

# South Koochiching Rainy River School Board Handbook



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# Introduction

## Navigating This Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the board’s operating procedures and norms. It also includes important information on policies, meetings, committees, partnerships, and communication. Its ongoing guidance is meant to enable each board member to fulfill essential governance duties and to exercise their responsibilities as a board member, while also providing expectations and standards of behavior for the conduct of the board.

## Handbook Maintenance and Review Procedure

- Annually, the handbook will undergo a review by the board. As part of this review, the board will:
  - Review mutual expectations of board norms;
  - Seek input and feedback regarding best practices, as needed;
  - Check the MSBA website for suggested handbook updates;
  - Adopt the updated handbook by a majority vote of the board.
- Board members may propose additions/revisions to the handbook by sending an email to the chair and superintendent requesting to add “handbook discussion” as a topic for an upcoming working session.
- The handbook may be updated to reflect adopted policy changes without further board action;
- Hyperlinks within the handbook may be updated without further board action;
- The date this handbook was last reviewed, updated, and/or revised, is included on the cover page of this handbook.



# District Information

The effectiveness of your decisions as a board member hinges on your knowledge of the district’s schools, staff, students, and the communities they inhabit. Recognizing the specific needs and aspirations of South Koochiching Rainy River will empower you to advocate for policies and initiatives that truly enhance our educational outcomes. By engaging with this information, you will not only enhance your ability to make informed decisions but also build trust and credibility with fellow board members, the community, staff, and students alike. Let this knowledge serve as the foundation of your tenure, guiding your decisions and initiatives to foster an environment where every student can succeed.



# District Identity

- South Koochiching-Rainy River ISD #363 is one of the largest geographic school districts in the state of Minnesota with an attendance area of 1,532 square miles. The District, as it is now configured, was preceded decades ago by many small communities/townships, which had their own schools, most being the one-room schoolhouse. Currently, ISD #363 has only one remaining PreK-12 Grade school located in Northome, MN.
- The Northome School offers unique opportunities to learn in nature. The experience begins with 80 acres of land that is laced with ski and wildlife trails. This beautiful northern acreage is enhanced by various geographic features such as the Northome School Forest and pond, which attract wildlife year around. We also utilize the Big Bog State Recreation Area, an old growth forest known as “The Lost 40”, Island Lake and many of the natural wonders of Koochiching County and surrounding areas.
- The Northome School community believes in the process of working in collaboration versus isolation and embraces the concept of Professional Learning Communities, or PLC’s. The Northome School Community understands that every student is unique, as we strive to meet the needs of each student learner. We have scheduled specific times during each school day that we call our WIN (What I Need) time that places special emphasis on student learning and the differentiation of instruction. During this time, we use the Four (4) questions of a PLC to help guide our fundamental purpose. 1) What is it that we want our students to know and be able to do (Essential Skills)? 2) How do we know if the students have learned the skill (Assessment)? What do we do for students that have not learned the skill (Intervention)? What do we do for students that already know the skill (Enrichment)?

# Leadership Directory

## Board Members

Name	Board Position	Phone Number	Email Address
Brian Dreher	Board Chair	218-897-5275	brian.dreher@isd363.org
Vickie Hasbargen	Vice Board Chair	218-897-5275	vickie.hasbargen@isd363.org
Emily Lindley	Treasurer	218-897-5275	emily.lindley@isd363.org
Malisa Schue	Clerk	218-897-5275	malisa.schue@isd363.org
Jake Hasbargen	Director	218-897-5275	jake.hasbargen@isd363.org
Scott Mai	Director	218-897-5275	scott.mai@isd363.org

## Superintendent’s Office

Name	Position	Phone Number	Email Address
Jeremy Tammi	Superintendent	218-897-5275	jeremy.tammi@isd363.org
Alissa Carlson	Business Manager/Admin. Asst.	218-897-5275	alissa.carlson@isd363.org



## Leadership Cabinet

Name	Position	Phone Number	Email Address
MacKenzie Lehn	Principal	218-897-5275	mlehn@northome.k12.mn.us
Samantha Hildebrandt	Wellness Coordinator	218-897-5275	shildebrandt@northome.k12.mn.us
Shawn Waldo	Accounts Payable	218-897-5275	shawn.waldo@isd363.org
Nikki Adegun	School Secretary	218-897-5275	nadegun@northome.k12.mn.us
Corey White	Technology Coordinator	218-897-5275	cwhite@northome.k12.mn.us

## District Facilities

Building	Address	Phone Number
Northome School	PO Box 465, 11731 Highway 1, Northome, MN 56661	218-897-5275

### Schedule a Facility Visit or Tour

You have the same right as a parent or community member to visit the schools in your district as long as you adhere to the procedures the district has for visitors. You may also visit the schools in an official capacity with the board's authority or to fulfill a specific duty required of you as a board member. In any event, be sure to communicate with the superintendent and building administrator to schedule your visit.

You should use school visits to build good working relations with building principals and staff, to celebrate the positive accomplishments of the schools, and to show your pride as a member of the board. Look for opportunities to visit when a school is hosting a special event or recognition program for students and staff.



# South Koochiching Rainy River School District 2024-2029

## STRATEGIC PLAN

**Mission Statement:** To prepare communities of tomorrow by promoting lifelong learning, positive values, school pride, mutual respect and individuality.

**Goal #1 High Quality Instruction (Page 5):** Supporting a districtwide culture where all instructional staff analyze student data, reflect on their practice, collaborate professionally with their peers, and incorporate evidence-based instructional practices to ensure High-Levels of Learning for ALL students.



