

Work Session will begin 15 minutes after the adjournment of the Business Meeting.

1. Board Topics
 - ReNae Bowman, School Board Chair*
 - A. School Board Primary Election Discussion 2
Karylanne Marchand, Business Office Manager/District Election Clerk
 - B. Interview Training, Stakeholder Report Discussion, and Interview Questions 8
and Procedures
Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) Superintendent Search Team
2. Other



To: School Board and Marti Voight, Interim Superintendent
From: Karylanne Marchand, Elections Clerk
Date: March 4, 2024
Re: Primary Election Process

Regarding a Primary Election, a resolution would need to be approved by April 15, 2024 for a school district to conduct a Primary in 2024. The last Primary the school district conducted was in 2005. Attached is the resolution from 2009. To acquire an updated resolution, I would need to reach out to our attorney for an updated resolution and election packet. You have given Virginia Vebrugge the approval to move ahead working with Kennedy and Graven this year, after research it appears Peter Martin is listed on their website for school district elections.

The filing period for a Primary Election is May 21, 2024-June 4, 2024. If more than 7 or more candidates file, then we would conduct the Primary Election on August 13, 2024 to reduce the candidates down to 6. If 6 or fewer file, then the Primary date in August would be N/A and will proceed to the November 5, 2024 General Election.

The filing period for the General Election is July 30, 2024-August 13, 2024. The General Election is November 5, 2024.

The estimated cost of an even year election is approximately \$8,000-\$10,000 depending on the number of ballots the City Clerks order. This includes legal publications, attorney fees, equipment programming and cost of ballots. We are charged for the space we consume on the ballot directly by Hennepin County Elections.

Election law changed in 2006 not requiring school districts to conduct a Primary Election because of the additional cost, allowing the decision at the local level.

As a reference, Minnesota Statute 205A.03 is included explaining the process to call a Primary

Election. Also included as a reference is the 2009 resolution.

EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 281
(ROBBINSDALE AREA SCHOOLS)
STATE OF MINNESOTA

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a _____ meeting of the School Board of Independent School District No. 281 (Robbinsdale Area Schools), State of Minnesota, was duly held in said district on _____, 2009, at _____ o'clock __.m. for the purpose, in part, of adopting a resolution establishing a school district primary election system.

Member _____ moved the adoption of the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRIMARY ELECTION SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the board wishes elections in Independent School District No. 281 to continue to be subject to the primary election system;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 281, State of Minnesota, as follows:

1. The school board hereby determines that nominees for school board office at the 2009 general election and thereafter shall be chosen by primary election.
2. The school district primary election shall be held on the date specified by law for school district primary elections. The filing periods shall be as specified by law.
3. If in any year there are more than two candidates for a specified school board position or there are more than twice as many school board candidates as there are at-large school board positions available, a primary election must be held that year.
4. The school district primary elections shall be conducted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.03, as amended, and the Minnesota election laws generally. The school district clerk is authorized and directed to take such actions as necessary to be prepared to conduct primary elections.
5. This resolution is effective for all ensuing elections of school board members unless it is revoked.

205A.03 PRIMARIES.

Subdivision 1. Resolution requiring primary in certain circumstances. The school board of a school district may, by resolution adopted by April 15 of any year, decide to choose nominees for school board by a primary as provided in this section. The resolution, when adopted, is effective for all ensuing elections of board members in that school district until it is revoked. If the board decides to choose nominees by primary and if there are more than two candidates for a specified school board position or more than twice as many school board candidates as there are at-large school board positions available, the school district must hold a primary.

Subd. 2. Date. The school district primary must be held on the second Tuesday in August in the year when the school district general election is held. The clerk shall give notice of the primary in the manner provided in section 205A.07. The date of a school district primary held in an odd-numbered year may be postponed for inclement weather as provided in section 205A.055.

Subd. 3. Candidates, filing. The clerk shall place upon the primary ballot without partisan designation the names of individuals whose candidacies have been filed and for whom the proper filing fee has been paid. When not more than twice as many school board candidates as there are at-large school board positions available file for nomination for the office or when not more than two candidates for a specified school board position file for nomination for that office, their names must not be placed upon the primary ballot and must be placed on the school district general election ballot as the nominees for that office. When more than one school board member is to be elected for full terms at the same election, the candidates' names shall be placed under one office on the ballot with the number to be elected to the office specified directly underneath the title and identification of the office.

Subd. 4. Results. (a) The school district primary must be conducted and the returns made in the manner provided for the state primary as far as practicable. If the primary is conducted:

(1) only within that school district, a canvass may be conducted on either the second or third day after the primary; or

(2) in conjunction with the state primary, the canvass must be conducted on the third day after the primary, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b).

The school board of the school district shall canvass the returns, and the two candidates for each specified school board position who receive the highest number of votes, or a number of candidates equal to twice the number of individuals to be elected to at-large school board positions who receive the highest number of votes, are the nominees for the office named. Their names must be certified to the school district clerk who shall place them on the school district general election ballot without partisan designation and without payment of an additional fee.

(b) Following a school district primary as described in paragraph (a), clause (2), a canvass may be conducted on the second day after the primary if the county auditor of each county in which the school district is located agrees to administratively review the school district's primary voting statistics for accuracy and completeness within a time that permits the canvass to be conducted on that day.

Subd. 5. Recount. A losing candidate at the school district primary may request a recount of the votes for that nomination subject to section 204C.36.

Subd. 6. [Repealed, 2011 c 65 s 9]

History: *1987 c 266 art 1 s 50; 1994 c 646 s 16,17; 1Sp2003 c 9 art 2 s 43-45; 2008 c 295 s 18; 2010 c 184 s 31,32; 2010 c 194 s 23; 2010 c 201 s 67; 2011 c 65 s 7; 2016 c 161 art 1 s 15*

Robbinsdale Area Schools Superintendent Search

Stakeholder Engagement Superintendent Search Survey

Overview: On January 17, 2024, the “Robbinsdale Area Schools Superintendent Search Survey” was made available to the public both online and in hard copy. The survey remained open for respondents until February 11, 2024, and a total of 928 people completed the survey (919 English, 9 Spanish).

In addition, listening sessions were held with:

- 47 students at Cooper High School, on January 23, 2024
- 34 students at Robbinsdale Academy-Highview on January 25, 2024
- 35 students at Armstrong High School on January 26, 2024

These groups bring the total of touchpoints regarding the superintendent search for Robbinsdale Area Schools to **1,044 stakeholders**, nearly twice the number typically expected for a district the size of RAS. This is a tremendous response and indicates high interest in the Robbinsdale Area Schools superintendent search process.

SURVEY RESULTS: Survey takers were asked to identify the role that best reflected the basis for their responses. The categories selected by the survey takers are provided below.

- 50.98% of respondents selected “Parent/Guardian”
- 33.84% of respondents selected “Staff Member”
- 7.92% of respondents selected “Community Member”
- 3.04% of respondents selected “Student”
- 3.04% of respondents selected “Other”
- 1.19% of respondents selected “Business Owner/District Partner”

Areas of Expertise: Those who responded to the survey were also asked to identify the top six desirable areas of expertise they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted areas of expertise are listed below in order of preference.

- Budget and Finance
- Collaborative Leadership
- School Reform (i.e. Strategic Planning, etc.)
- Curriculum Development/Evaluation
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Declining/Increasing Enrollment



Specialized Skills: The top six specialized skills the new superintendent must possess were identified in the survey results as shown below.

- Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner in dealings with the School Board, staff, and community
- Develops and directs an effective leadership team
- Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders
- Is visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Experience in school finance
- Experience in implementing educational priorities

Previous Experience: Respondents were asked if previous superintendent experience is important. Based on the results, 52.04% of the respondents selected “Yes,” while 47.96% of the respondents selected “No.”

Personal Characteristics: Survey takers were also asked to identify the top six personal characteristics they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted personal characteristics are listed below in order of preference.

- Honest and ethical
- Effective communicator
- Problem solver
- Transparent
- Consistent
- Resourceful

Tables on the following pages summarize the stakeholder survey’s quantitative data by respondent category.

- Parent/Guardian (470 responses)
- Staff Member (312)
- Community Member (73)
- Business Owner/District Partner (11)
- Other (28)
- Student (28)



TOP SIX AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Parent/ Guardian (470)	Staff Member (312)	Community Member (73)	Business Owner /District Partner (11)	Other (28)	Student (28)
Budget & Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Budget & Finance	Budget & Finance	Budget & Finance
Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative Leadership	Supportive Services
School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)	School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)	Personnel Management	Curriculum Development/Evaluation	School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)	Collaborative Leadership
Curriculum Development/Evaluation	Declining/Increasing Enrollment	School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)	Declining/Increasing Enrollment	Public Relations	School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)
Personnel Management	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Declining/Increasing Enrollment	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Declining/Increasing Enrollment	Curriculum Development/Evaluation
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Cultural Competence	Student Testing Results & Achievement	School Reform (strategic planning, etc.)	Curriculum Development/Evaluation	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

TOP SIX PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Parent/ Guardian (470)	Staff Member (312)	Community Member (73)	Business Owner/ District Partner (11)	Other (28)	Student (28)
Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Effective Communicator	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical
Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Problem Solver	Transparent	Effective Communicator	Problem Solver
Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Effective Communicator	Consistent	Problem Solver	Effective Communicator
Transparent	Transparent	Transparent	Honest and Ethical	Transparent	Consistent
Resourceful	Consistent	Consistent	Problem Solver	Consistent	Confident
Consistent	Empathetic	Resourceful	Resourceful	Intellectual	Resourceful

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Parent/ Guardian (470)	Staff Member (312)	Community Member (73)	Business Owner /District Partner (11)	Other (28)	Student (28)
Yes: 48.42%	Yes: 60.63%	Yes: 50.00%	Yes: 66.67%	Yes: 44.44%	Yes: 30.43%
No: 51.58%	No: 39.37%	No: 50.00%	No: 33.33%	No: 55.56%	No: 69.57%



TOP SIX SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Parent/ Guardian (470)	Staff Member (312)	Community Member (73)	Business Owner /District Partner (11)	Other (28)	Student (28)
Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community
Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Experience in school finance	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability
Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Understands the effects of poverty on student learning and achievement
Experience in implementing educational priorities	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	A visionary, creative thinker	Experience in school finance	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders
Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Experience in implementing educational priorities	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	A "people person" with proven abilities in human relations and communications
Experience in school finance	Experience in school district management practices	Possesses a strong academic background with experience in curriculum	Promotes business and community involvement in schools	A visionary, creative thinker	A visionary, creative thinker



Additional comments: Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey, and on average, 680 of the 928 respondents provided additional commentary. These results were then reviewed by MSBA representatives, with reappearing ideas identified and grouped into themes. These themes are highlighted below for each of the questions.

The stakeholder survey asked the following four questions:

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Robbinsdale Area Schools today?
2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?
3. What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the district and communities to be successful?
4. Additional comments.

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Robbinsdale Area Schools today?

<p>Survey respondents believe RAS benefits from dedicated, caring, and hard-working teachers, principals, and support staff who are committed to the academic, social, and emotional growth of students, ensuring a safe and engaging learning environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teachers are committed, caring, valuable educators. Other staff members are just as caring and invested in students.</i> • <i>Many hard-working staff giving their all for our beautiful students!</i> • <i>Fantastic teachers. Our family is impressed with engaged, passionate principals.</i> • <i>We have a very talented and dedicated staff.</i> • <i>Staff who care about the kids and make them feel comfortable. Good staff is sooooo important for the learning experience.</i> • <i>We've appreciated our kids' teachers and how hard working and genuine they have been.</i> • <i>Excellent teachers, principals, and support staff at all levels.</i> • <i>We are very pleased with the teachers that educate our children.</i> • <i>They have fantastic teachers. The teachers care for the children and make them feel safe.</i> • <i>The staff (office workers, teachers, support staff and admin) are committed to their students.</i> • <i>The teaching staff, special ed teachers, and staff are incredible at what they do.</i> • <i>Robbinsdale Schools has many staff and teachers that are caring and trying hard to enrich the lives of students.</i> • <i>The schools are full of staff that cares about the students' growth academically, socially, and emotionally.</i> 	<p>284 related responses</p>
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- *I see teachers and educational assistants working as hard as they can to support special education students.*
- *There are teachers who remain in the district that care about students and advocate for a safe and stable environment so they can study and learn.*
- *There are great teachers doing wonderful work.*
- *Robbinsdale Area Schools have dedicated, quality staff that care about all of their students' success.*
- *I believe we have many staff members in the building I work at who are there for the betterment of our students' futures.*
- *Great teachers who work hard and care about students.*
- *Really loyal and dedicated staff.*
- *We have some very dedicated and knowledgeable teachers.*
- *Staff who care about the students and wants what is best for them.*
- *Teachers are passionate and work hard to meet student needs.*
- *Teachers and staff are dedicated, hard-working and up to the challenges of today.*
- *Fantastic staff who deserve good consistent leadership so that can get the message out about the amazing things going on in the district.*
- *Passionate staff that care about the students and have the desire to see them grow academically*
- *There are absolutely incredible teachers and staff employed within this district!*
- *The teachers and support staff are great!*
- *There are a lot of great teachers in our district!*
- *We have some very qualified and dedicated teachers and staff.*
- *Caring teachers and staff!*
- *The teachers are dedicated, hardworking and do a lot with very little.*
- *We have highly skilled staff who care about students.*
- *My kids have always had great teachers and great support from administrators in their schools.*
- *We have many talented and dedicated staff members.*
- *There are so many excellent teachers.*
- *I feel lucky that my kids go to school here with such great examples being set by our teacher and staff.*
- *Most of the staff is amazing. They do great things for students with what they are given.*
- *The staff in buildings are working collaboratively to best meet the needs of students with the resources we have.*
- *There are very awesome teachers and support staff in all schools.*
- *We have dedicated staff in all of the schools.*
- *We have a strong teaching staff who believes in our students and keeps them accountable.*
- *The teachers and the staff that deal with the students daily are amazing.*
- *There are some great teachers and educational assistants who truly care about the wellbeing of my child.*
- *Great teachers and support staff who genuinely care about students.*



Robbinsdale Area Schools offer a wide range of arts and academic programs, including notable music and theater offerings, diverse extracurricular activities, specialized magnet and STEAM options, along with a strong emphasis on inclusive education and science-based reading instruction.

