



SCHOOL DISTRICT 197

West St. Paul + Mendota Heights + Eagan Area



Serving on the
School Board

Serving on the Board

In response to community interest in serving on the school board, the district has prepared this guide that explores the roles, responsibilities, and requirements for service on the school board for School District 197. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Amidon at 651-403-7002 or mary.amidon@isd197.org.

Filing for Candidacy

The terms of four school board seats are expiring in December 2023, and election for those seats will be held on November 7, 2023. The period for filing affidavits of candidacy for the office of school board member will begin in July or August of 2023.



Membership

The school board is made up of seven citizens elected at large by voters in the District every two years. Members are elected to four-year overlapping terms. At the end of a four-year term, members may run for re-election to successive terms. Voting takes place at general elections in November and terms begin the first Monday in January or as soon as possible thereafter. If a vacancy occurs in the middle of a term, the school board names an appointee to serve until the next district election.

Every year at its first meeting in January, the school board holds an organizational meeting to elect officers and settle other routine business. The board issues committee and school liaison assignments each year in July.

The superintendent is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the school board who facilitates the work of the Board and is responsible to the Board for providing leadership to the District and carrying out Board directives.

Joanne Mansur, Chair
651-452-3895 | joanne.mansur@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023

Byron Schwab, Treasurer
651-451-9928 | byron.schwab@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023

Brenda Corbett, Director
651-451-7599 | brenda.corbett@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023

Terry Stamman, Director
651-696-9537 | terry.stamman@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2023

Marcus Hill, Vice Chair/Clerk
651-493-9315 | marcus.hill@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2025

Sarah Larsen, Director
651-395-7603 | sarah.larsen@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2025

Jon Vaupel, Director
651-347-1998 | jon.vaupel@isd197.org
Term: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2025

Board Responsibilities

As the elected governing body of School District 197, the School Board is responsible to:

- Establish policy. The administration implements policy and supervises school operations.
- Employ and evaluate the Superintendent, the chief administrator who oversees all operations of the school district.
- Advocate for students with lawmakers.
- Establish and approve the annual budget.
- Approve expenditures and ensure that proper facilities and equipment are available to support teaching and learning in School District 197.



Meeting Attendance

Membership on the school board requires attendance at a variety of meetings held every month. All school board meetings must be open to the public so that the public has the opportunity to see and hear all discussion, testimony, and votes. Please check the district website, isd197.org, for a complete and up-to-date list of meetings.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS*

The school board holds official business meetings at 6 p.m. typically on the first Monday of each month. Meetings are held at the City of Mendota Heights Council Chambers (1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights).

WORK SESSIONS

The school board holds work sessions to study issues in more depth. Work sessions are at 5 p.m. and typically on the third Monday of each month at the School District 197 Office (1897 Delaware Ave., Mendota Heights).

LISTENING SESSIONS

Listening sessions are an informal opportunity for parents, students, and community members to talk with school board representatives and administration about school issues, thoughts, and concerns. Listening sessions precede the first school board meeting of the month from 5:00-5:45 p.m. at the City of Mendota Heights Conference Room (1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments are an opportunity for community members to address the full board. They typically allow three minutes per speaker, 10 minutes per topic, and as a general rule, no more than three speakers per topic. Public comments follow procedural items at the second meeting of the month (work sessions).

PUBLIC INPUT SESSIONS

On occasion, the school board may host a public input meeting. Public input meetings are devoted to specific topics of interest as identified by the school board or community. During public input meetings, the school board or administration typically makes a factual presentation, sometimes including a recommendation, followed by a structured question/answer/commentary session.

*Recordings of school board official business meetings (not work sessions) are played back on local cable channels, or are available for viewing on the district website or the Town Square TV website.

Committee Advisory & Task Force Assignments

School board members accept assignments to select school district committees and task forces which meet periodically to study specific issues, work on projects and make recommendations to the School Board. In addition, school board members represent School District 197 in metro and state education organizations in which the School District has membership. Current assignments include:

- Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)
- Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)
- Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL)
- Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC)
- TriDistrict Community Education
- Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee (GTAC)
- District Labor Management Council
- Intermediate District 917
- Meet and Confer
- Chemical Health Committee
- TriDistrict Comm Ed Advisory Council
- Equity Advisory

School Liaisons

School liaison assignments made annually pair school board members with specific elementary schools, middle schools, and/ or the high school. Board members are encouraged to attend the parent/teacher organization meetings for each of their liaison schools.

Time Commitment

The actual time commitment required varies depending on the board member and the number of issues the school board is addressing at any given time. Typically, a board member could expect to devote anywhere from 15 to 25 hours a month studying issues, attending meetings, and responding to and communicating with community members.

Policy Governance

According to its own approved policy, the School District 197 School Board's responsibility is to provide governance for the public education system to successfully achieve the ideals and goals set out in the Strategic Framework. Governance is framed by the purpose for which an organization was created and is therefore concerned with activities of the highest level including goal setting, policy development and monitoring progress toward governance objectives.

The board will strive to assure that all its members have the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to carry out excellence in governance, which will be achieved by 1) training new members and candidates, as well as maintaining and increasing current member skills and knowledge; 2) engaging in external monitoring that helps the board to exercise confident control over organizational performance; and 3) implementing community input strategies to ensure the board's ability to listen effectively to stakeholder viewpoints and values.



Groups & Roles

PUBLIC & PARENTS

- Primary educator of the child (parents)
- Elect school board members on educational issues
- Vote on levy requests

SCHOOL BOARD

- Supervision and appraisal for one employee: the superintendent
- Development of policies that govern schools and creation of district mission/vision/values
- Engagement with the public
- Approval of budgets

SUPERINTENDENT

- Management and operation of the school district

PRINCIPALS & ADMINISTRATION

- Create school-based plans that align with district's operational plans and vision
- Support for the superintendent
- Implementation of policies and procedures

STAFF

- Educate students
- Support for superintendent, principals, and administration
- Implementation of policies and procedures



School District 197 Strategic Framework

TAGLINE

Nurture. Inspire. Prepare. Together, we thrive.

MISSION STATEMENT

School District 197 is committed caring relationships, equitable practices, and high achievement for all.

WE BELIEVE...

Relationships

- People thrive when they feel connected, trusted, and affirmed.
- Communication and collaboration strengthen school, family, and community relationships.

Equity

- Our diversity makes us stronger.
- Seeking to understand each other strengthens the individual and community.
- We are all accountable for removing barriers and creating equitable systems.

Achievement

- High expectations and personalized support are critical for student success.
- Innovative environments promote curiosity, creativity, and courageous action.
- Everyone has the ability to continually grow.

GOALS

- All students are academically and socially ready for school.
- All 3rd graders can read at grade level.
- All racial and economic achievement gaps are closed.
- All students graduate from high school.
- All students are ready for career and college.

FOCUS AREAS

1. Establish a district-wide system of social-emotional learning and support
2. Build equitable systems and support throughout the district
3. Increase E-12 opportunities for career exploration and preparation