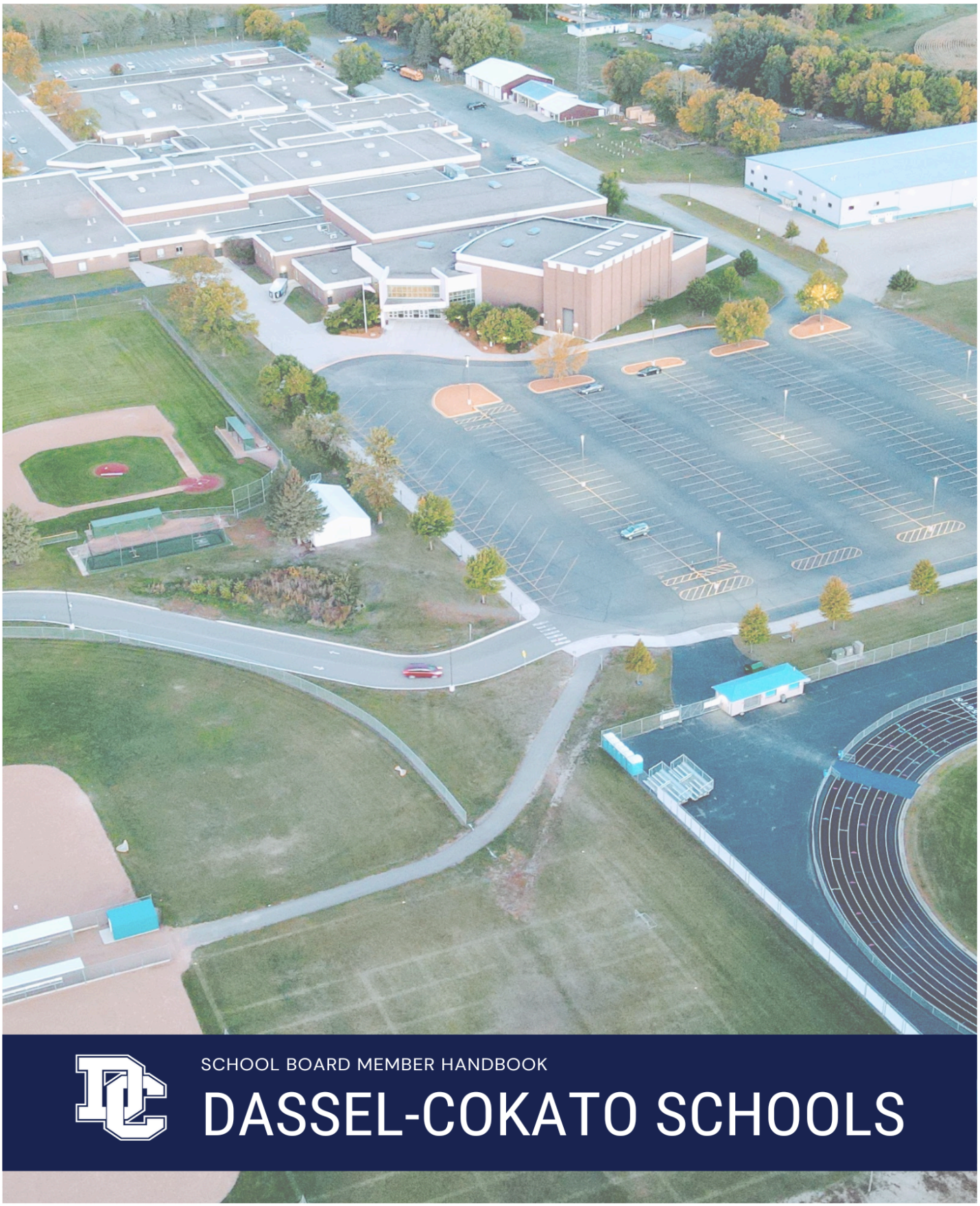
DASSEL-COKATO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATE • INNOVATE • SUCCEED

Updated September 2026



SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK

DASSEL-COKATO SCHOOLS

Updated September 2026

School Board Member Handbook

LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

Board Members
Andy Engh, Chair
Andy Bohnsack, Vice Chair
Bonni Halverson, Treasurer
Cindy Miller, Board Clerk
Katie Niska, Director
Jenna Kantola, Director