**Goal #2 Aligned and Coherent Systems (Page 6):** Ensuring articulated programs and systems to support a comprehensive, consistent, and responsive learning environment for ALL students.

**Goal #3 Social and Emotional Needs (Page 6):** Implementing mental health and behavioral interventions to best meet the social and emotional needs of ALL students.

**Goal #4 Safe and Engaging Environment (Page 7):** Ensuring all students are engaged and connected to their school, peers, and community in a safe and secure educational setting.

**Belief Statements:** The South Koochiching-Rainy River School District believes that:

Learning occurs best in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment

Schools should develop a culture which promotes integrity, respect, honesty, and trust

Every human being is unique, has worth, and deserves respect

Public Education is central to our democracy



Students, staff, administrators, school board members, parents, and community all have a responsibility in the development of successful citizens

Positive relationships are the foundation of successful schools

Positive leadership at all levels is integral to the success of the schools

Students will be actively involved in their learning process by setting goals for lifelong learning through the development of a personal learning plan.

We believe WIN Time is a valuable opportunity for ALL students throughout the academic day.

**WIN Time (What I Need)** The SKRR School District believes a goal driven program that meets the needs of ALL students is vital to our Academic Success. Our WIN program is structured so our professional educators, along with our support staff, use evidence-based practices of common/formative assessments, targeted interventions and enrichment-based activities in the core areas of math and reading. Our professional educators meet multiple times per week in collaborative teams called Professional Learning Communities (PLC'S) and they focus on answering the four critical questions of a high performing PLC.

**1) What do we want our students to learn and be able to do?  
(Standards/Essential Skills)**

**2) How do we know if they have learned it? (Assessments)**



**3) What do we do for our students that have not mastered the skill? (Interventions)**

**4) What do we do to challenge the students that have mastered or already know the skill? (Enrichment)**

Our WIN time is data-driven and designed to help ALL students whether they Meet or Exceed benchmarks or need additional support learning the skill.

**Goal #1: High Quality Instruction**

Outcome Statement: Supporting a districtwide culture where all instructional staff analyze student data, reflect on their practice, collaborate professionally with their peers, and incorporate evidence-based instructional practices to ensure high levels of learning for all students.

Achieved Through	Strategies	Success indicators
<p><b>Shared Organizational Leadership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development and support for school based instruction leadership teams</li> <li>● Continued utilization and support for school board and district committee structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implementation of PLC Teams</li> <li>● Implementation of District Leadership Teams</li> <li>● Increased Proficiency on Statewide MCA Tests</li> <li>● Student Success Team Meetings (Semi-Monthly)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence- Based Practice Instructional Strategies (EBP's)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identification, training, implementation of EBP's throughout the school district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning Targets Visible</li> <li>● Classroom Walk Through</li> <li>● Performance Appraisal</li> <li>● Increased Proficiency on Statewide MCA Tests</li> </ul>



<p><b>Climate of Collaboration and Focus on Student Learning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fostering a productive climate of collaboration (PLC's) where staff focus on answering the four critical questions             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do we want our students to learn?</li> <li>2. How do we know if they learned it?</li> <li>3. What do we do if they haven't learned it?</li> <li>4. What do we do if they already know it?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create PLC Teams</li> <li>● Schedule meeting times</li> <li>● Develop SMART Goals</li> <li>● PLC Meeting notes</li> <li>● Increased student performance on MCA, STAR and NWEA tests</li> </ul>
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**Goal #2: Aligned and Coherent Systems**

Outcome Statement: Ensuring articulated programs and systems to support a comprehensive, consistent, and responsive learning environment for ALL students.

Achieved Through	Strategies	Success indicators
<p><b>Guaranteed and viable curriculum</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comprehensive Curriculum Adoption and Professional Development Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased graduation rates</li> <li>● Increased proficiency on State Accountability tests (MCA)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Systems Alignment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Title I, ADSIS, SST, SPED Programs aligned with classroom learning targets, standards, evidence-based practice and IEP goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased SPED proficiency on NWEA, STAR, FASTBRIDGE and MCA tests</li> </ul>



<b>Post-Secondary Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expanding partnerships with community, local businesses, and outside resources to engage, expose, and support students with Career and Post-Secondary Options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased Graduation Rates</li> <li>● ACT increased performance</li> <li>● Increase in students enrolled in Post-Secondary Programs</li> </ul>
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### **Goal #3: Social and Emotional Needs**

Outcome Statement: Implementing mental health and behavioral interventions to best meet the social and emotional needs of ALL students.

<b>Achieved Through</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>
<b>Trauma Informed Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development and implementation of site-specific trauma sensitive student behavioral models</li> <li>● Implementation of district-wide student Behavioral Support Programs</li> <li>● Ongoing Professional Development related to Trauma informed practices</li> <li>● Providing a highly skilled Student Success Team that meets semi-monthly</li> <li>● Develop partnerships with outside mental health agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased student attendance</li> <li>● Increased Graduation Rate</li> <li>● Decreased Behavior Referrals</li> <li>● Increased proficiency on MCA, NWEA, and STAR Assessments</li> <li>● Decreased SPED Referrals</li> <li>● Provide in-person or telehealth mental health support.</li> </ul>

### **Goal #4: Safe and Engaging Environment**

Outcome Statement: Ensuring all students are engaged and connected to their school, peers, and community in a safe and secure educational setting.