158 related responses

- *Strong music and theater programs, a variety of extracurriculars and clubs.*
- *Variety of programs and extracurricular activities offered to students.*
- *Special programs like RSI, SEA, music, sports.*
- *Strong arts programs, strong Early Childhood Preschools.*
- *Variety in classes offered.*
- *Robbinsdale Area Schools offers a wide variety of arts allied classes for students.*
- *The magnet programs are wonderful.*
- *Our arts programs are nationally recognized.*
- *Implementation of curriculum related to the science of reading.*
- *Diversity, variety of programs and extracurricular activities offered to students.*
- *Promotion of the trades and phonics in reading instruction.*
- *Variety of activities. Community education.*
- *We have exceptional opportunities for our kids.*
- *Excellent work in science-based reading instruction.*
- *Arts and music programs. Partnerships with Henn Tech.*
- *Arts programs. Magnet programs.*
- *Classes that help neurodivergent children.*
- *Strong diversity & equity programs.*
- *Special programs in elementary schools like the steel drum experience.*
- *Team for curriculum, art in elementary, languages.*
- *Great music programs and academic opportunities across all schools.*
- *Arts programs. Magnet schools. CLC Programs.*
- *Science of Reading training, Bridge2Read, Career and Technical Pathways, and new reading and math strategies.*
- *A large variety of high school courses, sports, fine arts and clubs/activities.*
- *Great music programs and academic opportunities across all schools.*
- *Many staff trained in LETRS under the Science of Reading initiative.*
- *The quality and variety of academic options and pathways is incredible.*
- *IB and STEAM programming at Middle School. Arts programming and options for students across the district.*
- *Variety of educational opportunities.*
- *Lots of choices for kids to choose from.*
- *Curriculum based in objectively useful subjects like math, reading, science.*
- *Technology, variety of extracurricular activities.*



<p>Stakeholders appreciate that RAS is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, with focused efforts on creating safe, welcoming environments for all students, fostering cultural awareness, and actively working towards equity in education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diversity and inclusion for all students, including racial education</i> • <i>The curriculum includes education differently abled students and students with learning difficulties.</i> • <i>Diversity seems to be a focus.</i> • <i>Robbinsdale has started walking down the path of equity and much of the work is paying off.</i> • <i>The teachers care for the children and make them feel safe.</i> • <i>Many of our educators are deeply committed to their students and families and work to create safe and brave spaces for students.</i> • <i>Strong diversity & equity programs.</i> • <i>Focus on diversity.</i> • <i>Equity in a diverse district, many opportunities for learning.</i> • <i>Teachers advocate for a safe and stable environment so students can study and learn.</i> • <i>A positive focus on diversity and inclusion.</i> • <i>I feel like the school district is very welcoming to everyone.</i> • <i>I think excellent work is being done in the area of equity and diversity.</i> • <i>Trying to address diversity and culture differences.</i> • <i>The district’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is consistent and vocal.</i> • <i>The diversity in our schools continues to build, which I believe is wonderful for my children to be around other cultures.</i> • <i>Diversity is a huge strength.</i> • <i>Responding to the ever-changing climate of equity</i> • <i>Warm and welcoming environment.</i> • <i>Diversity and equity programs and cultural awareness celebrations.</i> 	<p>63 related responses</p>
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2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?

<p>Stakeholders are concerned about the district’s ability to recruit and retain quality staff, as it is increasingly challenged by issues such as non-competitive wages, inadequate support, escalating discipline problems, and burnout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recruiting and retaining quality staff.</i> • <i>Paying support staff higher wages that are more competitive with surrounding areas so we don’t lose them.</i> 	<p>196 related responses</p>
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- *Retaining good teachers. The district needs to recruit experienced staff and pay them accordingly.*
- *Retaining teachers by making sure they have the support they need.*
- *Retaining good staff.*
- *Staff leaving because of discipline issues and out of control kids.*
- *Maintaining good teaching staff as student's needs intensify.*
- *Maintaining sufficient and qualified teaching staff.*
- *Retention of staff and contracts.*
- *Attracting and retaining top notch teachers.*
- *Retaining high functioning staff.*
- *Keeping staff and students in the district.*
- *Good teachers and staff leaving due to poor pay, extended duties, more violent students, high cost of health care.*
- *Retaining the good workers that can do the jobs, instead of losing them to the competition.*
- *Trying to fully staff our schools and increase the retention of our good staff members.*
- *Burn out. Staff that are still here and not getting fair compensation, so they are leaving. No subs in the district for teachers.*
- *Stability. Too much turnover in leadership roles.*
- *Retaining teachers in an increasingly difficult work environment with dwindling compensations and resources.*
- *Retaining quality employees.*
- *Staffing issues and keeping good teachers.*
- *Retaining hard working staff.*
- *Staff leaving due to poor contracts.*
- *Loss of good teachers because they can get better pay and benefits in other nearby districts.*
- *Retaining high quality and experienced teachers, we have already lost so many valuable people that I have admired and learned from.*
- *Staff are not given the support or policies to be able to hold students accountable for their actions.*
- *Staff burn-out due to demands and low pay.*
- *With student behaviors the way they have been and staff continuing to get little support, staff will quit.*
- *The District is hemorrhaging veteran teachers and support staff. Teachers are stretched too thin, have too much on their plates.*
- *Many of good teachers/staff leaving due to poor working conditions.*
- *Staff exodus due to lack of support, increased duties, no compensation for extra duties and not being able to settle fair contracts.*
- *A lower pay than other professions, unsafe work environments, and lack of adequate training are all contributing to burnout, especially in young educators.*
- *Pay for non-licensed positions has been rising in competing districts faster than ours, I see difficulties retaining great staff if this continues.*
- *Behavior issues and possibilities of more severe and violent behavior in schools, causing mass staff exodus.*
- *Losing teachers to other districts and non-licensed staff to other jobs because our pay is not competitive.*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher burnout is going to become an even larger issue as the district increases demands without providing additional time for staff to complete the job.</i> • <i>Supporting staff and making them feel appreciated.</i> • <i>Being able to keep the necessary support staff due to budget cuts.</i> • <i>Rising caseloads in special education without staff to meet demand. I think the district is going to have difficulty retaining staff over the next five years as education continues to change and teachers continue to experience burnout with possibilities of making more money elsewhere.</i> • <i>Maintaining quality staff throughout all district programs.</i> • <i>New teachers are not supported appropriately which contributes to high levels of staff turnover.</i> 	
<p>Stakeholders perceive challenges in terms of reversing the district’s declining student enrollment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A big challenge the district is facing is declining enrollment - this could be helped by more community engagement highlighting the best the district has to offer.</i> • <i>Further decline of enrollment due to the mismanagement of funds and policies.</i> • <i>Maintaining enrollment of students and coming up with ways to attract more students.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment because of the school’s adoption of a more progressive ideology.</i> • <i>Figuring out declining enrollment.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment - families leave the district when they do not get in to the magnet programs.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment is concerning. The district needs to put more effort into selling their product.</i> • <i>Test scores and enrollment. The district needs to improve test scores, graduation rate and facilities to attract more families and build up the district’s reputation.</i> • <i>We need to increase enrollment.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment. Please focus your efforts into keeping our resident kids in our schools!</i> • <i>Declining enrollment. The percentage of in-district families enrolling outside of our district is staggering!</i> • <i>Impact of declining enrollment on district resources.</i> • <i>We need to maintain and increase student enrollment instead of losing more students.</i> • <i>Retaining students within the district attendance zone.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment continues especially when students are going into 6th grade.</i> • <i>Student enrollment is a tough problem as well with more charter schools and private schools taking students who want to learn out of the district while leaving more disruptive students in the district.</i> • <i>The schools need to be a safe environment where students are required to follow appropriate rules. If this does not happen enrollment will continue to decline as parents seek other alternatives.</i> 	<p>183 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to get in touch with the "leaving community" to find out why people are leaving and what can be done to get them to return. • Declining enrollment due to lack of focus on the basics of reading, writing and math skills. • Decreased enrollment from local families due to the open enrollment from other areas that bring in some students who cause issues and make the families leave. • Decline in student enrollment. • We need to reverse enrollment trends. • Neighborhood schools who are watching enrollment decline. • Our enrollment is down. Many families are choosing to enroll in neighboring districts because of behavior increases, teacher/staff leaving, and just the reputation of our schools. • To sum it up: declining enrollment. 	
<p>Robbinsdale Area Schools faces significant budgetary challenges, including addressing how enrollment decline will impact state funding – thereby leading to an increased need to effectively use resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective use of staff and resources to maintain programs and levels of student support despite enrollment and budget decreased. • It sounds like the budget is going to be a challenge. • Budget. We HAVE to find a way to avoid the proposed cut and impact on the quality of our district. • Balancing the budget and figuring out how to prioritize competing needs with shrinking revenues. • Really digging into the financials around marketing and making cost benefit decisions. • I think all schools will have the typical budget/limited resources challenges, but specifically in Robbinsdale. • The budget! Yikes. Very concerning how our students are supported moving forward with the deficit. • There should be a district wide, or statewide solution to find other resources than the school budget for these programs that are taking away from all of the students. • Finances will be a challenge. We are top heavy when it comes to upper management salaries. • Budget, they have created way too many top level positions • Budgetary concerns with declining enrollment and state funding that doesn't keep pace with costs. • Budget shortfalls. Making difficult decisions about closing buildings / decreasing staff. • Budget. The district needs to take a hard look at financials and put the money where it has the most impact on students. • Keeping track of its finances and doing effective financial planning, having a budget and working to it. • Prioritizing needs within the budget. 	<p>134 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The budget seems to be a constant issue.</i> • <i>Serious budget issues.</i> • <i>Overall district resources and finances.</i> • <i>Money and financial issues.</i> • <i>Budget, budget concerns, budget issues, budget challenges.</i> 	
<p>Survey respondents are concerned about the lack of school board unity and effectiveness, which they feel will be essential in order for the district to move forward in a positive direction and re-gain the trust of community stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The school board's lack of respect and cohesiveness. It's ok to have diversity of thoughts and ideas, but the defensive behaviors observed do nothing but drag on discussion.</i> • <i>A school board that is at odds with one another and at times attempts to micromanage.</i> • <i>It seems the school board has a lot of conflicting values, which is a barrier to moving the district forward in doing what's best for kids.</i> • <i>Many on the school board seem completely out of touch with the realities of running a district with the complexities of 281.</i> • <i>Dysfunctional school board is ruining the district.</i> • <i>The School Board is the Achilles heel of the District.</i> • <i>As a parent, I'm unhappy with our current school board and the way they treat each other and the way they treat school staff.</i> • <i>Turbulence on our school board and how it affects our school community and what messages it sends to the rest of the area!</i> • <i>Respect between school board and administration/staff. Some school board members need to stop putting misinformation on social media.</i> • <i>A school board that needs mediators and can't control its behavior in the interest of the job it's supposed to do.</i> • <i>The school board is a mess and not focused on the kids - they are focused on their infighting.</i> • <i>School board is not functioning.</i> • <i>Lack of a functioning school board. The infighting has got to stop.</i> • <i>Division in the community and on the school board.</i> • <i>The school board is not functioning properly and makes the district appear that they don't know how to function either.</i> • <i>The school board can't work together.</i> • <i>The school board drama that is playing out publicly is embarrassing and is further impacting negative opinions of our district.</i> • <i>Gaining a functional school board.</i> • <i>School Board that is ineffective, which models disrespectful behavior and is out of step with the vision and beliefs of district parents, staff and students.</i> • <i>The School Board is currently very hard to watch try to do their work.</i> • <i>Dealing with a challenging school board.</i> • <i>Stabilize the school board.</i> 	<p>85 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There is a huge distrust of leadership in the district administration and school board.</i> • <i>The school board's ability to have trust in the leadership at the district level and in the schools.</i> • <i>Our school board is not able to work together to accomplish their basic responsibilities.</i> 	
<p>Robbinsdale Area Schools must address growing concerns regarding student and staff safety, including managing changing student behaviors and enhancing safety measures across all school settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kids and staff safety.</i> • <i>Safety of students. Hitting isn't taken seriously even in elementary.</i> • <i>They need to maintain safety with crossings and playground equipment that is degrading or nonfunctional.</i> • <i>Student behaviors changing.</i> • <i>Safety and security.</i> • <i>School safety for students and faculty - i.e. providing hallway monitors that can actually enforce discipline as well as the teachers in their classes.</i> • <i>Out of control students and school safety.</i> • <i>School safety must be returned to school. Children should not be afraid to go to school because of the potential of violence.</i> • <i>Many teachers do not feel safe in school. No one should work in an environment where they don't feel supported by their superiors and are not allowed to stop fights and encourage peace.</i> • <i>Support SRO's and start honoring the work of law enforcement if the district wants to cultivate an environment of safety and stability for students and staff.</i> • <i>School safety and behavioral issues with students.</i> • <i>Safety. An excessive number of fights.</i> • <i>Increased safety concerns.</i> • <i>Behavior management and students' safety and the feeling of being safe.</i> • <i>Resident families don't want to send their kids to schools with safety and discipline issues.</i> • <i>Safety in the schools need to be addressed and plans to develop addressed these issues.</i> • <i>Managing safety at all school buildings.</i> • <i>Continued issues with safety and communication.</i> • <i>Aging buildings are definitely an issue and things need to be improved for safety and appearance.</i> • <i>Student behavior is becoming unruly and there are little to no consequences.</i> • <i>Safety - There have been some incidents that make the staff and students feel not safe in their building.</i> 	<p>84 related responses</p>



3. What does the next superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and communities to be successful?

<p>The next superintendent needs to understand the communities' diversity across racial, economic, and cultural dimensions, and help implement inclusive strategies that address the unique needs of the school district as its demographics now stand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The district is very diverse.</i> • <i>We come from a place of diversity, community and respect.</i> • <i>This community is diverse in all senses of the word.</i> • <i>First rate suburban school district with a very diverse makeup both racially and financially.</i> • <i>We seem to be a community divided east and west - we need leadership that can bring us together.</i> • <i>Economically and culturally diverse.</i> • <i>We are an involved community that want the best for their students.</i> • <i>That there's a mix of different cultures, backgrounds and values in the student's families.</i> • <i>The historical and ever-changing diversity of the district and community (racial, economic, etc.).</i> • <i>We are a diverse community with a high poverty rate, and the district is highly segregated.</i> • <i>How diverse of a community that we are. They need to understand that cookie cutter approaches do not work and that new strategies that are implemented will have to take into account our vast diversity.</i> • <i>Demographics of the school district have been rapidly changing.</i> • <i>Students are those that are traditionally underserved and face many social and financial hardships.</i> • <i>The district is full of untapped potential and a community ready to commit to continued success.</i> • <i>Deep rooted history that many in community are proud of.</i> • <i>Blue collar community.</i> • <i>Robbinsdale has an incredibly fabulous diverse background of families.</i> • <i>Robbinsdale demographics have changed over time and continue to change.</i> • <i>The demographic/cultural shift that has taken place in the last generation and the impacts it has on students across the district and the long-standing members of the community.</i> • <i>The district spans an area with diverse communities, there's a tremendous wealth of knowledge in the community that can support students and staff.</i> • <i>Widely diverse student population, most being from low income and high stress environments.</i> • <i>We love this district for its diversity. It's unique in this state.</i> • <i>I believe that there is a lot of support for our schools within the community, and that everyone cares deeply about the success of our students and schools.</i> 	<p>124 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is an amazing diverse and big district with a proud heritage in the fine arts as well as other areas.</i> • <i>The East-West economic split is a defining characteristic of the community. Navigating that split skillfully is a necessity.</i> • <i>We are a renowned arts community.</i> • <i>They need to understand and fully embrace the depth and breadth of the diverse students and families this school district serves. There are people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. There are people of all economic backgrounds.</i> 	
<p>Stakeholders want the next superintendent to prioritize rebuilding trust with the school community by fostering transparency and demonstrating a commitment to long-term leadership and financial responsibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There is a history of division, skepticism, and disappointment from our communities.</i> • <i>Our staff and community need a superintendent who will stay for a while.</i> • <i>Many parents are jaded and distrustful of the district.</i> • <i>Understand that a culture of distrust exists between the community and the school board/Superintendent.</i> • <i>They need to have experience working with distrusting staff and community. We are frustrated with where we are at and need someone to come in and help clean it up.</i> • <i>The candidate will need to work hard to rebuild relationships in the community and do something to stem the negativity that seems prevalent in our district.</i> • <i>We need leadership that can bring us together.</i> • <i>We are lacking trust in the superintendent and in the district. Let's head in the right direction together!!!</i> • <i>Many people don't trust the decisions made in the past. Transparency and personable accountability are important.</i> • <i>There has been a lot of distrust and turnover in the position.</i> • <i>Mistrust with the district from community members.</i> • <i>There isn't much trust or confidence in this district currently. It's going to be a tough job!</i> • <i>We need a longer-term superintendent to establish a respectable and trustworthy school district.</i> • <i>The district has lost trust with its parents and community.</i> • <i>We are coming from a place of insecurity and mistrust due to a lack of strong leadership and low accountability.</i> • <i>There's a pretty strong history of distrust between staff and the district.</i> • <i>There's a lack of trust because superintendents come and go so frequently. It would be great if the new superintendent planned to stay for more than 3 years.</i> • <i>History of problematic leadership and subsequent distrust from community members.</i> • <i>Rebuilding trust and maintaining consistency and accountability needs to be a priority.</i> 	<p>87 related responses</p>