Executive Staff
Mark Raymond, Superintendent of Schools
Clare Uecker, Administrative Assistant to the District Office and School Board

Directors
Tina Palmer, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
Amy Dimmler, Director of Community Services
John Heltunen, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Coordinators
Kelly Klima, Special Education Supervisor
Staci Barth, Human Resources Coordinator

Principals
TJ Anderson, Cokato Elementary
Ryan Weinandt, Dassel Elementary
Kip Lynk, Dassel-Cokato Middle School
Chris Meisch, Dassel-Cokato High School

About Dassel-Cokato Public Schools

ISD 466 Past and Present

The Dassel-Cokato School District is a rural school district in central Minnesota. It serves the steadily growing communities of Dassel and Cokato which have a combined population of approximately 4,200 residents. The entire school district, which includes many rural and lake homes, has a total population of 10,100 residents.

We are committed to the idea of life-long learning as evidenced by our programs serving infants through senior citizens. We provide opportunities for parent/community involvement in curriculum development, extra-curricular activities and volunteer programs in the schools. Extensive extra and co-curricular activities are offered and have generated accomplishments such as recent state championships in wrestling, drumline, track, speech, and football.



The district consists of three modern, attractive and well-maintained school facilities with additions as recent as 1998. Each community hosts a K-4 elementary school, and a larger complex is located halfway between Dassel and Cokato on highway twelve which includes a pre-school, a community education center, a 5-8 middle school, and a 9-12 high school. Total school enrollment has been slightly decreasing in recent years, and current K-12 enrollment is approximately 2,000 students. District employees number about 400 with 150 of those being teachers.

Dassel-Cokato student test scores are well above national averages. D-C schools have North Central Accreditation, Dassel Elementary and DCHS are recognized as "National Schools of Excellence" and Cokato Elementary is recognized as a "State School of Excellence." Lower elementary class sizes average 20 students, and the K-12 individualized gifted program is recognized as a state model. D-C schools offer a FOCUS program and Area Learning Center(ALC) for at-risk students, district reading specialists and coordinate the K-12 curriculum with sequential learning objectives. The district offers outstanding media and technology capabilities including computers in every classroom, mobile carts of computers and full computer labs in the ALC and Elementary buildings as well as a 1:1 student/computer ratio for grades 5-12.

Our Mission
In partnership with our communities and families, we will educate and inspire all learners to maximize their potential, promote lifelong learning, and become contributing members of society.

Our Students
ISD 466 includes all of the City of Dassel, the City of Cokato, and several surrounding townships including Albion, Collinwood, Cokato, Darwin, Dassel, Ellsworth, French Lake, Kingston, Stockholm, Middleville, and Victor. The total population within the district is approximately 10,100. The student population is about 2,000 and is expected to be stable for the next five-year planning horizon. Dassel-Cokato area students are more than great students - they are great people. The district's curricular and extra-curricular programming support their development as active, vital community members.

Our Staff
Dassel-Cokato Public Schools employs nearly 400 people, including more than 150 licensed teachers. More than half of our teachers hold master's or more advanced degrees. The district’s extensive and innovative staff development program ensures all employees continue to grow professionally to provide the best education possible to our students.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

How We Support Our Community

A large amount of our population was born, raised, and are now raising their own families here. Continuing our close-knit culture and traditions is extremely important. We also want our communities to continue to grow and be a place others want to call “home.” ISD 466 supports the local community in many ways beyond providing education and enrichment opportunities for all through our Community Education programs and K 12 public education services. Connections between community members, businesses, and formal and informal organizations collaboratively leverage resources that assist students in achieving positive outcomes.

Dassel-Cokato Public Schools is the largest employer in the City of Dassel and the City of Cokato. Our staff (and students) participate in numerous civic organizations and partner with local and county agencies in support of student achievement and quality education. We also maintain the majority of recreational facilities in the city including sports fields, courts, gyms, parks, and a public swimming pool.

