



BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK:
*An Informational Guide for
South St. Paul Public Schools
Board of Education Members*



104 – 5th Ave. So., South St. Paul, MN 55075

www.sspps.org

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South St. Paul Public Schools 2021 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

Board Members

Chris Walker, *Chair*
Linda Diaz, *Vice Chair*
Nikki Laliberte, *Secretary-Clerk*
Wendy Felton, *Treasurer*
Bill Arend
John Raasch
Monica Weber

Executive Staff

Dr. Brian Zambreno, *Superintendent*
Lisa Brandecker, *Executive Assistant*

Superintendent's Leadership Cabinet

Leah Bourg, *Middle School Principal*
Paul Brashear, *Technology Director*
Terry Bretoi, *Kaposia Principal*
Mark Fenton, *Building and Grounds Director*
Joel Milteer, *Human Resource Director*
Chuck Ochocki, *High School Principal*
Chad Schmidt, *Equity and Learning Director*
Theresa Starkman, *Lincoln Center Principal*
Lisa Kraft, *Special Education Director*
Jeanne Zehnder, *Early Learning and Community Education Director*

THE HISTORY OF SOUTH ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

We are Special School District 6

South St. Paul Public Schools and the City of South St. Paul's boundaries are nearly the same. The district serves approximately 3,500 students in the City of South St. Paul in two elementary schools (prek-5), a secondary school (6-12), and an alternative learning center (9-12). In addition, the district hosts early childhood programs (birth-5), an adult basic education program, and an extensive community education program. ***Our mission is to ignite a passion in every learner to inquire, continuously improve and engage in positively changing our world.***



Our History

South St. Paul schools was established in 1853. The schools operated under the name Kaposia School District, serving the sons and daughters of local residents, missionaries, and the Kaposia Village Native American chiefs. Initially under the jurisdiction of Dakota County, the district included sections of West St. Paul, Sunfish Lake, and Inver Grove Heights. In 1887, the county turned over the administration of the schools to the newly incorporated cities and their councils.

South St. Paul Special District No. 6 was officially designated a school district in 1890 when voters established an independent Board of Education. Rapid growth in the city and its schools continued in the 1950's and 1960's, culminating in the 1970's when more than 6,000 students attended six elementary schools, a high school, and a junior high school.

With the closing of the stockyards in 1986, enrollments in the South St. Paul schools began to decline and the community was forced to make the difficult decision to consolidate school buildings. During the same period, technology advances required the school district to be networked to keep up with the next generation of learners. In 1999, the South St. Paul community passed a technology referendum to maintain the quality of education in South St. Paul schools. This referendum was renewed in 2009 and 2017 providing an additional ten years of dedicated funding for technology initiatives and innovations.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

South St. Paul Public Schools is Minnesota's First K-12 IB World Schools District which signifies the district is authorized in the IB Primary Years Program (PYP) serving all students in grades K-5, the Middle Years Program (MYP) serving all students in grades 6-10, and the Diploma Program (DP) for students in grades 11-12. South St. Paul's IB program encourages students to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged community members.

The SSP Diploma Program (DP) authorized in 1986 and the Middle Years Program (MYP) and Primary Years Program (PYP) in 2009.

TriDistrict Career and College Readiness (CCR)

The TriDistrict Career and College Readiness (CCR) program is a partnership between South St. Paul Public Schools, Inver Grove Heights Community Schools, Mendota Heights-West St. Paul-Eagan Schools, and local businesses. The program gives students the opportunity to explore different career paths and earn college credits, degrees, and job-ready experiences or certifications while in high school. Through its TriDistrict CAPS programs, the TriDistrict CCR Initiative offers pathways in healthcare and medicine, transportation technologies, and business and entrepreneurship. This year the program began partnering with Metropolitan State University to offer a pathway in the field of Urban Education for South St. Paul students.

- Healthcare Careers and Medicine
- Careers in Transportation Technologies
- Careers in Business and Entrepreneurship

Community Support

In 1984, through a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation, the **South St. Paul Educational Foundation** was formed for the purpose of supporting and aiding the school district. Since its inception, over 4 million dollars has been raised to help student achieve success in the classroom and beyond. The South St. Paul Educational Foundation welcomes partnerships from the community who embrace the notion that quality educational opportunities provide a key to the future of our community.

The South St. Paul Open Foundation started in 1974 as a fundraising group supporting athletics at South St. Paul High School. Today the focus has expanded to support all co-curricular activities and their parent-run booster clubs in South St. Paul Schools.