<p>Survey respondents believe the next superintendent should be prepared to work collaboratively with the school board to rebuild trust through transparency, unity, and effective decision-making. Hard skills along with soft skills and emotional intelligence are desired.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The current iteration of the school board is contentious and combative.</i> • <i>As a parent, I would like to see fair teacher contracts.</i> • <i>Lack of past transparency and nonworking school board.</i> • <i>School board needs to get it together, be transparent and be open to public comments.</i> • <i>The candidate will need to work hard to rebuild relationships in the community and do something to stem the negativity that seems prevalent in our school district.</i> • <i>Ineffective school board making bad and time-wasting decisions, school board with lack of experience in board making decisions and processes.</i> • <i>Transparency about the difficulties within the school board.</i> • <i>There seems to be a long history of ineffective communication between school board, admin, and staff.</i> • <i>Members of the school board are a bit conspiratorial.</i> • <i>I think they would need to know about the current state of contention within the school board, and a good overview of the history of our school board and its management in recent years.</i> • <i>The school board's recent history of disfunction.</i> • <i>That the School Board is out of sync with the community and its priorities.</i> • <i>It seems like the school board is a bit of a mess after everything that's happened and it will take some time to get it back into a healthy place.</i> • <i>That administration and school board members lack clarity in the realistic struggles of education and discipline.</i> • <i>Our school board is a mess and at a stalemate.</i> • <i>That there seems to be a lot of problems within the school boards, past and present.</i> 	<p>82 related responses</p>
<p>The next superintendent needs to address staff concerns by improving morale, support, and working conditions to ensure retention and to enhance the educational environment for each and every student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff desire to be treated and valued as professionals.</i> • <i>Lack of support for teachers that try to have corrective action. Kids get away with too much.</i> • <i>Teachers and staff leaving and finding more pay and better working conditions that include more support in different school districts.</i> • <i>Staff turnover.</i> • <i>We have exceptional teachers that we want to keep.</i> 	<p>75 related responses</p>



- *Students have learned that there's not going to be a consequence for their actions. This makes it difficult to teach and for children to learn.*
- *We have strong/ loyal teachers who care about our students- let's work to keep them.*
- *When our teachers are at their best and set up for success, our students have the best chance at being and doing their best. This has been lacking and it is now showing.*
- *Teachers and staff leaving and finding more pay and better working conditions that include more support in different school districts.*
- *The new superintendent needs to be aware of the low morale across teachers and staff.*
- *We have excellent staff who care about each and every student, who go above and beyond every day every year despite working conditions due to factors out of the teacher's control.*
- *Support the teachers in order to keep them.*
- *We have a long history of initiative fatigue. There are so many competing priorities that our teachers are resources are sapped.*
- *Teachers have not been treated very well, and I don't think the principals have been treated very well either.*
- *Many teachers don't feel supported.*
- *Teachers are expected to do more and more by people who don't work with students or experience day-to-day classroom life.*
- *We need to increase special education staff members in order to provide these services, as well as work with general education teachers on ways to effectively work with these students without sending them out of the classroom.*
- *Teachers need to feel supported.*
- *High turnover of teachers at my school.*
- *School staff is dedicated to our students, and we deserve significant improvements in working conditions, salary, and benefits!!!*
- *They need to listen to the teachers. Most teachers have been in the district longer than anyone else and understand the issues firsthand.*
- *I have heard of teachers getting burn out, not getting along with administration and the school board.*
- *Teachers are becoming burnt out due to these pressures and leaving the district in droves.*
- *They need to listen to the needs of the staff and the community to make RAS a destination place to work.*



Leadership skills matter, as constituents want the next superintendent to be a strong, empathetic leader who prioritizes transparency, communication, community engagement, and creative problem-solving.

76 related responses

- *We have been through a very painful process over the last six years and we need healing leadership.*
- *RAS needs a strong leader who will bring back a disciplined approach that focuses on academics and keeping kids safe.*
- *Understand that we need a strong leader and voice in the community.*
- *Be transparent, creative, and win the trust of your teachers and the community. Work WITH us, rather than micromanage us.*
- *We need a super that understands that all kids want to feel safe in their schools.*
- *Honesty, clear communication, and a strong vision combined with great listening are a must.*
- *We need to start thinking outside the box, along with using independent and critical thinking skills, to improve the future of the education system as a whole.*
- *This community desperately needs a strong leader who is courageous, articulate, and visible.*
- *We need a leader who can be creative with funding, grants, donations to compete with those higher tax communities that surround us.*
- *They need to be consistent and open and transparent.*
- *Be involved, communicate, and listen to the concerns. Most importantly bring fun to learning.*
- *That it is very important to be honest and transparent.*
- *We need someone who was a teacher, understands what being in a school and classroom is like.*
- *The last several years have been tough for our district but someone with very strong leadership skills and thick skin can make positive changes.*
- *Strong, wise and empathetic leadership is necessary.*
- *We need to be responsive to the individual needs of buildings and provide them with adequate support and resources.*
- *Listen to parents, When problems come up find out the whole story really look at both sides of a situation. Try to understand our students and where they are coming from in our community.*
- *We need a strong leader who is able to think creatively.*
- *We need someone who can close the gap, and ensure we provide equal access and equity to all of our students.*
- *We have had a lot of change in leadership. We need a solid person to stay the course with a vision for our district.*
- *We need some fresh eyes, consistency and longevity from our new superintendent.*
- *We need a superintendent who respects the staff members and engages in conversations with staff.*
- *We need a strong leader who can guide and lead us while connecting with our entire school community.*



4. Additional Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Our next superintendent should have experience in dealing with complex challenges and have a proven track record.</i>• <i>The staff need a solid leadership team and incentive and trust to stay and do great things.</i>• <i>We need a superintendent who understands how important good staff are. And someone who can find ways to cut budget but make sure kids have the staff and technology that's needed in today's world.</i>• <i>I would love someone who thinks outside of the box, listens well to others, and isn't afraid to try new and creative ideas.</i>• <i>We are falling apart as a district. We need someone to help build it back up. We need solid leadership and together we can do great things!</i>• <i>Would love to see a superintendent who is creative in how they define "success" within the district - someone who looks beyond test scores, graduation rates, enrollment numbers, etc.</i>• <i>We need to find a dynamic, empathetic leader who can move this culture into a healthy dynamic.</i>• <i>We need someone with experience and passion.</i>• <i>District finance needs to be addressed so that things are paid for in a timely and appropriate manner.</i>• <i>The new superintendent must be able to be strategic and work effectively with the School Board.</i>• <i>We need an educational leader.</i>• <i>Experience is of course important and necessary for this kind of leadership role, but I believe there may be candidates who have not served specific role of superintendent who might be highly capable in such a role.</i>• <i>We need a superintendent who is going to stick around for more than 3-5 years.</i>• <i>We need a strong communicator, enforcer of integrity, collaboration and data driven outcomes.</i>• <i>Superintendent needs to be held accountable, have good communication skills, and prior experience.</i>• <i>We need someone who is hones, trustworthy, transparent and a team player! Someone who puts the students first!</i>	42 related responses
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Student Listening Sessions

On January 23, January 25, and January 26, 2024, MSBA staff met with 116 students (47 at Cooper, 34 at Highview, and 35 at Armstrong) and asked them four open-ended questions. The results of the listening sessions were reviewed by MSBA representatives, and below is a summary of the student groups' discussion in response to each question.

1. What are some good things happening in Robbinsdale Area Schools?

In attending RAS, students highlighted numerous positive aspects that contribute to a supportive and enriching educational environment. A standout feature is the commendation of their teaching staff, who are noted for positive attitudes, approachability, and proactive support. Students praise teachers in this district for going beyond the call of duty to assist students, even without being asked, and for fostering a caring and inclusive atmosphere. This level of care is perceived as improving over previous years, with staff showing genuine concern for students' wellbeing and academic success and it is appreciated. Robbinsdale Academy, specifically mentioned, exemplifies a learning institution within the district where innovative teaching methods and closer teacher-student collaboration enhance the learning experience.

Moreover, students feel the school district offers a broad spectrum of opportunities that serve diverse interests and academic needs. From open lunch policies to self-paced lessons, they see the district as being attentive to student preferences and learning styles. Extracurricular activities, including sports, arts, and clubs, alongside unique offerings like EMS and Ojibwe language courses, enrich students' school life. Advanced placement and college-level courses provide students with the challenge and preparation for future academic endeavors, and the emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and student voice, along with a wide variety of clubs and activities, ensures that every student can find a niche where they feel valued and included. Overall, Robbinsdale Area Schools' commitment to student engagement, strong academic programming, and a supportive community reflects its dedication to providing a high-quality education that meets the needs and aspirations of its students.

2. What are some challenges you see or that you see other students facing?

Students in Robbinsdale Area Schools face a variety of challenges that impact their educational experience and overall wellbeing. Mental health issues are a significant concern, with students reporting difficulties in maintaining focus in class, struggling with academic pressures, and facing barriers to connecting with teachers and peers. These challenges are exacerbated by a



perceived lack of compassion and understanding from some educators in their day-to-day experiences, coupled with the Modern Classroom program that results in limited student-teacher interaction. Additionally, language barriers and adaptability issues present learning obstacles for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Safety concerns, including bullying and the fear of weapons in schools, also contribute to an environment where some students feel unsafe. Particularly, there is discomfort associated with using school bathrooms due to incidents of vaping, violence, and insufficient cleanliness which contribute to a sense of insecurity among students. Students also report experiencing racial bias and a lack of diverse representation among staff, which affects their sense of belonging and inclusivity. The heavy workload and stress experienced by teachers, who are stretched thin across numerous responsibilities, have a trickle-down effect, impacting the quality of education and the timeliness of feedback needed by students. Moreover, the communication gaps regarding essential safety procedures and the overall engagement of students and educators highlight systemic issues that require attention to ensure a supportive, safe, and equitable educational experience for all students in RAS.

3. What personal characteristics, skills, or areas of expertise are important for the new superintendent to have?

The qualities deemed essential by students for the new superintendent of Robbinsdale Area Schools highlight a blend of personal integrity, professional experience, and a commitment to active engagement with the community. Honesty, empathy, and understanding emerged as foundational characteristics, underscoring the importance of a leader who can navigate the complexities of educational leadership with both compassion and transparency. The ability to relate to and understand the diverse needs of students, teachers, and parents alike is seen as crucial. This includes a history of being a former teacher, which could provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by educators and students, reinforcing the superintendent's empathy for teachers and dedication to trust-building across the district.

Effective communication skills, open-mindedness, and a strong work ethic were also highlighted by students, with an emphasis on the superintendent's role as a proactive problem solver who can implement change efficiently and thoughtfully. Students would like to see a leader who is accessible and involved, willing to listen to feedback and act on it, thereby ensuring that actions speak louder than words. The ability to engage with students directly, maintaining consistent contact and demonstrating a genuine interest in their well-being and academic success, is seen as vital. Furthermore, flexibility, relatability, and a commitment to improving educational resources, such as tutoring services and real-life work training, reflect a broader understanding that student needs are varied and require a nuanced approach. The call for more visible leadership, one that fosters a sense of trust and safety across all schools within the district, indicates a desire for a superintendent who not only leads with confidence and competence but also with a heartfelt commitment to students' diverse needs and aspirations.



4. What does the new superintendent need to understand about Robbinsdale students to be successful?

The overarching theme among students seems to be that the new superintendent in RAS must grasp the complex and diverse nature of its student body. Recognizing that students have varied learning styles, speeds, and needs is crucial. Some students may grasp concepts quickly, while others require more time or different methods of instruction, underscoring the importance of flexibility in educational strategies. The superintendent should be aware that motivational factors, such as engaging learning environments, access to quality resources, and opportunities for one-on-one interactions, can significantly impact students' willingness to attend and participate in school. Understanding each student's unique background and challenges, and making accommodations for those who need extra support, is essential in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, students feel the superintendent should recognize the district's diversity not just in demographics but in the ways students engage with their education. For example, the value of extracurricular activities in building social networks and integrating students into the school community cannot be overstated. These activities often play a critical role in students' overall success and satisfaction with their school experience. Communication with students and families should be clear, transparent, and varied to effectively reach and engage them. Innovation, flexibility, and a willingness to listen and adapt are key qualities needed to move the district forward. RAS students would like the superintendent to be visible, accessible, and genuinely interested in connecting with students, staff, and families to build trust and ensure that the district not only meets the current needs of its students but is also prepared to evolve with them into the future.



Stakeholder input during the interview process

MSBA's process offers three options to school boards for including stakeholders in their finalist interviews. Below is a short summary of the board's choices:

1. Rely on the Stakeholder Summary Report to represent stakeholder voices throughout the interview process. MSBA reviews this report with the board during interview training, and boards often choose to use this document for reference throughout the search (i.e. when screening applications, developing interview questions, conducting the interviews, and during board deliberations following both Round 1 and Round 2 interviews). No other stakeholder input is gathered as part of the interview process.
2. Create interview committee(s) – these groups interview all finalists separately in addition to the school board interviews. It is important that members of the interview committees not be chosen by the board – instead stakeholder groups should be invited to send a representative on their behalf. These groups must then be trained by MSBA to ensure adherence to EEOC protocols (interview format, legality of questions, etc.). These committees would report to the board following their interviews, but prior to the board's final deliberations. It's also important not to call these groups "hiring committees," as this creates unfair expectations and potentially deep resentment regarding the hiring process utilized by the school board.
3. Invite stakeholder groups to send one representative to observe school board interviews of the finalists, then those individuals provide feedback through an online Audience Input Form which asks them to share their thoughts on each candidate's top three strengths and top three opportunities for growth. MSBA then provides the board with this data shortly after their interviews, but prior to the board's final deliberations.

There are pros and cons to each of these options, all of which are discussed with the board prior to making a decision regarding stakeholder input in the interview process.

NOTE: Over the past three years most boards have selected Option 1, some boards have chosen Option 3, and only two boards have selected Option 2. This illustrates a shift away from involving stakeholders in the interview process, with most boards relying heavily on the Stakeholder Summary Report as the voice of the stakeholders throughout the search process; however, you should choose whichever option best fits your district.

Audience Input Forums

Stakeholder groups to consider

When discussing potential stakeholder groups to participate beyond the stakeholder survey, consider any groups the school board would typically reach out to in support of a school district levy. Also consider any group that is a sub-group of your district's community, parents, staff and students. Some people will tick more than one box. You may consider inviting the leadership of these groups, or an even better choice is to request they select someone from their membership themselves. Each bargaining unit should be represented.

Possibilities include:

- Principals' association (selected by the membership)
- Teachers representing early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school level (selected by the membership)
- District administration (selected by the membership)
- Executive assistant
- Buildings and grounds
- Food service
- Transportation
- Para-professional staff
- Secretarial staff
- ELL director or cultural liaisons
- Parent representative(s)
- Student representative who may serve on the school board
- Representative of any district partnerships with the business community or higher education institutions
- Chamber of Commerce representative
- Leadership of any major district funders, donors or foundations
- Representative from any substantive grassroots community organization

The number of stakeholders should not exceed 15. An ideal-size group is 7-10 participants.



SCHOOL BOARD INTERVIEW TRAINING AND PREPARATION

MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES



Relevant Law

All school board meetings related to the superintendent search must be open meetings. Applicants' materials contain data that are classified as private data. The law provides that the names of applicants for employment are private, but the names of finalists are public (M.S. 13.43, Subd. 3.). Once the finalists are named, the school board can only release the following information on applicants for a position: name (only finalists), veteran status, relevant test scores, rank on eligible list, job history, education and training, and work availability. All other information about applicants is private, as are the names and information of all other applicants who are not finalists.

