South St. Paul Public Schools

SSP School Board



Handbook

Updated: June 2026

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South St. Paul Public Schools
2026 Leadership Directory

Board Members

Kim Humann, Chair
Anne Claflin, Vice Chair
Wendy Felton, Secretary-Clerk
Paul Cumings, Treasurer
Tim Felton, Director
Amy Wardell, Director
Monica Weber, Director

Executive Staff

Dr. Brian Zambreno, Superintendent
Lisa Brandecker, Manager of Administrative Services and Communications

Superintendent's Leadership Cabinet

Jennifer Danielson, Executive Director of Student Services
Ra Chhoth, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
Charlie Cook, Executive Director of Human Resources
Amy Winter, Executive Director of Educational Services

South St. Paul Public Schools
Today

District Mission and Core Values

Mission
Engage, Educate, Empower!

Vision
Nurturing an inclusive Packer community of lifelong learners

Strategic Priorities		
Packer Performance *Fostering Growth and Achievement*	**Packer Pride** *Celebrating Core Values and Community*	**Packer Promise** *Cultivating Inclusive Opportunities for All*
• **Focus on Growth:** Cultivate an environment that encourages continuous improvement, academic success, and high performance. • **Support Staff Excellence:** Empower and support staff as they learn and collaborate to drive student achievement. • **Expand Opportunities:** Offer diverse academic and extracurricular experiences that inspire curiosity, critical thinking, and personal growth.	• **Align Actions with Core Values:** Ensure every decision and action reflects our commitment to our community values of Pride, Respect, Resilience, Integrity, Collaboration, and Equity. • **Promote District Strengths:** Showcase what makes our district unique and welcoming, attracting students, families, and staff. • **Celebrate and Promote Hard Work and Engagement:** Recognize and appreciate the dedication of students, families, staff, and community members in fostering a thriving and supportive educational environment.	• **Cultivate a Welcoming Environment:** Build a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning community where everyone feels valued and heard. • **Communicate Transparently:** Foster trust by delivering clear, consistent, and transparent communication that encourages engagement and strengthens relationships. • **Expand Pathways to Success:** Provide diverse opportunities for students to explore their academic and personal goals, unlocking their full potential for success in school, careers, and life. • **Foster Belonging:** Strengthen connections through shared experiences that create a sense of pride and belonging within our schools and community.

SSPPS Core Values

Pride- A welcoming, inclusive and supportive Packer community that honors and celebrates its rich history while collectively inspiring new traditions.

Respect- Recognizing and celebrating the goodness in oneself and others, seeing our differences as strengths and showing care and appreciation for people, property and the entire South St. Paul community.

Collaboration- Building community together through trust, hard work, innovation, and a shared commitment to building the South St. Paul that our community aspires to be.

Integrity- Being thoughtful, honest, transparent in our words, and actions, and accountable for our decisions.

Resilience- The courage to adapt, change and persevere when presented with challenges and opportunities.

Equity- A safe and supportive environment that provides opportunities for all to be seen, heard, and valued.



Bringing Our Strategic Plan to Life

The South St. Paul Public Schools Strategic Plan serves as the district's roadmap for achieving its mission to **Engage, Educate, and Empower** every learner while **nurturing an inclusive Packer community of lifelong learners.** To ensure the Strategic Plan remains an active guide for decision-making, the district uses district and department scorecards to translate strategic priorities into measurable goals and meaningful action.

Scorecards align the daily work of departments and schools with the district's Strategic Directions, helping staff focus on what matters most while tracking progress toward key performance measures. This process promotes continuous improvement, accountability, and transparency, ensuring the district's mission, vision, and strategic priorities remain at the forefront of daily work and long-term planning.

As part of its governance responsibilities, the School Board regularly reviews district and department scorecards throughout the year. These updates provide the Board with a consistent framework for monitoring progress toward strategic goals, celebrating successes, identifying opportunities for improvement, and making informed decisions that support student achievement and organizational excellence.

Together, the Strategic Plan, scorecards, and regular progress monitoring create a shared framework for continuous improvement, ensuring that every decision and initiative supports the district's commitment to student success.





