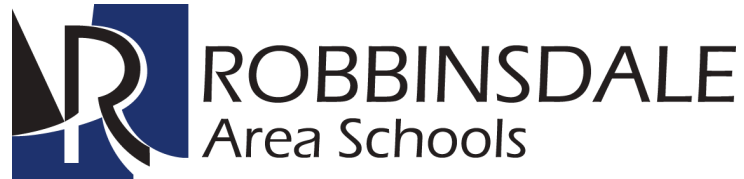


School Board Work Session

Work Session begins 15 minutes after adjournment of the Business Meeting.

1. Introductions
2. Robbinsdale Area Schools School Board Handbook Draft for Review (based on Minnesota School Boards Association template) 2
ReNae Bowman, School Board Chair
Dr. Greta Evans-Becker, School Board Clerk



School Board Handbook

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Introduction

Navigating this Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the board's operating procedures and norms. It also includes important information on policies, meetings, committees, partnerships, and communication. Its ongoing guidance is meant to enable each board member to fulfill essential governance duties and to exercise their responsibilities as a board member, while also providing expectations and standards of behavior for the conduct of the board.

Handbook Maintenance and Review Procedure

- Annually, the handbook will undergo a review by the board. As part of this review, the board will:
 - Review mutual expectations of board norms;
 - Seek input and feedback regarding best practices, as needed;
 - Check the MSBA website for suggested handbook updates;
 - Adopt the updated handbook by a majority vote of the board.
- Board members may propose additions/revisions to the handbook by sending an email to the chair and superintendent requesting to add "handbook discussion" as a topic for an upcoming working session.
- The handbook may be updated to reflect adopted policy changes without further board action;
- Hyperlinks within the handbook may be updated without further board action;
- The date this handbook was last reviewed, updated, and/or revised, is included on the cover page of this handbook.

Document History

- September 13, 2024 - Chair and Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board began to customize the document to Robbinsdale School Board Communications Standards
- September 20, 2024 - Chair and Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board began to customize the document to Robbinsdale School Board Communications Standards
- September 30, 2024 - Chair and Clerk met to combine the old orientation manual and sync it to the new handbook.

District Information

The effectiveness of your decisions as a board member hinges on your knowledge of the district's schools, staff, students, and the communities they inhabit. Recognizing the specific needs and aspirations of [Robbinsdale Area Schools](#) will empower you to advocate for policies and initiatives that truly enhance our educational outcomes. By engaging with this information, you will not only enhance your ability to make informed decisions but also build trust and credibility with fellow board members, the community, staff, and students alike. Let this knowledge serve as the foundation of your tenure, guiding your decisions and initiatives to foster an environment where every student can succeed.



District Identity

District Customization – Insert essential information about your district. Suggested topics include:

- **History of the District** – A brief overview of how the district was established, key historical milestones, and significant changes over the years.
- **Demographics** – Current data on the population of the district, including student enrollment numbers, graduation rates, ethnic and racial composition, socioeconomic status, languages spoken, and any notable trends in demographic shifts.
- **Points of Pride** – Information regarding district-wide achievements, awards, and recognitions in various areas like academics, sports, arts, and community service.
- **Programming** – Facts regarding curricular and extracurricular programming that distinguish your district and highlight its unique strengths.
- **Community Partnerships** – Information on how the district engages with parents, community members, and local organizations. Highlight successful partnerships that enhance educational outcomes.

Leadership Directory

Board Members

Name	Board Position	Phone Number	Email Address
ReNae Bowman	Chair		renae_bowman@rdale.org
Kim Holmes	Vice Chair		kim_holmes@rdale.org
Dr. Greta Evans-Becker	Clerk		greta_evans-becker@rdale.org
John Vento	Treasurer		john_vento@rdale.org
Helen Bassett	Director		helen_bassett@rdale.org
Sharon E. Brooks	Director		sharon_brooks@rdale.org
Caroline Long	Director		caroline_long@rdale.org

Note - Possible board positions include Chair, Vice-Chair (optional), Clerk, and Treasurer.

Superintendent's Office

Name	Position	Phone Number	Email Address
Dr. Teri Staloch	Superintendent	763-504-8012	teri_staloch@rdale.org
Marti Voight	Assistant Superintendent	763-504-8070	marti_voight@rdale.org
Kristen Hoheisel	Chief Financial Officer	763-504-8037	kristen_hoheisel@rdale.org
Molly Olson	Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board	763-504-8012	molly_olson@rdale.org

Note - Possible positions include Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Administrative Assistant.

Leadership Cabinet

Name	Position	Email Address
John Groenke	Executive Director of Student Services	john_groenke@rdale.org
Bridget Hall	Interim Assistant Superintendent/Director of Elementary Curriculum and Federal Programs	bridget_hall@rdale.org
Amy O'Hern	Executive Director of Human Resources	amy_ohern@rdale.org
Toya Stewart Downey	Executive Director of Strategic Communications, Equity and Inclusion	toya_stewartdowney@rdale.org
Anthony Williams	Executive Director of Community Education, Athletics and Activities	anthony_williams@rdale.org

Note -

District Facilities

Building	Address	Phone Number
Education Service Center	4148 Winnetka Ave N, New Hope, MN 55427	763-504-8000
Armstrong High School	10635 36th Ave N, Plymouth, MN 55441	763-504-8800
Bus Garage	4124 Winnetka Ave N, New Hope, MN 55427	763-504-8105
Cooper High School	8230 47th Ave N, New Hope, MN 55428	763-504-8500
Crystal Learning Center	305 Willow Bend, Crystal, MN 55428	763-504-8300
FAIR School Crystal	3915 Adair Ave N, Crystal, MN 55422	763-971-4500
FAIR School Pilgrim Lane	3725 Pilgrim Ln N, Plymouth, MN 55441	763-504-8400
Forest Elementary	6800 47th Ave N, Crystal, MN 55428	763-504-7900
Lakeview Elementary	4110 Lake Dr N, Robbinsdale, MN 55422	763-504-4100
Meadow Lake Elementary	8525 62nd Ave N, New Hope, MN 55427	763-504-7700
Neill Elementary	6600 Medicine Lake Rd, Crystal, MN 55427	763-504-7400
Noble Elementary	2601 Noble Ave N, Golden Valley, MN 55422	763-504-4000
Plymouth Middle School	10011 36th Ave N, Plymouth, MN 55441	763-504-7100
Robbinsdale Middle School	3730 Toledo Ave N, Robbinsdale, MN 55422	763-504-4800
Robbinsdale Spanish Immersion School	8808 Medicine Lake Rd, New Hope, MN 55427	763-504-4400
Sandburg Middle School	2400 Sandburg Ln, Golden Valley, MN 55427	763-504-8200
School of Engineering and Arts	1751 Kelly Dr, Golden Valley, MN 55427	763-504-7200
Sonnesyn Elementary	3421 Boone Ave N, New Hope, MN 55427	763-504-7600
Warehouse	5440 Highway 169 Service Dr, New Hope, MN 55428	763-504-8131
Zachary Lane Elementary	4350 Zachary Ln N, Plymouth, MN 55442	763-504-7300

Schedule a Facility Visit or Tour

You have the same right as a parent or community member to visit the schools in your district as long as you adhere to the procedures the district has for visitors. You may also visit the schools in an official capacity with the board's authority or to fulfill a specific duty required of you as a board member. In any event, be sure to communicate with the superintendent and building administrator to schedule your visit.