How Our Community Supports Us

The vision of Dassel-Cokato Schools is: Educate. Innovate. Succeed. Our communities support this vision by staying engaged and informed about school district needs, helping create innovative solutions through collaborative groups, and successfully passing referendums that provide long-term student and facility solutions. Most recently a $17.9 million bond referendum was passed in 2022, supporting Career and Technical Education pathways, several infrastructure projects, and a new, secured high school entrance. In 2018 our community passed an operating levy supporting day-to-day operating expenses such as staffing, utilities, and transportation. Community-supported referendums enable Dassel-Cokato Schools to operate as a fiscally responsible district able to keep up with increased expenses by utilizing long-term plans and goals. Lifelong learning for every student is supported through a tradition of excellence in education fostered within the communities of Dassel and Cokato.

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Dassel Elementary School
(Grades K-4)
Address: 131 William Ave. East
Dassel, MN 55325
Phone:(320) 286-4100 ext.1500
Enrollment as of 11/6/26: 319

Dassel-Cokato Middle School
(Grades 5-8)
Address: 4852 Reardon Ave. SW Ste. 1500
Cokato, MN 55321
Phone:(320) 286-4100 ext.1600
Enrollment as of 11/6/26: 583

Cokato Elementary School
(Grades K-4)
Address: 200 5th Street SW
Cokato, MN 55321
Phone:(320) 286-4100 ext.1300
Enrollment as of 11/6/26: 384

Dassel-Cokato High School
(Grades 9-12)
Address: 4852 Reardon Ave. SW Ste. 1600
Cokato, MN 55321
Phone:(320) 286-4100 ext.1800
Enrollment as of 11/6/26: 596

BECOMING A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Dassel-Cokato Public Schools are governed by six board members, elected at large, representing all citizens within the boundaries. Board members are elected to four-year terms, with elections for three board seats held in November of even-numbered years and terms

beginning January 1 following the election. To run for a seat on the Board of Education, candidates must file an affidavit of candidacy with the District office during the official filing period.

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

To qualify for election to your local school board you must be:

- at least 21 years old
- an eligible voter
- district resident for at least 30 days (M.S. 204B.06, Subd. 1)
- not a convicted sex offender (M.S. 205A.06, Subd. 1b)

Term of Office

School board members are elected to 4-year terms and take office the first Monday in January (M.S. 123B.09, Subd. 1). 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 466. 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.

ONCE ELECTED AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

What to Expect

Board Action:

No one person, or group of persons, acts in the name of the Board. When an item of business comes before the Board in the form of a motion, it is necessary that a majority of votes be cast in favor of the motion for the board to act. Members of the board are without authority to act independently as individual board members.

Public Comment:

While the public is encouraged to attend Board of Education meetings to become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools, they are not public forums. Most school districts include an opportunity for the public to comment on agenda items during the meetings; however, this is a time for board members to listen rather than engage in a discussion. School districts are encouraged to hold town halls and other events that allow for constructive commentary and two-way communication.

Closed Sessions:

State law provides that all meetings of governmental bodies (including school boards and multi-member bodies created by the boards) shall be open sessions unless a closed session is expressly permitted by law. For the most part, closed sessions are normally held to discuss student and personnel matters. A governmental body may hold a closed session only by an affirmative public vote of the majority of members present at the meeting, and only to the extent a closed session meets the guidelines established by Minnesota Statute 13D.03 or 13D.05.

Minnesota Open Meeting Law:

The Minnesota Open Meeting Law requires that meetings of governmental bodies generally be open to the public. This information brief discusses the groups and types of meetings covered by the open meeting law, and then reviews the requirements of and exceptions to the law and the penalties for its violation. See attachment.

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

Why is Parliamentary Procedure Important?

Because it's a time-tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization. Today, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations, and other groups. It is important that everyone knows these basic rules.

Organizations using parliamentary procedures usually follow a fixed order of business.

Below is a typical example:

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Public Comment
4. Consent Agenda
5. Informational Items (reports)
6. Action Items
7. Board Member Reports
8. Adjourn

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of making motions. A motion is a proposal that the board take action or a stand on an issue. Each individual member can:

- Make motions
- Second motions
- Debate motions
- Vote on motions

There are Four Basic Types of Motions:

1. Main Motions: The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. Subsidiary Motions: Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled and is voted on before a main motion.
3. Privileged Motions: Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. Incidental Motions: Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

There are Three Other Motions that are Commonly Used that Relate to Voting:

1. Motion to Table - This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion; however, this is inappropriate. This motion is to set aside a motion temporarily at the same meeting. Once the motion is tabled, the option is always present, however, to "take from the table," for reconsideration by the membership at the same meeting.
2. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely - This motion is used to kill a motion by postponing it to an indefinite time.
3. Motion to Postpone Definitely - This motion is used to put off making a decision until a definite time in the future.

Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.

- Allow motions that are in order.
- Have members obtain the floor properly.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Obey the rules of debate.
- Most importantly, BE COURTEOUS.

Board Policies

All School Board policies are available on the district website at isd466.org.
The School Board reviews policies as the legislature approves changes as well as on a three-year cycle for district-specific policies.

Assign a Mentor

The Board Chair is responsible for assigning each board member a mentor.

MSBA Phase I and II Training

This is to be scheduled by the Executive Assistant and completed in December or at the MSBA Conference in January. The Executive Assistant will set this up for each board member. The Board Chair will review with the new members.

Pre-work before the new Board Member(s) begin their term

Access to Resources

- Meeting set with Superintendent after elections
- MSBA access
- School Board email account and ISD466 Google account

School board Meeting Schedule

- The School Board meets regularly on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.
- When school board meetings fall on a holiday the School Board Meeting will be rescheduled.

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP

Source: MSBA, 2017 and Dennis Cheesebrow, TeamWorks International

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

ISD 466 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:

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 — focus 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 are 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 support 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 Dassel-Cokato Public Schools. The District's Code of Ethics Policy 209 states the following expectations, functions, and legal obligations for board members:

Expectations of a School Board Member

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

Functions of a School Board Member

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

Legal Obligations of a School Board Member

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

Characteristics of Effective School Boards

Source: Center for Public Education, 2011

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

Duties of School Board Members
Source: ISD 466 Policy 201

The school board has powers and duties specified by statute. The school board's authority includes implied powers in addition to specific powers granted by the legislature.

- The school board exercises administrative functions. It also has certain powers of a legislative character and other powers of a quasi-judicial character.
- The school board shall supervise and manage the schools of the school district; adopt rules for their organization, government, and instruction; prescribe textbooks and courses of study; and make and authorize contracts.
- The school board shall have the general charge of the business of the school district, its facilities and property, and of the interest of the schools.
- 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;
    - conduct the business of the schools and pay indebtedness and proper expenses;
    - employ and 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; and
- procure insurance against liability of the school district, its officers, and employees.

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; and
- perform other acts as the school board shall deem to be reasonably necessary or required for the governance of the schools.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Source: TeamWorks International

While there 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

See the Educational Leadership System Guidebook from TeamWorks International for more information on Governance and Management.

APPLICATION OF EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE IN REAL LIFE

Situation	Sound Governance Practice
What do I do if I get a **phone call** with a concern from a: ● staff member ● student ● 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 the supervisor, and notify the superintendent's office Caution: do not get involved in employment / contractual issues. ● Redirect the student to the principal and notify the superintendent's office Caution: Follow district procedures if a safety concern is raised. ● 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 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 the Board Chair in addition to the Superintendent's Office.
What do I do if I get an **email** with concerns from a: 1. staff member 2. student 3. 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." ● Be alert to "patterns" of like concerns, and if present, notify the Superintendent's office. ● If concern raises governance or political edge questions, contact the Board Chair in addition to the Superintendent's Office.

What do I do if I get **stopped out in public** (school event, grocery store, etc.) by a concerned: ● staff member ● student ● 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 student to principal and notify superintendent's office Caution: If a concern about safety is raised, follow district procedures ● 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 limiting 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 the Board Chair in addition to the Superintendent's Office.
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

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

ELECTION AND ROLES OF OFFICERS

Source: ISD 466 Policy 202

School board officers are charged with the duty of carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to them for the care, management, and control of the public schools of the school district.

Election of Officers

The school board meets annually on the first Monday in January, or as soon thereafter as practicable, and organizes by selecting a chair, a clerk, a treasurer, and such other officers as determined by the school board. These officers hold office for one year and until their successors are elected and qualified.

