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse, culturally responsive, and equity-minded workforce. This includes ongoing professional development focused on equity, gender inclusion, racial consciousness, and cultural responsiveness.
- C. **Equitable Resource Allocation:** School District 197 commits to prioritizing the allocation of resources, including but not limited to, curriculum, facilities, staffing, support services, technology, transportation, and activities, in a manner that ensures all students, including historically marginalized students, have the access and opportunity necessary to succeed.
- D. **Equitable Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:** Aligned to our curriculum review cycle, School District 197 commits to selecting and implementing curriculum that is culturally relevant and representative of our student population. We also commit to including equity in the rubrics used in our decision-making process for curriculum adoption. School District 197 commits to culturally affirming, inclusive, and responsive instructional practices and to equitable assessment and grading practices that foster motivation, are bias-resistant, and accurately reflect student learning.
- E. **Equitable Learning in Classroom and Other School Environments:** School District 197 commits to culturally affirming, inclusive, and responsive community building and behavior management practices. Our physical spaces and routines will be reflective of the diversity of our students' identities. We also commit to building strong, supportive relationships with each student while holding them accountable to high expectations. School District 197 commits to behavior support and discipline practices that reduce disparities in suspensions. When there is harm, we commit to interrupting the harm regardless of the intent, while also committing to restoring relationships within the classroom and school.
- F. **Equitable Student Leadership and Voice:** School District 197 commits to seeking to gather and understand student perspectives (including those from historically marginalized groups) in decision-making processes, creating spaces for student groups, and providing leadership opportunities.
- G. **Equitable Family and Community Partnerships:** School District 197 commits to building two-way linguistic and cultural bridges between the School District and the various communities it serves. We will seek representation reflective of our student

demographics on District advisory committees, provide spaces for family groups, provide cultural liaisons, provide family education, and provide interpretation and translation tools and resources. We commit to using these resources to better understand the perspectives, goals, and priorities of the communities we serve and to seek ongoing input and feedback.

V. **SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITY**

School District 197 believes education is a shared responsibility among staff, students, families, and the community.

- A. **School Board:** The school board will ensure that educational equity efforts are in alignment with the District strategic framework. The school board will provide and allocate resources for educational equity. The school board will hold the superintendent accountable for annual progress toward the commitments of this policy. The school board will hold the superintendent accountable for supporting staff in implementing this policy. The school board will review and update District policies in accordance with the four-way equity test:
 - i. How does this help to provide opportunities for all students, including students who have historically been underserved, underrepresented, or disadvantaged by the current system?
 - ii. How does this help to ensure equitable access for all?
 - iii. How does this help to eliminate barriers (structural, process, financial, etc) based on race and ethnicity, language, immigration status, ability, socioeconomic status, sex, or gender identity and sexual orientation (2SLGBTQ+ status)?
 - iv. How does this ensure the same rigorous standards for academic performance exist for all students?
- B. **Superintendent:** The superintendent shall create procedures and guidelines for the implementation of this policy. Annually, the superintendent or designee, will provide a report to the school board regarding progress on the commitments outlined in this policy. Progress will also be communicated to the community in the District's annual report. In addition to the annual report, the superintendent will ensure ongoing communication with families and the broader community about the District's equity initiatives related to its strategic framework and the commitments in this policy. The superintendent will hold administration accountable for making progress on the commitments. The superintendent will require each site and the District to set annual equity goals. The superintendent will actively cultivate a School District culture that prioritizes equity and recognizes, responds to, and remedy inequities in its practices and systems. The superintendent will provide support to staff responsible for implementing this policy and hold

administration accountable to supporting staff in the implementation of this policy.