You should use school visits to build good working relations with building principals and staff, to celebrate the positive accomplishments of the schools, and to show your pride as a member of the board. Look for opportunities to visit when a school is hosting a special event or recognition program for students and staff.

RAS – To request your tour, email the superintendent and the superintendent will contact the building administrator to schedule.

Strategic Framework

RAS – [Strategic Plan Document 2024-2025](#)

[Strategic Plan Framework Document](#)

References for Further Information

District Customization – Insert a list of resources that will help board members understand the district on a deeper level. Consider creating hyperlinks to each document for easy access to these resources instead of providing printed copies. Suggested resources include:

- District Policy Manual - [District Policy Page](#)
- District Strategic Plan - [Strategic Plan Document 2024-2025](#) and [Strategic Plan Framework Document](#)
- Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report **(2023 WBWF)**
- Results of District Stakeholder Surveys **(?)**
- School Improvement Plan **(by building - to come)**
- Student Performance Data **(?)**
- District Report Card **(?)**
- District Budget and Financial Reports **(current budget and most recent audit report)**
- District Technology Plan **(?)**
- District Emergency Plan **(? - paragraph regarding structure (i.e. look to your building admin. first, etc.))**
- Facilities Assessments **(last time BT 2014?)**
- Employee Handbook **(?)**
- [A Guide to Student Support and Behavior](#)
- Chain of Communication **(org chart(s) - in process of being updated)**
- Employee Collective Bargaining Agreements **(?)**
- District and Board Meeting Calendar [School Board Meeting Calendar](#)
- [School Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes](#)
- List of curricular and extracurricular programs **(by building - school web pages?)**
- Reports on recent projects, programs, or initiatives **(?)**

Board Membership

When considering your governance role, embracing the procedural steps that underpin the integrity of the democratic process is paramount. From post-election procedures to the establishment of board offices, each action reflects your commitment to transparency and accountability. By being diligent in these duties, you acknowledge the trust placed in you by constituents. Prioritizing effective governance ensures you serve the community and prioritize the needs of students.



Post-Election Procedures

Canvass and Declaration of Results

Between the third and tenth days after a district election, the board must canvass the returns and declare the results of the election. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

Certification of Results

The district clerk shall certify the results of the district election to the county auditor. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

Issuance of Certificate of Election

After canvassing the election and the time for contesting an election has passed (seven days after the canvassing board has declared the result of the election), the board shall issue a certificate of election to the candidate for each office who received the largest number of votes cast for the office. If there is a contest, the certificate of election to that office must not be issued until the outcome of the contest has been determined by the proper court. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3;](#) [Minn. Stat. 204C.40, Subd. 2.](#)

Campaign Financial Report Certification of Filing

The Certification of Filing is due no later than seven days after the general election. [Minn. Stat. 211A.05.](#)

Taking Office

Board members take office the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#)

Official Oath of Office

The official oath of office is administered once elections have been canvassed, the candidates have turned in their certificate of campaign filing report, and the seven-day contest period has ended. When the contest period ends, the school election officer should give each winning candidate the certificate of election. Each winning candidate then has thirty days to sign the official oath and acceptance of office form in front of a notary. By signing this document, the individual officially becomes a board member on the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 358.05.](#)

Ceremonial Oath of Office

The ceremonial oath of office is usually administered at the organizational meeting on the first Monday in January (or as soon thereafter as practicable). While the official oath of office is required, the ceremonial oath of office is optional.

Organizational Meeting

On the first Monday in January (or as soon as practicable thereafter) each year, newly elected board members' terms of office begin, and boards must meet to organize for the year. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#) During this meeting, ceremonial oaths of office may be administered, officers are elected, committee assignments are established, and meeting schedules are adopted. This process lays the groundwork for the board's operations, emphasizing collaboration and effective governance to serve the district and its stakeholders.

For more regarding organizational meetings see, [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook](#).

District Intake Paperwork

District Customization – Insert what department(s) (human resources, business office, district office, etc.) will contact new board members after the election and what information the department representative will request or provide. Suggested topics include:

- Providing a copy of the board handbook
- Providing a copy of school and board calendars
- Providing access to district electronic resources
- Completing onboarding paperwork **including campaign finance final report**
- Collecting contact information including home address and cell phone number and a photo
- Completing payroll paperwork
- Completing a background check
- Setting up a district email
- Scheduling a one-on-one meeting with the superintendent and cabinet
- Scheduling a one-on-one meeting with your board mentor
- **Providing MSBA login information**
- **Providing MSBA's contact information (Phone: 507-934-2450; [Online Inquiry Form](#))**

Board Organization

Eligibility Requirements

To run for a board seat, you must be (1) at least 21 years old, (2) an eligible voter, (3) a district resident for at least 30 days prior to election/appointment, and (4) not convicted of a felony. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#); [Minn. Stat. 204B.06, Subd.1](#).

Term of Office

Board members are elected to four-year terms and take office on the first Monday in January. The term of a member who has been appointed to fill a vacancy will be for the remainder of the predecessor's term until the date of the district's next general election. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a board member can serve. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#).

Filling Vacancies

A vacancy on the board can occur for a number of reasons including when a member dies, resigns, or ceases to be a resident of the district. All vacancies will be filled according to [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#). [RAS Policy 215 - School Board - Vacancies and Procedures for Filling of Vacancies](#)

For more information, regarding filling vacancies see: [Steps to Fill a School Board Vacancy with Sample Application and Interview Questions](#) on the MSBA website.

Board Composition

Robbinsdale School Board is made up of seven members. The superintendent is an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the board. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#).

Board Officers

Officers of the board include chair, vice-chair ~~(optional)~~, clerk, and treasurer. These positions are determined annually at the organizational meeting. All board members, regardless of office, maintain equal rights and equal voices. See the Election of Board Officers section on page 27 for information regarding nominating and voting procedures.

Role of the Chair

- The chair, when present, shall preside at all meetings of the board, countersign all orders upon the treasurer for claims allowed by the board, represent the district in all actions, and perform all duties a chair usually performs.
- In case of absence, inability, or refusal of the clerk to draw orders for the payment of money authorized by a vote of the majority of the board to be paid, the chair may draw the orders, or the office of the clerk may be declared vacant by the chair and treasurer and filled by appointment.

Role of the Vice-Chair (optional)

- The vice-chair shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's temporary absence.

Role of the Clerk

- The clerk shall keep a record of all meetings in the books provided.
 - Clerk will review draft meeting minutes provided in the Wednesday preliminary agenda packets for accuracy, and provide any revisions to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board by Friday at noon prior to the Monday/Tuesday meeting.
- Within three days after an election, the clerk shall notify all persons elected of their election.
- **The Executive Assistant to the Board on or before September 15 of each year, acting for the clerk shall:**
 - **file with the board a report of the revenues, expenditures, and balances in each fund for the preceding fiscal year.**
 - **make and transmit to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (Commissioner) certified reports, showing:**
 - **revenues and expenditures in detail, and such other financial information required by law, rule, or as may be called for by the Commissioner;**
 - **length of school term and enrollment and attendance by grades; and**
 - **other items of information as called for by the Commissioner.**
- **Enter into the clerk's record book copies of all reports, the teachers' term reports, the proceedings of any meeting, and keep an itemized account of all expenses of the district.**
- **Furnish to the county auditor, on or before September 30 of each year, an attested copy of the clerk's record, showing the amount of proposed property tax levy voted by the district or the board for school purposes.**