South St. Paul Public Schools Today

Mission *(our core purpose)*

The mission of South St. Paul Public Schools is to *ignite a passion in every learner to inquire, continuously improve and engage in positively changing our world.*

Our Vision *(what we intend to create)*

The vision of South St. Paul Public Schools is that we will...

- **Prepare** each and every student for their next step
- **Provide** high quality, individualized programs, services and personalized learning for all ages and stages of a learner's life
- **Build** capacity in our learners to exemplify the IB Learner Profile
- **Partner** with our families and community to develop shared ownership of student outcomes and family learning needs
- **Ensure** students and families have reliable and regular access to technology for accelerated learning

Our Strategic Directions *(how we will get there)*

1. **Develop** systemic student support services in each school and classroom
2. **Promote** ownership of learning by students and staff through an engaging environment and professional development
3. **Secure, sustain and allocate** resources to meet student needs
4. **Strengthen** family connections and engagement
5. **Partner** with community and businesses to leverage local resources

Our Core Values *(what drives our words and actions)*

Compassion: Be kind, fair and just toward all people because of who we are

Equity: Provide equal access to opportunities in academics, student services and activities

Excellence: Strive for the/our best in all we do with high expectations for all

Integrity: Do the right thing even when no one is watching, and keep our promises

Resilience: Be able to bounce back from challenges and disappointments with confidence and hope

Respect: Honor our similarities and differences in our assumptions, inquiries, words and actions

We Believe

- All students can learn
- Rigorous and relevant education is essential to student success
- Learning is a continuous process built on strong skill base
- Schools must be respectful of and responsive to individual differences
- The quality of our future depends upon effective public education
- We must provide a safe, welcoming, respectful, and motivating place to learn
- Parent and community involvement is critical to the success of children
- We must prepare our students to participate in the global society

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

District Office

104 – 5th Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9400

Central Square Community Center

Community Education/Adult Basic Education

100 – 7th Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 306-3631

Family Education Center (Early Learning Programming)

104 – 5th Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9418

Kaposia Education Center (PreK-5)

1225 – 1st Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 451-9260
Enrollment as of 10/1/20: 682

Lincoln Center Elementary (PreK-5)

357 – 9th Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9426
Enrollment as of 10/1/20: 767

South St. Paul Secondary (6-12)

700 – 2nd Street North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9408
Enrollment as of 10/1/20: 1648

South St. Paul Education Center

710 – 19th Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075

- **Community Learning Center (9-12)**
 - (651) 450-9966
 - *Enrollment as of 10/1/20: 101*

BECOMING A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

South St. Paul Public Schools governed by seven Board members, elected at-large, representing all citizens within the boundaries.

Becoming a Board Member

South St. Paul Board of Education members are elected officials. Elections are held in November of even-numbered years. To avoid having all seven seats up for election simultaneously, the seats are balloted on alternating basis, with four spots being available one year, and the remaining three being available two years later. The process then repeats itself.

Eligibility Requirements *Source: Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)*

To run for a school Board seat, you must be:

- At least 21 years old;
- Eligible voter
- A District resident for at least 30 days prior to election/appointment;
- Not convicted of a felony;

Term of Office

Board members are elected to four year terms commencing on January 1 of the year following the November election, and ending on December 31 four years later. A member who has been appointed to fill the unfinished term of a member will need to run for election depending on when he/she was appointed. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a member can serve.

Filling Vacancies *Source: SSP Public Schools Policy Manual #214*

A vacancy on the Board shall occur when a member dies, resigns, or ceases to be a resident of Special School District No. 6. If a member of the Board of Education is unable to serve on the Board and attend its meetings for ninety (90) days or more because of illness or prolonged absence from the District, the Board may, at any regular or special meeting thereof, declare a vacancy to exist. All vacancies will be filled according to school board policy #214 and Minnesota Statute.

If a seat becomes vacant mid-term, the replacement member will serve a term of office which is the shorter of the following: "until the completion of the unexpired term, or until the first day of January immediately following the next regular Board of education election taking place more than ninety days after a person is selected by the Board."

The term of a member elected during a special election shall not exceed the term of the member they are replacing. Nor can the term of a Board of education member be lengthened by the member's resignation and subsequent selection by the Board.

Minnesota Statute states that once the board approves an appointment, the appointed board member cannot be seated until 30-days after the appointment.

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP *Source: MSBA, 2017 and Dennis Cheesebrow, TeamWorks International*

School boards are most effective when members focus on the big picture: making policy, setting goals and engaging stakeholders, all with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. When boards focus on administrative issues, school districts suffer. Divided boards lead to a divided community.