Roles of Board Officers

Role of the Chair

1. The chair, when present, shall preside 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.
2. In case of absence, inability, or refusal of the clerk to draw orders for the payment of money authorized by a vote of the majority of the school board to be paid, the chair may draw the orders, or the office of the clerk may be declared vacant by the chair and treasurer and filled by appointment.

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 Clerk

1. The clerk shall keep a record of all meetings in the books provided.
2. Within three days after an election, the clerk shall notify all persons elected of their election.
3. On or before September 15 of each year, the clerk shall:
    a. file with the school board a report of the revenues, expenditures, and balances in each fund for the preceding fiscal year.
    b. make and transmit to the commissioner certified reports, showing:
        i. revenues and expenditures in detail, and such other financial information required by law, rule, or as may be called for by the commissioner;
        ii. length of school term and enrollment and attendance by grades; and iii. other items of information as called for by the commissioner.
4. The clerk shall enter into the clerk's record book copies of all reports and of the teachers' term reports, and of the proceedings of any meeting, and keep an itemized account of all expenses of the school district.
5. The clerk shall furnish to the county auditor, on or before September 30 of each year, an attested copy of the clerk's record, showing the amount of proposed property tax voted by the school district or the school board for school purposes.
6. The clerk shall draw and sign all orders upon the treasurer for the payment of money for bills allowed by the school board for salaries of officers and for teachers' wages and all claims, to be countersigned by the chair.
7. The clerk shall perform such duties as required by the Minnesota Election Law or other applicable laws relating to the conduct of elections.
8. The clerk shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's and the vice-chair's temporary absences.

Role of Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall deposit the funds of the school district in the official depository.
2. The treasurer shall make all reports which may be called for by the school board and perform all duties a treasurer usually performs.
3. In the event there are insufficient funds on hand to pay valid orders presented to the treasurer, the treasurer shall receive, endorse, and process the orders in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 123B.12.

BOARD MEETINGS

A quorum of members (defined as four or more of the six members) 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 in January of each year), the Board will set its

meeting schedule for the upcoming year. Additional “special” meetings may be called, as needed, throughout the year. All meetings not previously approved during the Organizational Meeting are considered special meetings, and must be properly noticed to the public.

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

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

Board members are paid $60 per meeting for their committee meetings, regular business meetings, and all liaison committee work. Board members are paid $100 for all day obligations. The Board Chair is paid $70 per meeting for their committee meetings, regular business meetings, and all liaison committee work. The Board Chair is paid $120 for all day obligations.

Organizational Meeting
The Board is required to hold an organizational meeting in January of each year. The primary purpose of this meeting is to elect members to serve as Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Clerk.

Work Sessions
Work sessions are generally held on the second Monday of each month at 5 p.m. 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 Business Meetings
The school board conducts their business at the Regular Board Business Meeting, which is typically held on the fourth Monday of each month at 5 p.m.

Board Retreat
The Board will hold a retreat annually for strategic planning and vision work.

Board Training
(Source: ISD 466 Policy 212)

In recognition of the need for continuing in-service training and development for its members, the purpose of school board policy 212 is to encourage 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 Meetings
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 Meetings
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 Sessions
Minnesota Statutes govern what constitutes a closed session. They are: Labor negotiations strategy, Bureau of Mediation Services, preliminary consideration of charges, performance evaluations, attorney-client meeting, dismissal hearing, coaches' opportunity to respond to non-renewal, discuss certain non-public data, purchase, and sale of property, and security matters. For specific examples of each of these areas, see school board policy 205 Open/Closed Meetings.

COMMITTEES

Source: ISD 466 Policy 213

School board members serve on a variety of committees, some of which are internal – operating solely within the confines of Dassel-Cokato Public Schools, ISD 466 and the ISD 466 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 interests and abilities and the committees on which they are being asked to serve.

BOARD POLICIES

The 200 series of district policies relate specifically to school board operations. All School Board policies are available on the district website at https://www.isd466.org/. The School Board reviews policies as the legislature approves changes as well as a three-year cycle for district-specific policies.

201 - Legal Status of the School Board
202 - School Board Officers
203.2 - Order of the Regular School Board Meeting
203.5 - School Board Meeting Agenda
205 - Open Meetings and Closed Meetings
206 - Public Participation in School Board Meetings - Complaints about Persons
207 - Public Hearings
208 - Development, Adoption and Implementation of Policies
209 - Code of Ethics
210 - Conflict of Interest - School Board Members
211 - Criminal Civil Action Against School Board Member, Employee, or Student
212 - School Board Member Development
213 - School Board Committees
214 - Out of State Travel by School Board Members

LIAISONS AND 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 board chair 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.

