

BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK

An informational guide for
Austin Public Schools Board of Education Members

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Austin Public Schools, located in southeastern Minnesota, serves approximately 5,200 students at 8 different sites, including an all-day Kindergarten center, four elementary schools, one intermediate school, one middle school, one high school, an online education academy, a special education cooperative, and a robust community education program providing opportunities from pre-k through adult. Our student population is diverse with more than 45 different home languages spoken. As such, we have worked hard to develop programs to reach and support families in the community to help ensure the success of our students.

In addition, we have developed partnerships with many different organizations, including **The Hormel Foundation**, the **University of Minnesota**, **Austin Aspires**, and the **MacPhail Center for Music**. These partnerships allow us to provide students with opportunities not typically found in a small-town community, from our 1:1 technology program and cutting-edge music facilities to instructional, technology, and success coaches across the district. We have also established rigorous educational outcomes for all learners with a focus on project-based learning and STEAM curriculum. Technology plays a huge role at **Austin Public Schools** with iPads at the elementary level and laptops for every student grade 5-12.

We are a recognized leader in the state of Minnesota in the use of best practices and research-based curriculum through multiple PBIS Exemplar schools and we are renowned for our music and art programs, with numerous state and national recognitions to our credit. Many of our extracurricular teams have qualified for state and national level competitions, and our athletic facilities are robust and accessible (even in the winter, thanks to the Packer Dome). We have also partnered with the Hormel Foundation, Riverland Community College, and Pacelli Catholic Schools for the Hormel Foundation Austin Assurance Scholarship, which provides two years of tuition-free college to qualifying graduates from Austin.

In short, **Austin Public Schools** is an amazing place to work, with stellar opportunities in the classroom, on the stage, on the athletic field, and even after graduation.

AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2023-2024 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

BOARD MEMBERS



Carolyn Dube
CHAIRPERSON



Kathy Green
**VICE-
CHAIRPERSON**



Peggy Young
CLERK



Cece Kroc
TREASURER



Don Leathers
DIRECTOR



Evan Sorenson
DIRECTOR



Carol McAlister
DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Dr. Joey Page
SUPERINTENDENT

Sharon Alms
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

SUPERINTENDENT'S LEADERSHIP CABINET

Katie Baskin
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ACADEMICS
AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

Todd Lechtenberg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Sheri Willrodt
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL
SERVICES**

Jen Lawhead
**COMMUNITY EDUCATION DIRECTOR AND WOODSON
SITE ADMINISTRATOR**

Corey Haugen
DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES

Amy Thuesen
DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

MISSION

Our mission at Austin Public Schools is to **Inspire, Empower, and Accelerate.**

VISION

At Austin Public Schools, we are **preparing all learners to make a difference in the world.**



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
2. Packer Profile for all learners.
3. District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
4. Excellence in resource management.



OUR CORE VALUES

Responsible

Demonstrates accountability to self and others.

Resilient

Develops perseverance and self-confidence.

Learner

Challenges self to think critically.

Communicator

Listens actively and shares learning and experiences.

Contributor

Engages as a productive member of the community and global society.

POINTS OF PRIDE

Great things are happening at Austin Public Schools! With a wide range of partnerships and programs to benefit our students, staff, and the community, our [#PackerPride](#) shines through in all we do. Be sure to check out our Points of Pride page at <https://www.austin.k12.mn.us/district-resources/points-of-pride> for more information.