SSPPS Board members vote according to district interests as they interpret, while listening to, and seeking to understand the diverse individual and group interests on any issue or situation.

The SSPPS Board strives for excellence in governance, operates in partnership with the Superintendent who strives for excellence in management, and both partner for excellence in consultation with staff, students, families, and the public.

SSPPS may use terminology and structure as defined in policy and plan that differs slightly from sourced materials in the Handbook.

Standard 1: Conduct and Ethics

The school board, as a whole, provides leadership to the community on behalf of the school district by conducting its business in a fair, respectful, legal, and responsible manner.

An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

- A. Recognize the school board team consists of school board members and the superintendent and evaluates its performance at least annually.
- B. Take full responsibility for its activity and behavior at and away from the school board table.
- C. Encourage its members to express their individual opinions, respect others' opinions, and vote according to their convictions.
- D. Speak with one voice after reaching a decision.
- E. Spend time on board governance work rather than staff work — focuses on the ends not the means.
- F. Provide for orientation and ongoing training for all school board members.
- G. Follow established policies, including the chain-of-command, by directing people with concerns to the appropriate staff.
- H. Set an example of respectful and civil leadership.

Standard 2: Vision

The school board, with community input, envisions the educational future of the community and then formulates the goals, defines the outcomes, and sets the course for the school district.

An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

- A. Use clear, focused, attainable, and measurable goals and outcomes to support gains in student achievement.
- B. Develop a strategic plan, which includes well-crafted school district belief statements, mission statement, vision statement, goals, and objectives that enable the school board to evaluate school district performance.
- C. Regularly monitor the strategic plan to evaluate progress toward goal achievement and school district success.
- D. Ensure that the school district belief statements, mission statement, vision statement, goals, and objectives are reflected in school board policies, mirrored in the budget planning and implementation efforts, and is supported district-wide.
- E. Communicate the strategic plan and the progress to the community.

Standard 3: Structure

The school board, to achieve its vision, establishes organizational and physical structures for student and staff success.

An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

- A. Create organizational and physical structures based on equity in which all students and staff have the resources and supports to maximize achievement.
- B. Advocate and provide for learning through rigorous curriculum, effective technology, and a safe and secure environment.
- C. Select and employ one person — the superintendent — as the school district’s chief executive officer to lead and manage the school district.
- D. Hold the superintendent accountable for school district performance and compliance with written school board policy.
- E. Delegate the authority to the superintendent to recommend and evaluate all school district staff within the standards established through written school board policies.
- F. Accept ultimate responsibility for the care, management, fiscal oversight, and control of the district while understanding that the day-to-day operations will be conducted by the staff.

Standard 4: Accountability

The school board is accountable to the community for constantly monitoring the conditions affecting the school district as a whole.

An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

- A. Recognize the duty to itself and the community to determine whether the authority delegated to the superintendent is being used as intended.
- B. Evaluate the superintendent's performance at least annually.
- C. Use student achievement data and other indicators when available as the basis for assessing progress toward school district goals and compliance with school board policies and state and federal laws.
- D. Recognize the distinction between "monitoring data" (data used by the school board to address accountability) and "management data" (data used by the staff for operations).

Standard 5: Advocacy and Communication

The school board advances its vision at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

- A. Focus on community-wide concerns and values that best support equity and student achievement rather than being influenced by special interests.
- B. Develop communication strategies to build trust between the school board and the superintendent, staff, students, and community.
- C. Utilize a public relations strategy that supports the flow of information in/out of the district.
- D. Engage and build relationships with both public and private stakeholders.
- E. Advocate on local, state, and national levels.

In general, Board members are expected to follow a code of ethics that will guide their decision-making as it relates to South St. Paul Public Schools. The District's Code of Ethics Policy #209 states the following expectations, functions, and legal obligations for board members: *Source: SSP Public Schools Policy Manual #209*

Expectations of a School Board Member

1. Attend school board meetings.
2. Come to the meetings prepared for discussion of the agenda items.
3. Listen to the opinions and views of others (including, but not limited to, other school board members, administration, staff, students, and community members).
4. Vote my conscience after informed discussion, unless I abstain because a conflict of interest exists.
5. Support the decision of the board, even if my position concerning the issue was different.
6. Recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and appreciate their work.
7. Be primarily motivated by a desire to provide the best possible education for the students of my school district.
8. Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a school board member.