- **Shall draw and process all orders for signatures for the payment of money for bills allowed by the board for salaries of officers and for teachers' wages and all claims.**
- **Shall perform such duties as required by the Minnesota Election Law or other applicable laws relating to the conduct of elections.**
- The clerk shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's and the vice-chair's temporary absences.
- **(RAS Specific)** By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasurer in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

Role of the Treasurer or designee

- The treasurer shall deposit the funds of the district in the official depository.
- The treasurer shall make all reports which may be called for by the board and perform all duties a treasurer usually performs.
- In the event there are insufficient funds on hand to pay valid orders presented to the treasurer, the treasurer shall receive, endorse, and process the orders in accordance with [Minn. Stat. 123B.12](#).
- By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasurer in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

Associated Policy - [202 Policy - School Board Officer](#)

Board Compensation **Revise this to current rates**

The clerk, treasurer, and superintendent of any district shall receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. Unless otherwise provided by law, the other members of the board shall also receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. All members of the board may receive reimbursement for transportation at the rate provided for in [Minn. Stat. 471.665](#). No board member or district employee shall receive any compensation or benefits based on incentives or other money provided to the district by or from a source of group insurance coverage referenced in [Minn. Stat. 471.6161, Subd. 1](#), except for a refund provided under [Minn. Stat. 123B.75, Subd. 10](#), or a wellness plan that is mutually agreed upon by the district and the exclusive representatives of employees.

District Customization – *Insert district norms related to compensation. Suggested topics include:*

- When the board fixes compensation - **done at the organizational meeting in January.**
- **Delete - Details of the board member's compensation package**
- **Delete in red - Whether board members receive** *Extra compensation for holding an office*
- *How often the board member is paid (~~annually, monthly, every two weeks, etc.~~)*

Expense Reimbursement

District Customization – *reimbursement for board members – Suggested topics include:*

- *Process for submitting travel expense reimbursement requests*
- *Process for submitting mileage reimbursement*

- Required documentation to support reimbursement requests **Align this section with district procedures.**
- District policies governing the types of expenses that can be reimbursed, such as travel expenses, conference fees, or professional development **Align to district procedures**
- How reimbursed funds are paid out
- **Delete this** The typical turnaround time for reimbursement requests
- Limits or caps on the amount of reimbursement that can be requested **example travel limits**
- **Delete this** Possible recourses for denied reimbursement requests

Associated Policy – [214 Policy - Out-of-State Travel by School Board Members](#)

Learning the Job

Learning from Board Colleagues

One of the most valuable resources at your disposal, outside of this handbook, is the wealth of experience and knowledge possessed by your fellow board members and district staff. Engaging with them can significantly enhance your understanding of board operations, policies, and educational best practices. Your colleagues on the board bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives that can provide invaluable insights. Here are a few ways to leverage their experience:

Workshops and Retreats – Participate actively in board workshops and retreats. These sessions are designed not only to address key issues but also to foster team building and collective learning.

Committee Participation – Join board committees that align with your interests and expertise. Working closely with other members on specific topics will deepen your understanding and contribute to your professional growth.

Informal Meetings – Work with the superintendent to schedule informal meetings with key staff members to discuss specific areas of interest. These one-on-one interactions can offer a more personalized learning experience and help you build strong working relationships.

Mentorship

The district recognizes the importance of supporting new board members as they transition into their roles. To facilitate this, the district has implemented a mentorship program designed to provide guidance, support, and valuable insights. Each new board member will be paired with an experienced mentor who will help them navigate their responsibilities and become effective contributors to the board. This mentor will be a seasoned board member with a deep understanding of the district's operations, policies, and culture. The assignment will be made by the board chair in consultation with the superintendent to ensure a good match based on experience and areas of expertise.

To support you in this transition, you and your mentor will use the [MSBA New Board Member Orientation Year At-a-Glance](#) to guide you through your first year. This program aims to provide you with the knowledge, tools, and support necessary to become an effective and confident board member. Mentor and mentee should schedule a time before each school board meeting to check-in regarding the upcoming agenda, policies, and procedures.

Our orientation program is structured to ensure you receive a balanced combination of printed materials, hands-on training, and personal mentorship. Throughout the year, you will engage in various learning sessions, attend MSBA training events, and participate in board meetings and district activities. These experiences are designed to deepen your understanding of board operations, district policies, and educational goals. By the end of your first year, you will have a solid foundation to effectively contribute to the board's mission of providing quality education for all students. Mentors are encouraged to attend the workshops and trainings with the mentees to make the information more relevant and specific to the district.

Ongoing Professional Development

Continuous learning is crucial for effective governance. Board members are encouraged to participate in school board and related workshops and activities sponsored by local, state, and national school boards associations, as well as in the activities of other educational groups. Each board member shall receive training in school finance and management developed in consultation with the Minnesota School Boards Association. [Minn. Stat 123B.09, Subd. 2](#). Below is a full list of MSBA's Learning to Lead Phase Workshops.

- [Learning to Lead – School Board Basics: Phase I Workshop](#)
- [Leadership Foundations – School Finance and Management: Phase II Workshop](#)
- [Building a High-Performance School Board Team: Phase III Workshop](#)
- [Representing Your Community Through Policy and Engagement: Phase IV Workshop](#)

Other MSBA Professional Development Opportunities – To learn more about these opportunities, see the [Workshops and Events](#) section of the MSBA website.

In District Workshops	Events
Mutual Expectations Workshop	Leadership Conference
School Board Self-Evaluation Workshop	Summer Seminar
Superintendent Search Workshop	Delegate Assembly
Superintendent Evaluation Workshop	Day at the Capitol
	Advocacy Tour
	Coffee and Conversation Series
	Board Chair Chat
	Monthly Webinars
Regional Workshops	
Officers' Workshop	
Negotiations Seminars	

District Customization – [Professional Learning Travel Authorization Process](#) *(link is for in district access)*

Associated Policy – [214 Policy - Out-of-State Travel by School Board Members](#)

MSBA Series of Publications – New board members automatically receive the following publications to stay current on education related news.

- **eClippings** – Receive daily links to K-12 news from around the state.
- **Leader Newsletter** – Monthly updates regarding MSBA news and events, topical news items, administrative topics, and much more.
- **Journal Magazine** – Bimonthly magazine includes school features, exploration of leadership issues, in-depth stories on education trends, and a directory of vendors.

Individual Board Membership

Duties as an Individual Board Member

The position of board member carries with it a profound responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards. A commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability will not only enhance the effectiveness of educational policies but also strengthen the community's confidence in the board's decision-making. Remember that your actions and decisions will help shape the future of our students, schools, and community. Let the Code of Ethics in District Policy [1.4 Board Code of Conduct - RAS Board Governance Policy](#) guide you in navigating the complexities of governance with unwavering moral clarity and purposeful dedication.

Associated Policy – *Insert a link to the district policy related to the board's code of ethics. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 209 – Code of Ethics (waiting for draft document from policy committee and Ann Becker)*

Board Time Commitment

The time required to complete your board responsibilities will most vary by time of year. It will depend on how many meetings are scheduled, which committees you serve on, what issues are going on in the district at the time, and how much time you need to prepare for upcoming meetings. For example, if the district is going through a building project, hiring a superintendent, or developing the district budget, the time needed for board meetings may be more extensive. On average, however, you can anticipate spending about nine to twelve hours a month on board service.

Packets published to the board prior to the meeting (timing TBA) Expectations include, a thorough review of meeting materials prior to the meeting. Questions regarding meeting materials must be submitted in advance to the Superintendent with enough lead time for answers to be gathered.