Don't Ask

Both state and federal law prohibit questions regarding "protected categories." Indirect questions regarding protected categories are also a violation of the law. Some of the protected categories are listed below.

Protected Categories	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Race or color• National origin• Religion or creed• Age• Status with regard to public assistance• Familial status• Marital status• Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual orientation• Disability• Sex• Membership or activity in a local commission• Veteran status• Genetic information

What is an indirect question that may violate one or more protected categories? Some examples are provided below.

- How much longer do you plan to work before you retire? (The answer to this question may reveal information that discriminates with regard to age.)
- Do you own a home? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? (The answers to these questions may reveal information that discriminates with regard to public assistance or disability.)
- How will you make dependent care arrangements? (The answer to this question may reveal information that discriminates with regard to marital and familial status.)

School boards should be particularly careful during follow-up questions. The school board should be cautious and agree beforehand how follow-up questions will be handled. Going "off script" increases the risk of an inappropriate question being asked. When in doubt, check with an attorney or contact MSBA.

Interview Questions: Non-Discrimination Laws

Anti-discrimination laws affect all steps of the employee hiring process. Knowledge of the characteristics on which these laws prohibit inquiry is especially critical when conducting interviews. Sloppy interview practices can result in the appearance of discrimination or even actual discrimination.

Interviewers should avoid seeking information that is not job related. The school board should assume that a rejected applicant may believe that all information acquired during an interview will be used in the hiring decision. The school district will have the burden to explain that not all information elicited during the interview process was used – a very difficult burden when the information involves race, sex, religion, age, disability, etc. Information needed for insurance, tax, social security, or similar purposes should be obtained after employment. The following list of protected characteristics may not be complete because of the rapidly changing nature of discrimination laws.

Protected Category	Not Permissible to Ask	Permissible to Ask
Race and color	What race are your parents?	
Alienage, ancestry, national origin, nationality, and citizen status (provided the individual is authorized to work in the U.S.)	In what country were you born? In what country were your parents born? Are you a naturalized citizen?	Are you legally authorized to work in the United States? What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently? (if related to the job requirements)
Marital status	Are you married? Single? Divorced? Engaged? Are you living with someone? Would your spouse move with you if you got this position? What is your maiden name?	
Gender, including parental and pregnancy status	What are your future family plans? Are you pregnant? Do you have children? What are their ages?	Are you available to work overtime? (if related to the job requirements)

Protected Category	Not Permissible to Ask	Permissible to Ask
Sexual orientation, including actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or gender-related identity	Do you have a spouse or partner – which?	What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?
Religion or creed	What religious holidays do you celebrate?	Are you available to work “X” to “X”?
Age	When do you plan to retire? How would you feel about working for someone younger than you?	What are your long-term career goals?
Military status	Will you miss work because you are a member of a U.S. Reserve unit, such as, Army Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve, or a member of a National Guard unit?	How does your military training or experience prepare you for this job?*
Unfavorable discharge from military service	Under what circumstances were you discharged from the service?	<p><i>*This question is permissible only if information about military status is provided by the applicant, otherwise it is not permissible to ask any military status-related questions.</i></p>
Arrest record	Have you ever been arrested? Spent time in jail?	
Use of lawful products during non-working hours	Do you smoke or use tobacco products during non-working hours? Do you consume alcoholic beverages during non-working hours?	
Genetic information	What were the results of any diagnostic, predictive, or pre-symptomatic genetic testing that you’ve had?	See section on <i>disability</i> below.

Protected Category	Not Permissible to Ask	Permissible to Ask
<p>Credit history/report, unless the Employee Credit Privacy Act permits a satisfactory credit history to be a job requirement, such as, the position's duties include custody of or unsupervised access to cash or marketable assets valued at \$2,500 or more</p>	<p>Unless the Employee Credit Privacy Act permits a satisfactory credit history to be a job requirement for a specific position, do not ask:</p> <p>Do you have a good credit score?</p> <p>Have you been denied a credit card within the last 5 years?</p> <p>Have you ever filed bankruptcy?</p>	

Disability

Inquiries that are likely to elicit information about a disability, before a bona fide job offer is made, are prohibited. Inquiries about the ability to perform job functions that do not ask about disabilities are permissible.

Protected Category	Not Permissible to Ask	Permissible to Ask
Disability	<p>Have you had any recent illnesses or operations?</p> <p>Do you have AIDS?</p> <p>Do you have asthma?</p> <p>Do you have a disability which would interfere with your ability to perform the job?</p> <p>How many days were you sick last year?</p> <p>Have you ever filed for workers' compensation?</p> <p>Have you ever been injured on the job?</p> <p>How much alcohol do you drink each week?</p> <p>Have you ever been treated for alcohol problems?</p> <p>Have you ever been treated for mental health problems?</p> <p>What prescription drugs are you currently taking?</p>	<p>Can you perform the functions of this job (essential and/or marginal), with or without reasonable accommodation?</p> <p>Please describe/demonstrate how you would perform these functions (essential and/or marginal).</p> <p>Have you ever been disciplined (oral or written reprimand, suspension, or termination) for attendance violations or problems?</p> <p>Do you have the required licenses to perform this job?</p>

Adopted: _____

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 401

Orig. 1995

Revised: _____

Rev. 2017

401 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

[Note: School districts are not required by statute to have a policy addressing these issues. However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission strongly encourages the adoption of a policy and will look for such a policy during accreditation visits, audits, or investigations.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants for school district employment and school district employees.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The policy of the school district is to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants and employees. The school district does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status, or veteran status. The school district also makes reasonable accommodations for disabled employees.

[Note: The Minnesota Human Rights Act defines “sexual orientation” to include “having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one’s biological maleness or femaleness.” Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, Subd. 44.]

B. The school district prohibits the harassment of any individual for any of the categories listed above. For information about the types of conduct that constitute impermissible harassment and the school district’s internal procedures for addressing complaints of harassment, please refer to the school district’s policy on harassment and violence.

C. This policy applies to all areas of employment including hiring, discharge, promotion, compensation, facilities, or privileges of employment.

D. Every school district employee shall be responsible for following this policy.

E. Any person having a question regarding this policy should discuss it with _____ (specify, e.g., the Personnel Manager).

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
29 U.S.C. § 621 *et seq.* (Age Discrimination in Employment Act)
29 U.S.C. § 2615 (Family and Medical Leave Act)

38 U.S.C. § 4211 *et seq.* (Employment and Training of Veterans)
38 U.S.C. § 4301 *et seq.* (Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.* (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act)
42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.* (Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 402 (Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 405 (Veteran’s Preference)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)

Adopted: _____

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406

Orig. 1995

Revised: _____

Rev. 2014

406 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PERSONNEL DATA

[Note: The provisions of this policy accurately reflect the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and are not discretionary in nature.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to school district employees as to the data the school district collects and maintains regarding its personnel.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. All data on individuals collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by the school district, which is classified by statute or federal law as public, shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the procedures established by the school district.
- B. All other data on individuals is private or confidential.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Public” means that the data is available to anyone who requests it.
- B. “Private” means the data is available to the subject of the data and to school district staff who need it to conduct the business of the school district.
- C. “Confidential” means the data is not available to the subject.
- D. “Parking space leasing data” means the following government data on an application for, or lease of, a parking space: residence address, home telephone number, beginning and ending work hours, place of employment, location of parking space, and work telephone number.
- E. “Personnel data” means government data on individuals maintained because they are or were employees of the school district, applicants for employment, or volunteers or independent contractors for the school district, or members of or applicants for an advisory board or commission. Personnel data include data submitted to the school district by an employee as part of an organized self-evaluation effort by the school district to request suggestions from all employees on ways to cut costs, make the school district more efficient, or to improve school district operations. An employee who is identified in a suggestion shall have access to all data in the suggestion except the identity of the employee making the suggestion.

- F. “Finalist” means an individual who is selected to be interviewed by the school board for a position.
- G. “Protected health information” means individually identifiable health information transmitted in electronic form by a school district acting as a health care provider. “Protected health information” excludes health information in education records covered by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and employment records held by a school district in its role as employer.
- H. “Public officials” means business managers; human resource directors; athletic directors whose duties include at least 50 percent of their time spent in administration, personnel, supervision, and evaluation; chief financial officers; directors; and individuals defined as superintendents and principals.

IV. PUBLIC PERSONNEL DATA

- A. The following information on employees, including volunteers and independent contractors, is public:
 - 1. name;
 - 2. employee identification number, which may not be the employee’s social security number;
 - 3. actual gross salary;
 - 4. salary range;
 - 5. terms and conditions of employment relationship;
 - 6. contract fees;
 - 7. actual gross pension;
 - 8. the value and nature of employer-paid fringe benefits;
 - 9. the basis for and the amount of any added remuneration, including expense reimbursement, in addition to salary;
 - 10. job title;
 - 11. bargaining unit;
 - 12. job description;
 - 13. education and training background;
 - 14. previous work experience;

15. date of first and last employment;
16. the existence and status of any complaints or charges against the employee, regardless of whether the complaint or charge resulted in a disciplinary action;
17. the final disposition of any disciplinary action, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 2(b), together with the specific reasons for the action and data documenting the basis of the action, excluding data that would identify confidential sources who are employees of the school district;
18. the complete terms of any agreement settling any dispute arising out of the employment relationship, including superintendent buyout agreements, except that the agreement must include specific reasons for the agreement if it involves the payment of more than \$10,000 of public money, and such agreement may not have the purpose or effect of limiting access to or disclosure of personnel data or limiting the discussion of information or opinions related to personnel data;
19. work location;
20. work telephone number;
21. badge number;
22. work-related continuing education;
23. honors and awards received; and
24. payroll time sheets or other comparable data that are used only to account for employee's work time for payroll purposes, except to the extent that release of time sheet data would reveal the employee's reasons for the use of sick or other medical leave or other not public data.

B. The following information on applicants for employment is public:

1. veteran status;
2. relevant test scores;
3. rank on eligible list;
4. job history;
5. education and training; and
6. work availability.

- C. Names of applicants are private data except when certified as eligible for appointment to a vacancy or when they become finalists for an employment position.
- D. Applicants for appointment to a public body.
1. Data about applicants for appointment to a public body are private data on individuals except that the following are public:
 - a. name;
 - b. city of residence, except when the appointment has a residency requirement that requires the entire address to be public;
 - c. education and training;
 - d. employment history;
 - e. volunteer work;
 - f. awards and honors;
 - g. prior government service;
 - h. any data required to be provided or that are voluntarily provided in an application for appointment to a multimember agency pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 15.0597; and
 - i. veteran status.
 2. Once an individual is appointed to a public body, the following additional items of data are public:
 - a. residential address;
 - b. either a telephone number or electronic mail address where the appointee can be reached, or both at the request of the appointee;
 - c. first and last dates of service on the public body;
 - d. the existence and status of any complaints or charges against an appointee; and
 - e. upon completion of an investigation of a complaint or charge against an appointee, the final investigative report is public, unless access to the data would jeopardize an active investigation.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2., any electronic mail address or telephone number provided by a public body for use by an appointee shall be public. An appointee may use an electronic mail address or telephone number provided by the public body as the designated electronic mail address or telephone number at which the appointee can be reached.
- E. Regardless of whether there has been a final disposition as defined in Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 2(b), upon completion of an investigation of a complaint or charge against a public official, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 2(e), or if a public official resigns or is terminated from employment while the complaint or charge is pending, all data relating to the complaint or charge are public, unless access to the data would jeopardize an active investigation or reveal confidential sources.
- F. Data relating to a complaint or charge against a public official is public only if: (1) the complaint or charge results in disciplinary action or the employee resigns or is terminated from employment while the complaint or charge is pending; or (2) potential legal claims arising out of the conduct that is the subject of the complaint or charge are released as part of a settlement agreement. Data that is classified as private under another law is not made public by this provision.

V. PRIVATE PERSONNEL DATA

- A. All other personnel data are private and will only be shared with school district staff whose work requires such access. Private data will not be otherwise released unless authorized by law or by the employee's informed written consent.
- B. Data pertaining to an employee's dependents are private data on individuals.
- C. Data created, collected or maintained by the school district to administer employee assistance programs are private.
- D. Parking space leasing data are private.
- E. An individual's checking account number is private when submitted to a government entity.
- F. Personnel data may be disseminated to labor organizations to the extent the school district determines it is necessary for the labor organization to conduct its business or when ordered or authorized by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Mediation Services.
- G. The school district may display a photograph of a current or former employee to prospective witnesses as part of the school district's investigation of any complaint or charge against the employee.
- H. The school district may, if the responsible authority or designee reasonably determines that the release of personnel data is necessary to protect an employee from harm to self or to protect another person who may be harmed by the employee,

release data that are relevant to the concerns for safety to:

1. the person who may be harmed and to the attorney representing the person when the data are relevant to obtaining a restraining order;
 2. a pre-petition screening team conducting an investigation of the employee under Minn. Stat. § 253B.07, Subd. 1; or
 3. a court, law enforcement agency, or prosecuting authority.
- I. Private personnel data or confidential investigative data on employees may be disseminated to a law enforcement agency for the purpose of reporting a crime or alleged crime committed by an employee, or for the purpose of assisting law enforcement in the investigation of such a crime or alleged crime.
- J. A complainant has access to a statement provided by the complainant to the school district in connection with a complaint or charge against an employee.
- K. When allegations of sexual or other types of harassment are made against an employee, the employee shall not have access to data that would identify the complainant or other witnesses if the school district determines that the employee's access to that data would:
1. threaten the personal safety of the complainant or a witness; or
 2. subject the complainant or witness to harassment.
- If a disciplinary proceeding is initiated against the employee, data on the complainant or witness shall be available to the employee as may be necessary for the employee to prepare for the proceeding.
- L. The school district shall make any report to the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board or the state board of education as required by Minn. Stat. § 122A.20, Subd. 2, and shall, upon written request from the licensing board having jurisdiction over a teacher's license, provide the licensing board with information about the teacher from the school district's files, any termination or disciplinary proceeding, and settlement or compromise, or any investigative file in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 122A.20, Subd. 2.
- M. Private personnel data shall be disclosed to the department of economic security for the purpose of administration of the unemployment insurance program under Minn. Stat. Ch. 268.
- N. When a report of alleged maltreatment of a student in a school is made to the Commissioner of Education, data that are relevant and collected by the school about the person alleged to have committed maltreatment must be provided to the Commissioner on request for purposes of an assessment or investigation of the maltreatment report. Additionally, personnel data may be released for purposes of

informing a parent, legal guardian, or custodian of a child that an incident has occurred that may constitute maltreatment of the child, when the incident occurred, and the nature of the conduct that may constitute maltreatment.

- O. The school district shall release to a requesting school district or charter school private personnel data on a current or former employee related to acts of violence toward or sexual contact with a student, if an investigation conducted by or on behalf of the school district or law enforcement affirmed the allegations in writing prior to release and the investigation resulted in the resignation of the subject of the data; or the employee resigned while a complaint or charge involving the allegations was pending, the allegations involved acts of sexual contact with a student, and the employer informed the employee in writing, before the employee resigned, that if the employee resigns while the complaint or charge is still pending, the employer must release private personnel data about the employee's alleged sexual contact with a student to a school district or charter school requesting the data after the employee applies for employment with that school district or charter school and the data remain classified as provided in Minn. Stat. Ch. 13. Data that are released under this paragraph must not include data on the student.
- P. The identity of an employee making a suggestion as part of an organized self-evaluation effort by the school district to cut costs, make the school district more efficient, or to improve school district operations is private.
- Q. Health information on employees is private unless otherwise provided by law. To the extent that the school district transmits protected health information, the school district will comply with all privacy requirements.
- R. Personal home contact information for employees may be used by the school district and shared with another government entity in the event of an emergency or other disruption to ensure continuity of operation for the school district or government entity.
- S. The personal telephone number, home address, and electronic mail address of a current or former employee of a contractor or subcontractor maintained as a result of a contractual relationship between the school district and a contractor or subcontractor entered on or after August 1, 2012, are private data. These data must be shared with another government entity to perform a function authorized by law. The data also must be disclosed to a government entity or any person for prevailing wage purposes.
- T. When a teacher is discharged immediately because the teacher's license has been revoked due to a conviction for child abuse or sexual abuse or when the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) makes a final determination of child maltreatment involving a teacher, the school principal or other person having administrative control of the school must include in the teacher's employment record the information contained in the record of the disciplinary action or the final maltreatment determination, consistent with the definition of public data under Minn. Stat. § 13.41, Subd. 5, and must provide the

Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and the licensing division at MDE with the necessary and relevant information to enable the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and MDE's licensing division to fulfill their statutory and administrative duties related to issuing, renewing, suspending, or revoking a teacher's license. In addition to the background check required under Minn. Stat. § 123B.03, a school board or other school hiring authority must contact the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and MDE to determine whether the teacher's license has been suspended or revoked, consistent with the discharge and final maltreatment determinations. Unless restricted by federal or state data practices law or by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, the responsible authority for a school district must disseminate to another school district private personnel data on a current or former teacher (employee or contractor) of the district, including the results of background investigations, if the requesting school district seeks the information because the subject of the data has applied for employment with the requesting school district.