Meeker and Wright County Special Education Cooperative (MAWSECO)
https://www.mawseco.k12.mn.us/

The Meeker and Wright Special Education Cooperative (MAWSECO) is a Joint Powers District located immediately west of Minneapolis and south of St. Cloud. MAWSECO was established in 1975 for the purpose of providing leadership, services, and support to meet the needs of and increase opportunities for staff, students, and families within our member public school districts. MAWSECO is proud to serve our seven founding member districts: Annandale, Dassel-Cokato, Delano, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, Litchfield, Maple Lake, and Rockford. Through cooperation, our member school districts are better able to provide educational opportunities for students in an efficient and effective manner. Administrative and service costs are reduced and member districts are assured of fiscal equity because of the organization's formal, uniform, and consistent policies, procedures, and service agreements relating to shared staff and programs.

MAWSECO provides a number of special education and related services on behalf of its member districts including: Assistive Technology consultation, Autism Resource Team, Behavior Analysts, Braillist, Early Childhood Special Education Part C (Birth-2) services, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Consultation for Other Health Disabilities and Physical Disabilities, Orientation & Mobility Services, Speech-Language Therapy, Teachers of the Blind/Visually Impaired, Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, School Psychologists, and leadership from the Special Education Director and Coordinators.

In addition to special education leadership, support, and services provided for its member districts, MAWSECO operates nine alternative programs on behalf of its members including: elementary, mid-level, and secondary Federal Setting IV special education programs, a secondary transition program for students ages 18-21, and operates educational programs at four residential care and treatment facilities.

MAWSECO has a seven-member governing board. Member districts are each represented on the MAWSECO governing board by one member of each local district's board of directors. The Governing Board is empowered generally to act in the interest of the member districts and to provide for a thorough and continuing system of reporting to, and communication with, the Board of Education for each member district. Superintendents serve in an advisory capacity to the MAWSECO Executive Director and meet monthly as an Executive Advisory Committee.

Resource Training and Solutions
https://www.resourcecoop-mn.gov

Resource Training and Solutions, a nonprofit educational cooperative, was established in 1976 by the Minnesota Legislature to provide cost-effective, high-quality education services and programs to public schools/districts, private schools, and nonprofits in the central Minnesota area. This organization is member-driven and governed by a Representative Assembly and an Executive Committee.

Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)
https://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.

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.

POSITIONS THAT REPORT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

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

Role of the 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 Framework 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 administer 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)

EDUCATIONAL DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

- ABE - Adult Basic Education
- ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
- ADM - Average Daily Membership
- EC - Early Childhood
- ECFE - Early Childhood Family Education
- ECSE - Early Childhood Special Educations (Birth-5)
- EI - Early Intervention
- EL / ELL - English Learner / English Language Learner
- ESEA - Elementary Secondary Education Act
- FTE - Full Time Equivalent
- IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- IEE - Individual Education Evaluation
- IEP - Individual Education Plan
- ISD - Independent School District

- MARSS - Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System
- MCA - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment
- MDE - Minnesota Department of Education
- MSBA - Minnesota School Board Association
- OT - Occupational Therapist or Therapy
- PBIS - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- PE - Physical Educations
- PSEO - Postsecondary Enrollment Options
- PT - Physical Therapist or Therapy
- PTP - Parent Teacher Partnership
- SAT - Scholastic Assessment Test
- 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.
- SpEd / SPED - Special Education

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Board Governance Model
- Educational Leadership System Guidebook (TeamWorks International)
- Financing Education in Minnesota
- Minnesota Open Meeting Law
- Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators

WORKS CITED

- Eight Characteristics of an Effective School Board, Center for Public Education
- Educational Leadership System Guidebook, *TeamWorks International*
- MSBA - Legal Requirements for running for School Board
- ISD 466 Policy 202
- ISD 466 Policy 205
- ISD 466 Policy 212
- ISD 466 Policy 213
- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) School Board Workshop Series
- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) Standards for School Board Leadership