Conflict of Interest

As a board member, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity by actively avoiding any conflicts of interest in your official capacity. This means refraining from any personal financial involvement in district transactions such as sales, leases, or contracts you oversee or participate in. If a potential conflict arises, you must fully disclose your **interests and ownerships**, and abstain from decision-making processes related to those interests **and ownerships**. You will operate under stringent guidelines to ensure that any exceptions to this rule are handled transparently, with unanimous consent and clear documentation. This approach maintains the community's trust and ensures all decisions

are made solely in the best interest of the district and its stakeholders (**provide a public purpose of expenditure requested**)

Associated Policy – [210 Administrative Procedure - Conflict of Interest School Board Members](#)

Working as a Board Team

At the heart of educational excellence lies the steadfast commitment of the board, entrusted with duties that shape the very fabric of our district's future. Defined by statute, yet driven by a passion for progress, the board's responsibilities encompass a profound dedication to nurturing thriving learning environments and supporting the endeavors of our administration. Crucial to fulfilling these responsibilities is the collaborative spirit of board teamwork, where collective wisdom and shared vision pave the path toward transformative change. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and collaboration, the board can harness its collective strength to address challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and ultimately, advance the educational journey of every student in our district.

Duties of the Board

- The board has powers and duties specified by statute. The board's authority includes implied powers in addition to specific powers granted by the legislature.
- The board exercises administrative functions. It also has certain powers of a legislative character and other powers of a quasi-judicial character.
- The board shall superintend and manage the schools of the district; adopt rules for their organization, government, and instruction; prescribe textbooks and courses of study; and make and authorize contracts.
- The board shall have the general charge of the business of the district, its facilities and property, and of the interest of the schools.
- The board, among other duties, shall perform the following in accordance with applicable law:
 - provide by levy of tax, necessary funds for the conduct of schools, the payment of indebtedness, and all proper expenses of the district;
 - conduct the business of the schools and pay indebtedness and proper expenses;
 - employ and contract with necessary qualified teachers and discharge the same for cause;
 - provide services to promote the health of its pupils;
 - provide school buildings and erect needed buildings;
 - purchase, sell, and exchange district property and equipment as deemed necessary by the board for school purposes;
 - provide for payment of claims against the district, and prosecute and defend actions by or against the district, in all proper cases;
 - employ and discharge necessary employees and contract for other services;

- provide for transportation of pupils to and from school, as governed by statute; and
- procure insurance against liability of the district, its officers, and employees.
- The board, at its discretion, may perform the following:
 - provide library facilities, public evening schools, adult and continuing education programs, summer school programs, and intersession classes of flexible school year programs;
 - furnish school **lunches meals** for pupils and teachers on such terms as the board determines;
 - enter into agreements with one or more other independent districts to provide for agreed upon educational services;
 - lease rooms or buildings for school purposes;
 - authorize the use of school facilities for community purposes that will not interfere with their use for school purposes;
 - authorize co-curricular and extracurricular activities;
 - receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose; and
 - perform other acts as the board shall deem to be reasonably necessary or required for the governance of the schools.

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

Board Governance Model

The [MSBA Board Governance Model](#) delineates the distinct roles and responsibilities of the board and the superintendent, ensuring both governance and management functions are clearly articulated and understood. It outlines the board's role in setting expectations and parameters through policy adoption, budgeting, contracting, and focusing on student achievement for all. It also highlights the superintendent's responsibilities in providing leadership and supervision, thus ensuring policies and strategies set by the board are effectively implemented.

Standards for Board Leadership

The board is responsible to the community to govern efficiently and lead effectively to provide students an equitable education that results in high achievement. To assist in this journey, see the [Standards for School Board Leadership](#) developed by the MSBA. This document outlines best practices for board members and provides the standards we should strive to meet as part of a high-performing board team.

Attributes of High-Performing Board Teams

1. Everyone clearly understands the mission, goals, and role of the board; everyone knows who is, and who should be, doing what.
2. Board members are skilled in group leadership and/or membership functions.
3. Board members have a high degree of trust in one another.

4. Interaction occurs in a supportive atmosphere. Suggestions, comments, ideas, information, and criticism are all offered in a manner that is helpful. Respect is shown for varying team viewpoints.
5. Expectations for the group and its members are high. Goals are stretched.
6. The board is not dominated by an individual or sub-group; everyone participates and has the opportunity to influence the discussion.
7. The board has established procedures for operation including decision-making, conflict resolution, and meeting management.
8. The board is future focused. Decisions are made with long-term consequences and benefits in mind.
9. The board evaluates its performance periodically.

School Board Self-Evaluation

School Board self-evaluations can be an invaluable tool for assessing and enhancing the effectiveness of our governing body. This process allows us to reflect on our collective performance, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Engaging in a self-evaluation enables us to gain insights into individual contributions and understand the dynamics and overall functioning of the board. It also fosters open communication, promotes accountability, and strengthens teamwork among board members. By participating in the process, we can gain insights that will empower us to make informed decisions, enhance our effectiveness in serving the community, and contribute to the continuous improvement of the board's performance and impact.

District Customization – *Insert the process your board uses for self-evaluation. Suggested topics include:*

- [BoE 2024-25 Goals, Agenda and Working Document](#)
- **Board approved evaluation tool (TBD) Customize MSBA board evaluation tool to meet our needs**
- *The school board self-evaluation process and timeline*
- *The criteria and metrics used to evaluate the board's performance*
- *The current goals and objectives of the board and their relation to the district's strategic plan*
- *The role board members play in the evaluation process*
- *Procedures in place for addressing any areas for improvement identified in the evaluation*
- *Board's norm for sharing the results of the self-evaluation*
- *Learn about [MSBA's School Board Self-Evaluation in-district workshop](#).*

Role of the Superintendent

The board employs a superintendent to lead and manage the district. The superintendent is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board and the chief executive officer of the school system. The superintendent's duties and responsibilities are derived largely from three sources: statute, the employment contract, and the job description. Superintendents are responsible for the management of the schools, the administration of all board policies, and are directly accountable to the board. The superintendent must annually evaluate each

principal assigned responsibility for supervising a school building in the district. Also, the superintendent may delegate responsibilities to other district personnel but shall continue to be accountable for actions taken under such delegation. [Minn. Stat. 123B.143](#).

Hiring a Superintendent

One of the most critical responsibilities of the board is the hiring of a superintendent. The selection of the superintendent is a decision that shapes the future of the district, influencing the quality of education, the effectiveness of school management, and the overall success of students. The importance of this decision cannot be overstated. The superintendent's vision and leadership directly impact educational outcomes and the district's ability to achieve its strategic goals. Therefore, it is imperative that the board conducts a thorough and meticulous search process, considering candidates' experience, leadership style, and alignment with the district's values and objectives. This decision requires careful deliberation and a commitment to finding a leader who will foster a positive educational environment, promote innovation, and address the diverse needs of the school community. In essence, the hiring of a superintendent is not just a routine administrative task but a defining moment that sets the course for the district's future.

Duties of the Superintendent

District Customization – Insert the duties outlined in your superintendent's employment contract and **(job description - in the works, based on other two documents linked here)**
[MN Rules 2020, Part 3512.0510](#) [RAS Superintendent Vacancy Brochure link](#)

Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship

Understanding and fostering a productive relationship between the board and the superintendent is critical for the success of our educational institution. The [17 Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship](#) provides a comprehensive guide outlining key principles and best practices for maintaining a collaborative and effective partnership. This document highlights essential responsibilities and expectations for both the board members and the superintendent, promoting a clear understanding of each party's role in governance and administration. By adhering to these tenets, our board can ensure decisions are made efficiently, communication remains open and transparent, and the strategic goals of our district are met.