VI. MULTIPLE CLASSIFICATIONS

If data on individuals are classified as both private and confidential by Minn. Stat. Ch. 13, or any other state or federal law, the data are private.

VII. CHANGE IN CLASSIFICATIONS

The school district shall change the classification of data in its possession if it is required to do so to comply with other judicial or administrative rules pertaining to the conduct of legal actions or with a specific statute applicable to the data in the possession of the disseminating or receiving agency.

VIII. RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

The school district has designated [*name and title, telephone*] as the authority responsible for personnel data. If you have any questions, contact [*him/her*].

IX. EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION/RELEASE FORM

An employee authorization form is included as an addendum to this policy.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 13.02 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 13.37 (General Nonpublic Data)
Minn. Stat. § 13.39 (Civil Investigation Data)
Minn. Stat. § 13.43 (Personnel Data)
Minn. Stat. § 13.601, Subd. 3 (Elected and Appointed Officials)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.20, Subd. 2 (Mandatory Reporting)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subds. 13 and 16 (Employment; Contracts; Termination)

Minn. Stat. § 626.556, Subd. 7 (Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors)
P.L. 104-191 (HIPAA)
45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164 (HIPAA Regulations)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 206 (Public Participation in School Board Meetings/Complaints about Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 13, School Law Bulletin “T” (School Records – Privacy – Access to Data)

Adopted: _____

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 205

Orig. 1995

Revised: _____

Rev. 2017

205 OPEN MEETINGS AND CLOSED MEETINGS

[Note: The provisions of this policy accurately reflect the Open Meeting Law statute and are not discretionary in nature.]

I. PURPOSE

- A. The school board embraces the philosophy of openness in the conduct of its business, in the belief that openness produces better programs, more efficiency in administration of programs, and an organization more responsive to public interest and less susceptible to private interest. The school board shall conduct its business under a presumption of openness. At the same time, the school board recognizes and respects the privacy rights of individuals as provided by law. The school board also recognizes that there are certain exceptions to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law as recognized in statute where it has been determined that, in limited circumstances, the public interest is best served by closing a meeting of the school board.
- B. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to assure the rights of the public to be present at school board meetings, while also protecting the individual's rights to privacy under law, and to close meetings when the public interest so requires as recognized by law.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Except as otherwise expressly provided by statute, all meetings of the school board, including executive sessions, shall be open to the public.
- B. Meetings shall be closed only when expressly authorized by law.

III. DEFINITION

“Meeting” means a gathering of at least a quorum or more members of the school board, or quorum of a committee or subcommittee of school board members, at which members discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of the school board. The term does not include a chance or social gathering or the use of social media by members of a public body so long as the social media use is limited to exchanges with all members of the general public. For purposes of the Open Meeting Law, social media does not include e-mail.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Meetings

1. Regular Meetings

A schedule of the regular meetings of the school board shall be kept on file at its primary offices. If the school board decides to hold a regular meeting at a time or place different from the time or place stated in its schedule, it shall give the same notice of the meeting as for a special meeting.

2. Special Meetings

- a. For a special meeting, the school board shall post written notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting on the principal bulletin board of the school district or on the door of the school board's usual meeting room if there is no principal bulletin board. The school board's actions at the special meeting are limited to those topics included in the notice.
- b. The notice shall also be mailed or otherwise delivered to each person who has filed a written request for notice of special meetings.
- c. This notice shall be posted and mailed or delivered at least three days before the date of the meeting. As an alternative to mailing or otherwise delivering notice to persons who have filed a written request, the school board may publish the notice once, at least three days before the meeting, in the official newspaper of the school district or, if none, in a qualified newspaper of general circulation within the area of the school district.
- d. A person filing a request for notice of special meetings may limit the request to particular subjects, in which case the school board is required to send notice to that person only concerning those particular subjects.
- e. The school board will establish an expiration date on requests for notice of special meetings and require refiling once each year. Not more than 60 days before the expiration date of request for notice, the school board shall send notice of the refiling requirement to each person who filed during the preceding year.

3. Emergency Meetings

- a. An emergency meeting is a special meeting called because of circumstances that, in the judgment of the school board, require immediate consideration.

[Note: While the statute leaves the question to the board of whether the circumstances require immediate consideration at an emergency meeting, the advisory opinions of the Commissioner of Administration would limit

such meetings to responding to natural disasters or health epidemics caused by an event such as an accident or terrorist attack.]

- b. If matters not directly related to the emergency are discussed or acted upon, the minutes of the meeting shall include a specific description of those matters.
- c. The school board shall make good faith efforts to provide notice of the emergency meeting to each news medium that has filed a written request for notice if the request includes the news medium's telephone number.
- d. Notice of the emergency meeting shall be given by telephone or any other method used to notify the members of the school board.
- e. Notice shall be provided to each news medium which has filed a written request for notice as soon as reasonably practicable after notice has been given to the school board members.
- f. Notice shall include the subject of the meeting.
- g. Posted or published notice of an emergency meeting shall not be required.
- h. The notice requirements for an emergency meeting as set forth in this policy shall supersede any other statutory notice requirement for a special meeting that is an emergency meeting.

4. Recessed or Continued Meetings

If a meeting is a recessed or continued session of a previous meeting, and the time and place of the meeting was established during the previous meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting, then no further published or mailed notice is necessary.

5. Closed Meetings

The notice requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law apply to closed meetings.

6. Actual Notice

If a person receives actual notice of a meeting of the school board at least 24 hours before the meeting, all notice requirements are satisfied with respect to that person, regardless of the method of receipt of notice.

7. Health Pandemic or Declared Emergency

In the event of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under Minn. Stat. Ch. 12, a meeting may be conducted by telephone or other electronic means in compliance with Minn. Stat. § 13D.021.

8. Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology

A meeting may be conducted by interactive technology, Skype, or other similar electronic means in compliance with Minn. Stat. § 13D.02.

B. Votes

The votes of school board members shall be recorded in a journal kept for that purpose, and the journal shall be available to the public during all normal business hours at the administrative offices of the school district.

C. Written Materials

1. In any open meeting, a copy of any printed materials, including electronic communications, relating to the agenda items prepared or distributed by the school board or its employees and distributed to or available to all school board members shall be available in the meeting room for inspection by the public while the school board considers their subject matter.
2. This provision does not apply to materials not classified by law as public, or to materials relating to the agenda items of a closed meeting.

D. Data

1. Meetings may not be closed merely because the data to be discussed are not public data.
2. Data that are not public data may be discussed at an open meeting if the disclosure relates to a matter within the scope of the school board's authority and is reasonably necessary to conduct the business or agenda item before the school board.
3. Data discussed at an open meeting retain the data's original classification; however, a record of the meeting, regardless of form, shall be public.

E. Closed Meetings

1. Labor Negotiations Strategy

- a. The school board may, by a majority vote in a public meeting, decide to hold a closed meeting to consider strategy for labor negotiations, including negotiation strategies or developments or discussion and review of labor negotiation proposals.

- b. The time and place of the closed meeting shall be announced at the public meeting. A written roll of school board members and all other persons present at the closed meeting shall be made available to the public after the closed meeting. The proceedings shall be tape recorded, and the tape recording shall be preserved for two years after the contract discussed at the meeting is signed. The recording shall be made available to the public after all labor contracts are signed by the school board for the current budget period.

2. Sessions Closed by Bureau of Mediation Services

All negotiations, mediation sessions, and hearings between the school board and its employees or their respective representatives are public meetings. These meetings may be closed only by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS). The use of recording devices, stenographic records, or other recording methods is prohibited in mediation meetings closed by the BMS.

3. Preliminary Consideration of Charges

The school board shall close one or more meetings for preliminary consideration of allegations or charges against an individual subject to its authority. If the school board members conclude that discipline of any nature may be warranted as a result of those specific charges or allegations, further meetings or hearings relating to those specific charges or allegations held after that conclusion is reached must be open. A meeting must also be open at the request of the individual who is the subject of the meeting. A closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

4. Performance Evaluations

The school board may close a meeting to evaluate the performance of an individual who is subject to its authority. The school board shall identify the individual to be evaluated prior to closing a meeting. At its next open meeting, the school board shall summarize its conclusions regarding the evaluation. A meeting must be open at the request of the individual who is the subject of the meeting. A closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

5. Attorney-Client Meeting

A meeting may be closed if permitted by the attorney-client privilege. Attorney-client privilege applies when litigation is imminent or threatened, or when the school board needs advice above the level of general legal

advice, i.e., regarding specific acts and their legal consequences. A meeting may be closed to seek legal advice concerning litigation strategy, but the mere threat that litigation might be a consequence of deciding a matter one way or another does not, by itself, justify closing the meeting. The motion to close the meeting must specifically describe the matter to be discussed at the closed meeting, subject to relevant privacy and confidentiality considerations under state and federal law. The law does not require that such a meeting be recorded.

6. Dismissal Hearing

- a. A hearing on the dismissal of a licensed teacher shall be public or private at the teacher's discretion. A hearing regarding placement of teachers on unrequested leave of absence shall be public.
- b. A hearing on dismissal of a student pursuant to the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act shall be closed unless the pupil, parent or guardian requests an open hearing.
- c. To the extent a teacher or student dismissal hearing is held before the school board and is closed, the closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

7. Coaches; Opportunity to Respond

- a. If the school board has declined to renew the coaching contract of a licensed or nonlicensed head varsity coach, it must notify the coach within 14 days of that decision.
- b. If the coach requests the reasons for the nonrenewal, the school board must give the coach the reasons in writing within 10 days of receiving the request.
- c. On the request of the coach, the school board must provide the coach with a reasonable opportunity to respond to the reasons at a school board meeting.
- d. The meeting may be open or closed at the election of the coach unless the meeting is closed as required by Minn. Stat. § 13D.05, Subd. 2, to discuss educational or certain other nonpublic data.
- e. A closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

8. Meetings to Discuss Certain Not Public Data

Any portion of a meeting must be closed if the following types of data are discussed:

- a. data that would identify alleged victims or reporters of criminal sexual conduct, domestic abuse, or maltreatment of minors or vulnerable adults;
- b. active investigative data collected or created by a law enforcement agency;
- c. educational data, health data, medical data, welfare data, or mental health data that are not public data; or
- d. an individual's personal medical records.
- e. A closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

9. Purchase and Sale of Property

- a. The school board may close a meeting:
 - (1) to determine the asking price for real or personal property to be sold by the school district;
 - (2) to review confidential or nonpublic appraisal data; and
 - (3) to develop or consider offers or counteroffers for the purchase or sale of real or personal property.
- b. Before closing the meeting, the school board must identify on the record the particular real or personal property that is the subject of the closed meeting.
- c. The closed meeting must be tape recorded at the expense of the school district. The tape must be preserved for eight years after the date of the meeting and be made available to the public after all real or personal property discussed at the meeting has been purchased or sold or the school board has abandoned the purchase or sale. The real or personal property that is the subject of the closed meeting must be specifically identified on the tape. A list of school board members and all other persons present at the closed meeting must be made available to the public after the closed meeting.

- d. An agreement reached that is based on an offer considered at a closed meeting is contingent on its approval by the school board at an open meeting. The actual purchase or sale must be approved at an open meeting and the purchase price or sale price is public data.

10. Security Matters

- a. The school board may close a meeting to receive security briefings and reports, to discuss issues related to security systems, to discuss emergency response procedures, and to discuss security deficiencies in or recommendations regarding public services, infrastructure, and facilities, if disclosure of the information discussed would pose a danger to public safety or compromise security procedures or responses.
- b. Financial issues related to security matters must be discussed and all related financial decisions must be made at an open meeting.
- c. Before closing a meeting, the school board must refer to the facilities, systems, procedures, services, or infrastructures to be considered during the closed meeting.
- d. The closed meeting must be tape recorded at the expense of the school district and the recording must be preserved for at least four years.

11. Other Meetings

Other meetings shall be closed as provided by law, except as provided above. A closed meeting must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district, and the recording must be preserved for at least three years after the date of the meeting. The recording is not available to the public.

F. Procedures for Closing a Meeting

The school board shall provide notice of a closed meeting just as for an open meeting. A school board meeting may be closed only after a majority vote at a public meeting. Before closing a meeting, the school board shall state on the record the specific authority permitting the meeting to be closed and shall describe the subject to be discussed.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D (Open Meeting Law)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.47, Subd. 5 (Student Dismissal Hearing)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.33, Subd. 3 (Coaches; Opportunity to Respond)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subd. 14 (Teacher Discharge Hearing)

Minn. Stat. § 179A.14, Subd. 3 (Labor Negotiations)
 Minn. Rules Part 5510.2810 (Bureau of Mediation Services)
Brown v. Cannon Falls Township, 723 N.W.2d 31 (Minn. App. 2006)
Brainerd Daily Dispatch v. Dehen, 693 N.W.2d 435 (Minn. App. 2005)
The Free Press v. County of Blue Earth, 677 N.W.2d 471 (Minn. App. 2004)
Prior Lake American v. Mader, 642 N.W.2d 729 (Minn. 2002)
Star Tribune v. Board of Education, Special School District No. 1, 507
 N.W.2d 869 (Minn. App. 1993)
Minnesota Daily v. University of Minnesota, 432 N.W.2d 189 (Minn. App.
 1988)
Moberg v. Independent School District No. 281, 336 N.W.2d 510 (Minn.
 1983)
Sovereign v. Dunn, 498 N.W.2d 62 (Minn. App. 1993), *rev. denied.* (Minn.
 1993)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 19-008 (May 22, 2019)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 19-006 (April 9, 2019)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 18-019 (December 28, 2018)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 17-005 (June 22, 2017)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 13-009 (March 19, 2013)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 12-004 (March 8, 2012)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 11-004 (April 18, 2011)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 10-020 (September 23, 2010)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 09-020 (September 8, 2009)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 08-015 (July 9, 2008)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 06-027 (September 28, 2006)
 Dept. of Admin. Advisory Op. No. 04-004 (February 3, 2004)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 204 (School Board Meeting Minutes)
 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 206 (Public Participation in School Board
 Meetings/Complaints about Persons at School Board Meetings and Data
 Privacy Considerations)
 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 207 (Public Hearings)
 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
 MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 13, School Law Bulletin “C” (Minnesota’s
 Open Meeting Law)

Other search considerations based upon statute

Minnesota Statute 122A.40 (excerpt provided below) addresses two areas school boards must also be aware of during the superintendent search process:

1. Residency
2. Candidates who may be related to a board member (additional information provided in School Board Guidelines for Special Voting Situations)

122A.40 EMPLOYMENT; CONTRACTS; TERMINATION.