Functions of a School Board Member

1. Focus on education policy as much as possible.
2. Remember my responsibility is to set policy – not to implement policy.
3. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
4. Recognize that my responsibility, exercised through the actions of the school board as a whole, is to see that the schools are properly run – not to run them myself.
5. Work through the superintendent – not over or around the superintendent.
6. Delegate the implementation of school board decisions to the superintendent.

Legal Obligations of a School Board Member

1. Comply with all federal, state and local laws relating to my work as a school board member.
2. Comply with all school district policies as adopted by the school board.
3. Abide by all rules and regulations as promulgated by the Minnesota Department of Education and other state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over school districts.
4. Recognize that school district business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the school board.
5. Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using school board position for personal gain.
6. Take no private action that will compromise the school board or administration.
7. Guard the confidentiality of information that is protected under applicable law.

Characteristics of Effective School Boards Source: Center for Public Education, 2011

1. Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision
2. Effective school boards have strong-shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.
3. Effective school boards are accountable driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve, student achievement.
4. Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.
5. Effective boards are data savvy; they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
6. Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.
7. Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
8. Effective school boards take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values, and commitments for their improvement efforts.

Duties of School Board Members Source: SSP Public Schools Policy Manual #201

The school board, among other duties, shall perform the following in accordance with applicable law:

1. provide by levy of tax, necessary funds for the conduct of schools, the payment of indebtedness, and all proper expenses of the school district
2. conduct the business of the schools and pay indebtedness and proper expenses;
3. employ/contract with necessary qualified teachers and discharge the same for cause;
4. provide services to promote the health of its pupils
5. provide school buildings and erect needed buildings;
6. purchase, sell, and exchange school district property and equipment as deemed necessary by the school board for school purposes;
7. provide for payment of claims against the school district, and prosecute and defend actions by or against the school district, in all proper cases;
8. employ and discharge necessary employees and contract for other services;
9. provide for transportation of pupils to and from school, as governed by statute; and
10. procure insurance against liability of the school district, its officers and employees.

The school board, at its discretion, may perform the following:

1. provide library facilities, public evening schools, adult and continuing education programs, summer school programs and intersession classes of flexible school year programs;
2. furnish school lunches for pupils and teachers on such terms as the school board determines;
3. enter into agreements with one or more other independent school districts to provide for agreed upon educational services;
4. lease rooms or buildings for school purposes;
5. authorize the use of school facilities for community purposes that will not interfere with their use for school purposes;
6. authorize co-curricular and extracurricular activities;
7. receive, for the benefit of the school district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose; and
8. perform other acts as the school board shall deem to be reasonably necessary or required for the governance of the schools.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT *Source: TeamWorks International*

While there some degree of overlap in roles and accountabilities, it is more important to understand the difference between the groups, especially in terms of authority.

The Board has the Authority of Governance

No one else has it. The board has five primary responsibilities:

1. District governance and policy
2. Operational performance oversight and organizational direction
3. Board governance policy
4. Superintendent relations
5. Public engagement, community relations, and advocacy of public education

The Administration has the Authority of Management

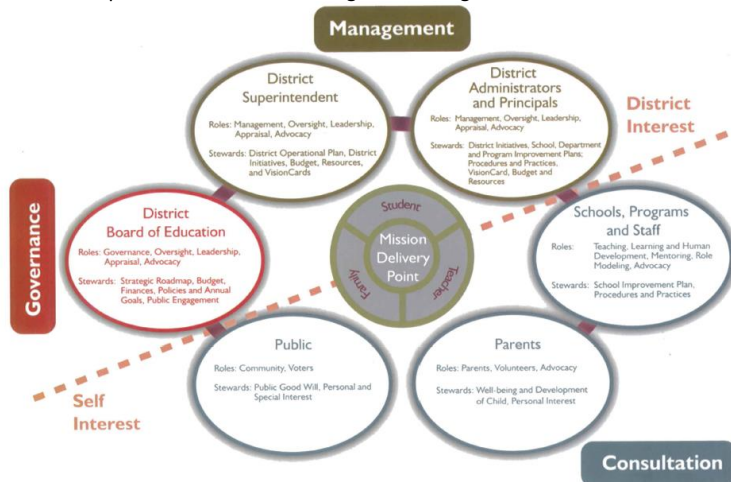
No one else has it. Administrators have six primary responsibilities:

1. Resource management: financial, human, and physical
2. Instructional leadership at the principal level
3. Performance management and professional development
4. Continuous improvement
5. Procedures and practices aligned with district policy
6. Staff, parent, and community relations