- **Strategic Plan** - Our mission at Austin Public Schools is to Inspire, Empower, and Accelerate as we work to prepare all learners to make a difference in the world. To achieve this goal, we have developed four strategic priorities to guide us into the future:
 - Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Packer Profile for all learners.
 - District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Excellence in resource management.
- **Programs & Partnerships** - We have worked hard to develop a wide range of programs and partnerships to help all students and staff be successful:
 - Instructional, Technology, and Success Coaches
 - MacPhail Center for Music
 - PI Academy
 - The Mower County CEO Program
 - The Hormel Foundation
 - The Hormel Foundation Austin Assurance Scholarship
 - The Hormel Foundation Gifted and Talented Symposium
 - The Hormel Institute
 - PSEO and CE
 - Austin Aspires
- **Facilities** - We have numerous schools and facilities throughout Austin, including a high school, a middle school, an intermediate school, four elementary schools, one early childhood / kindergarten center, a special education cooperative, an athletic complex with two turf fields and tennis courts. We take pride in our facilities and are constantly working to improve and enhance them.
- **Finances** - We have worked to focus on organizational fiscal health through fiscally responsible budgeting, streamlining of programming and staffing, and a dedication to maintaining our fiscal responsibility through the strategic plan.
- **Activities** - At Austin Public Schools, we believe that extracurricular activities provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom in a real-world context, which is an essential component for a well-rounded education.
- **Community Education** - Community Education has the unique opportunity to serve all members of the Austin community from birth through the rest of their lives as we seek to prepare all learners to make a difference in the world. We offer numerous programs and opportunities, including:
 - Packer in Training
 - More than Pink
 - Preschool on Wheels
 - Community Partnerships
 - Family Lit
 - Voluntary Prekindergarten
 - Austin Adult Learning
 - Kids Korner

DISTRICT INFORMATION



DISTRICT OFFICES
401 3rd Ave NW
507-460-1800



AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL
301 3rd St NW
507-460-1800



ELLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL
1700 4th Ave SE
507-460-1500



IJ HOLTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
1800 4th Ave SE
507-460-1525



BANFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
301 17th St NW
507-460-1200



NEVELN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1918 Oakland Ave E
507-460-1600



SOUTHGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1601 19th Ave SW
507-460-1300



SUMNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
805 8th Ave NW
507-460-1100



WOODSON KINDERGARTEN CENTER
1601 4th St SE
507-460-1400



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER
Located at various
elementary sites

BECOMING A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Austin Public Schools is governed by seven Board members, elected at large, representing all citizens within the boundaries.

BECOMING A BOARD MEMBER

Austin Public Schools 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 an 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 they were appointed. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a member can serve.

FILLING VACANCIES

Source: MN Statute 123B.09

A vacancy on the Board shall occur when a member dies, resigns, or ceases to be a resident of Independent School District #492. In addition, 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, through resolution, declare a vacancy to exist. All vacancies will be filled according to Minnesota Statutes.

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 TeamWorks

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. APS 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 APS Board strives for excellence in governance, operates in partnership with the Superintendent, strives for excellence in management, and partners for excellence in consultation with staff, students, families, and the public.

APS may use terminology and structure defined in policy, resolution, 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:

1. Recognize the school board team consists of school board members and the superintendent and evaluates its performance at least annually.
2. Take full responsibility for its activity and behavior at and away from the school board table.
3. Encourage its members to express their individual opinions, respect others' opinions, and vote according to their convictions.
4. Speak with one voice after reaching a decision.
5. Spending time on board governance work rather than staff work — focuses on the ends not the means.
6. Provide for orientation and ongoing training for all school board members.
7. Follow established policies, including the chain-of-command, by directing people with concerns to the appropriate staff.
8. 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:

1. Use clear, focused, attainable, and measurable goals and outcomes to support gains in student achievement.
2. 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.
3. Regularly monitor the strategic plan to evaluate progress toward goal achievement and school district success.
4. 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 supported district-wide.
5. Communicate the strategic plan and the progress to the community.

STANDARD 3: STRUCTURE

To achieve its vision, the school board establishes organizational and physical structures for student and staff success. An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

1. Create organizational and physical structures based on equity in which all students and staff have the resources and supports to maximize achievement.
2. Advocate and provide for learning through rigorous curriculum, effective technology, and a safe and secure environment.
3. Select and employ one person — the superintendent — as the school district’s chief executive officer to lead and manage the school district.
4. Hold the superintendent accountable for school district performance and compliance with written school board policy.
5. Delegate the authority to the superintendent to recommend and evaluate all school district staff within the standards established through written school board policies.
6. 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. The school board and individual members are also accountable to themselves, students, families, other board members, the superintendent, and staff. An effective, high-performing school board strives to meet the following benchmarks:

1. Recognize the duty to itself and the community to determine whether the authority delegated to the superintendent is being used as intended.
2. Evaluate the superintendent’s performance at least annually.
3. 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.
4. 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:

1. Focus on community-wide concerns and values that best support equity and student achievement rather than being influenced by special interests.
2. Develop communication strategies to build trust between the school board and the superintendent, staff, students, and community.
3. Utilize a public relations strategy that supports the flow of information in/out of the district.
4. Engage and build relationships with both public and private stakeholders.
5. 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 Austin Public Schools.