Pathway to Packer Promise

The **Pathway to Packer Promise** reflects South St. Paul Public Schools' commitment to **Engage, Educate, and Empower** every learner while **nurturing an inclusive Packer community of lifelong learners.** This comprehensive framework prepares each student for success by providing high-quality, personalized learning experiences that support their growth from early learning through graduation.



Designed to meet students where they are and help them discover where they can go, the Pathway to Packer Promise offers individualized programs, services, and learning opportunities at every stage of their educational journey. Through real-world experiences, interactive learning, guest speakers, field trips, career exploration, and flexible curriculum options, students are encouraged to explore their interests, build meaningful skills, and prepare for future success.

The Pathway to Packer Promise was developed through extensive collaboration and feedback from students, families, staff, and community members, ensuring it reflects the shared priorities and aspirations of our learning community.



Talent Development and Advanced Academics

South St. Paul Public Schools is committed to meeting the needs of every learner through its Talent Development and Advanced Academics program. Beginning in elementary school and continuing through high school, students have opportunities to engage in enriched learning experiences, advanced coursework, acceleration options, and personalized academic challenges designed to foster curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. By recognizing and nurturing students' strengths and interests, the district empowers learners to reach their highest potential while preparing them for future success.



International Baccalaureate (IB)

Since 1986, South St. Paul Public Schools has offered the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, becoming Minnesota's first K-12 IB World Schools District in 2009. While the district transitioned away from the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Middle Years Programme (MYP) in 2024 to better align with the Pathway to Packer Promise, it continues to offer the internationally recognized Diploma Programme for students in grades 11-12.

The IB Diploma Programme encourages intellectual curiosity and a lifelong love of learning through a balanced curriculum that includes coursework across multiple subject areas, an independent extended essay, the Theory of Knowledge course, and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) experiences. Together, these components foster academic excellence while supporting students' personal, social, and emotional growth, empowering them to become confident, responsible, and engaged global citizens success.





Career and College Readiness (CCR)

The **Career and College Readiness (CCR)** initiative is a collaborative partnership between the TriDistricts of South St. Paul Public Schools, Inver Grove Heights Schools, Mendota Heights, West St. Paul, Eagan Area Schools (District 197), and local business and industry partners. Through this partnership, students gain access to innovative career exploration opportunities, college-level coursework, and authentic, hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for success after graduation.



Through the **TriDistrict CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies)** programs, students can explore high-demand career fields while earning college credit, industry-recognized certifications, and valuable real-world experience. These opportunities help students build professional skills, make informed postsecondary decisions, and graduate with a competitive advantage for college and careers.

Career pathways include:

- Healthcare
- Transportation and Skilled Trades
- Business and Entrepreneurship
- Information Technology and Computer Science
- Urban Education in partnership with Metropolitan State University *(South St. Paul Public Schools students only)*



Community Partnerships

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 students achieve success in the classroom and beyond.

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.

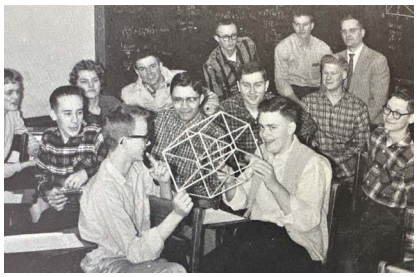


The History of
South St. Paul Public Schools

We are Special School District #6







South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) has been a vital part of the community since its founding in 1853 as the Kaposia School District. Initially serving the children of local residents, missionaries, and Kaposia Village Native American chiefs, the district grew rapidly alongside the city, which was once home to the world's largest stockyards. Officially designated as South St. Paul Special District No. 6 in 1890, SSPPS experienced its peak in the 1970s, serving over 6,000 students across six elementary schools, a high school, and a junior high school. Following the closure of the stockyards in 1986, enrollment declined, leading to the consolidation of school buildings. Today, SSPPS serves approximately 2,900 students in the City of South St. Paul.

The District Schools Include:

- **Kaposia Education Center** (Grades PreK-5)
- **Lincoln Center Elementary** (Grades PreK-5)
- **South St. Paul Secondary** (Grades 6-12)
- **SSP Community Learning Center** (Grades 10-12 alternative program)

Additionally, SSPPS offers early childhood programs (birth–5), Adult Basic Education, and a robust Community Education program at Central Square. The district office and Early Childhood Family Education programs are housed in a separate facility.