RAS Policy 203.7 Adopted Dec. 2022 States:

- 1. The Board employs one person—the Superintendent—and holds that person accountable for the performance of the entire District. The Board directs the Superintendent only through decisions of the Board acting as an entity. The Board delegates authority to the Superintendent to pursue District Goals. The Board/Superintendent relationship is based on mutual respect for their complementary roles.**
- 2. The Board will make official decisions by formal, recorded vote in order to avoid any lack of clarity.**
- 3. The Board, acting as an entity, may provide direction to the Superintendent in a posted meeting.**

4. **The Superintendent is neither obligated nor expected to follow the directions or instructions of individual Board members, officers and committees unless the Board has specifically delegated such exercise of authority.**
5. **If individual board members or board committees request information or assistance without Board authorization, the Superintendent may refuse such requests that, in the Superintendent's opinion, are disruptive, unreasonable, or require an excessive amount of resources or staff time.**
6. **If individual board members or board committees request public information or assistance without Board authorization, all board members will receive a notice that the requested information is available.**

Evaluating the Superintendent

Evaluation of a superintendent's performance is one of the board's most important responsibilities. The evaluation of the superintendent is an inherent managerial right of the board. Each board member should review the superintendent's employment contract to determine the evaluation-related provisions, if any, that may be included. Done correctly, an evaluation is a useful governance tool that helps drive school improvement. In fact, a high-quality evaluation process enhances positive school-superintendent relationships, improves communication, clarifies leadership roles, creates common understandings, and provides a mechanism for accountability and communication.

District Customization – Insert information regarding the superintendent's evaluation. Suggested topics include: **(Teri's framework: [BoE 2024-25 Goals, Agenda and Working Document](#), [BoE 3 Year Agenda 2024-2027](#), [2024-2025 District Strategic Plan Priority Work](#), [Establishing Goals - Superintendent - blank versions](#))**

- *The superintendent evaluation process and timeline*
- *The superintendent's goals and objectives*
- *The role board members play in the evaluation process*
- *Procedures in place for addressing any deficiencies found during the evaluation process*

Board Communication Guide

Communication Between Board Members

Adhering to guidelines for effective and lawful communication with your fellow board members is crucial. While open and collaborative communication is vital for the board's success, remember that discussions outside of official board meetings must be handled carefully to avoid violating the Minnesota Open Meeting Law (OML). This law requires any gathering of a quorum of board members, where official business is discussed, must be conducted in public and notice must be provided to ensure transparency. (See exceptions in the Closed Meeting Chart **on pages 25 - maybe insert a link for the exceptions.**) Therefore, while informal discussions can be valuable for building relationships and exchanging ideas, avoid veering into areas of official board business unless they are part of a scheduled public meeting.

Building Collaborative Relationships – School governance is founded on the belief that a group of very different people representing various constituencies in their district can make better decisions than any one person alone. That diversity is the board’s strength. It’s best to be open-minded about the opinions of your fellow board members. Your goal should not be to change them to your point of view, but rather to determine the best solution to an issue by working together to try and accommodate all views. You want the students to be the “winners” — not one board member or another.

Addressing Team Dysfunction – Open communication is critical to the proper functioning of the board. If you feel the board is not functioning well, it may be appropriate to suggest a workshop where the board reviews its ground rules, board policies on board operations, and board/administrative relations that establish how the leadership team will function. If these ground rules and policies are not effective, then consider modifications to them. The board may want to hire a facilitator to assist with discussions to improve the board’s working relations. MSBA can help with a custom board in-service tailored to the board’s specific situation.

Guidelines for interacting outside a board meeting

- **Do Not Discuss Board Business.** Focus on topics such as general education trends, personal updates, or board training and development without steering into specifics of pending decisions or board business.
- **Be Cautious with Written Communication.** Exercise caution with emails, texts, and social media interactions among board members. Avoid group messages or email chains discussing board business that could be construed as a meeting. **Avoid responding to ALL, all communications should go through the chair and superintendent.**
- **Be Transparent with Your Intentions.** Always make the purpose of any gathering clear, ensuring it is social or educational in nature and not meant for making decisions or deliberations that should be reserved for official meetings, **not for promoting ownerships/memberships or personal causes.**
- **Consider Public Perception.** When planning to meet outside of formal board meetings, consider how such gatherings might be perceived by the public. It’s crucial to remember any appearance of conducting board business or decision-making outside of the designated public meetings could undermine community trust and confidence.

Associated Policy – *Insert a link to the district policy related to Open Meeting Law. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 205 [RAS Policy 205– Open Meetings and Closed Meetings](#). (Rules under Communication with the Superintendent - requests for information, through Superintendent - shared with all, etc.)*

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about board governance and/or operation.	<i>Insert district protocol</i> Contact Chair/Directors/Superintendent

I have a concern or questions regarding board governance.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact Chair/Directors/Superintendent
I have a concern or questions regarding district operations.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact Superintendent

Communication with the Superintendent

You need to establish a productive working relationship with the superintendent. To do this, you need to communicate with that individual. If you have questions, it is better to call **contact** the superintendent and discuss them before the board meeting rather than surprise the superintendent at a public meeting. If the questions are concerns or relate to negative feelings from the community, superintendents appreciate knowing about them in advance of the board meeting so they can come prepared to address them. It is appropriate to call the superintendent, set up a meeting to discuss questions, or send an email for simple questions or requests. When contacting the superintendent, it is important for you to keep the scope of such contacts within reason, to permit adequate time to receive a response, and to generally remain cognizant of the superintendent’s other responsibilities and demands on their time.

Disagreements with the Superintendent – Always treat your fellow board members, the superintendent, and other administrators with respect. However, don’t be afraid to disagree on an issue. In fact, a discussion about an issue that reflects two or more views usually results in a better decision than if everyone agrees with the first solution offered. Be certain to debate the issue, not the person, and maintain decorum in debate. **(Find common ground to work together for the benefit of the district/students)**

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about the district.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact Superintendent
What if I disagree with a report or presentation to the board from the superintendent or other staff member?	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact Superintendent/Chair

Communication with District Administrators and Staff

You will likely come in contact with district employees, including administrators, teachers, and other staff members. While there’s nothing wrong with talking to district staff, keep in mind that complaints should follow the chain of communication. Additionally, understand **individual board members do not have authority to direct the work of district staff members.** Directing requests through the superintendent can assist with appropriate prioritization, identifying information that may be readily available, and determining when it may be appropriate to have the full board weigh in regarding certain requests and project ideas.

Discussing Your Child with Staff – This can be a tricky area. No matter what you say about “speaking as a parent, not a board member,” it may be difficult for some teachers to separate your role on the board from your role as a parent. Some board members have indicated their significant other **change to a designated other** frequently takes the lead in speaking to their children’s teachers. Make sure you’re not using your position as a board

member to secure special treatment for your child. If there are issues you wish to discuss with a teacher, you should follow the normal procedures for contacting your child’s teacher to discuss them. Keep in mind that you do not relinquish your parental rights now that you’re a board member.