- C. **Administration:** District and site administration will actively cultivate department and school cultures that prioritize equity and recognize, respond to, and remedy inequities in its practices and systems. Administration will support staff in implementing this policy. District and site administration will set annual equity specific goals and action plans and report out progress and results to the superintendent or designee. District and site administration will engage in ongoing equity professional development aimed at increasing their cultural awareness and their ability to be culturally responsive and equity-minded. Administration will provide and align resources to the commitments in this policy and the goals and action plans of sites and District departments. District and site administrators will regularly seek the input and perspectives that reflect the diversity of students in the School District. Administration will strive to recruit, hire and retain culturally responsive and equity-minded staff whose backgrounds and experiences are reflective of student demographics in the District.
- D. **School District Staff:** School district staff, including administration, will, within the parameters of their various duties and responsibilities, adhere to and execute the equity-based plans developed to meet the commitments named in this policy. School District staff will demonstrate the values outlined by this policy as they go about their daily work. School District staff will actively contribute to the efforts of their site or department in meeting its annual equity goal. School District staff will engage in ongoing equity professional development aimed at increasing their cultural awareness and their ability to be culturally responsive and equity-minded. School District staff are further responsible for making suggestions to the appropriate authority to improve the ability of the District to live up to the commitments named in this policy.
- E. **Students:** Students are partners in their academic achievement and personal growth. Students can demonstrate this partnership by providing feedback to the District, advocating for themselves, taking ownership of their learning, growing toward their goals, supporting the learning environment, and making positive contributions to the school culture.

School District 197 acknowledges the important role of student voice and student leadership. Through intentional inclusion and engagement, students will be encouraged to regularly share their voice and leadership as the District actively works to create more equitable systems and opportunities.

- F. **Families and Community:** Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring students attend school. The District is responsible for encouraging ongoing partnerships with families and communities that reflect its diversity. Parents/guardians are encouraged to partner with schools and school staff in

culturally meaningful ways. School District 197 will encourage partnership through opportunities to volunteer, ongoing communication, parent/guardian education, and opportunities for parent/guardian participation in decision-making. We will further support community connections and collaborations with groups and organizations that reflect the diversity of our students.

VI. RELATED POLICIES

It is the policy of the District to maintain a safe and supportive learning and educational environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, violence, and/or bullying and free from discrimination.

Complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, violence or bullying should be made according to the procedures in the policies below. For more information about Equal Education Opportunity, including information about complaints alleging violations, refer to Policy 102. For information about the types of conduct that violate the School District's policy on harassment and violence and the District's procedures for addressing such complaints, refer to the School District's policy on harassment and violence (Policy 413). For information about the types of conduct that violate the School District's policy on bullying and the school district's procedures for addressing such complaints, refer to the District's policy on bullying (Policy 514).

For information about the types of conduct that violate the District's sex discrimination policies and procedures for complaints, refer to Policy 522. For information about the types of conduct that constitute disability discrimination and how to make a complaint, refer to District Policies 402 and 521. Questions related to District Policy 401 Equal Employment Opportunity should be referred to the Director of Human Resources.

VII. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy shall be given to each school district employee at the time of initial employment with the school district.
- B. The school district will develop a method for the regular review of this policy by all employees.
- C. This policy shall be referenced in the family handbook and the student rights and responsibilities handbook.

References:

Minnesota Department of Education's Equity Commitments
Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board's
Standards of Effective Practice

Cross References:

District Policy 102 Equal Education Opportunity
District Policy 401 Equal Employment Opportunity
District Policy 402 Disability Nondiscrimination

District Policy 413 Harassment & Violence
District Policy 503 Student Attendance
District Policy 514 Bullying Prohibition
District Policy 521 Student Disability Nondiscrimination
District Policy 522 Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy,
Grievance, Procedures and Process

POLICY ADOPTED:	August 21, 2023
POLICY REVIEWED/REVISED:	August 18, 2025
Monitoring Method:	Administrative Review
Monitoring Frequency:	Annually Once every three years



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Referendum Update: Community Information Timeline and the Permanent School Fund Amendment

BACKGROUND

Two school funding questions will appear on the November 3, 2026 ballot: School District 197's capital project levy and a statewide constitutional amendment related to Minnesota's Permanent School Fund.

Because both questions concern school funding, this update provides context on the district's local need, the Permanent School Fund amendment, and the distinction between the two questions.

LOCAL REFERENDUM: WHY THE DISTRICT IS ASKING

The district continues to face a structural budget gap. Costs to operate our schools are increasing by approximately 3% annually, while ongoing revenue has typically grown closer to 1%. This creates an annual gap of approximately \$2 million that compounds over time.

The district has responded first by reducing its own budget. Over the past two years, \$3.2 million has been reduced, including \$2.55 million for the 2026–27 school year. Nearly all of those reductions are ongoing structural changes rather than one-time measures.

The reductions that can be made away from the classroom are now largely behind us. Without additional ongoing revenue, future reductions would increasingly affect students through areas such as staffing, class sizes and caseloads, programming, and transportation. No specific future reductions have been determined; any such decisions would occur through the regular public budget process.