South St. Paul Secondary continues its tradition of providing students with outstanding academic, athletic, and co-curricular opportunities. Students can participate in more than 40 athletic and activity programs, performing arts, student affinity groups, clubs, and student organizations that foster leadership, teamwork, belonging, and school pride. These experiences, combined with diverse academic pathways and personalized learning opportunities, empower students to explore their interests, build lasting connections, and prepare for success in school, careers, and life.

The success of South St. Paul Public Schools is driven by the unwavering support of its community. Organizations such as the South St. Paul Educational Foundation, South St. Paul Open Foundation, and the South St. Paul Lions Club provide scholarships, program funding, volunteer support, and other resources that enrich learning experiences and expand opportunities for students.

Building on its rich history, South St. Paul Public Schools continues to prepare students for success through innovative learning opportunities, strong community partnerships, and a continued commitment to academic excellence. Today, the district's mission, vision, strategic priorities, and student-centered programs guide every learner from early childhood through graduation and beyond.

Why Families Choose South St. Paul Public Schools

At South St. Paul Public Schools, every student is known, valued, and supported throughout their educational journey. From personalized learning opportunities and rigorous academics to career exploration, college preparation, fine arts, athletics, and community partnerships, students are empowered to discover their passions and build the knowledge and skills needed for success in school, careers, and life.

District
Demographics



District Office

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



Central Square *(Community Education and Adult Basic Education)*

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



Early Learning *(Classes: Kaposia Education Center, Office: Central Square)*

1225 – 1st Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9418
2025-26 Early Learning including PreK & ECSE Enrollment: 134



Kaposia Education Center *(Grades PreK-5)*

1225 – 1st Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 451-9260
2025-26 Enrollment: 610



Lincoln Center Elementary *(Grades PreK-5)*

357 – 9th Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9426
2025-26 Enrollment: 626



South St. Paul Secondary *(Grades 6-12)*

700 – 2nd Street North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 457-9408
2025-26 MS Enrollment: 550
2025-26 HS Enrollment: 805



Community Learning Center *(Grades 11-12)*

710 – 19th Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075
(651) 450-9966
2025-26 CLC Enrollment: 88

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 School Board members are elected officials, with elections held in November of even-numbered years. To ensure continuity and avoid all seven seats being up for election at once, the positions are staggered. Every two years, four seats are up for election one year, and the remaining three are available in the following election cycle. This alternating process ensures that the board maintains a balance of experienced and newly elected members.

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.

Eligibility Requirements *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 School Board Members 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 School Board Members 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 School Board 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 and 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

- Attend Phase I-IV School Board training as provided by the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA).
- Attend school board meetings.
- Come to the meetings prepared for discussion of the agenda items.
- Listen to the opinions and views of others (including, but not limited to, other school board members, administration, staff, students, and community members).
- Vote my conscience after informed discussion unless I abstain because a conflict of interest exists.
- Support the decision of the board, even if my position concerning the issue was different.
- Recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and appreciate their work.
- Be primarily motivated by a desire to provide the best possible education for the students of my school district.
- Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a school board member.

Functions of a School Board Member

- Focus on education policy as much as possible.
- Remember my responsibility is to set policy – not to implement policy.
- Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
- 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.
- Work through the superintendent – not over or around the superintendent.
- Delegate the implementation of school board decisions to the superintendent.

Legal Obligations of a School Board Member

- Comply with all federal, state and local laws relating to my work as a school board member.
- Comply with all school district policies as adopted by the school board.
- 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.
- Recognize that school district business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the school board.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using school board position for personal gain.
- Take no private action that will compromise the school board or administration.
- Guard the confidentiality of information that is protected under applicable law.

Characteristics of Effective School Boards

Source: Center for Public Education, 2011

1. Thoughtful decision-making, considering the implications of policies and actions focused on student success.
2. Strong communication skills, effectively conveying ideas and listening to community members.
3. Dedication to public service, demonstrating a genuine interest in the success of all students.
3. Ability to work as part of a team, collaborating with others to achieve common goals.
4. Willingness to learn, staying informed of educational trends and district matters.