Staff, students, parents, and public have the Authority of Consultation

No one else has it. They have four primary responsibilities:

1. Voice of self and collective interest
2. Assessing risks and merits of various options as part of decision making processes and/or the daily operations of the district
3. Responsibly resist or oppose change
4. Provide input and feedback to management and governance



Application of Excellence in Governance in Real Life

Situation	Sound Governance Practice
<p>What do I do if I get a <u>phone call</u> with concerns from a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. staff member b. student c. parent 	<p>Check name, status, and phone number for contact</p> <p>Always seek to identify the situation or interest, but generally, do not agree or commit to personally resolve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Redirect staff to supervisor, and notify superintendent’s office Caution: do not get involved in employment / contractual issues b. Redirect student to principal and notify superintendent’s office Caution: If a concern about safety is raised, follow district procedures c. Redirect parent to teacher / principal / administrator as appropriate and notify superintendent’s office Caution: Don’t attempt to deal with issues of groups, only the individual parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall: do not agree to confidentiality, or commit to limit your options of notification • Be available for contact in future if redirecting does not address concern • Be alert to “patterns” of like concerns, and if present, notify the superintendent’s office • If concern raises governance and/or political edge questions, contact Board Chair in addition to Superintendent’s Office
<p>What do I do if I get an <u>email</u> with concerns from a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. staff member b. student c. parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to send an acknowledgement email to the person who emailed, thanking them for reaching out and then let them know that you forwarded their concern to the Superintendent’s office • After you respond to the author of the email and forwarded their concern to the Superintendent’s office as stated above, additional engagement or seeking to understand issue is not necessary. • Do not cc or bc to any individual or group, nor “reply to all” • Be alert to “patterns” of like concerns, and if present, notify the superintendent’s office • If concern raises governance and/or political edge questions, contact Board Chair in addition to Superintendent’s Office

Situation	Sound Governance Practice
<p>What do I do if I get a stopped out <u>in public</u> (school event, grocery store, etc.) by a concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. staff member a. student c. parent 	<p>Check name, status, and get a phone number for contact Always seek to identify the situation or interest, but generally, do not agree or commit to personally resolve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Redirect staff to supervisor, and notify superintendent’s office Caution: do not get involved in employment / contractual issues b. Redirect student to principal and notify superintendent’s office Caution: If a concern about safety is raised, follow district procedures c. Redirect parent to teacher / principal / administrator as appropriate and notify superintendent’s office Caution: Don’t attempt to deal with issues of groups, only the individual parent <p><u>Overall</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not agree to confidentiality, or commit to limit your options of notification • Be available for contact in future if redirecting does not address concern • Be alert to “patterns” of like concerns, and if present, notify the superintendent’s office • If concern raises governance and/or political edge questions, contact Board Chair in addition to Superintendent’s Office
<p>As a board member, what do I do if I have a concern or complaint?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Chair and /or the Superintendent directly, preferably in person, or by phone • Don’t engage in serial meetings with other board members • Be clear as to if your concern is as a Board member, parent, etc., and be clear as to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ your experience ○ what you think ○ what you feel ○ what you want • Identify what in the concern is governance work, and what is management work • Seek to increase your understanding, with an assumption of trust and competence for employees • Don’t represent other’s or group’s interest as your own • Don’t raise an issue as a surprise in work sessions or business meetings. Allow the Board Chair and Superintendent time to research and prepare for a board discussion, if warranted
<p>What if I disagree with a report or presentation to the board?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit questions and concerns to Office of Superintendent as the Board protocol describes 2. Reflect on what is driving your concern or disagreement 3. If disagreement is in the details, request a meeting with Superintendent to discuss 4. Do not surprise administrators or the board in work sessions and business meetings 5. Praise publicly, confront privately

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ELECTION AND ROLES OF OFFICERS *Source: South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #201 and #209*

Election of Officers

The chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary-clerk of the Board are elected annually at the Organizational Meeting, which is held no later than January 15 of each year. Prior to the Organizational Meeting, the sitting president, in consultation with the Board, will develop a slate of officers to present for approval at the January meeting. Once elected and sworn into office, the chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary-clerk will immediately assume their duties.

Roles of Board Officers

There are four official officers of the school Board: **Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary-Clerk**. These positions are determined annually at the Organizational Meeting. It is important officers are elected to maintain the order of meeting proceedings. All board members maintain equal rights and equal voices.