The capital project levy would provide approximately \$4.6 million annually for 10 years. It would support existing costs such as textbooks, safety and security, technology, utilities, and transportation. It does not build new facilities or create new programs.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION TIMELINE

The district's referendum information timeline is proceeding as previously presented to the Board. Three public town halls are scheduled:

- September 16, 8-10 a.m. — District Office
- September 30, 4-6 p.m. — District Office
- October 29, 5-7 p.m. — Thompson Park Activity Center

Early voting begins September 18, and Election Day is November 3.

Additional information, including the sample ballot, budget materials, and a property tax calculator, is available at isd197.org/vote2026. Questions may be sent to levy@isd197.org

PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND AMENDMENT

The Permanent School Fund is a longstanding statewide education trust that already provides funding to Minnesota public schools. The proposed constitutional amendment would change how much of the fund is distributed to schools each year. It does **not** create a new tax or a new revenue source.

If approved, the change is expected to provide somewhat more funding to Minnesota schools beginning in 2027 while continuing to preserve the fund for future generations.

For District 197, the estimated increase is approximately ****0.2% of annual revenue****. That funding would help, but it represents only a small portion of the district's ongoing structural budget gap.

TWO QUESTIONS, ONE BALLOT

The Permanent School Fund amendment and the capital project levy are separate questions.

- **The amendment is statewide; the levy is local.** Every Minnesota voter will decide the amendment. Only voters in School District 197 will decide the levy.
- **The amendment creates no new individual income or property tax; the local levy would increase property taxes.**
- **The scale is different.** The Permanent School Fund amendment would provide a small increase in district revenue. The capital project levy would provide approximately \$4.6 million annually to address the district's structural budget needs.
- **The voting rules are different.** For a constitutional amendment, a blank on the question effectively counts as a "No." For the local levy, a blank is not counted either way.

The two questions are not alternatives. Passage of the statewide amendment would not eliminate the district's need to address its ongoing structural budget gap.

SUMMARY

The district has already made significant ongoing reductions, but costs continue to grow faster than revenue. The local capital project levy is intended to address that structural gap and reduce the need for additional cuts that would increasingly affect students.

The Permanent School Fund amendment is a separate statewide question that could provide District 197 with a modest amount of additional revenue, but it would not resolve the district's budget challenge or replace the local levy.

The district provides information. Voters make the decision.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

For informational purposes only, no resolution needed.



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Approval of 2026-2027 School Board Goals

BACKGROUND

The School Board Planning Committee presented their preliminary draft of the 2026-27 School Board Continuous Improvement Goals at the August 10, 2026 School Board Meeting. The proposed goals are intended to guide the Board's continuous improvement work from September 2026 through June 2027.

The draft identified three areas of focus: clarifying the school liaison role and related communication expectations; conducting an evaluative review of the "197 School Board" webpage; and providing the Board with educational sessions regarding the district's current use of technology. The goals are aligned with the district's strategic priorities related to connection and trust, communication and collaboration, and innovation.

The Planning Committee requested input from the full Board, whereupon a final draft is now presented for approval.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of School District 197 to approve the 2026-2027 School Board goals as presented.

**ISD 197 School Board Planning Committee:
Potential 2026-27 Continuous Improvement Goals for the School Board**

Beginning Date: September 2026		Ending Date: June 2027		
Board Goals	Strategic Alignment	Resource(s) Needed	Timeline(s)	Desired Outcome(s)
Clarify the school liaison role and determine needed communication.	People thrive when they feel connected, trusted, and affirmed.	Planning Committee to develop draft Full board to review and approve	TBD	Help the board, staff, and the community better understand the school board liaison's role.
Conduct an evaluative review of the "197 School Board" webpage	Communication and collaboration strengthen school, family, and community relationships	Results Committee to develop draft Full board to review and approve	TBD	To ensure that messaging is clear, consistent, and accurate.
Attend a board educational session/s on the district's use of technology	Innovative environments promote curiosity, creativity and courageous action.	Management to develop presentation/s. Board to set development session/s.	TBD	Enrich the board's understanding of the district's current utilization of technology and how management is balancing the pros and cons of technology



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent

DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Approval of 2026-2027 Superintendent Goals

BACKGROUND

Each year, the superintendent establishes annual goals that are aligned to and informed by the district's strategic framework, the board's evaluation of the superintendent, and formative feedback received from stakeholders. Prior to drafting these goals, the superintendent meets with the Results Committee to review these elements and discuss the general direction of the goals for the coming year. The superintendent then drafts the goals, presents them to the full board for feedback, and revises as necessary before returning them to the board for final approval.