Governance and Management

Source: TeamWorks International

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:

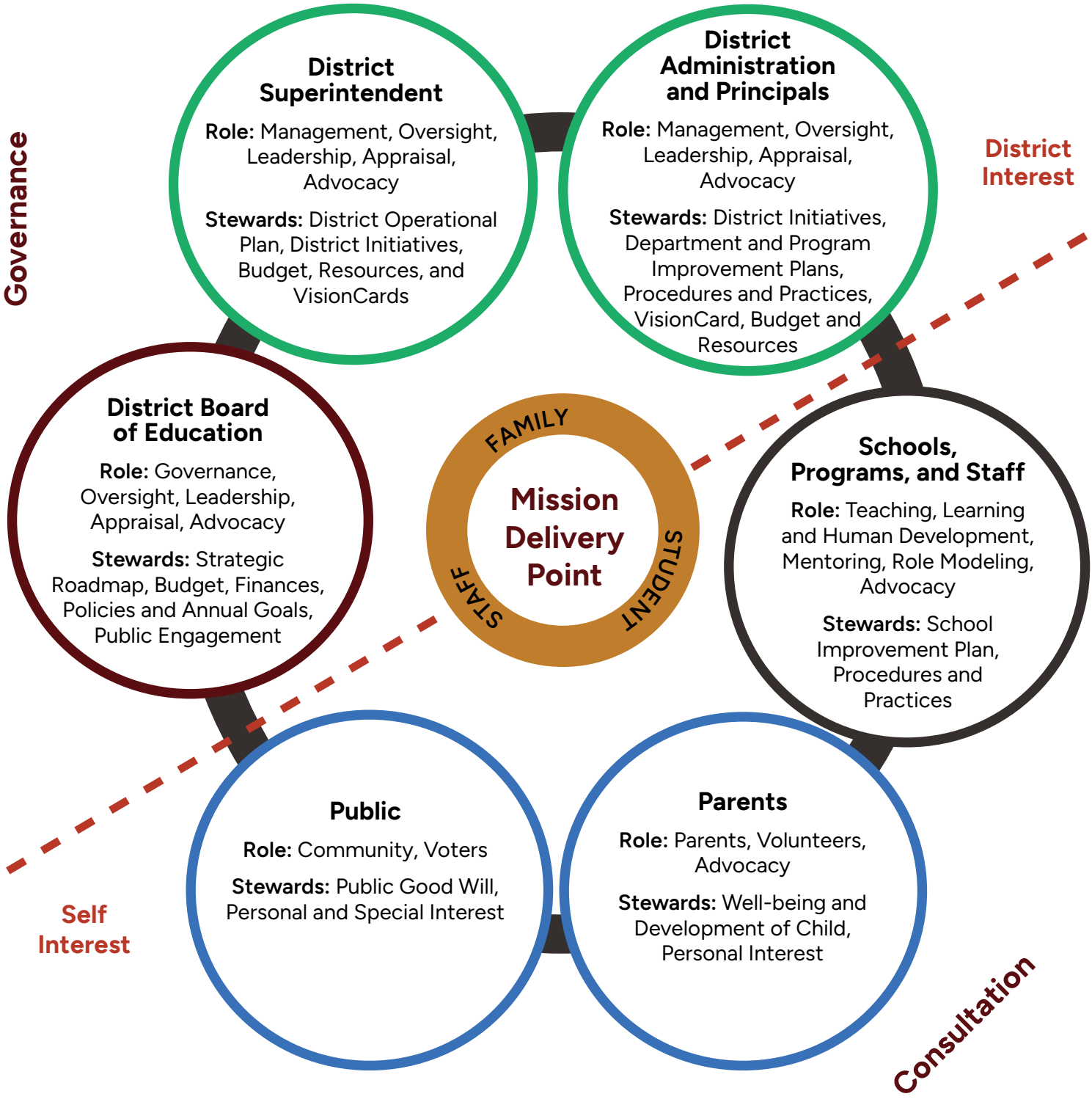
1. Resource management: financial, human, and physical
2. Instructional leadership at the principal level
3. Performance management and professional development
4. Continuous improvement
5. Procedures and practices aligned with district policy
6. Staff, parent, and community relations