Communication with Constituents Including Staff, Students, Parents, and Community

Identify the person contacting you and ensure you have their contact information. Seek to understand the situation or interest but, generally, do not agree or commit to resolve it personally as that is not the role of individual board members. Here are some general expectations:

- Do not agree to confidentiality or commit to limit your options of notification.
- Do not get involved in staff employment or contractual issues.
- Do not attempt to work with a parent who is working on behalf of an organized group rather than on behalf of their own student.
- When applicable, redirect the person to the appropriate staff person or administrator to address the concern. **Parent Guide for Addressing Concerns (Ask if the person has been in contact with the appropriate staff person or administrator first.)**
- Be alert to patterns of like concerns and notify the superintendent’s office of the possibility.
- If the concern raises governance or public relations questions, contact the board chair in addition to the superintendent.
- Avoid forming and communicating opinions about a board decision before the board has discussed it in a board meeting.

Situation	District Protocol
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent with concerns regarding the district.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Listen, get contact information, and ask for the constituent’s expectation for resolution.
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent regarding the board’s decisions.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Listen, and discuss with constituent.
If I get an email that is addressed to the entire board with concerns from a constituent.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Chair/Superintendent will respond to the constituent on behalf of the Board.
There is a situation that requires the district’s legal counsel to be contacted.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Chair/Superintendent will make contact with legal counsel.

Engaging with the Community

Be proactive. The board can engage key stakeholders by inviting and appointing them to participate in standing and ad hoc committees, advisory panels, focus groups, forums, and surveys to describe a vision for the district, set its goals, plan strategically, align resources with goals, and other actions offering them an opportunity to learn about public education and to influence governance decisions. Encourage all members of the community to visit

their schools. Invite them to extracurricular activities, schedule a grandparents' day, and offer tours. In public education, familiarity often breeds support.

Use a variety of means to engage community members, inform them about the district, and learn about their interests, priorities, and concerns. Print and electronic media, social media (be mindful of emerging trends for younger parents), the district's website, and face-to-face conversations all play important roles in a year-round district campaign to inform and to be informed.

While accentuating the positive — student successes and district progress — don't neglect the negative. Be the first to let the community know about clouds looming on the horizon, and what the board is doing to dispel them. The board should be ambassadors for the district by scheduling dialogues with a cross section of the community — preferably in their neighborhoods as well as in online forums. And be prepared to address negative comments and feedback in a positive, proactive manner.

In addition, consider the varying expectations of the district's constituents. The parents of seniors may have far different expectations than the parents of kindergartners, and elderly community members with no students in the district may want completely different types of communication.

Associated Policy – [Insert a link to the district policy related to parent and family engagement. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 612.1 – Development of Parent and Family Engagement Policies for Title I Programs.](#) **612 RAS Policy: Development of Parental Involvement Plans for Title I Programs**

Communication with the Media

It's important to handle media interactions with care to maintain the veracity and unified voice of the board. Maintaining a unified voice is crucial as it ensures all board communications are consistent, clear, and reflect the collective decisions and strategic direction of the board. This unified approach helps to build trust and credibility with the community, stakeholders, and the media.

Situation	District Protocol
If I am approached by the media regarding a concern or board decision.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Chair/Superintendent speaks with media on behalf of the Board.

Communication on Social Media

Social media plays a significant role in board members' responsibilities. To use social media effectively while avoiding potential pitfalls, remember your posts should reflect well on your role and set a good example for students and the community. Be careful not to share personal, confidential, or legally protected information about students, employees, or board members. Opt for face-to-face or telephone conversations for private matters instead of using social media. Control your emotions and avoid posting in anger or frustration, as negative statements can have lasting consequences and may lead to legal issues. Always use polite language and refrain from abusive, profane, or offensive comments. Additionally, avoid posting on behalf of the district or sharing commercial messages linked to the district. Use

social media primarily for listening, making announcements, and gathering feedback rather than conducting board business. Finally, ensure you comply with all relevant laws and district policies, including those related to acceptable use, harassment, discrimination, and privacy. Your online actions should always reflect the values and responsibilities of your position within the district.

Situation	District Protocol
I know about an upcoming district event that should be featured on social media.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Bring it to the Superintendent
I saw a post containing false or misleading information regarding the board or district.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Bring it to the Chair/Superintendent

Using a District Email

You should use a district email account for your board communications. While this creates another account to monitor, the extra effort is well worth it. As an elected official, your communications related to your office are presumed to be public data unless a provision of law makes part or all of the email private. Your emails may contain private personnel data ([Minn. Stat. 13.43](#)), private educational data ([Minn. Stat. 13.32](#)), correspondence with a private individual ([Minn. Stat. 13.601](#)), or protected medical information.

Members of the public may request access to public government data for any reason.

Government entities must respond to these requests, and any work required to separate private data from public data, known as redaction, cannot be charged to the requester. The government entity must keep public data readily accessible, and redacting private data is its responsibility. Often, decisions about redaction need to be made by legal counsel, which adds to the expense.

If you use a personal or work email account, access to the public data may require you to turn over the personal or work device on which the emails are stored. **(Best practice use district provided email for all district communication.)** If you use a district email address, the district’s computer system can be searched to respond to public data requests. As a result, you do not have to worry about your personal or work devices being unavailable or about your personal or work information being shared with others.

Using a separate email account also separates your board work from personal or business correspondence. This reduces the number of emails that need to be searched in preparation for responding to a public data request, saving the district time and money.

Another reason this separation is helpful is in how you think about your emails related to board work. Remembering the presumed public status of what you write in emails to other board members, the superintendent, and other district personnel about board work can save you from explanations and embarrassment. Public data may end up on the local news or social media, so it is wise to keep this in mind as you compose emails related to board work.

A final consideration is the potential to violate the OML. If a two-way communication about board business occurs among a quorum of the board (or a quorum of a board committee), it results in an OML violation, and the emails create a record of the violation. **What is RAS records management policy/practice for retention of emails?**

Communicating with Board Members Via Email – To ensure OML compliance, you are strongly discouraged from using email to communicate with other board members about issues within the board’s realm of authority, except for procedural elements like establishing meeting dates and locations. Generally, you should use email only for one-way communications to and from the board chair or superintendent to distribute information.

What about text messages with board members? private or public?

Situation	District Protocol
I have questions regarding an email I received from the board chair or superintendent.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact the Chair/Superintendent for clarification, and discussion.
Another board member emailed me regarding board business.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> respond only to the board member being cautious in what you say.
I have important information that everyone on the board needs to know before the next board meeting.	<i>Insert district protocol.</i> Contact the Chair/Superintendent to prevent serialized meetings.

References for Further Information

District Customization – Insert a list of resources that will help board members gain a deeper understanding of their role as a board member and how to work as part of a board team. Consider creating hyperlinks to each document for easy access to these resources instead of providing printed copies. Suggested resources include:

- All district policies regarding board operations. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is the 200 series. **(Coming from work with Anne Becker/Policy Committee to the Board)**
- A copy of most recent school board self-evaluation **(Recommendation: will cause need to review/change every year - leave this in the Board Self-Evaluation section above)**
- The superintendent’s employment contract
- The superintendent’s job description
- Legal Requirements for School Board Members
- [MSBA’s Board Development and Recognition Program](#)
- [MSBA Legal Requirements for School Board Members](#)
- [MSBA Common Acronyms Used in Education](#)

- [MSBA Glossary of Educational Terms](#)
- [MSBA School Finance Guide](#)
- [MSBA Election Manual](#)
- [MDE – School Finance Reports](#)
- [MN House Research – Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators](#)

Board Meetings and Governance

Board meetings are pivotal gatherings that dictate the course of educational policies and decisions within a district. Governed by a structured framework, these meetings encompass various types, from regular sessions to emergency convenings, each serving distinct purposes and following legal mandates outlined in Minnesota statutes. Moreover, the operational norms, roles of board officers, and adherence to parliamentary procedures shape the conduct of these meetings, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability. In this comprehensive overview, we delve into the intricacies of board meetings, covering everything from meeting types and legal obligations to procedural guidelines and public participation protocols.