The 2026-2027 school year marks the district's second year using the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) Superintendent Evaluation System. Under this model, the superintendent's annual goals are connected to specific MSBA competencies and indicators, allowing the board's evaluation to remain focused on the district's priorities and the work most directly associated with the approved goals.

The proposed goals for 2026-2027 continue the superintendent's focus on implementation of the district's strategic plan, long-term fiscal stability, communication and community engagement, and building a culture of trust and cooperation among staff. The goals also reflect significant work anticipated during the coming year related to communication regarding the proposed capital project levy and, depending on the outcome of the referendum, continued cost-containment efforts.

The proposed goals and their associated MSBA rubric descriptors are presented in the board packet.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of School District 197 to approve the 2026-2027 Superintendent goals as presented.

SCHOOL DISTRICT 197

Nurture. Inspire. Prepare. Together, We Thrive.

2026-2027 Superintendent Goals

Approved by School Board on TBD

Goal 1

The superintendent will oversee the implementation of operational plans in support of the strategic plan's focus areas of social and emotional learning, equitable systems and support, and career exploration and preparation.

Goal 1 Related MSBA Rubric

Standard 1 (Governance Team) Element B (Goals and/or Strategic Plan)

<u>Ineffective (1)</u>	<u>Developing (2)</u>	<u>Effective (3)</u>	<u>Highly Effective (4)</u>
Goals are not developed.	Goals have been developed, but no overall plan or alignment of resources exists.	Facilitates the development of the school district's short- and long-term goals and recommends necessary financial strategies to meet goals.	Facilitates development of the school district's short- and long-term measurable goals and aligns available resources with the school district's budget to accomplish goals.

Goal 2

The superintendent will develop and implement a plan to communicate the proposed capital project levy. Based on the levy referendum results, the superintendent will continue to implement budget procedures and policies that enhance long-term fiscal stability and further implement cost-containment strategies as needed.

Goal 2 Related MSBA Rubrics

Standard 2 (School District Finances) Element A (Budget Development and Maintenance)

<u>Ineffective (1)</u>	<u>Developing (2)</u>	<u>Effective (3)</u>	<u>Highly Effective (4)</u>
Budget knowledge is limited. Budget is developed and managed without taking into consideration current needs of the school district. Resources are allocated without consideration of school district needs.	Budget development, resource allocations, and management is focused on meeting immediate needs and fiscal issues. Decisions are primarily reactive to current needs of the school district.	Engages in proactive budget actions that consider current information and data; seeks balance to meet the students' needs and be fiscally responsible to community; distributes resources in light of school district goals and immediate objectives.	Engages in timely budget planning and actions that consider current and long-range information and data; seeks balance to meet students' current and future needs and be fiscally responsible to community; distributes resources to meet immediate and long-range objectives.

Goal 2 Related MSBA Rubrics (continued)**Standard 3 (Communication and Community Relationships) Element C (Inform the Community as a Whole)**

Ineffective (1)	Developing (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
Does not provide information community needs to understand school district issues and/or concerns, hindering school board's ability to meet its responsibilities.	Keeps only some community members informed of school district issues and/or concerns, limiting school board's ability to meet its responsibilities.	Keeps community members informed of school district issues and/or concerns as needed so school board may meet its responsibilities.	Actively keeps community informed with appropriate, regular communication on variety of school district topics, issues, and/or concerns, allowing school board to meet its responsibilities.

Goal 3

The superintendent will increase staff engagement and feedback through one-on-one interviews with all district staff within 4-6 years. Additionally, should further budget cuts be required, the superintendent will host listening sessions at each site.

Goal 3 Related MSBA Rubric**Standard 6 (Teaching and Learning) Element E (Culture of Cooperation)**

Ineffective (1)	Developing (2)	Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)
Culture of trust does not exist.	Haphazardly supports open, productive, caring, and trusting environment among staff.	Encourages open, productive, caring, and trusting environment among staff.	Develops and supports open, productive, caring, and trusting relationships among staff.