<b>Achieved Through</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>
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<p><b>Implement and utilize Pre K-12 Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● District wide PBIS Framework</li> <li>● PBIS collaborative team to plan and implement building wide themes and practices</li> <li>● Implementation of Evidence Based SEL curriculum (such as 2<sup>nd</sup> Step or STAR) for E-12 students</li> <li>● Monthly school wide celebrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased positive school climate</li> <li>● Increased Student Attendance</li> <li>● Increased Graduation Rate</li> <li>● Increased family involvement</li> <li>● Decrease in behavior/ office referrals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Extracurricular Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A variety of academic, athletic and social activities will be offered. Such as sports, study groups, German Club, Science Club, National Honor Society, Student Council</li> <li>● Late rides will be provided to students involved in extracurricular activities to ensure all students can participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased student achievement/ grades</li> <li>● Increased positive school climate</li> <li>● Increased parent and family involvement</li> <li>● Increased Graduation Rate</li> <li>● Increased positive school climate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implement Trauma Informed Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development and implementation of site-specific trauma sensitive student behavioral models</li> <li>● Implementation of district-wide student Behavioral Support Programs</li> <li>● Ongoing Professional Development related to Trauma informed practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased student attendance</li> <li>● Increased Graduation Rate</li> <li>● Decreased Behavior Referrals</li> <li>● Increased proficiency on MCA, NWEA, and STAR Assessments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implement evidence based environmental supports and classroom management programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ongoing professional development to support staff in evidence-based practices (EBP's) to support classroom management</li> <li>● Collaboration time for teachers to work in their Professional Learning Communities in order to appropriately implement EBP's.</li> <li>● CPI training for special education staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased student engagement</li> <li>● Increased student attendance</li> <li>● Increased proficiency on MCA, NWEA, and STAR Assessments</li> <li>● Decreased Behavior Referrals</li> <li>● Increased Graduation Rate</li> </ul>



### Student and Family Resources

- The School Food Pantry is available to all students and families on an as needed basis
- Backpack Program: any students in need of school supplies will be provided with a backpack and any needed school supplies
- Support Resources: the school nurse and behavioral health support staff will provide students and families with outside resources to help them if there is an area of need (medical assistance, county assistance, clothing, etc).

- Increased student attendance
- Increased family involvement
- Increased proficiency on MCA, NWEA, and STAR Assessments

## Board Membership

When considering your governance role, embracing the procedural steps that underpin the integrity of the democratic process is paramount. From post-election procedures to the establishment of board offices, each action reflects your commitment to transparency and accountability. By being diligent in these duties, you acknowledge the trust placed in you by constituents. Prioritizing effective governance ensures you serve the community and prioritize the needs of students.



# PostElection Procedures

## Canvass and Declaration of Results

Between the third and tenth days after a district election, the board must canvass the returns and declare the results of the election. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

## Certification of Results

The district clerk shall certify the results of the district election to the county auditor. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3.](#)

## Issuance of Certificate of Election

After canvassing the election and the time for contesting an election has passed (seven days after the canvassing board has declared the result of the election), the board shall issue a certificate of election to the candidate for each office who received the largest number of votes cast for the office. If there is a contest, the certificate of election to that office must not be issued until the outcome of the contest has been determined by the proper court. [Minn. Stat. 205A.10, Subd. 3;](#) [Minn. Stat. 204C.40, Subd. 2.](#)

## Campaign Financial Report Certification of Filing

The Certification of Filing is due no later than seven days after the general election. [Minn. Stat. 211A.05.](#)

## Taking Office

Board members take office the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#)

## Official Oath of Office

The official oath of office is administered once elections have been canvassed, the candidates have turned in their certificate of campaign filing report, and the seven-day contest period has ended. When the contest period ends, the school election officer should give each winning candidate the certificate of election. Each winning candidate then has thirty days to sign the official oath and acceptance of office form in front of a notary. By signing this document, the individual officially becomes a board member on the first Monday in January. [Minn. Stat. 358.05.](#)

## Ceremonial Oath of Office

The ceremonial oath of office is usually administered at the organizational meeting on the first Monday in January (or as soon thereafter as practicable). While the official oath of office is required, the ceremonial oath of office is optional.

## Organizational Meeting

On the first Monday in January (or as soon as practicable thereafter) each year, newly elected board members' terms of office begin, and boards must meet to organize for the year. [Minn. Stat. 123B.14, Subd. 1.](#) During this meeting, ceremonial oaths of office may be administered, officers are elected, committee assignments are established, and meeting schedules are adopted. This process lays the groundwork for the board's operations, emphasizing collaboration and effective governance to serve the district and its stakeholders.

*For more regarding organizational meetings see, [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook.](#)*



## District Intake Paperwork

The Business Office will contact new board members after the election and will request or provide:

- Providing a copy of the board handbook
- Providing a copy of school and board calendars
- Providing access to district electronic resources
- Completing onboarding paperwork
- Collecting contact information including home address and cell phone number
- Completing payroll paperwork
- Completing a background check
- Setting up a district email
- Providing MSBA login information
- Providing MSBA's contact information (Phone: 507-934-2450; Online Inquiry Form)

# Board Organization

## Eligibility Requirements

To run for a board seat, you must be (1) at least 21 years old, (2) an eligible voter, (3) a district resident for at least 30 days prior to election/appointment, and (4) not convicted of a felony. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09](#); [Minn. Stat. 204B.06, Subd. 1.](#)

## Term of Office

Board members are elected to four-year terms and take office on the first Monday in January. The term of a member who has been appointed to fill a vacancy will be for the remainder of the predecessor's term until the date of the district's next general election. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a board member can serve. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)

## Filling Vacancies

A vacancy on the board can occur for a number of reasons including when a member dies, resigns, or ceases to be a resident of the district. All vacancies will be filled according to [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)

*For more information, regarding filling vacancies see: [Steps to Fill a School Board Vacancy with Sample Application and Interview Questions.](#)*

## Board Composition

School boards in Minnesota are made up of either six or seven members. Some exceptions have been created by special legislation, often for consolidated districts. The superintendent is an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the board. [Minn. Stat. 123B.09.](#)



## Board Offices

Officers of the board include chair, vice-chair (optional), clerk, and treasurer. These positions are determined annually at the organizational meeting. All board members, regardless of office, maintain equal rights and equal voices. See the Election of Board Officers section on page 27 for information regarding nominating and voting procedures.

