I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures relating to the maintenance of records of the school board and the publication of its official proceedings.

II. General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the school district to maintain its records so that they will be available for inspection by members of the general public and to provide for the publication of its official proceedings in compliance with law.

III. Maintenance of Minutes and Records

A. The clerk or designee 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 as referenced in Policy 202, Section III. A. Specifically "the persons who perform the duties of clerk and treasurer need not be members 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 or minutes 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.

B. Recordings of Closed Meetings

1. All closed meetings, except those closed as permitted by the attorney-client privilege, must be electronically recorded at the expense of the school district. Recordings of closed meetings shall be made separately from the recordings of an open meeting, to the extent such meetings are recorded. If a meeting is closed to discuss more than one (1) matter, each matter shall be separately recorded.

2. Recordings of closed meetings shall be preserved by the school district for the following time periods:

a. Meetings closed to discuss labor negotiations strategy shall be preserved for two (2) years after the contract is signed.

b. Meetings closed to discuss security matters shall be preserved for at least four (4) years.

c. Meetings closed to discuss the purchase or sale of property shall be preserved for at least eight (8) years after the date of the meeting.

d. All other closed meetings shall be preserved by the school district for at least three (3) years after the date of the meeting.

e. Following the expiration of the above time periods, recordings of closed meetings shall be maintained as set forth in the school district's Records Retention Schedule.

3. Recordings of closed meetings shall be classified by the school district as protected non-public data that is not accessible by the public or any subject of the data, with the following exceptions:

a. Recordings of labor negotiations strategy meetings shall be classified as public data and made available to the public after all labor contracts are signed by the school district for the current budget period.

b. Recordings of meetings related to the purchase or sale of property shall be classified as public data and made available to the public after all real or personal property discussed at the meeting has been purchased or sold or the school district has abandoned the purchase or sale.

c. Recordings of any other closed meetings shall be classified and/or released as required by court order.

4. Recordings of closed meetings shall be maintained separately from recordings of open meetings, to the extent recordings of open meetings are maintained by the school district, with the exception of recordings that have been classified as public data as set forth in Section III.B.3. above. Recordings of closed meetings classified as non-public data also shall be maintained in a secure location, separate from recordings classified as public data.

5. Recordings of closed meetings shall be maintained in a manner to easily identify the data classification of the recording. The recordings shall be identified with at least the following information:

   a. The date of the closed meeting;

   b. The basis upon which the meeting was closed (i.e.: labor negotiations strategy, purchase or sale of real property, educational data, etc.); and

   c. The classification of the data.

6. Recordings of closed meetings related to labor negotiations strategy and the purchase or sale of property shall be maintained and monitored in a manner that reclassifies the recording as public upon the occurrence of an event reclassifying that data as set forth in Section III.B.3. above.

IV. Publication of Official Proceedings

In 2024, the Minnesota legislature enacted two laws regarding publication of school board minutes. Under Chapter 109 (2024), school districts are authorized to publish their minutes on their websites; this section expires on August 1, 2026.

Under Chapter 115 (2024), the Minnesota legislature enacted the following:

A. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, when a qualified newspaper designated by a school district ceases to exist for any reason except consolidation with another newspaper, the school district may publish its proceedings on the school district's website instead of publishing the proceedings in a newspaper. The school district must also request that the same information be posted at each public library located within the school district for the notice's publication period. This section expires August 1, 2026.

B. If, before August 1, 2026, there is a newspaper located within a school district's boundaries that is qualified to be designated as the school district's official newspaper pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 331A.04, then the exemption provided in this section shall not apply, provided that the qualified newspaper's legal rate is not more than ten percent above the rate charged by the school district's previous official newspaper and the qualified newspaper provides some coverage of the activities of the school district that is publishing the notice.

C. The proceedings to be published may be a summary of the essential elements of the proceedings, and/or of resolutions and other official actions of the school

board. Such a summary shall be written in a clear and coherent manner and shall, to the extent possible, avoid the use of technical or legal terms not generally familiar to the public. When a summary is published, the publication shall clearly indicate that the published material is only a summary and that the full text is available for public inspection at the administrative offices of the school district and that a copy of the proceedings, other than attachments to the minutes, is available without cost at the offices of the school district or by means of standard or electronic mail.

Legal references: Minn. Stat. § 13D.01, Subds. 4-6 (Meetings Must be Open to the Public; Exceptions)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.04, Subd. 10 (Publishing Proceedings)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.14, Subd. 7 (Record of Meetings)
Minn. Stat. § 331A.01 (Definition)
Minn. Stat. § 331A.05, Subd. 8 (Notice Regarding Published Summaries)
Minn. Stat. § 331A.08, Subd. 3 (Publication of Proceedings)
Op. Atty. Gen. 161-a-20, December 17, 1970
Ketterer v. Independent School District No. 1, 248 Minn. 212, 79 N.W. 2d 428 (1956)

Cross References: Policy 205 - Open Meetings and Closed Meetings
MSBA Service Manual, Chapter 1, School District Governance, Powers and Duties