Role of the Chair

1. Presides at all meetings of the school board, countersign all orders upon the treasurer for claims allowed by the school board, represent the school district in all actions and perform all duties a chair usually performs.

Role of the Vice-Chair

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

Role of the Secretary-Clerk

1. The clerk shall keep and maintain permanent records of the school board, including records of the minutes of school board meetings and other required records of the school board. All votes taken at meetings required to be open to the public pursuant to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law shall be recorded in a journal kept for that purpose. Public records maintained by the school district shall be available for inspection by members of the public during the regular business hours of the school district. Minutes of meetings shall be available for inspection at the administrative offices of the school district after they have been prepared. Minutes of a school board meeting shall be approved or modified by the school board at a subsequent meeting, which action shall be reflected in the official proceedings of that subsequent meeting
2. Within three days after an election, the clerk shall notify all persons elected
3. The clerk shall perform such duties as required by the Minnesota Election Law or other applicable laws relating to the conduct of elections.
4. The clerk shall perform such duties of the chair in the event of the chair's and vice-chair's temporary absence.

Role of Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall work closely with the Director of Finance
2. The treasurer shall perform such duties of the chair in the event of the chair, vice-chair, and secretary-clerk's temporary absence.

BOARD MEETINGS

A quorum of members (defined as four or more of the seven members for regular meetings and committee-of-the-whole meetings) must be present for a board meeting to be official, and before any action can be taken by the Board. All meetings of the Board are considered public meetings, including committee meetings, and therefore shall be open to the public to attend.

At the Organizational Meeting (which is held no later than January 15 each year), the Board will set its meeting schedule for the upcoming year. Additional "special" meetings may be called, as needed, throughout the year. All meetings not previously approved during the Organizational Meeting are considered special meetings, and must be properly noticed to the public.

The chair presides over all meetings, and along with the vice chair and superintendent, sets the agenda for committee-of-the-whole and regular board meetings. Meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Attendance at Board Meetings

All Board members are expected to attend all meetings. However, it is recognized that sometimes scheduling conflicts will occur. A member should notify the Board Chair and the Executive Assistant to the School Board whenever he/she is unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

Board members are paid \$4,900 annually for their committee meetings, regular business meetings, and all liaison committee work. The only exception is the School Board Chair whose annual stipend is \$5,400.

Organizational Meeting

The Board is required to hold an organizational meeting no later than January 15 of each year. The primary purpose of this meeting is to elect members to serve as chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary-clerk. The South St. Paul Board of Education also uses this meeting to establish regular meeting dates for the year as well as a number of other business items.

Committee-of-the-Whole

Committee-of-the-whole meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 5:00 PM. This committee session is used to provide orientation for board members on certain areas or programs of the district as well as provide time for discussion of items to be approved at an upcoming regular school board business meeting.

Regular Board Business Meeting

The school board conducts their business at the Regular Board Business Meeting which is typically held on the second and fourth Monday of each month beginning at 6:00 PM in the council chambers of city hall.

Board Retreat

The Board will hold a retreat various times throughout the year for strategic planning and vision work.

Board Training *Source: South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #212 and Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) School Board Workshop Series*

In recognition of the need for continuing in-service training and development for its members, school board policy #212 encourages the members of the school board to participate in professional development activities designed for them so that they may perform their responsibilities. The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) provides a workshop series that consists of the following four components:

Phase I: Learning to Lead – School Board Basics

Phase II: Leadership Foundations – School Finance and Management

Phase III: Building a High-Performance School Board Team

Phase IV: Representing your Community through Policy and Engagement

In addition, the superintendent will provide various opportunities throughout each calendar year for governance and management training.

Special Meeting

A meeting is labeled a “special meeting” if it is called after the meetings for the year have been established and approved at the Organizational Meeting in January.

For a special meeting, the school board will post written notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. The school board’s actions at the special meeting are limited to those topics included in the notice. The notice will also be delivered, by standard or electronic mail, to each person who has filed a written request for notice of special meetings. The notice will be posted and mailed or delivered at least three days before the date of the meeting.

Emergency Meeting

An emergency meeting is a special meeting called because of circumstances that, in the judgment of the school board, require immediate consideration. If matters not directly related to the emergency are discussed or acted upon, the minutes of the meeting must include a specific description of those matters

Closed Session

Minnesota Statutes govern what constitutes a closed session. They are: *Labor negotiations strategy, Bureau of Mediation Services, preliminary consideration of charges, performance evaluations, attorney-client meeting, dismissal hearing, coaches' opportunity to respond to non-renewal, discuss certain non-public data, purchase and sale of property, and security matters.*

For specific examples of each of these areas, see school board policy #205 Open/Closed Meetings.