### Role of the Chair

- The chair, when present, shall preside at all meetings of the board, countersign all orders upon the treasurer for claims allowed by the board, represent the district in all actions, and perform all duties a chair usually performs.
- 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 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 (optional)

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

### Role of the Clerk

- The clerk shall keep a record of all meetings in the books provided.
- Within three days after an election, the clerk shall notify all persons elected of their election.
- On or before September 15 of each year, the clerk shall:
  - file with the board a report of the revenues, expenditures, and balances in each fund for the preceding fiscal year.
  - make and transmit to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (Commissioner) certified reports, showing:
    - revenues and expenditures in detail, and such other financial information required by law, rule, or as may be called for by the Commissioner;
    - length of school term and enrollment and attendance by grades; and
    - other items of information as called for by the Commissioner.
- The clerk shall enter into the clerk's record book copies of all reports, the teachers' term reports, the proceedings of any meeting, and keep an itemized account of all expenses of the district.
- 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 levy voted by the district or the board for school purposes.
- The clerk shall draw and sign all orders upon the treasurer for the payment of money for bills allowed by the board for salaries of officers and for teachers' wages and all claims, to be countersigned by the chair.



- 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 the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's and the vice-chair's temporary absences.
- By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasure in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

### **Role of the Treasurer**

- The treasurer shall deposit the funds of the district in the official depository.
- The treasurer shall make all reports which may be called for by the board and perform all duties a treasurer usually performs.
- 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](#).
- By resolution, the board may combine the duties of clerk and treasure in a single person in the Office of Business Affairs. Typically, that single person almost always delegates at least some duties to others.

### **Board Compensation**

The clerk, treasurer, and superintendent of any district shall receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. Unless otherwise provided by law, the other members of the board shall also receive such compensation as may be fixed by the board. All members of the board may receive reimbursement for transportation at the rate provided for in [Minn. Stat. 471.665](#). No board member or district employee shall receive any compensation or benefits based on incentives or other money provided to the district by or from a source of group insurance coverage referenced in [Minn. Stat. 471.6161, Subd. 1](#), except for a refund provided under [Minn. Stat. 123B.75, Subd. 10](#), or a wellness plan that is mutually agreed upon by the district and the exclusive representatives of employees.

Items related to compensation:

- The board will fix compensation at the organizational meeting in January of each year.
- Compensation includes pay for meetings and extra position duties (i.e. Chair, Clerk, Treasurer)
- Board members receive extra compensation for holding an office
- Board members are paid on a semi-monthly payroll schedule

### **Expense Reimbursement**

Items related to expense reimbursement for board members:

- Reimbursement requests will be made via payroll vouchers through the Business Office
- Required documentation to support reimbursement requests includes itemized receipts and invoices



- District policies governing the types of expenses that can be reimbursed, such as travel expenses, conference fees, or professional development
- Reimbursements are processed through payroll
- The typical turnaround time for reimbursement requests is less than one month

# Learning the Job

## Learning from Board Colleagues

One of the most valuable resources at your disposal, outside of this handbook, is the wealth of experience and knowledge possessed by your fellow board members and district staff. Engaging with them can significantly enhance your understanding of board operations, policies, and educational best practices. Your colleagues on the board bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives that can provide invaluable insights. Here are a few ways to leverage their experience:

**Workshops and Retreats** – Participate actively in board workshops and retreats. These sessions are designed not only to address key issues but also to foster team building and collective learning.

**Committee Participation** – Join board committees that align with your interests and expertise. Working closely with other members on specific topics will deepen your understanding and contribute to your professional growth.

**Informal Meetings** – Work with the superintendent to schedule informal meetings with key staff members to discuss specific areas of interest. These one-on-one interactions can offer a more personalized learning experience and help you build strong working relationships.

## Mentorship

The district recognizes the importance of supporting new board members as they transition into their roles. To facilitate this, the district has implemented a mentorship program designed to provide guidance, support, and valuable insights. Each new board member will be paired with an experienced mentor who will help them navigate their responsibilities and become effective contributors to the board. This mentor will be a seasoned board member with a deep understanding of the district's operations, policies, and culture. The assignment will be made by the board chair in consultation with the superintendent to ensure a good match based on experience and areas of expertise.

To support you in this transition, you and your mentor will use the [MSBA New Board Member Orientation Year At-a-Glance](#) to guide you through your first year. This program aims to provide you with the knowledge, tools, and support necessary to become an effective and confident board member. Mentor and mentee should schedule a time before each school board meeting to check-in regarding the upcoming agenda, policies, and procedures.

Our orientation program is structured to ensure you receive a balanced combination of printed materials, hands-on training, and personal mentorship. Throughout the year, you will engage in various



learning sessions, attend MSBA training events, and participate in board meetings and district activities. These experiences are designed to deepen your understanding of board operations, district policies, and educational goals. By the end of your first year, you will have a solid foundation to effectively contribute to the board's mission of providing quality education for all students. Mentors are encouraged to attend the workshops and trainings with the mentees to make the information more relevant and specific to the district.