MN Statute 123B.09 as well as [School Board Policy 209](#) state the following expectations, functions, and legal obligations for board members:

EXPECTATIONS OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

1. Attend all school board meetings, including work sessions, committee meetings, and board retreats.
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. Remember, my responsibility is to set policy – not to implement policy.
2. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
3. 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.
4. Work through the superintendent – not over or around the superintendent.
5. 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 a 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.



ADDRESSING SCHOOL BOARD ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board and each of its members must be committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the Board's policies. Failure to deal with violations of its policies risks the loss of public confidence in the Board's ability to govern effectively. In the event of a member's violation of policy, or other forms of misconduct, the Board shall address the issue by using the following steps:

1. Conversation in a private setting between the offending member and the School Board Chair or other individual members; such conversation will be reported to the balance of the Board.
2. Discussion in a public meeting between the offending member and the full School Board.
3. Public censure, by simple majority vote, of the offending member of the School Board, as well as removal from committees and leadership positions, to which the member has been appointed or elected.
4. Removal from the school board for proper cause by a concurrent vote of at least four members. The board member to be removed will be duly notified of the time and place of the meeting for which the vote is to be taken, and for the reasons for the proposed removal. The board member will be given an opportunity to be heard in defense against the removal (MN 123.B.09; Subd. 9).

Most board member issues and situations are intended to fall into Category 1. Categories 2, 3, and 4 are intended for extreme and/or repeated instances of violations where Category 1 has not resulted in a change in member behaviors.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARDS

Source: MSBA; Center for Public Education, 2019

- Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
- 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.
- Effective school boards are accountable-driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.
- Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.
- Effective boards are data-savvy; they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
- Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.
- Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
- Effective school boards participate 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

The school 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 school district
- employ/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 school district property and equipment as deemed necessary by the school board for school purposes
- provide for payment of claims against the school district, and prosecute and defend actions by or against the school 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
- procure insurance against liability of the school district, its officers, and employees

DUTIES OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS (CONT.)

The school 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 for pupils and teachers on such terms as the school board determines
- enter into agreements with one or more other independent school 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 school district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose
- 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

While there is 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



QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD



GOVERNANCE

- Why?
- To what end?
- At what cost?
- Through what policies?