COMMITTEES Source: SSP Public Schools Policy Manual #213

There are numerous committees on which board members serve. Some of which are internal – operating solely within the confines of South St. Paul Public Schools and the South St. Paul Board of Education, and others which are governed by outside entities. It is important to note that all committees convened by the Board are subject to the Open Meetings Act of Minnesota, meaning they are open to the public to attend.

It is the responsibility of the Board Chair to assign members to serve on committees as well as a liaison to the various organizations and partnerships affiliated with the school district. This is generally done at the annual Organization Meeting in January, with some consultation with individual members to ensure that there is a correlation between member interest and abilities and the committees on which they are being asked to serve.

There are four main committees:

Finance, Facilities, and Long-Range Planning Committee

This committee meets with the superintendent and finance director to discuss key finance items and budget planning as well as discuss various building and grounds items and/or planning projects for the District.

Policy Committee

As stated previously, one of the primary responsibilities of a school board is to set policy. These policies dictate how a school district will operate and ensure the district operates within legal boundaries. The Board Policy Committee reviews policies and recommends them to the full board for review, discussion, and approval. This committee meets monthly to review policies that arise either from legislative changes (due to changes in state or federal statutes), or from administrative changes (arising from district staff or board members). Once reviewed and approved by the Policy Committee, the policies are turned over to the Board who presents them to the community for “First Reading” by placing them on the regular business meeting agenda.

First Readings serve as an introduction of the policy, or changes to the policy, to district staff and the community. It is a way of providing notice that the Board is seeking to implement these rules and regulations. The public is afforded two school board meetings to review the proposed policy and to provide feedback.

At the third meeting the policy is listed on the agenda, the Board will take a vote on the new/revised policy. Successful passage makes the policy effective immediately, unless otherwise noted. The Policy Manual is maintained on the District's website at www.sspps.org under the Our District and then School Board tabs.

Superintendent/Executive

The Board is required to evaluate the superintendent as a direct reports of the Board. This committee organizes and prepares the superintendent evaluation and other executive business.

Public Relations/Community Engagement

The Public Relations/Community Engagement Committee works with administration to engage the community in various planning/projects for the District.

LIAISONS/PARTNERSHIPS

Board members serve as liaisons to various organizations and partnerships affiliated with the school district. As stated above, it is the responsibility of the president to assign members both to serve on committees, and to serve as a liaison to the various organizations and partnerships affiliated with the school district. This is generally done at the annual Organization Meeting in January, with some consultation with individual members to ensure that there is a correlation between member interest and abilities and the committees on which they are being asked to serve.

Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)

South St. Paul Public Schools, along with 40 other K-12 school districts, is a member of the AMSD organization. The mission of AMSD is to advocate for metropolitan school districts and advance legislation that supports student achievement. AMSD is a strong voice for public education both at the Legislature and in the media, with a proactive agenda and a commitment to action. AMSD's primary task is to lobby at the state level for the needs of metropolitan school districts. However, AMSD's Board believes that its lobbying efforts are most effective when the organization plays a role in shaping the broader public debate on K-12 issues and advocates for policies that benefit the State as a whole.

Central Square Community Center Advisory Board

The Central Square Community Center is a joint partnership between South St. Paul Public Schools, Special School District 6 and the City of South St. Paul. The Central Square Governing Board is composed of six members; three appointed by the city council and three appointed by the school board of South St. Paul. The Central Square Advisory Board has the authority and obligation to manage and operate Central Square's educational and recreational activities on behalf of the city council and school board.

Community Education Advisory Committee

The combined Community Education Advisory Council for the West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan, South St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights and School Districts supports and promotes the philosophy and concept of Community Education. Members represent citizens and community members, school district employees and municipal representatives who advise the Community Education department staff in the planning, implementation and evaluation of departmental activities and programs. The Advisory Council enjoys the support of each District's Board and ensures that the department remains in touch with the people and the community it serves.

Equity Alliance MN

Equity Alliance has been providing culturally relevant learning since 1995, through professional learning and student programs in its eight-member school districts. They have increased its focus on providing programs and support services focused around professional learning and student programming. Equity Alliance is governed by a Joint Powers Board with a member from each of the eight-member school districts.

Intermediate School District 917

Intermediate School District 917 provides service and support to nine south metro area schools districts in the areas of special education, career and technical education, and alternative learning programming. The Intermediate School District 917 Board of Education is comprised of a school board member from each of the nine-member school districts. School board members are appointed by each member district board to a three-year term.