## Ongoing Professional Development

Continuous learning is crucial for effective governance. Board members are encouraged to participate in school board and related workshops and activities sponsored by local, state, and national school boards associations, as well as in the activities of other educational groups. Each board member shall receive training in school finance and management developed in consultation with the Minnesota School Boards Association. [Minn. Stat 123B.09, Subd. 2](#). Below is a full list of MSBA’s Learning to Lead Phase Workshops.

- [Learning to Lead – School Board Basics: Phase I Workshop](#)
- [Leadership Foundations – School Finance and Management: Phase II Workshop](#)
- [Building a High-Performance School Board Team: Phase III Workshop](#)
- [Representing Your Community Through Policy and Engagement: Phase IV Workshop](#)

**Other MSBA Professional Development Opportunities** – To learn more about these opportunities, see the [Workshops and Events](#) section of the MSBA website.

In District Workshops	Events
Mutual Expectations Workshop	Leadership Conference
School Board Self-Evaluation Workshop	Summer Seminar
Superintendent Search Workshop	Delegate Assembly
Superintendent Evaluation Workshop	Day at the Capitol
Regional Workshops	Advocacy Tour
Officers’ Workshop	Coffee and Conversation Series
Negotiations Seminars	Board Chair Chat
	Monthly Webinars

Board members should contact the District Business Office (218-897-5275 ext. 152) to register for MSBA workshops and events.

**MSBA Series of Publications** – New board members automatically receive the following publications to stay current on education related news.

- **eClippings** – Receive daily links to K-12 news from around the state.
- **Leader Newsletter** – Monthly updates regarding MSBA news and events, topical news items, administrative topics, and much more.
- **Journal Magazine** – Bimonthly magazine includes school features, exploration of leadership issues, in-depth stories on education trends, and a directory of vendors.

# Individual Board Membership



## Duties as an Individual Board Member

The position of board member carries with it a profound responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards. A commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability will not only enhance the effectiveness of educational policies but also strengthen the community's confidence in the board's decision-making. Remember that your actions and decisions will help shape the future of our students, schools, and community. Let the Code of Ethics in District Policy 203 guide you in navigating the complexities of governance with unwavering moral clarity and purposeful dedication.

## Board Time Commitment

The time required to complete your board responsibilities will most vary by time of year. It will depend on how many meetings are scheduled, which committees you serve on, what issues are going on in the district at the time, and how much time you need to prepare for upcoming meetings. For example, if the district is going through a building project, hiring a superintendent, or developing the district budget, the time needed for board meetings may be more extensive. On average, however, you can anticipate spending about nine to twelve hours a month on board service.

## Conflict of Interest

As a board member, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity by actively avoiding any conflicts of interest in your official capacity. This means refraining from any personal financial involvement in district transactions such as sales, leases, or contracts you oversee or participate in. If a potential conflict arises, you must fully disclose your interests and abstain from decision-making processes related to those interests. You will operate under stringent guidelines to ensure that any exceptions to this rule are handled transparently, with unanimous consent and clear documentation. This approach maintains the community's trust and ensures all decisions are made solely in the best interest of the district and its stakeholders.

# Working as a Board Team

At the heart of educational excellence lies the steadfast commitment of the board, entrusted with duties that shape the very fabric of our district's future. Defined by statute, yet driven by a passion for progress, the board's responsibilities encompass a profound dedication to nurturing thriving learning environments and supporting the endeavors of our administration. Crucial to fulfilling these responsibilities is the collaborative spirit of board teamwork, where collective wisdom and shared vision pave the path toward transformative change. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and collaboration, the board can harness its collective strength to address challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and ultimately, advance the educational journey of every student in our district.

## Duties of the Board

- The board has powers and duties specified by statute. The board's authority includes implied powers in addition to specific powers granted by the legislature.
- The board exercises administrative functions. It also has certain powers of a legislative character and other powers of a quasi-judicial character.



- The board shall superintend and manage the schools of the district; adopt rules for their organization, government, and instruction; prescribe textbooks and courses of study; and make and authorize contracts.
- The board shall have the general charge of the business of the district, its facilities and property, and of the interest of the schools.
- The 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 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 district property and equipment as deemed necessary by the board for school purposes;
  - provide for payment of claims against the district, and prosecute and defend actions by or against the 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 district, its officers, and employees.
- The 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 board determines;
  - enter into agreements with one or more other independent 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 cocurricular and extracurricular activities;
  - receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose; and
  - perform other acts as the board shall deem to be reasonably necessary or required for the governance of the schools.

## Board Governance Model

The [MSBA Board Governance Model](#) delineates the distinct roles and responsibilities of the board and the superintendent, ensuring both governance and management functions are clearly articulated and



understood. It outlines the board's role in setting expectations and parameters through policy adoption, budgeting, contracting, and focusing on student achievement for all. It also highlights the superintendent's responsibilities in providing leadership and supervision, thus ensuring policies and strategies set by the board are effectively implemented.

## Standards for Board Leadership

The board is responsible to the community to govern efficiently and lead effectively to provide students an equitable education that results in high achievement. To assist in this journey, see the [Standards for School Board Leadership](#) developed by the MSBA. This document outlines best practices for board members and provides the standards we should strive to meet as part of a high-performing board team.

## Attributes of High-Performing Board Teams

1. Everyone clearly understands the mission, goals, and role of the board; everyone knows who is, and who should be, doing what.
2. Board members are skilled in group leadership and/or membership functions.
3. Board members have a high degree of trust in one another.
4. Interaction occurs in a supportive atmosphere. Suggestions, comments, ideas, information, and criticism are all offered in a manner that is helpful. Respect is shown for varying team viewpoints.
5. Expectations for the group and its members are high. Goals are stretched.
6. The board is not dominated by an individual or sub-group; everyone participates and has the opportunity to influence the discussion.
7. The board has established procedures for operation including decision-making, conflict resolution, and meeting management.
8. The board is future focused. Decisions are made with long-term consequences and benefits in mind.
9. The board evaluates its performance periodically.