Meetings of the Board

Types of Meetings

Regular Board Meeting – Regular meetings of the board are held according to an established schedule. The schedule must be kept on file at the district office. No additional notice required unless the date, time, or place of the regular meeting is changed. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 1.](#)

Special Meeting – The board may hold a special meeting to conduct business as needed. A special meeting can provide extra time for presentations, such as review of building-level outcomes, or to deal with an issue that arises but is not likely to be ongoing. A special meeting requires three days' notice (posted on the district's main bulletin board and either published in the official newspaper or mailed/delivered to those persons requesting notice) of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Board discussion and action must fall within the posted purpose(s) of the meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 2.](#)

Emergency Meeting – The board may hold an emergency meeting called to deal with a situation that requires immediate board consideration and possible action, such as a response to a school fire, a school safety issue, etc. The board determines when an emergency meeting is needed. Good faith effort must be made to notify the news media that have requested notice in the same manner as notice is given to board members. If the situation allows for a three-day notice, hold a special meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 3.](#)

District Customization – *Insert descriptions of meetings the district holds with other titles. Suggestions include:*

- **Business or Regular (?)**: At business meetings, boards take action on policies, contracts, bid awards, personnel appointments, etc. This meeting may be a regular, a special, or an emergency meeting.
- **Work or Study (?) Session**: A work or study session is a meeting of the board with selected staff or presenters to study and discuss in depth matters which potentially will come before the board. This meeting may be a regular or a special meeting.
- **Retreat/Workshop**: This is a leadership team meeting for board members and the superintendent, often led by a professional facilitator and dealing with evaluation and/or development issues. This is usually a special meeting.
- **Committee**: Board committee meetings are covered by the OML. Other committee meetings that include board members may also be covered by the OML. [Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 1.](#)
- **Listening Time**: Public forum for community input, where the Board listens but does not respond.

Organizational Meeting – The first meeting in January will be devoted to business required for the proper organization of the board. The agenda may include:

- Seating new members including administering the ceremonial oath of office
- Electing officers for chair, vice-chair (optional), clerk, and treasurer
- Setting (?) the dates, time, and location(s) for regular board meetings (**Board generally approves calendar for the coming SY in the spring**)

- Setting board member compensation
- Establishing standing (**Recommendation: add “and Ad Hoc”**) committees and committee members
- Passing a [Resolution for Combined Polling Places](#) (**This must be approved and sent to Hennepin County by the end of December annually**)
- Determining time, place, and manner for public comments (**Listening Time - see above**)
- Designating district depositories
- Selecting the official media sources (newspaper, TV) and district legal counsel

District Customization – Insert any additional topics your district traditionally includes as part of the organizational meeting.

Open Meeting Law (OML)

The Open Meeting Law ([Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D.](#)) is intended to preserve the rights of the public to observe actions and decisions of its representatives. To satisfy this, all meetings of the board will be open to the public for attendance, and a schedule of the board’s regular meetings and working sessions will include times and locations and shall be kept on file at the district office. (See the Closed Meeting Law Chart link below for exceptions). Additionally, the board will ensure a schedule of meetings is posted on the district’s website. The OML applies to all meetings of the public body and, in general, meetings of its committees and subcommittees. For the law to apply, a quorum (a majority of the members of the board) must be present. Although the responsibility to ensure meetings are properly noticed lies with the board, this operational activity is typically carried out by the staff member who functions as the clerk to the board.

Closed Meetings

Minnesota’s OML requires all board meetings to be open to the public with few exceptions. A public body must begin in an open meeting and state on the record the specific grounds permitting the meeting to be closed and describe the subject to be discussed. A majority vote is needed to close the meeting, with the time and place announced at the public meeting before going into closed session. Please review [Minn. Stat. 13D.05](#) before proceeding to close a meeting. For specific questions, consult with legal counsel.

For more information regarding closed meetings, see [MSBA’s Closed Meeting Law Chart](#).

Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology

In the ever-evolving landscape of governance, technology has become an indispensable tool for facilitating communication and collaboration. Section 13D.02 of the Minnesota Statutes acknowledges this reality by outlining the conditions under which meetings governed by section 13D.01 can be conducted using interactive technology.

For more information regarding remote meetings, see [Minn. Stat. 13D.02 Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology](#).

Meeting Operations

Attendance of Meetings

All board members are expected to attend all meetings. However, it is recognized scheduling conflicts will occur.

District Customization – Insert who and by what method (email, phone call, etc.) a board member should notify if a member is unable to attend a board meeting.

(Recommendation: contact the Chair/Superintendent/Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board)

Acceptable Dress Code and Language

District Customization – Insert what is considered an acceptable dress code at board meetings. **(Recommendation: Board discussion - if yes, should be in compliance with policies/APs that apply to the entirety of the district).**

Location of Meetings

District Customization – Insert where board meetings are regularly held and where to find out information regarding location changes **(Recommendation: Robbinsdale Area Schools Education Service Center, 4148 Winnetka Ave N, New Hope, Minnesota 55427).**

Addressing Others

District Customization – Insert how to address other board members, the superintendent, and other presenters during meetings **(Recommendation: Robert's Rules of Order/Parliamentary Procedure - titles, Director, chair, and surnames, and/or Mr./Ms./Dr.).**

Presentations

District Customization – Insert district norms related to presentations at board meetings. Suggested topics include: **This should come from communications office.**

- How presenters at board meetings address the board prior to their presentation and the order of their address. **Address the board by chair and director last name**
- When board members should ask questions to presenters, during or after the presentation. **Board questions may occur at the end of the presentation at the direction of the chair.**
- What is the process for a board member to request a presenter to come speak to the board? **If a board member would like to request a presenter to come to speak to the board, contact the superintendent and the board chair prior to agenda setting meeting.**

Voting

Each elected member of the board will have one vote. A roll call vote will be taken when required by law or when requested by any board member.

District Customization – Insert the district norms for regular voting. **(Recommendation: Robert's Rules of Order/Parliamentary Procedure)**

Quorum of the Board

In order for a board meeting to be official and before any action can be taken by the board, at least a quorum of board members must be present. In the absence of a quorum, the only

official action that the board may take is to adjourn the meeting. The gathering of a quorum constitutes a meeting if “members discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of the district.”

Parliamentary Procedure During Meetings **(Recommendation: Chair and Clerk review/revise from Robert’s Rules of Order)**

District Customization – Insert the district norms regarding Parliamentary Procedure.

Associated Policies – Insert a link to the district policy related to Parliamentary Procedure during board meetings. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policies 203 – Operation of the School Board – Governing Rules and 203.1 – School Board Procedures; Rules of Order. **RAS policy 203.1**

Presiding Officer

The chair will preside over all board meetings. If the chair is unable to preside, the vice-chair (if one has been appointed), will perform the duties of the chair. Should both the chair and vice-chair be unable to preside, the clerk will perform the duties of the chair. In the unlikely event that the chair, vice-chair, and clerk are unable to preside, the treasurer will perform the duties of the chair.