Subdivision 1. Teacher defined.

A principal, supervisor, and classroom teacher and any other professional employee required to hold a license from the state department shall be deemed to be a "teacher" within the meaning of this section. A superintendent is a "teacher" only for purposes of subdivisions 3 and 19.

Subd. 3. Hiring, dismissing.

School boards must hire or dismiss teachers at duly called meetings. Where a husband and wife, brother and sister, or two brothers or sisters, constitute a quorum, no contract employing a teacher shall be made or authorized except upon the unanimous vote of the full board. A teacher related by blood or marriage, within the fourth degree, computed by the civil law, to a board member shall not be employed except by a unanimous vote of the full board. The initial employment of the teacher in the district must be by written contract, signed by the teacher and by the chair and clerk. All subsequent employment of the teacher in the district must be by written contract, signed by the teacher and by the chair and clerk, except where there is a master agreement covering the employment of the teacher. Contracts for teaching or supervision of teaching can be made only with qualified teachers. A teacher shall not be required to reside within the employing district as a condition to teaching employment or continued teaching employment.

In addition, Minnesota Statute 123B.143 (excerpt provided below) addresses the role of a superintendent and the board's contractual parameters.

123B.143 SUPERINTENDENT.

Subdivision 1. Contract; duties.

All districts maintaining a classified secondary school must employ a superintendent who shall be an ex officio nonvoting member of the school board. The authority for selection and employment of a superintendent must be vested in the board in all cases. An individual employed by a board as a superintendent shall have an initial employment contract for a period of time no longer than three years from the date of employment. Any subsequent employment contract must not exceed a period of three years. A board, at its discretion, may or may not renew an employment contract. A board must not, by action or inaction, extend the duration of an existing employment contract. Beginning 365 days prior to the expiration date of an existing employment contract, a board may negotiate and enter into a subsequent employment contract to take effect upon the expiration of the existing contract.



School Board Guidelines for Special Voting Situations

Subject	Vote	Minn. Stat.
Initial hire of a teacher related to a board member	Unanimous vote of the full board	122A.40, Subd. 3
Termination of continuing contract teacher	Majority roll call vote of the full board	122A.40, Subd. 7
Placement of teacher on unrequested leave of absence	Majority vote unless defined otherwise in the negotiated ULA language in a Master Agreement	122A.40, Subd. 11
District may reimburse employee for legal expenses	Majority vote Board member who is witness or alleged victim may not vote on reimbursement	123B.02, Subd. 20
School board member's right to employment	Majority approval at a meeting at which all board members are present	123B.195
School district general obligation bonds not exceeding 5-1/10 percent of the net tax capacity	2/3 majority vote of all the members of the board	128D.11, Subd. 3
Removal of board member for cause and fill vacancy	Concurrent vote of at least four board members	123B.09, Subd. 9
Designation of voting hours	Majority vote	205A.09
Designation of newspaper <u>other than</u> a 'qualified newspaper'	Unanimous vote	331A.04, Subd. 6(a)(4)
Donation or gift to the school district	2/3 majority vote	465.03

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Subject	Vote	Minn. Stat.
Contract with employee class and a board member's spouse is in the class (spouse cannot receive a special benefit)	<p>Majority of disinterested board members vote to approve the contract</p> <p>School board member-spouse must be directed to abstain from voting; essential facts of contract must be set forth at the meeting</p>	471.88, Subd. 21
<p>Designation of district bank/savings association</p> <p>School board member who is 'interested' shall disclose that the member is a director or employee; disclosure is entered in minutes; disclosure shall be made when bank or savings association is first designated as depository or source of borrowing or when member is elected (whichever is later)</p>	Unanimous vote	471.88, Subd. 2
Official newspaper <u>with an interested board member</u> and the paper is the only newspaper complying with legal requirements on designation or publication	Unanimous vote	471.88, Subd. 3
District contract with a cooperative association that has an interested board member as shareholder or stockholder	Unanimous vote	471.88, Subd. 4
A contract that does not require bids <u>and</u> the contract involves an interested board member	Unanimous vote	471.88, Subd. 5
Contract to provide construction materials/services contract with interested board member when the school district population is equal to or less than 1,000	<p>Unanimous vote</p> <p>Interested board member may not vote on the contract</p>	471.88, Subd. 12
Application for federal or state grant for housing, community, or economic development and a board member may benefit	<p>Unanimous vote</p> <p>Interested board member must abstain on voting on measures related to the grant</p>	471.88, Subd. 17

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Common Interview Mistakes

Below are ten common interview mistakes. School board members are wise to review the list prior to the interviews.

- 1. Poor or incomplete selection criteria.** If the school board hasn't carefully considered the skills and qualities needed for the position, the school board's interview questions won't get to the key issues.
- 2. Making a bad impression.** Plan ahead so the school board appears cohesive and organized. Start the interview on time and give the candidates your undivided attention. Avoid talking too much – whether it's in the formal interview or informal chitchat – the candidates should be the ones doing most of the talking. School boards don't want the best candidates to have an unfavorable opinion of the school board or school district.
- 3. Violations of the “Don't Ask” list.** Asking “Don't Ask” questions during an interview – intentionally or unintentionally – could subject the school district to a lawsuit. Remember, the “Don't Ask” questions pertain to every step of the process.
- 4. Vague questions, vague answers.** School board members shouldn't be left to interpret what a candidate said or meant. Interview questions should be open-ended but should not invite vague answers. Rather, when possible, ask the candidate to provide current and/or previous examples (i.e., How did you ...).
- 5. Forgetting the whole picture.** When the school board spends too much time on a particular topic, or the questions keep returning to a single topic, the “whole picture” is lost and important areas don't get covered. School board members also sometimes cling to one important characteristic – such as good communication skills – at the expense of considering other weaknesses. The reverse is also true.
- 6. Failure to probe motivation.** School board members certainly want to focus on a candidate's skills. However, the school board should also learn about the candidate's motivation and passion for the job. If the candidate isn't supportive of the school board's goals, the lack of support will be evident in his or her performance. Finding the right candidate is more than learning if a candidate can do the job; the issue is will he or she do it and do it well?
- 7. Treating the interview like a one-way street.** The school board must make sure the interview is a two-way conversation – the school board asks the candidates questions, yet ensures the candidates have time to ask their own questions.
- 8. Incomplete notes.** Without notes, school board members are unlikely to remember key points of each interview – especially after talking to several candidates. Good notes help ensure equal consideration of all candidates; otherwise, the first and last candidates tend to stand out and gain an unfair advantage.
- 9. Quick decisions.** Individuals without a great deal of interview experience may find it difficult to avoid first impressions and assign characteristics based on their own personal interpretations. However, school board members should take their time and make confident, measured decisions based on the pre-established selection criteria.
- 10. Accepting the wrong fit.** Being without a full-time, permanent superintendent for long is neither easy nor desirable. However, lowering the school board's standards to fill the position quickly is worse. When dealing with a high-profile job in a public institution, the process counts. Take your time.
- 11. Not checking your bias at the door.** See the following page for more information on the role Implicit Bias plays in candidate interviews.

WHAT IS BIAS?

First, it's important to understand what bias is and why we all have biases.

Bias is often regarded negatively. For the purpose of this discussion, we consider bias in the context of partiality, preconceived notion and predisposition. The reality is that biases naturally come from our brains' use of schemas. A schema can be described as a template of knowledge. We use schemas to process the information that bombards our senses every moment of every day. This is simply a way for us to sort information into categories that make sense to us. We have schemas about objects, processes and other human beings.

For example, our brain uses a schema to assign the category of "chair" to an object based on its flat seat, back and legs, even though the chair might be plain wood or lavishly upholstered. We may have a negative bias about plain wood chairs because we have had the uncomfortable experience of sitting in one for an extended period of time. We have a schema for the process of ordering food at a restaurant. We know what it means when a smiling person hands us a laminated document with descriptions of various dishes and prices. And, by observing assorted traits, we use schemas to naturally assign people into categories such as age, gender, race and role.

There are two types of bias, explicit and implicit. Both types of bias include stereotypes and attitudes.

STEREOTYPES are traits that we associate with a category. These associations may arise from direct personal experience or they might be relayed to us through stories, media and culture. "Elderly people are frail" is an example of a stereotype.

ATTITUDES are overall evaluative feelings that are positive or negative. If we meet someone who graduated from the same university, we tend to feel more at ease with that person.

WHAT IS IMPLICIT BIAS?

Implicit biases are those we carry without awareness or conscious direction. It is the result of our human brains using schemas to organize information into categories. Most of the work our brains do occurs on the unconscious level. Implicit bias does not mean that we hide our prejudices. We are unaware of these biases and they are generally not an indication of our beliefs and values.

This is important for interviewers to understand because without awareness we cannot know if we are acting on hidden biases. Implicit bias is also referred to as hidden or unconscious bias.

WHAT IS EXPLICIT BIAS?

In contrast, explicit bias means that we are aware that we have a particular thought or feeling. It sometimes means we understand the source of that thought or feeling. If you have an explicitly positive attitude toward chocolate, you consciously endorse and celebrate that preference.



Deliberation Scenarios

In preparation for deliberating in public, it can be helpful to discuss possible scenarios and plan in advance how the board might handle them. Below are some examples of what can occur during the deliberation process. Although these types of situations are rare, please discuss how your board might manage these scenarios in order to conduct open, honest, and positive deliberations regarding your district's candidates.

1. The Board is deadlocked regarding two finalists. As each side digs in, they drill deeper and deeper into the reasons they want their candidate. These reasons could be because they think the candidate will move to the area or are young and vital and will be visible and energetic. How could your board manage that discussion?
2. The debate regarding who should be offered the job is heated and begins to unravel. It reaches a point where comments are becoming personal from board member to board member or even questioning the chair's intentions and character. How do you respond in order to keep the discussion collaborative and professional?
3. During deliberations on the final candidates, one board member states they have information from credible sources that one candidate has issues in their background that the rest of the board does not know about and that is why they won't support their candidacy. How could your board manage the deliberations?

Again, these situations are rare; however, should they arise what can your board agree upon as fundamental principles to help keep the deliberations as respectful as possible? Please list them below.

Sample Interview Questions

Professional Information

1. Why are you interested in this position?
2. What do you consider to be your proudest accomplishment as an educator?
3. How do you systematically improve your knowledge and skills as an administrator?
4. In which professional area of expertise would you most like to improve?

Biographical and Self-Assessment

5. What administrative strengths will you bring to this school district?
6. If we visited with your staff, what would they say is your most obvious strength?
Weakness?
7. How does this position fit in with your long-term goals?
8. Do you consider yourself an “out front” leader or a “behind-the-scenes” leader?
9. Why are you seriously interested in becoming our superintendent?
10. What aspects of your education and experience would be especially helpful in this position?
11. How do you respond and personally deal with criticism?
12. What would you like to accomplish in your present position but doubt that you will be able to accomplish? Why?
13. Assume for the moment that you have completed a long successful career in the school district. What would you hope to be the three most significant achievements you will be remembered for?
14. What are your long-term career objectives?
15. What has been the most unpopular decision you have had to make and how did you handle the reaction to this decision?
16. What qualities do you possess that you believe make you an outstanding administrator?

School Board/Superintendent Relations

17. What is your responsibility if the school board proposes something that you think is educationally unsound?
18. What role do you think the school board should play in the hiring process for various categories of personnel, such as secretaries, teachers, and building administrators?
19. What would you do if you believed one or more school board members were exceeding the proper exercise of their office in the day-to-day operations of the school district?
20. How should a school board member respond to a constituent’s complaint concerning a teacher in an elementary school?
21. What is your definition of an ideal school board/superintendent relationship?
22. How would you help the school board maintain its leadership role in this world of educational change?
23. What would be your reaction if the school board opposes something which you thought was sound? What if the school board proposes something which you think is unsound or inappropriate?
24. How would you expect to be evaluated?
25. How would you work with a chronically “split board”?
26. What kind of understanding would you hope to establish between the school board and yourself in order to administer this school district effectively?

27. How would you keep the school board informed about what is happening in the school district?
28. How would you expect the school board to help you as a superintendent?
29. Describe your vision of the perfect relationship between the school board and the superintendent. What have you done in your past assignments to help achieve that relationship?
30. What types of events or behaviors have caused you to feel at odds with your school board and how have you resolved those situations?
31. Describe how you keep your school board fully informed between meetings.
32. Describe how you would prepare an agenda for the next school board meeting. What is your procedure for determining how items get on the agenda?
33. How would you prepare the school board to make a decision on a politically sensitive or controversial issue?
34. How do you feel the annual evaluation of superintendent performance should be handled? What elements should be included in the evaluation?
35. What is your role in developing school board policy?
36. What role should the superintendent play in orienting new school board members? How should this be accomplished?
37. How would you propose to have your performance evaluated? By whom? On what criteria? How often?
38. Tell us about your past relations with your school board.
39. How do you balance conflicting interests between school board and school district support groups?

Personnel, Management, and Administration

40. Describe your philosophy of effective delegation.
41. What do you consider to be the most important duties of a CEO?
42. How would you set up an accountability system for personnel?
43. How would you motivate the teaching, administrative, and support staff to achieve new levels of excellence in education for children of all abilities?
44. What do you understand to be your responsibility in providing professional educational leadership?
45. How have you shared decision making with staff and citizens?
46. How aggressive would you be in creating change within the school district?
47. How would you build trust and collaboration within the school district?
48. How would you describe your management style? Would your subordinates describe it the same way?
49. What is your understanding of the administrative team concept? How would you implement that concept?
50. How do you delegate responsibility to others?
51. How would you improve the abilities of the professional staff?
52. Is there a difference between management and leadership? If so, what might that be? Can an individual be a manager and a leader?
53. How would you describe your management philosophy? Your managerial strengths and weaknesses?
54. How would you go about evaluating the effectiveness of our current administrative team? If you were to feel some re-alignment were necessary, how would you go about making a change?

55. How do you make decisions? Please relate the process you used in making your last important decision.
56. What process do you use (or would you use) to hire staff? At the school district level? At the building level?
57. How do you handle a conflict between parents and a building principal over school rules?
58. What is your philosophy concerning the recruitment of personnel?
59. What procedures do you find most useful in recruiting administrators and teachers?
60. Describe your experience with negotiations. What role do you prefer to play? How much has your school board been involved?
61. How do you maintain a collaborative relationship with the staff and/or teachers' association?
62. What kind of authority do you give to principals, and how do you hold them accountable?
63. If a teacher expresses concern to you about a principal's written evaluation of his/her performance, what would you do?
64. What is your philosophy concerning human resource development?
65. Tell us about your training in conflict management and consensus building.

Finance and Building Programs

66. What is your procedure in developing a school district-wide budget?
67. What are some of the techniques you would recommend the school district use to cut the budget if that becomes necessary?
68. How would you suggest this school district handle long-range financial planning?
69. What is your experience in organizing and successfully passing bond issues?
70. Explain how you achieved success in past assignments that required coping with flat or minimally increasing revenues in the face of substantially increasing student enrollments.
71. Explain how you have achieved the appropriate balance between the need to protect the taxpayer's wallet and the need to have an outstanding program for students.
72. How would you develop a budget for the school district?
73. What is the school board's role in the budget process?
74. How would you involve the school board, staff, and the community in the budget process?
75. What is your experience in passing referendums?
76. How would you describe your understanding of school district finance? What do you know of finance issues?
77. Describe the budget-making process you have used.
78. What has been your experience with budget management, budgetary controls, and budget reduction?
79. What financial responsibilities have been assigned to others in your school district?
80. How would you suggest establishing a reasonable balance between budgeting for needed school district improvements and maintaining the fiscal integrity of the school district?
81. What financial difficulties have you encountered? What did you do?
82. How involved are you in the budgeting process and financial planning of your school district or do you leave those decisions to a business manager? (Superintendents from large school districts usually have a business manager.)