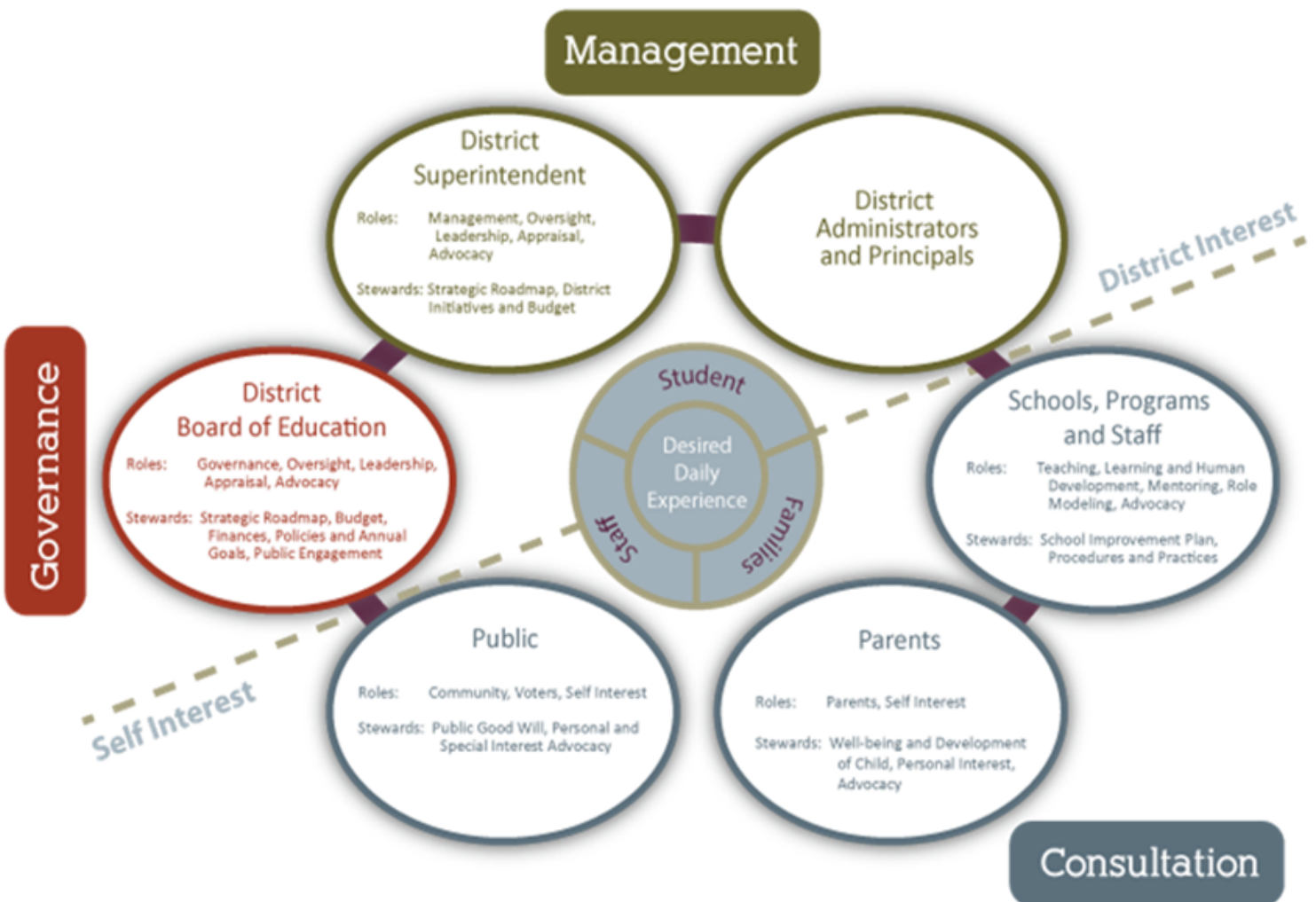
MANAGEMENT

- What?
- When?
- How will this get done?
- Who will be responsible for doing it?



Education Leadership System (ELS)

Part of the FrameWorks Series



APPLICATION OF EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE SCENARIOS

WHAT DO I DO IF I GET A *PHONE CALL* WITH CONCERNS FROM A STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT, OR PARENT?

Check the name, status, and phone number for contact. Always seek to identify the situation or interest, but generally, do not agree or commit to resolve personally.

- Redirect **staff** to supervisor, and notify superintendent's office. **Caution: do not get involved in employment / contractual issues.**
- Redirect **students** to principal and notify superintendent's office. **Caution: Follow district procedures if a safety concern is raised.**
- Redirect **parents** 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.**

WHAT DO I DO IF I GET AN *EMAIL* WITH CONCERNS FROM A STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT, OR PARENT?

- It is important to send an acknowledgment email to the person who emailed, thanking them for reaching out and then letting them know that you forwarded their concern to the Superintendent's office.
- After you respond to the email's author and forward their concern to the Superintendent's office as stated above, additional engagement or seeking to understand the issue is not necessary.
- Do not cc or bc to any individual or group, nor "reply to all" - this could violate the Open Meeting law.
- Be alert to "patterns" of like concerns, and if present, notify the Superintendent's office.
- If concern raises governance or political edge questions, contact Board Chair in addition to Superintendent's Office.