## School Board Self-Evaluation

School Board self-evaluations can be an invaluable tool for assessing and enhancing the effectiveness of our governing body. This process allows us to reflect on our collective performance, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Engaging in a self-evaluation enables us to gain insights into individual contributions and understand the dynamics and overall functioning of the board. It also fosters open communication, promotes accountability, and strengthens teamwork among board members. By participating in the process, we can gain insights that will empower us to make informed decisions, enhance our effectiveness in serving the community, and contribute to the continuous improvement of the board's performance and impact.

- Learn about [MSBA's School Board Self-Evaluation in-district workshop](#).

# Role of the Superintendent

The board employs a superintendent to lead and manage the district. The superintendent is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board and the chief executive officer of the school system. The superintendent's duties and responsibilities are derived largely from three sources: statute, the



employment contract, and the job description. Superintendents are responsible for the management of the schools, the administration of all board policies, and are directly accountable to the board. The superintendent must annually evaluate each principal assigned responsibility for supervising a school building in the district. Also, the superintendent may delegate responsibilities to other district personnel but shall continue to be accountable for actions taken under such delegation. [Minn. Stat. 123B.143.](#)

### **Hiring a Superintendent**

One of the most critical responsibilities of the board is the hiring of a superintendent. The selection of the superintendent is a decision that shapes the future of the district, influencing the quality of education, the effectiveness of school management, and the overall success of students. The importance of this decision cannot be overstated. The superintendent's vision and leadership directly impact educational outcomes and the district's ability to achieve its strategic goals. Therefore, it is imperative that the board conducts a thorough and meticulous search process, considering candidates' experience, leadership style, and alignment with the district's values and objectives. This decision requires careful deliberation and a commitment to finding a leader who will foster a positive educational environment, promote innovation, and address the diverse needs of the school community. In essence, the hiring of a superintendent is not just a routine administrative task but a defining moment that sets the course for the district's future.

### **Contract of the Superintendent**

## **SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT**

### **ARTICLE I PURPOSE**

**This Contract is entered into between Independent School District No 363.(the South Koochiching-Rainy River School District) Northome, Minnesota, hereinafter referred to as the School District, and Jeremy Tammi, hereinafter referred to as the Superintendent, a legally qualified and licensed superintendent who agrees to perform the duties of the Superintendent of the School District.**

### **ARTICLE II APPLICABLE STATUTE**

**This Contract is entered into between the School District and the Superintendent in conformance with M.S.123B.143.**

### **ARTICLE III LICENSE**

**The Superintendent shall furnish the School Board, throughout the life of this Contract, a valid and appropriate license to act as superintendent in the State of Minnesota as provided by applicable laws, rules, and regulations.**



**ARTICLE IV  
DURATION, EXPIRATION, TERMINATION  
DURING THE TERM, MUTUAL CONSENT, AND CONTINGENCY**

**Section 1. Duration:** This Contract is for a term of 3 years commencing on July 1, 2024 and ending on June 30, 2027. It shall remain in full force and effect unless modified by mutual consent of the School Board and the Superintendent or unless terminated as provided in this Contract.

**Section 2. Expiration:** This Contract shall expire at the end of the term specified in Section 1. above. At the conclusion of its term, neither party shall have any further claim against the other, and the School District's employment of the Superintendent shall cease, unless a subsequent Contract is entered into in accordance with M.S. 123B.143, Subd. 1. Three (3) to six (6) months prior to the expiration of this Contract, at the Superintendent's written request, the School board shall conduct a performance evaluation of the Superintendent pursuant to M.S. 13D.05, Subd. 3.

**Section 3. Termination During the Term:** The Superintendent's employment may be terminated during the term of this Contract only for cause as defined in M.S. 122A.40, Subd. 9. And Subd. 13., but, except for purposes of describing grounds for discharge, the provisions of M.S. 122A.40 shall not be applicable. If the School Board proposes to terminate the Superintendent during the term of this Contract for cause as described in M.S. 122A.40, Subd. 9. or Subd. 13., it shall notify the Superintendent in writing of the proposed grounds for termination. The Superintendent shall be entitled to a hearing before an arbitrator provided the Superintendent makes such a request in writing to the School Board Chair within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the written notice of the proposed termination. In such event, the parties shall jointly petition the Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS) for a list of five (5) arbitrators. The arbitrator shall be selected by the parties through the striking process as provided by BMS rules. The arbitrator shall conduct a hearing under arbitration procedure rules and issue a written decision. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties, subject to judicial review of arbitration decisions as provided by law. The Superintendent may be suspended with pay pending final determination by the arbitrator. If the Superintendent fails to request a hearing as provided in this section within the fifteen (15)-day calendar period, he/she shall be deemed to have acquiesced to the School Board's proposed action, and the proposed action shall become final on such date as determined by the School Board, and the Superintendent shall have no further claim or recourse.

**Section 4. Mutual Consent:** This Contract may be terminated at any time by mutual consent of the School Board and the Superintendent.