Community Relations

83. Describe ways you would help build public confidence in this school district.
84. How would you be involved in the community?
85. How have you effectively kept the public involved with the school district?

86. As CEO, how would you establish partnerships with the business community to support the school district?
87. What is the role of the superintendent and the school board in developing community support for the schools?
88. How would you involve the business community in the schools?
89. How would you involve the community in the schools?
90. Describe what you believe is an effective public information program.
91. How would you, as superintendent, be involved in the civic affairs of the community?
92. How do you make yourself available to community members/groups who have need of information, questions, concerns?
93. Give some specific examples of ways you have successfully communicated to your shareholders accomplishments and problems.
94. How is the content of regular reports to the community determined?
95. What evidence can you cite which indicates your success in gaining school board and community support for educational programs?
96. How important do you feel it is for the superintendent to be visible throughout the community? How would you decide what activities/organizations are worth the time and effort of active participation?
97. How would you inform the staff of action taken at the last school board meeting?
98. How would you handle parent complaints about teacher performance?
99. What role do you believe you should play in community organizations?
100. How do you maintain visibility in the school district where you work now?
101. Describe your relations with your business community.
102. How have you succeeded in maintaining connection with and support from families who no longer have children in the schools?

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

103. How will you lead to ensure that the diverse and rich backgrounds of all members in our school community will be heard and included?
104. Please provide an example of how you have intentionally sought out diverse perspectives to reach a more just and equitable outcome.
105. Please share your understanding of how diversity, equity, and inclusion are interconnected.
106. How will you work to improve educational experiences and outcomes for our students who have been historically underserved and underrepresented?
107. Please describe your approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining more educators of color? (Or Please describe your approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining more Black and Indigenous educators and educators of color?)
108. What does educational equity mean to you?
109. How has your racial identity and culture shaped and informed your world view? How are you actively working to increase and grow your own racial and cultural critical consciousness?
110. How will you develop authentic and enduring partnerships with various district stakeholder groups to support the achievement of all students?
111. Describe how you would handle the inevitable opposition that often accompanies the courageous work of educational equity.
112. School districts are responsible for providing a high quality, equitable education for each and every student. What does an equitable education look like to you and how will you lead with an equity lens?

113. Share examples of systemic and institutional racism in our education system. How will you work toward dismantling those barriers?
114. Provide an example of the strategies you have used to create an inclusive learning environment for all students, regardless of ability, race, or life experiences.
115. How would you advocate for equity and diversity initiatives with both staff and community members that don't see its value?
116. Why do you think it's important to address diversity and equity issues in this position, and what are some ways you might do that?
117. As a member of district administration, what does it mean to you to use an "equity lens" in your decision-making processes?
118. Has the pandemic changed your perceptions of equity issues in public education, and if so, in what ways?

Negotiations

119. Do you prefer to use traditional or collegial process for bargaining? Why?
120. If we talked to a union representative in your school district, how would he or she describe your relationships?
121. Have you worked with outside consultants in the area of collective bargaining? How do you choose and work with outside consultants?
122. Describe your experience in working with employee unions.

Curriculum and Instruction

123. How have you been involved in using technology in administration and instructional programs?
124. Describe how you would evaluate the instructional programs of this school district.
125. What have you found to be effective in increasing the achievement of low socio-economic and minority students?
126. How would you determine the educational strengths and weaknesses of the school district?
127. How would you achieve and maintain the proper balance between academics and extracurricular programs?
128. Describe the techniques you have found most successful to maintain and improve the quality of instruction in classrooms with a stable and long-tenured staff.
129. Describe the educational change in your previous school district of which you are most proud.
130. What criteria do you use in evaluating an instructional program?
131. What, if any, new educational programs are available which are likely to improve schooling for pre-kindergarten students? Elementary students? Middle school students? High school students?
132. What have you done to upgrade the educational programs in schools under your supervision? How have you evaluated the results?
133. During your first year as our superintendent, how might you go about determining the strengths and weaknesses of this school district?
134. What educational programs at the federal level do you consider most significant at this time?
135. Describe your most successful efforts to use the influence of the superintendency to increase student achievement at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels.
136. How would you determine whether an excellent school system needs to be improved?
137. How would you conduct an assessment of the school district's current curriculum and its instructional programs?

138. Describe an appropriate role for the school board in curriculum development.
139. Discuss how you would ensure the relevance of a school district's educational program for students in the next century.
140. What do you see as the emerging role of technology as used in education?
141. What curricular innovations have you implemented in your school district?
142. What worthwhile educational trends do you see as having a significant impact on education in the immediate future?
143. What process do you use to bring about curriculum changes in your school district?
144. What are your thoughts on "inclusion" for multi-needs special education students?

Accountability

145. What do you view as your major responsibilities in helping our school district meet the requirements of the accountability system?
146. What were some of your previous successes in meeting the state standards?
147. What else should be included in a local accountability system beyond those required by the state?
148. Describe your involvement and successes in the establishment or revision of legislation favorable to schools in general and your past school districts in particular.

Grant Writing and Administration

149. What are some examples that demonstrate your background in grant writing and administration?
150. How should a school district implement a successful grant writing and administration program?
151. Who are some of the key people involved in a successful grant program?
152. What is your basic philosophy regarding the use of grants to fund public education?
153. What grants have you written and how have they impacted student learning?

Leadership

154. What are the strongest leadership characteristics you bring to the position of superintendent?
155. What would your former subordinates say about your leadership style?
156. Give us a couple of examples of tough leadership situations you've faced in the past and how you handled them.
157. What's your approach for dealing with the different leadership styles among those leaders who work for you?
158. What would your school board/administration say are your strengths/weaknesses?
159. In considering your last one or two positions, describe a few accomplishments which you would attribute to your leadership.

Dealing with Change

160. How do you intend to deal with the significant number of changes occurring in education today?
161. What are some examples of significant changes you instituted in your past organizations?
162. How do you build the support needed throughout the organization for needed changes?
163. How do you motivate those in the school district who tend to resist needed changes?

Planning

164. How are the school board's role and the superintendent's role in school district planning different?
165. How should the community be involved in school district planning?
166. How would you lead the school district in developing long-range strategic and short-range operational plans?
167. What type of information about school district operations should the superintendent supply to school board members?
168. How would you determine long-range and short-range goals for the school district? Whom would you involve in the planning process? Have you worked on a strategic plan for your school district?
169. How would you implement short- and long-range school district goals? How would you monitor and evaluate their implementation?
170. When, if ever, do you feel the use of staff or community advisory committees is appropriate? How would you use them?
171. How do you delegate to others? How do you monitor the performance of those who are responsible?

Technology

172. Give an example of how your school district now uses technology.
173. Explain how your present school district uses technology in the classroom.
174. Describe how you have been involved in implementing technology in your school district.
175. What does the research tell you about the use of technology in the classroom?

Summary

176. If selected, when would you be able to assume this position?
177. Upon review of the school district's hiring criteria, is there anything about your past work experience that you would like to share with us?
178. Do you have any questions you would like to ask school board members?

The Candidate's Turn

The school board has its questions answered; now it's the candidate's turn. The school board plans time in the interviews so candidates can ask questions about the school board's expectations and the school district. If the school board-superintendent relationship is akin to a "marriage," then both parties need to understand the other before making a commitment. The superintendent wants the school district to be a good fit for him/her as much as the school board wants the superintendent to be a good fit for the school district.

With a small pool of qualified candidates and a highly competitive environment, school board members should be prepared to explain why their school district is a good place to work, while acknowledging the challenges they face.

School board members should be aware that candidates, especially those who consider themselves finalists, are asking tougher and tougher questions.

Sample Candidate Questions

- How do you evaluate your superintendent?
- What are the strengths of the school district?
- What are the school board's short- and long-term goals? What is the school district's vision?
- What are the school district's biggest challenges?
- How would you describe the relationship between the administration and teachers?
- What is the school district's financial condition?
- What does the school board see as its role? What about the superintendent's role?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses as a school board?
- Does the school district have any problems of which I should be aware?
- What does your community expect in terms of my involvement in the community?
- How will key administrators be selected?
- What are the most important skills you expect a superintendent to possess?
- How does the school board involve itself in the operation of the school district?

Sample Reference Check Questions

Remember, the reference check questions asked should relate both to the candidate's work and the school board's established hiring criteria. Some sample questions to ask references are provided below.

Questions to Ask School Board Members

- How often and under what circumstances did XXX contact you?
- What is XXX's role in building the agenda for the school board meeting?
- What is XXX's role at a school board meeting?
- How does XXX deal with school board members who have different agendas or points of view?
- Has XXX shown the ability to hold employees accountable for results?

Questions to Ask School District Employees

- Does XXX know your name?
- How do representatives of your employee group discuss work-related issues with XXX?
- Does XXX formally or informally recognize employees for good work?
- Can you identify a situation that has caused XXX to terminate the employment of, or to reprimand, an employee? How was it handled?

Questions to Ask Citizens

- Describe XXX's level of involvement in the community.
- What is the community's impression of XXX's ability to maintain control of school district costs?
- What is the community's perception of the quality of education in your school district?
- How has XXX developed support from businesses and other stakeholders?
- What is most needed in your school district?

Tips for Conducting Reference Checks

- *Always* check references.
- Do not ask “Don’t Ask” questions.
- Avoid asking “yes/no” questions.
- Ask about the candidate’s working relationship with other administrators and staff.
- Ask follow-up questions to get specifics. “Can you provide me a specific example?”
- Ask in what areas the candidate could use additional training or experience.
- Ask the critical questions: “Would you rehire the individual? If no, why?”
- Call past employers as well. The current employer may have reasons for wanting the candidate to leave, and this may distort the answers you received.

Deliberating in Public

The most difficult part of the superintendent search typically involves the final step: debating which finalist best meets the school district’s needs.

The debate is public. Many school board members struggle to balance meeting the spirit of the Open Meeting Law with the logistics of an open, honest discussion about the candidates’ attributes. How can school board members ensure they don’t offend any of the candidates? After all, what will happen if the top candidate declines the position and the school board has alienated its second or third choice?

While these concerns are legitimate, the school board must remember that it is analyzing the candidates because the candidates “voluntarily” sought the position. Candidates for a high-profile public position, such as the superintendency, know they will be judged on criteria set by the school board and/or community and that they will be judged against other candidates. As professionals, they willingly put themselves in that position in order to seek out opportunities in other school districts.

However, school board members should not launch into the process until they are prepared. School board members are reminded to treat the candidates fairly and with respect by emphasizing the candidates’ positive attributes instead of pointing out negative ones. This approach will call attention to a school board’s professionalism. If questions arise, school board members should seek advice from an MSBA search consultant.

If the school board has determined the qualifications it wants and carefully constructs the interview questions, the debate will follow logically. Do not, as individuals, go off on “fact-finding” missions. Do not entertain the demands of one self-interest group while ignoring others. Remember, the school board is trying to find someone to lead the entire school district, and the school board must try to match that individual’s skills with the individuals already employed by the school district.

School boards that plan ahead, abide by the law, and treat people with respect seldom have difficulty in finding new leadership for their school districts. By conducting a quality search, school boards will help usher in new leadership and elevate their stature as quality school boards with a quality educational product.

Do:	Don’t:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the positive attributes of candidates during public discussion rather than negative ones.• Judge candidates based on the school board’s pre-established criteria.• Treat the candidates the way you would want to be treated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go on individual fact-finding missions.• Let a special interest group shape the process.• Alienate any of the finalists.• Discuss the candidates in between interviews – save that discussion until you’ve completed the interviews for that round.

SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

This Contract is entered into between Independent School District No. _____, _____, Minnesota, hereinafter referred to as the School District, and _____ hereinafter referred to as the Superintendent, a legally qualified and licensed superintendent who agrees to perform the duties of the Superintendent of the School District.

ARTICLE II APPLICABLE STATUTE

This Contract for Superintendent Services is entered into between the School District and the Superintendent in conformance with and governed by Minnesota Statutes 123B.143.

For Combined Positions: This Contract for [Superintendent/continuing contract position] services between the School District and the [continuing contract position] is in conformance with and governed by Minnesota Statutes 122A.40 and nothing in this Contract waives statutory continuing contract and other statutory rights related to [continuing contract position]. The [continuing contract position] constitutes ____% of the Superintendent's employment position with the District.

NOTE to Article II: The second paragraph governs situations in which the Administrator is serving a combined position as a Superintendent and continuing contract position, such as a principal, and the parties agree that the continuing contract position continues to be governed by Minnesota Statutes 122A.40. The provision will need to be consistent with current Teacher Master Contract and Principal Master Contract right to return provisions.

ARTICLE III LICENSE

The Superintendent shall furnish the School Board, throughout the life of this Contract, a valid and appropriate license to act as superintendent in the State of Minnesota as provided by applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

ARTICLE IV DURATION, EXPIRATION, TERMINATION DURING THE TERM, MUTUAL CONSENT, AND CONTINGENCY

Section 1. Duration: This Contract is for a term of _____ years commencing on July 1, 20__, and ending on June 30, 20__ . It shall remain in full force and effect unless modified by mutual consent of the School Board and the Superintendent or unless terminated as provided in this Contract.

NOTE to Article IV, Section 1: Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 123B.143, Subd. 1., a School Board may enter into a Contract with a Superintendent for a period of time no longer than three (3) years.

The Contract must provide that the School Board, at its discretion, may or may not enter into a subsequent Contract. Such a Contract may not be extended during its term. However, during the last three hundred sixty-five (365) days of such a Contract, a School Board may negotiate and enter into a subsequent Contract to take effect upon the expiration of the existing Contract. Such subsequent Contract must be contingent upon the Superintendent completing the terms of the existing Contract.

Section 2. Expiration: This Contract shall expire at the end of the term specified in Section 1 above. At the conclusion of its term, neither party shall have any further claim against the other, and the School District's employment of the Superintendent shall cease, unless a subsequent Contract is entered into in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 123B.143, Subd. 1.

NOTE to Article IV, Section 2: See "NOTE to Article IV, Section 1."

Section 3. Termination During the Term: The Superintendent's employment may be terminated during the term of this Contract only for cause as defined in Minnesota Statutes 122A.40, Subd. 9 and Subd. 13, but, except for purposes of describing grounds for discharge, the provisions of Minnesota Statutes 122A.40 shall not be applicable. If the School Board proposes to terminate the Superintendent during the term of this Contract for cause as described in Minnesota Statutes 122A.40, Subd. 9 or Subd. 13, it shall notify the Superintendent in writing of the proposed grounds for termination. The Superintendent shall be entitled to a hearing before an arbitrator provided the Superintendent makes such a request in writing to the School Board Chair within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the written notice of the proposed termination. In such event, the parties shall jointly petition the Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS) for a list of five (5) arbitrators. The arbitrator shall be selected by the parties through the striking process as provided by BMS rules. The arbitrator shall conduct a hearing under arbitration procedure rules and issue a written decision. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties, subject to judicial review of arbitration decisions as provided by law. The Superintendent may be suspended with pay pending final determination by the arbitrator. If the Superintendent fails to request a hearing as provided in this section within the fifteen (15)-day calendar period, the Superintendent shall be deemed to have acquiesced to the School Board's proposed action, and the proposed action shall become final on such date as determined by the School Board, and the Superintendent shall have no further claim or recourse.

Section 4. Notice of Intent: The Superintendent bears the responsibility in this Contract for reasonably notifying the School Board in writing of the notice requirement in order for it to be binding and effective. Failure of the School Board to take action authorizing the negotiation of a subsequent Contract in the first six months of the final year of this Contract, will serve as notice to the Superintendent that the School Board will not enter into a subsequent Contract.