WHAT DO I DO IF I GET STOPPED OUT IN PUBLIC BY A CONCERNED STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT, OR PARENT?

Check the 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 resolve personally.

- Redirect **staff** to supervisor, and notify superintendent's office. **Caution: do not get involved in employment / contractual issues.**
- Redirect **students** to principal and notify superintendent's office. **Caution: If a concern about safety is raised, follow district procedures.**
- Redirect **parents** 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.**

Overall:


- Do not agree to confidentiality or commit to limit your options of notification.
- Be available for contact in the future if redirecting does not address the concern.
- Be alert to "patterns" of like concerns, and if present, notify the superintendent's office.
- If concern raises governance or political edge questions, contact Board Chair in addition to Superintendent's Office.
- Direct staff member, student, or parent to our Report a Concern page at <https://www.austin.k12.mn.us/district-resources/report-a-concern>.

AS A BOARD MEMBER, WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT?

- Contact the Chair and 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:
 - 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 interests 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.

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH A REPORT OR PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD?

- Submit questions and concerns to the Office of Superintendent as the Board protocol describes.
- Reflect on what is driving your concern or disagreement.
- If the disagreement is in the details, request a meeting with Superintendent to discuss.
- Do not surprise administrators or the board in work sessions and business meetings.
- Praise publicly, confront privately.



For more information on Policy Governance, watch the video at <https://youtu.be/bFV1pzp47Wc>.



ELECTION AND ROLES OF OFFICERS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary-clerk of the Board are elected annually at the Organizational Meeting in January 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. Officers must be elected to maintain the order of meeting proceedings. In addition, all board members maintain equal rights and equal voices.

Role of the Chair

- Presides at all school board meetings, countersigns all orders upon the Treasurer for claims allowed by the school board, represents the school district in all actions, and performs all duties a chair usually performs.

Role of the Vice-Chair

- The Vice-Chair shall perform the Chair's duties in the event of the Chair's temporary absence.

Role of the Secretary-Clerk

- 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 public members during the school district's regular business hours. Minutes of meetings shall be available for inspection at the school district's administrative offices 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.
- Within three days after an election, the Clerk shall notify all persons elected.
- The Clerk 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 such duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's and Vice-chair's temporary absence.

Role of Treasurer

- The Treasurer shall work closely with the Director of Finance
- 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 (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 (including work sessions, committee meetings, and Board retreats). However, it is recognized that sometimes scheduling conflicts will occur. Therefore, a member should notify the Board Chair and the Executive Assistant to the School Board 24 hours prior to the meeting whenever they are unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

Board members are paid \$4,000 annually for their committee meetings, regular business meetings, and liaison committee work. The only exception is the School Board Chair, whose annual stipend is \$5,200.

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 Clerk. The Board also uses this meeting to establish regular meeting dates for the year as well as a number of other business items.

WORK SESSION

Work sessions are generally held on the fourth Monday of each month at 4:00 PM. The work session is used to provide orientation for board members on certain areas or programs of the district and provide time for discussion of items.

REGULAR BOARD BUSINESS MEETING

The school board conducts their business at the Regular Board Business Meeting which is typically held on the second Monday of each month beginning at 5:30 PM in the Recital Hall of the Annex.

DELEGATIONS

This is an opportunity for the public to address the board at each regular school board meeting. Speakers are limited to 5 minutes and must register with the district clerk prior to speaking.

BOARD RETREAT

The Board will hold an annual retreat for strategic planning, district vision, and board evaluation work.

BOARD TRAINING

Source: School Board Policy 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 meeting’s date, time, place, and purpose. 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](#).

COMMITTEES, COUNCILS, AND REPRESENTATIVES

There are numerous committees on which board members serve. Please 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.

Additionally, the School Board will be represented on various Advisory Councils and community organizations.

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 a correlation between member interest and abilities and the committees on which they are being asked to serve.