South St. Paul Educational Foundation

The South St. Paul Educational Foundation was established in 1984 to provide an innovative source of public school funding to support the South St. Paul public schools educational plan. Such initiatives provide enrichment, scholarships, research opportunities, training, intervention and prevention strategies, and extend the educational effort. The funds provided by the Foundation directly benefit students and staff and enhance educational opportunities.

South St. Paul Open Foundation

The South St. Paul Open was established in 1974 as a community based, volunteer group committed to supporting SSP athletics. The SSP Open has since expanded their focus to also include co-curricular activities. From the Arts to Athletics, the South St. Paul Open Foundation is committed to enhancing the experience available for students at South St. Paul Secondary. In 2012, the SSP Open became an officially IRS-recognized Foundation.

Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)

www.mnmsba.org



The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) is a private, nonprofit organization that exists to support the work of the public school boards and public education.

The MSBA is a leading advocate for public education, supports, promotes, and strengthens the work of public school boards through professional development opportunities, policy development and maintenance, legislative guidance and information, and legal advice.

As mentioned in the school board training section of this handbook, the MSBA offers annually, a Leadership Conference in January and a Summer Seminar in August. However, the MSBA School Board Workshop Series (Phase I, II, III, and IV) is the most important set of workshops for school board members because it sets the foundation for their work. These sessions cover all aspects of school board service.

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

www.nsba.org



NSBA uses the power of its 90,000 local school board members to influence key federal legislative issues.

NSBA hosts an annual three-day conference each spring, choosing a different city each year. Sessions designed to educate and assist its member districts are held in the following areas: *Governance and Executive Leadership, Innovations in District Leadership, Legal and Legislative Advocacy, Professional and Personal Development, School Board/Superintendent Partnerships, Student Achievement and Accountability, and Technology + Learning Solutions*. In addition, there are typically several inspirational, motivational and educational keynote speakers.

POSITIONS THAT REPORT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

There is only one position that reports to the School Board, the Superintendent of Schools.

Role of Superintendent

The Superintendent of Schools reports directly to the Board and holds all executive and administrative authority and responsibility for the effective operation of the school, excluding those areas of control which are required by statute to be exercised directly by the Board. The Superintendent acts as the district leader with the support of the district's administrators, who make up the district leadership team. The Superintendent may delegate specific powers or duties to assistants and subordinates, while maintaining final responsibility for any actions taken." The superintendent is also responsible for evaluating their leadership team.

Key functions and responsibilities of the superintendent

- Vision, Continuous Improvement, and Focus of District Work
 - Partner with the Board to design a Vision for high student achievement and readiness for life;
 - Responsible for the structure, practices, and outcomes in continuous improvement in all aspects of school and district functions, in alignment with the District Strategic Plan and Policy
 - Facilitate the process of identifying/executing the district's goals and objectives
- Communication and Collaboration
 - Interact effectively with the Board;
 - Establish effective internal and external communication systems
- Policies and Governance
 - Develop procedures that define how policy will be implemented;
 - Work with Policy Committee to draft policy for full board;
 - Recommend to the Board policies on all school system functions;
 - Implement Board policies;
 - Demonstrate leadership skills and professionalism
- Instruction
 - Lead the district in the development and implementation of a rigorous and relevant curriculum that leads to increased student achievement;
 - Set clear expectations for district-wide high-quality instruction and comprehensive assessment;
 - Provide full access and opportunity for all students;
 - Develop and maintains professional and personal skills and knowledge through professional development activities
- Resources
 - Recommend to the Board the employment and selection of the administrative, instructional, and support staff;
 - Assign, evaluates, and supports district staff;
 - Oversee and administers the procurement and use of district funds and facilities to maximize efficiency and minimize waste;
 - Identify and/or address specific district tasks or problems that emerge (such as the need for new facilities or levy campaigns).

WORKS CITED

Eligibility Requirements for School Board Member, *Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)*

Filling of Vacancies, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #214*

Standards for School Board Leadership, *Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)*

Code of Ethics for School Board Members, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #209*

Eight Characteristics of an Effective School Board, *Center for Public Education*

Duties of School Board Members, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #201*

Governance and Management, *TeamWorks International*

Election and Roles of Officers, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #201 and #209*

Board Training, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #212 and Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) School Board Workshop Series*

School Board Committees, *South St. Paul Public Schools Policy Manual #213*