Superintendent’s Role in Board Meetings

The superintendent is a key person at all board meetings. The superintendent, chair, **and vice chair – RAS Governance handbook 1.6 B3 adopted November 2014** commonly plan the meeting agenda together. The superintendent makes certain the meeting room is set up as required and all tools needed are available, such as audio or visual recording equipment, internet access, microphones, etc. Each item on the agenda is introduced by the chair; however, for discussion or action items, the superintendent or a designee is often asked to explain the issue. The superintendent’s recommendation should be solicited before a vote is taken.

Board Committees

Committees may be established to address recurring needs of the board. Committees are in place to make the board’s work more efficient and effective. They serve in advisory capacities and bring recommendations to the full board for decision making. Board committees should meet as often as necessary to accomplish their work and should meet only when there is substantive work to be done.

District Customization – Insert district norms regarding board committees. Suggested topics include: **LIST board standing committees LAC, FAC, Policy also list district committees with board participation (287 board membership also)**

- List and description of board committees including district and community committees with board representation
- Establishing board committees
- Appointing board committee assignments
- Your District Attorney’s recommendation regarding the Open Meeting Law’s impact on board committees

Associated Policy – *Insert a link to the district policy related to board committees. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 213 – School Board Committees. **RAS does not have a policy 213 yet***

Election of Board Officers

Minnesota law is silent on the method of electing officers, except that the election must be by open vote and not by any form of secret ballot. [Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 4](#). Subsequently, the board may establish its own procedures, including procedures for nominating officers and voting procedures. The board will establish procedures in advance of the meeting so that everyone will know what to expect from the outset. The board must follow the procedures, but the procedures can be changed if the majority of the board members agree.

For more information regarding officer elections, see [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook](#).

District Customization – *Insert the district's procedures for electing board officers.*

Suggested topics include:

- *Procedures for nominating officers including – **Board members can nominate other board members or themselves.***
 - *What to do if no one is nominated (**should it remain as it stands?**)*
 - *What to do if a single person is nominated, but declines the office*
- *Voting procedures including the following special situations –*
 - *Only one board member is nominated*
 - *No candidate receives a majority of votes*

Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities

Effective management and clear understanding of roles are essential for the smooth operation of board meetings. The [Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities](#) provides a detailed outline of the duties and expectations for board members, the chair, the superintendent, and administrative staff before, during, and after meetings. This comprehensive guide helps ensure all participants are well-prepared, meetings are conducted efficiently, and follow-up actions are clearly defined. It covers everything from agenda preparation and legal advice to maintaining a positive meeting atmosphere and accurate record-keeping.

Data Privacy

It's essential to understand how data privacy relates to board meetings. When discussing district matters in board meetings, we encourage open dialogue. However, we need reasonable restrictions to ensure orderly proceedings and protect individuals' privacy and due process rights. These rights extend to both employees and students of the district. For employees, this includes the privacy of their personnel data. Similarly, students have privacy rights concerning their educational data. To uphold these privacy rights, we have procedures in place for handling agenda items and complaints. **If you are unsure if it is private data, ask before disclosing any information.**

Associated Policy – *Insert a link to the district policy related to data privacy. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policies 406 – Public and Private Personnel Data and 515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records. **406 RAS Policy: Public and Private***

Public Comments to the Board

The board recognizes the value of participation by the public in deliberations and decisions on district matters. However, the board retains the right to determine whether and how public comment may occur.

District Customization – Insert the district’s protocols regarding public comments at board meetings:

- Whether the board allows public comment during board meetings (**currently Business/Regular meeting (formerly WBWF) presentation - and in Truth in Taxation Public Hearing prior to Business/Regular meeting. Recommendation: Board discussion regarding public comment in Business/Regular meeting and/or Work Session**)
- **Currently RAS has Listening time once a month before a business meeting.**
- During which part of the board meeting will public comment occur
- Whether and how the public signs up to speak; what information is collected
- District rules/restrictions on public comment Page from notebook with instructions
- **Whether and who will read rules/restrictions before the public comment period**
- Whether and how the board engages in dialogue with speakers
- Whether and who will follow up with speakers after the meeting

Associated Policy – Insert a link to the district policy related to public comments. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 206 – Public Participation in School Board Meetings/Complaints About Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations. **RAS does not have a policy 206 at this time.**

Agendas and Minutes

Agenda Procedures

The board will conduct business during meetings through an adopted agenda that advances board work and district goals. The agenda serves as a roadmap for the meeting, outlining topics such as reports, presentations, discussions, and decisions. It is expected all board members will read the agenda and any supporting documents prior to the meeting.

Each board member has the right to request additions, amendments, or revisions to the agenda prior to its adoption, and the board will determine if those changes are to be made. TBD - Board discussion is required to decide what to do moving forward.

District Customization – Insert district norms regarding agendas. Suggested topics include:

- Who forms the agenda (**Chair/Superintendent/Vice-Chair, with Directors submitting items for consideration prior to agenda setting session, Robert’s Rules**)
- Protocols to make additions, amendments, or revisions to the agenda before and during a board meeting (**Robert’s Rules will be the protocol used to make additions, amendments, motions, etc**)

- Procedure for distributing the tentative agenda and supporting documents **(Wednesday prior to the Monday/Tuesday meeting via email)**
- Procedure for asking questions about the agenda and supporting documents **(All questions to be submitted to the Superintendent prior to 9 p.m. on the Sunday prior to the meeting via email)**
- Procedure for addressing clerical errors in the agenda and supporting documents **(Email any clerical errors to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board prior to noon on Friday prior to the meeting)**
- Who will inform the board if there are changes to the agenda after its initial distribution **(Friday prior to the meeting via email update)**

Associated Policy – Insert a link to the district policy related to board agendas. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 203.5 – School Board Meeting Agenda.

Consent Agenda

The superintendent, in consultation with the board chair, may place items on the consent agenda. **A consent agenda is a part of the agenda that includes items typically approved together in one motion. These items may include meeting minutes, routine reports, personnel appointments, and other administrative matters. By grouping these items together, the board can streamline the meeting process and focus on more substantive discussions.** If any board member wishes to discuss or vote separately on an item listed in the consent agenda, they can request to have it removed for individual consideration.

Associated Policy – Insert a link to the district policy related to board consent agendas. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 203.6 – Consent Agendas.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes will be carefully recorded to include all actions of the board and all votes taken at a board meeting by the board’s clerk or designee. Minutes do not include discussion or editorial comments.

District Customization – Insert district norms regarding meeting minutes. Suggested topics include: **204 RAS AP: School Board Meeting Minutes - as of July 1, 2024, meeting minutes no longer need to be published in a newspaper. We are now publishing them in the agendas on the website.**

- Format and what is included in the minutes
- Modifying and adoption minutes
- Distribution of adopted minutes
- Who and where are minutes preserved as an official record of board business
- Where and when are the minutes published/posted for the public

Associated Policy – Insert a link to the district policy related to board meeting minutes. For MSBA Policy Services Subscribers, this is MSBA Policy 204 – School Board Meeting Minutes.

References for Further Information

District Customization – Insert a list of resources that will help board members gain a deeper understanding of their role as a board member and how to work as part of a board team. Consider creating hyperlinks to each document for easy access to these resources instead of providing printed copies. Suggested resources include:

- Copies of Meeting Minutes from the past year
- [MSBA Sample Board Meeting Agenda](#)
- [MSBA School Board Ceremonial Oath of Office](#)
- [MSBA Guidelines with Meeting Minutes](#)
- [MSBA First Monday in January Booklet](#) (regarding the Organizational Meeting)
- [MSBA Parliamentary Procedure Overview](#)