COMMITTEES

- [World's Best Workforce](#)
- [Facilities](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [Wellness](#)

ADVISORY COUNCILS

- Activities
- Calendar
- Community Education
- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)
- Special Education (SEAC)
- Technology

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- Albert Lea Area Special Education Cooperative
- Austin Aspires
- Austin Leaders Council
- Austin Parks and Recreation Board
- Austin Public Education Foundation
- County Collaborative
- Minnesota State High School League
- Schools for Education Equity

SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

The 200 series of district policies relate specifically to school board operations. These policies can be accessed on [the website](#) or by clicking on the individual policies below.

- [Policy 201 - Legal Status of the School Board](#)
- [Policy 202 - School Board Officers](#)
- [Policy 203 - Operation of the School Board - Governing Rules](#)
- [Policy 203.1 - School Board Procedures - Rules of Order](#)
- [Policy 203.2 - Order of the Regular School Board Meeting](#)
- [Policy 203.5 - School Board Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Policy 203.6 - Consent Agendas](#)
- [Policy 204 - School Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Policy 205 - Open Meetings and Closed Meetings](#)
- [Policy 206 - Public Participation in School Board Meetings, Complaints at Meetings, etc.](#)
- [Policy 207 - Public Hearings](#)
- [Policy 208 - Development, Adoption, and Implementation of Policies](#)
- [Policy 209 - School Board Member Code of Conduct](#)
- [Policy 210 - Conflict of Interest - School Board Members](#)
- [Policy 211 - Criminal or Civil Action Against School District](#)
- [Policy 212 - Board Member Development](#)
- [Policy 213 - School Board Committees](#)
- [Policy 214 - School District Attorney](#)
- [Policy 215 - Out of State Travel by School Board Members](#)
- [Policy 216 - School Board Electronic Communications](#)



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 that 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 the 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 address specific district tasks or problems that emerge (such as the need for new facilities or levy campaigns).

EDUCATIONAL DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABE	Adult Basic Education	EBD	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders
ABI	Acquired Brain Injury	EC	Early Childhood
ABS	Adaptive Behavior Scale	ECFE	Early Childhood Family Education
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder	ECSU	Education Cooperative Service Unit
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	EDGAR	Education Department General Administrative Regulations
ADM	Average Daily Membership	EDRS	Electronic Data Reporting System
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution	EEP	Emergency Evacuation Plan
ADSIS	Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services	EI	Early Intervention
AEM	Accessible Educational Material	EL	English Learner
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	ER	Evaluation Report
ALC	Area Learning Centers	ESEA	Elementary Secondary Education Act
APR	Annual Performance Report	ESL	English as a Second Language
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders	ESU	Education Service Unit
ASL	American Sign Language	ESY	Extended School Year
AT	Assistive Technology	F&R	Free and Reduced
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress	FAE	Fetal Alcohol Effects
BOSA	Board of School Administrators	FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
BOT	Board of Teaching	FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
BVI	Blind/Visually Impaired	FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
CAP	Corrective Action Plan	Federal Setting	Refers to the percentage of time a student spends in special education
CEIS	Coordinated Early Intervening Services	FERPA	Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
CIMP	Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (See MNCIMP and MNCIMP:SR)	FR	Federal Register
CLASS	Coordinating Learner for Academics and Social Success	FTE	Full Time Equivalent
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	FY	Fiscal Year
CNS	Central Nervous System	GED	General Education Development
COMS	Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist	HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
CP	Cerebral Palsy	HQ	Highly Qualified
CSPR	Consolidated State Performance Report	IASA	Improving Americas' Schools Act
CT	Computed Tomography	ICC	Interagency Coordinating Council
CTIC	Community Transition Interagency Committee	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
CVI	Cortical/Cerebral Visual Impairment	IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation
DAPE	Developmental Adaptive Physical Education	IEIC	Interagency Early Intervention Committee
DB	Deaf-Blind	IEP	Individualized Education Program
DCD	Developmental Cognitive Disabilities	IFCSP	Individual Family Community Support Plan
DD	Developmental Delay	IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
DHH	Deaf/Hard of Hearing	IHE	Institution of Higher Education
DHS	Department of Human Services	IHP	Individual Health Plan
DIRS	Disciplinary Incident Reporting System	IIIP	Individual Interagency Intervention Plan
DLC	Disability Law Center	IQ	Intelligence Quotient
DOC	Department of Corrections	ISD	Independent School District
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders	LD	Learning Disabilities
		LEA	Local Educational Agency
		LEP	Limited English Proficient
		LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or gender expansive, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, and two-spirit
		IA2S+	

LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse	P&A	Protection and Advocacy
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment	PACER	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights Center
LSTA	Library Services and Technology Act	Part C	Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program
MA	Medical Assistance	PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
MAEF	Minnesota's Academic Excellence Foundation	PCA	Personal Care Attendant
MARSS	Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System	PD	Physical Disability
MCA	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment	PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorders
MCIS	Minnesota Career Information System	PDD/	Pervasive Developmental Disorders Not Otherwise Specified
MDE	Minnesota Department of Education	NOS	
MESPA	Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association	PE	Physical Education
MH	Mental Health	PFDA	Pupil Fair Dismissal Act
MHCP	Minnesota Health Care Programs	PI	Physically Impaired
MMR	Multiple Measurements Rating	PL	Public Law
MnCIMP	Minnesota Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process	PLAAFP	Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
MnCIMP:	Minnesota Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process: Self Review	PSEO	Postsecondary Enrollment Options
SR		PT	Physical Therapy or Physical Therapist
MnSEMS	Minnesota Special Education Mediation Service	PTA	Parents, Teachers, and Students
MnSIC	Minnesota System of Interagency Coordination	PTI	Pathways to Employment
MNTAFS	Minnesota Technical Assistance for Family Support	PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
MOE	Maintenance of Effort	RDA	Results-Driven Accountability
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging	RLIF	Regional Low Incidence Facilitator
MS	Multiple Sclerosis	RLIP	Regional Low Incidence Projects
MSBA	Minnesota School Board Association	RRC	Regional Resource Center
MSS	Minnesota Student Survey	RTI	Response to Intervention
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging	SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
MTC	Minneapolis Technical College	SDFS	Safe and Drug Free Schools
MTSS	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	SDFSC	Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
N&D	Neglected and Delinquent	SEA	State Educational Agency
NAD	National Association of the Deaf	SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council
NAEP	National Assessment of Education Progress	SEAP	Special Education Advisory Panel
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association	SEAU	Special Education Administrative Unit
NIMAC	National Instructional Materials Access Center	Section 504	A federal law that protects a student with an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, regardless of whether the student receives special education services.
NIMAS	National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard	SERVS	State Educational Record View and Submission
NP	Nurse Practitioner	SIC	State Interagency Coordination Committee
O&M	Orientation and Mobility	SIMR	State-Identified Measurable Result
OCD	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	SL	Speech/Language
OCR	Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)	SLD	Specific Learning Disability
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity	SLP	Speech Language Pathologist
OHD	Other Health Disabilities	SMI	Severely Multiply Impaired
OMB	Office of Management and Budget	SPDG	State Personnel Development Grant
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education	SPED	Special Education
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, U.S. Department of Education	SPP	State Performance Plan
OT	Occupational Therapist or Therapy	SRBI	Scientific, Research-Based Intervention
		SSA	Social Security Act; Social Security Administration
		SSB	State Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped

SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
SSIP	State Systemic Improvement Plan
STAR	Staff Automatic Reporting System
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SW	Social Worker
SW-PBIS	Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
TBVI	Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired
TDD	Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf
TEAE	Test of Emerging Academic English
TIES	Technology and Information Educational Services
TSES	Total Special Education System
TTY	Teletypewriter
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UEB	Unified English Braille
UFARS	Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting System
USC	United States Code
VI	Visually Impaired
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
VSA	Very Special Arts
WIDA	World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
WISC	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
WSS	Work Sampling System



WORKS CITED

- Eligibility Requirements for School Board Member, Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)
- Austin Public Schools 200 Series Policies
- Standards for School Board Leadership, Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)
- Governance and Management, TeamWorks Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) School Board Workshop Series