Section 5. Subsequent Contract: If the School Board takes action authorizing the negotiation of a subsequent Contract, the parties will act in good faith to complete negotiations and enter the subsequent Contract before the end of this Contract. This action will include a provision that, in the event that negotiations for a subsequent Contract have not been completed by the end of this Contract's term, the parties will enter into a subsequent Contract for the term set forth in the School Board's action and that the new subsequent Contract's compensation and

benefits level in the last year of this Contract is the same as in the current Contract pending final negotiations of compensation and benefit terms for the new Contract.

NOTE to Article IV, Section 5: This addresses situations in which the Superintendent's employment Contract passed June 30th while negotiations continue. This acknowledgment includes a provision consistent with Minnesota Statutes 123B.143 by which continued negotiations after June 30th of the last year of a Contract result in a subsequent Contract for the term set forth in the Resolution and at the Superintendent's current salary and benefits, pending final negotiation of terms. This is not an extension of the current Contract by School Board action or inaction as prohibited by Minnesota Statutes 123B.143. This will be reflected in the adopting action for the current Contract.

Notice to start Contract negotiations can be by default, i.e., the School Board not acting to start negotiations within a set period (as drafted above) or by affirmative notice such as a notice of intent not to renew. But reasonable notice to start or not start Contract negotiations, whether by default or affirmative action, should be given and the six-month period suggested above for such notice fits within the standard hiring cycle.

Section 6. Mutual Consent: This Contract may be terminated at any time by mutual consent of the School Board and the Superintendent.

Section 7. Contingency: If this Contract is a subsequent Contract entered into prior to the completion of an existing Contract, this subsequent Contract is contingent upon the Superintendent completing the terms of the existing Contract.

ARTICLE V DUTIES

The Superintendent shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the School Board. The Superintendent shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the School District; shall direct and assign teachers and other School District employees under the Superintendent's supervision; shall organize, reorganize, and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff, including instruction and business affairs, as best serves the School District subject to the approval of the School Board; shall select all personnel subject to the approval of the School Board; shall, from time to time, suggest policies, regulations, rules, and procedures deemed necessary for the School District; and, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the Superintendent and such other duties as may be prescribed by the School Board from time to time. The Superintendent shall abide by the policies, regulations, rules, and procedures established by the School Board and the State of Minnesota. The Superintendent shall have the right to attend all School Board meetings and all School Board and citizen committee meetings, serve as an ex-officio member of the School Board and all School Board committees, and provide administrative recommendations on each item of business considered by each of these groups.

NOTE to Article V: School districts should consult TRA to determine if a proposed administrative leave will be eligible for TRA service credit.

ARTICLE VI
DUTY YEAR AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Section 1. Basic Work Year: The Superintendent's duty year shall be for the entire twelve (12)-month Contract year, and the Superintendent shall perform duties on those legal holidays on which the School Board is authorized to conduct school if the School Board so determines. The Superintendent shall be on duty during any emergency, natural or unnatural, unless otherwise excused in accordance with School Board administrative policy.

Section 2. Vacation: The Superintendent shall earn _____ working days of annual paid vacation each Contract year. Unused vacation must be taken within six (6) months after the end of the Contract year in which it is earned. [or other greater accumulation provision such as "vacation leave may accumulate to a maximum of ___ days during the course of this Contract."]. Upon voluntary termination of employment or expiration of the Contract, if not offered a subsequent Contract, the Superintendent shall be entitled to payment for any unused vacation days earned and accrued pursuant to the provisions of this section; however, if the Superintendent is involuntarily terminated, the Superintendent shall not be entitled to unused earned and accrued vacation days.

Section 3. Section 3. Holidays: The Superintendent shall be entitled to ____ paid holidays as designated by the School Board each Contract year.

NOTE to Article VI, Section 3: The specific holidays should be listed.

Section 4. Sick Leave: The Superintendent shall earn paid sick leave at the rate of ____ day(s) each working month, and earned sick leave may accumulate to a maximum of ____ days. Sick leave shall be allowed whenever the Superintendent's absence is found to have been due to the illness and/or injury of the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's immediate family. "Immediate Family" is defined as the Superintendent's child, adult child, spouse or registered domestic partner, sibling, parent, parent-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, and all similar relationships that are preceded with "step" or "foster." Upon voluntary termination of employment or expiration of the Contract, if not offered a subsequent Contract, the Superintendent shall be entitled to payment for any unused sick leave days earned and accrued pursuant to the provisions of this section; however, if the Superintendent is involuntarily terminated, the Superintendent shall not be entitled to unused earned and accrued sick leave days.

Section 5. Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST): The Superintendent shall earn, use, and accumulate ESST in conformance with the School District's Employment Policies and Minnesota Statutes 181.9445 – 181.9448.

NOTE to Article VI, Sections 4 and 5: These sections must be modified to reflect the current implementation of Sick Leave/ESST within the School District. For example: the School District may have implemented Paid Time Off (PTO) to address sick leave and all other leaves, or the School District may have converted all sick leave to ESST. The School District's policy may also front load all leave versus accrue it on a defined period basis.

Section 6. Workers' Compensation: Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 176, the Superintendent injured on the job in the service of the School District and collecting workers' compensation insurance may draw sick leave and receive full salary from the School District, the

salary to be reduced by an amount equal to the insurance payments, and only that fraction of the days not covered by insurance will be deducted from accrued sick leave.

Section 7. Bereavement Leave: The Superintendent shall be granted bereavement leave for a death within the Superintendent's immediate family, as defined in Section 4. The time utilized shall be in an amount to be determined after conferring with the School Board Chair. Days utilized *[will or will not]* be deducted from the Superintendent's sick leave.

Section 8. Emergency Leave: The Superintendent may be granted paid emergency leave at the discretion of the School Board.

Section 9. Jury Service: The Superintendent who serves on jury duty shall be granted the day or days necessary as stipulated by the court to discharge this responsibility without any salary deduction or loss of basic leave allowance. The compensation received for jury duty service shall be remitted to the School District.

Section 10. Military Leave: Military leave shall be granted pursuant to applicable law.

Section 11. Disability: If the Superintendent is unable to perform their regular duties because of personal illness or disability and has exhausted all accumulated sick leave, the School Board shall provide additional paid sick leave at a salary equal to ___ percent of the Superintendent's regular salary until the expiration of the waiting period for long-term disability insurance.

Section 12. Medical Leave: The Superintendent may be placed on a leave of absence for health reasons pursuant to the procedures outlined in Minnesota Statutes 122A.40, Subd. 12.

Section 13. Insurance Application: A Superintendent on unpaid leave is eligible to continue to participate in group insurance programs if permitted under the insurance policy provisions. The Superintendent shall pay the entire premium for such insurance commencing with the beginning of the leave and shall pay to the School District the monthly premium in advance. In the event the Superintendent is on paid leave from the School District under Section 4 above, or supplemented by sick leave pursuant to Section 5 above, the School District will continue insurance contributions as provided in this Contract until paid leave is exhausted. Thereafter, the Superintendent must pay the entire premium for any insurance retained.

ARTICLE VII INSURANCE

Section 1. Health and Hospitalization and Dental Insurance: The School District shall provide the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependents with health and hospitalization and dental insurance coverage under the School District's group health and hospitalization and dental insurance plans at the expense of the School District.

[or]

The School District shall provide the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependents with health and hospitalization insurance coverage under the School District's group health and

hospitalization insurance plan. The School District shall contribute the sum of \$____ per month toward the premium for such insurance. The balance of the premium shall be paid by the Superintendent through payroll deduction. The School District shall also provide the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependents with dental insurance coverage under the School District's group dental insurance plan. The School District shall contribute the sum of \$____ per month toward the premium for such insurance. The balance of the premium shall be paid by the Superintendent through payroll deduction.

NOTE to Article VII, Section 1: In the event this Contract will cause or does cause penalties, fees, or fines to be assessed against the School District, the parties agree to reopen negotiations that result in a revised Contract between the parties that eliminates or reduces penalties, fees, or fines to be assessed against the School District. The amount of any reduction in the School District's contribution toward the Superintendent's healthcare benefits as a result of addressing the "highly compensated employee" component of the ACA will be placed into another School District provided benefit) (i. e., a retirement HRA, salary, etc.) as agreed upon between the parties.

Section 2. Life Insurance: The School District shall provide, at its own expense, term life insurance for the Superintendent under the School District's group term life insurance plan in the amount of \$____ payable to the Superintendent's named beneficiary(ies).

NOTE to Article VII, Section 2: According to the Internal Revenue Service rules, the amount of School District premium contribution that pays for life insurance coverage in excess of \$50,000 is considered taxable income, so the School District should be certain that it is reporting that contribution as such, and the Superintendent needs to know why that amount is being reported.

Section 3. Long-Term Disability Insurance: The School District shall provide, at its own expense, long-term disability insurance for the Superintendent under the School District's group long-term disability insurance plan.

Section 4. Eligibility: The eligibility of the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependent(s) and beneficiary(ies) for insurance benefits shall be governed by the terms of the insurance policies purchased by the School District pursuant to this article.

Section 5. Claims Against the School District: The School District's only obligation is to purchase the insurance policies described in this article, and no claim shall be made against the School District as a result of denial of insurance benefits by an insurer if the School District has purchased the policies and paid the premiums described in this article.

ARTICLE VIII OTHER BENEFITS

Section 1. Tax-Sheltered Annuities: The Superintendent is eligible to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity plan through payroll deduction established pursuant to Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Subd. 15., School District policy, and as otherwise provided by law.

Section 2. Vehicle: The School District shall compensate the Superintendent for business use of the Superintendent's private vehicle at the rate of ____ cents per mile pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 471.665, Subd. 1 as allowed by Internal Revenue Service guidelines.

[or]

The School District shall provide the Superintendent with a monthly allowance of \$____ for business use of the Superintendent's private vehicle pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 471.665, Subd. 3 as allowed by Internal Revenue Service guidelines.

NOTE to Article VIII: Prohibition Against Combination of Options. One of the two options above should be selected, and the other option deleted. Some School Districts have been utilizing a combination of Minnesota Statutes 471.665, Subd. 1 and Subd. 3 — i.e., in-district travel and out-of-district travel. However, an opinion by the Minnesota Attorney General indicates that using the combination is improper (see Op. Atty. Gen. 11/20/95).

NOTE 2 to Article VIII: Prohibition Against Personal Use of School District Vehicle. Two opinions by the Minnesota Attorney General conclude that a School District may not provide a school district-owned vehicle which the Superintendent utilizes for personal use even if the Superintendent pays for such personal use (see Op. Atty. Gen. 161b-12 1/24/89 and Op. Atty. Gen. 395b- 10/24/89).

NOTE 3 to Article VIII: Statutory Restrictions on Personal Use of District-Owned Vehicles. Minnesota Statutes 471.666 prohibits personal use of a vehicle owned, leased by, or loaned to a School District, except for incidental use related to School District business. Such a vehicle may not be used for transportation to or from the residence of the School District employee except for narrow, incidental use related to the School District's business. The effect of this restriction is so limiting that a School District's provision of District-owned, leased, or loaned vehicles for any personal use by the Superintendent is impractical (see Minnesota Statutes 471.666).

Section 3. Conferences and Meetings: The School District shall pay all legally valid expenses and fees for the Superintendent's attendance at professional conferences and meetings with other educational agencies when such attendance is required, directed, or permitted by the School Board. The Superintendent shall periodically report to the School Board relative to all meetings and conferences attended. The Superintendent shall file itemized expense statements to be processed and approved as provided by School Board policy and law.

ARTICLE IX SALARY

The Superintendent shall be paid an annual salary of \$_____ for the 20__-20__ Contract year, \$_____ for the 20__ - 20__ Contract year, and \$_____ for the 20__-20__ Contract year. During the term of this Contract, the annual salary may be modified but shall not be reduced. The annual salary shall be paid in equal installments during the Contract year.

[or]

The Superintendent shall be paid an annual salary of \$____ for the 20__- 20__ Contract year. The parties shall endeavor to agree by April 1 of each subsequent year as to the amount of the salary for the following year. During the term of this Contract, the annual salary may be modified but shall not be reduced. The annual salary shall be paid in _____ installments during the Contract year.

NOTE to Article IX: Options. School Boards should use only one of the paragraphs above. The first paragraph fixes a salary for more than one year, while the second paragraph fixes the salary for one year and requires mutual agreement for the subsequent year(s). Practices vary from School District to School District.

ARTICLE X EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

The School Board shall oversee, direct, and evaluate the Superintendent's performance as the School Board sees fit.

NOTE to Article X: The School Board and Superintendent should discuss a process for conducting at least an annual evaluation of the Superintendent's performance.

ARTICLE XI OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 1. Outside Activities: While the Superintendent shall devote full time and due diligence to the affairs and the activities of the School District, the Superintendent may also serve as a consultant to other school districts or educational agencies, lecture, engage in writing and speaking activities, and engage in other activities if, as solely determined by the School Board, such activities do not impede the Superintendent's ability to perform the duties of the superintendency. However, the Superintendent may not engage in other employment, consultant service, or other activity for which a salary, fee, or honorarium is paid without the prior approval of the School Board.

Section 2. Indemnification and Provision of Counsel: In the event that an action is brought or a claim is made against the Superintendent arising out of or in connection with their employment and the Superintendent is acting within the scope of employment or official duties, the School District shall defend and indemnify the Superintendent to the extent provided by law. Indemnification, as provided in this section, shall not apply in the case of malfeasance in office or willful or wanton neglect of duty, and the obligation of the School District in this regard shall be subject to the limitations as provided in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 466. This indemnification and defense obligation extends to all costs and fees incurred by the Superintendent in any internal investigation of a claim against the Superintendent that does not result or would not have resulted in substantial disciplinary action against the Superintendent (defined as sufficient to create public data under the final disposition of a disciplinary action provisions of Minnesota Statutes 13.43, Subd. 2). Payment of legal fees includes when the Superintendent incurs individual legal costs in serving as a witness in a claim against the School District. Nothing herein affects the Superintendent's right to legal counsel of the Superintendent's choice. Nothing herein affects the parties' right to negotiate payment of legal fees as part of a separation agreement.

Section 3. Dues: The Superintendent is encouraged to belong to and participate in appropriate professional, educational, economic development, community, and civic organizations when such membership will serve the best interests of the School District. Accordingly, the School District will pay the membership dues for such organizations as are required, directed, or permitted by the School Board. The Superintendent shall present appropriate statements for approval as provided by law.

NOTE to Article XI, Section 3: Until 2007, school districts were restricted to paying dues for their superintendents to belong to professional and educational organizations, but the 2007 Minnesota Legislature enacted Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Subd. 24, allowing school districts to pay dues for other organizations if their school boards deemed such membership to be appropriate.

Section 4. [Other Applicable Provisions: In this section, other terms and conditions of employment as agreed on between the parties should be included. Items such as severance pay, payment for unused sick leave, and extended leaves of absence, if provided to the Superintendent, are examples of what could be included. Since superintendents' contracts vary greatly in the manner in which they address such provisions, no attempt has been made to develop specific model Contract language. However, if the parties are considering the inclusion of such provisions, both MSBA and MASA may be able to provide sample language upon request.]

NOTE to Article XI, Section 4: A "highly compensated employee" is an employee with estimated annual wages that are greater than sixty percent (60%) of the governor's salary and are equal to, or greater than, eighty percent (80%) of the estimated annual wages of the second highest paid employee of the School District. Severance pay for highly compensated employees is restricted to an amount equivalent to six (6) months of wages. For purposes of this restriction, payments for accumulated vacation and sick leave liquidated to cover the cost of group term insurance may be paid in addition to the six (6) months of severance pay. For exceptions to the six (6)-month restriction, see Minnesota Statutes 465.722, Subd. 3.

ARTICLE XII SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this Contract shall be severable, and if any such provision or the application of any such provision under any circumstances is held invalid, it shall not affect any other provisions of this Contract or the application of any provision thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
subscribed my signature this ____ day of
_____, 20__.

Superintendent

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have subscribed
my signature this ____ day of
_____, 20__.

School Board Chair

School Board Clerk