## ARTICLE V DUTIES

The Superintendent shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the School Board. The Superintendent shall be the chief executive officer of the School District; shall direct and assign teachers and other School District employees under the Superintendent's supervision; shall organize, reorganize, and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff, including instruction and business affairs, as best serves the School District subject to the approval of the School Board; shall select all personnel subject to the approval of the School Board; shall, from time to time, suggest policies, regulations, rules, and procedures deemed necessary for the School District; and, in general, perform all duties incidental to the office of the Superintendent and such other duties as may be prescribed by the School Board from time to time. The Superintendent shall abide by the policies, regulations, rules, and procedures established by the School Board and the State of Minnesota. The Superintendent shall have the right to attend all School Board meetings and all School Board and citizen committee meetings, serve as an ex-officio member of the School Board and all School Board committees, and provide administrative recommendations on each item of business considered by each of these groups.

## ARTICLE VI DUTY YEAR AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

**Section 1. Basic Work Year:** The Superintendent's duty year shall be for the entire twelve (12)-month Contract year, and the Superintendent shall perform duties on those legal holidays on which the School Board is authorized to conduct school if the School Board so determines. The Superintendent shall be on duty during any emergency, natural or unnatural, unless otherwise excused in accordance with School Board administrative policy.

**Section 2. Vacation:** The Superintendent shall be provided 25 working days of annual paid vacation per each Contract year. Unused vacation must be taken within six (6) months after the end of the Contract year in which it is earned.

**Section 3. Holidays:** The Superintendent shall be entitled to 12 paid holidays as designated by the School Board each Contract year. Those holidays shall be New Year's Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.



**Section 4. Sick Leave:** The Superintendent shall earn sick leave at the rate of fifteen (15) days for each working year, which may be accumulated to a maximum of ninety (90) days. Sick leave may be used according to MN Statute 181.9413.

**Section 5. Personal Leave:** The Superintendent shall be provided six (6) days Personal Leave, per year, non-cumulative. As of June 30 of each year, the Superintendent shall be reimbursed for each of those days not used.

**Section 6. Workers' Compensation:** Pursuant to M.S. Chapter 176, the Superintendent injured on the job in the service of the School District and collecting workers' compensation insurance may draw sick leave and receive full salary from the School District, the salary to be reduced by an amount equal to the insurance payments, and only that fraction of the days not covered by insurance will be deducted from accrued sick leave.

**Section 7. Bereavement Leave:** The Superintendent shall be granted bereavement leave for a death within the Superintendent's immediate family. The time utilized shall be in an amount to be determined after conferring with the School Board Chair. Days utilized will not be deducted from the Superintendent's sick leave. "Immediate family" is defined as the Superintendent's spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, or other relative who was living in the same household as the Superintendent.

**Section 8. Emergency Leave:** The Superintendent may be granted paid emergency leave at the discretion of the School Board.

**Section 9. Jury Service:** The Superintendent who serves on jury duty shall be granted the day or days necessary as stipulated by the court to discharge this responsibility without any salary deduction or loss of basic leave allowance. The compensation received for jury duty service shall be remitted to the School District.

**Section 10. Military Leave:** Military leave shall be granted pursuant to applicable law.

**Section 11. Medical Leave:** Pursuant to M.S. 122A.40, Subd. 12., the Superintendent shall have a right to a leave of absence for health reasons.

## ARTICLE VII INSURANCE



**Section 1. Health and Hospitalization and Insurance:** The School District shall provide the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependents with health, hospitalization and dental coverage under the School District's group health and hospitalization plan at the expense of the School District.

**Section 2. Life Insurance:** The School District shall provide at its own expense, term life insurance for the Superintendent under the School District's group term life insurance plan in the amount of \$150,000 payable to the Superintendent's named beneficiary(ies).

**Section 3. Long-Term Disability Insurance:** The School District shall provide, at its own expense, long-term disability insurance for the Superintendent under the School District's group long-term disability insurance plan.

**Section 4. Eligibility:** The eligibility of the Superintendent and the Superintendent's dependent(s) and beneficiary(ies) for insurance benefits shall be governed by the terms of the insurance policies purchased by the School District pursuant to this article.

**Section 5. Claims Against the School District:** The School District's only obligation is to purchase the insurance policies described in this article, and no claim shall be made against the School District as a result of denial of insurance benefits by an insurer if the School District has purchased the policies and paid the premiums described in this article.

## ARTICLE VIII OTHER BENEFITS

**Section 1. Tax-Sheltered Annuities:** The Superintendent is eligible to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity plan through payroll deduction established pursuant to Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, M.S. 123B.02, Subd. 15., School District policy, and as otherwise provided by law. The School District will provide a contribution match of up to \$5,000 for each contracted year into a District approved 403(b) vendor.

**Section 2. Vehicle:** The School District shall compensate the Superintendent for business use of his private vehicle at the rate that is set annually by the IRS.

**Section 3. Conferences and Meetings:** The School District shall pay all legally valid expenses and fees for the Superintendent's attendance at professional conferences and meetings with other educational agencies when such attendance is required, directed, or permitted by the School Board. The Superintendent shall periodically report to the School Board relative to all meetings and conferences attended. The Superintendent shall file itemized expense statements to be processed and approved as provided by School Board policy and law.



## ARTICLE IX SALARY

**Section 1. Salary:** The Superintendent shall be paid an annual salary of \$122,000.00 for the 2024-2025 Contract year and \$124,000 for the 2025-2026 Contract year and \$126,000.00 for the 2026-2027 Contract year. During the term of this Contract, the annual salary may be modified but shall not be reduced. The annual salary shall be paid in 24 equal installments during the Contract year.

**Section 2. Other Compensation:** As additional compensation, the Superintendent shall have deposited monthly into his Tax Sheltered Annuity the amount described in Article VIII, section 1.