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

Management


Governance
District Superintendent
Role: Management, Oversight, Leadership, Appraisal, Advocacy
Stewards: District Operational Plan, District Initiatives, Budget, Resources, and VisionCards
District Administration and Principals
Role: Management, Oversight, Leadership, Appraisal, Advocacy
Stewards: District Initiatives, Department and Program Improvement Plans, Procedures and Practices, VisionCard, Budget and Resources
District Interest
District Board of Education
Role: Governance, Oversight, Leadership, Appraisal, Advocacy
Stewards: Strategic Roadmap, Budget, Finances, Policies and Annual Goals, Public Engagement
FAMILY
STUDENT
STAFF
Mission Delivery Point
Schools, Programs, and Staff
Role: Teaching, Learning and Human Development, Mentoring, Role Modeling, Advocacy
Stewards: School Improvement Plan, Procedures and Practices
Public
Role: Community, Voters
Stewards: Public Good Will, Personal and Special Interest
Parents
Role: Parents, Volunteers, Advocacy
Stewards: Well-being and Development of Child, Personal Interest
Self Interest
Consultation

Application in excellence

Governance in real life

Situation	Sound Governance Practice
What do I do if I get a phone call with concerns from a: a. Staff member b. Student c. Parent	Get the name and phone number for contact Always seek to identify the situation or interest, but generally, do not agree or commit to personally resolve 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 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
What do I do if I get an email with concerns from a: a. Staff member b. Student c. Parent	• It is important to send an acknowledgment 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 the 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
What do I do if I get a stopped out in public (school event, grocery store, etc.) by a concerned: a. Staff member b. Student c. Parent	Always seek to identify the situation or interest, but generally, do not agree or commit to personally resolve 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 **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
As a board member, what do I do if I have a concern or complaint?	• Contact the Chair and/or the Superintendent directly, preferably in person, or by phone • Don't engage is 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, and 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
What if I disagree with a report or presentation to the board?	• Submit questions and concerns to Office of Superintendent as the Board protocol describes • Reflect on what is driving your concern or disagreement • If 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

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

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

The vice-chair shall perform the duties of the chair 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 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.

- 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.

School 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 work sessions 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 Manager of Administrative Services and Communications whenever he/she is unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

Board members are paid $4,900 annually for their committee and regular business meetings and all liaison committee work. The School Board Chair's 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 School Board Members also use this meeting to establish regular meeting dates for the year as well as a number of other business items.

Work Sessions

Work Sessions are intended to provide space for School Board members to hear and discuss district business. The Work Session meeting is open to the public and begins at 5:00 PM. The second Monday of month, the meeting will be held at the SSPPS District Office (104 5th Ave S). The fourth Monday of the month, the meeting will be held at SSP City Hall (125 - 3rd Avenue North).

Business Meeting

The Business Meeting is for School Board members to review and approve staffing and other official district business. This Business Meeting takes place the fourth Monday of the month and is open to the public. Meetings begin at 6:00 PM at SSP City Hall (125 - 3rd Avenue N).

Stakeholder Comments to the Board

The SSP School Board provides the following opportunities for community members to address the board.

- In-Person on the 2nd Monday of each month after the Work Session. Stakeholder Comments to the Board are held at the SSPPS District Office beginning at 6:30 PM.
- In-person or electronic form submissions are accepted.

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.

School Board
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 School Board, 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 three 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 report of the Board. This committee organizes and prepares the superintendent evaluation and other executive business.

School Board
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.

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.

Intermediate School District 917

Intermediate School District 917 provides service and support to nine south metro area school districts in the areas of special education, career and technical education, and alternative learning programming. The Intermediate School District 917 School Board 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 (SSPEF) is an independent nonprofit organization that partners with SSPPS to enhance educational opportunities for students. Through grants, scholarships, and community support, the Foundation funds programs, enriches classroom learning, and helps expand opportunities that benefit students. A member of the SSP School Board serves on the SSPEF Board of Directors to help strengthen communication and collaboration between the District and the Foundation.

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