## ARTICLE X OTHER PROVISIONS

**Section 1. Outside Activities:** While the Superintendent shall devote full time and due diligence to the affairs and the activities of the School District, he may also serve as a consultant to other school districts or educational agencies, lecture, engage in writing and speaking activities, and engage in other activities if, as solely determined by the School Board, such activities do not impede the Superintendent's ability to perform the duties of the superintendency. However, the Superintendent may not engage in other employment, consultant service, or other activity for which a salary, fee, or honorarium is paid without the prior approval of the School Board.

**Section 2. Indemnification and Provision of Counsel:** In the event that an action is brought or a claim is made against the Superintendent arising out of or in connection with his employment and the Superintendent is acting within the scope of employment or official duties, the School District shall defend and indemnify the Superintendent to the extent provided by law. Indemnification, as provided in this section, shall not apply in the case of malfeasance in office or willful or wanton neglect of duty, and the obligation of the School District in this regard shall be subject to the limitations as provided in M.S. Chapter 466.

**Section 3. Dues:** The Superintendent is encouraged to belong to and participate in appropriate professional, educational, economic development, community, and civic organizations when such membership will serve the best interests of the School District. Accordingly, the School District will pay the membership dues for such organizations as are required, directed, or permitted by the School Board. The Superintendent shall present appropriate statements for approval as provided by law.



## ARTICLE XI SEVERABILITY

**The provisions of this Contract shall be severable, and if any such provision or the application of any such provision under any circumstances is held invalid, it shall not affect any other provisions of this Contract or the application of any provision thereof.**

### **Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship**

Understanding and fostering a productive relationship between the board and the superintendent is critical for the success of our educational institution. The [17 Tenets of an Effective Board-Superintendent Relationship](#) provides a comprehensive guide outlining key principles and best practices for maintaining a collaborative and effective partnership. This document highlights essential responsibilities and expectations for both the board members and the superintendent, promoting a clear understanding of each party's role in governance and administration. By adhering to these tenets, our board can ensure decisions are made efficiently, communication remains open and transparent, and the strategic goals of our district are met.

### **Evaluating the Superintendent**

Evaluation of a superintendent's performance is one of the board's most important responsibilities. The evaluation of the superintendent is an inherent managerial right of the board. Each board member should review the superintendent's employment contract to determine the evaluation-related provisions, if any, that may be included. Done correctly, an evaluation is a useful governance tool that helps drive school improvement. In fact, a high-quality evaluation process enhances positive school-superintendent relationships, improves communication, clarifies leadership roles, creates common understandings, and provides a mechanism for accountability and communication. **The Superintendent shall be evaluated annually (usually in April-June). This evaluation process is led by the school board chair.**

# Board Communication Guide

### **Communication Between Board Members**

Adhering to guidelines for effective and lawful communication with your fellow board members is crucial. While open and collaborative communication is vital for the board's success, remember that discussions outside of official board meetings must be handled carefully to avoid violating the Minnesota Open Meeting Law (OML). This law requires any gathering of a quorum of board members, where official business is discussed, must be conducted in public and notice must be provided to ensure transparency. (See exceptions in the Closed Meeting Chart on pages 25.) Therefore, while informal discussions can be valuable for building relationships and exchanging ideas, avoid veering into areas of official board business unless they are part of a scheduled public meeting.



**Building Collaborative Relationships** – School governance is founded on the belief that a group of very different people representing various constituencies in their district can make better decisions than any one person alone. That diversity is the board’s strength. It’s best to be open-minded about the opinions of your fellow board members. Your goal should not be to change them to your point of view, but rather to determine the best solution to an issue by working together to try and accommodate all views. You want the students to be the “winners” — not one board member or another.

**Addressing Team Dysfunction** – Open communication is critical to the proper functioning of the board. If you feel the board is not functioning well, it may be appropriate to suggest a workshop where the board reviews its ground rules, board policies on board operations, and board/administrative relations that establish how the leadership team will function. If these ground rules and policies are not effective, then consider modifications to them. The board may want to hire a facilitator to assist with discussions to improve the board’s working relations. MSBA can help with a custom board in-service tailored to the board’s specific situation.

**Guidelines for interacting outside a board meeting**

- **Do Not Discuss Board Business.** Focus on topics such as general education trends, personal updates, or board training and development without steering into specifics of pending decisions or board business.
- **Be Cautious with Written Communication.** Exercise caution with emails, texts, and social media interactions among board members. Avoid group messages or email chains discussing board business that could be construed as a meeting.
- **Be Transparent with Your Intentions.** Always make the purpose of any gathering clear, ensuring it is social or educational in nature and not meant for making decisions or deliberations that should be reserved for official meetings.
- **Consider Public Perception.** When planning to meet outside of formal board meetings, consider how such gatherings might be perceived by the public. It’s crucial to remember any appearance of conducting board business or decision-making outside of the designated public meetings could undermine community trust and confidence.

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about board governance and/or operation.	<i>A conversation with the Board Chair would be a great starting point.</i>
I have a concern or questions regarding board governance.	<i>A conversation with the Superintendent and Board Chair would be appropriate.</i>
I have a concern or questions regarding district operations.	<i>A conversation with the Superintendent would be appropriate.</i>

**Communication with the Superintendent**

You need to establish a productive working relationship with the superintendent. To do this, you need to communicate with that individual. If you have questions, it is better to call the superintendent and discuss them before the board meeting rather than surprise the superintendent at a public meeting. If the questions are concerns or relate to negative feelings from the community, superintendents appreciate knowing about them in advance of the board meeting so they can come prepared to address them. It is appropriate to call the superintendent, set up a meeting to discuss questions, or send an



email for simple questions or requests. When contacting the superintendent, it is important for you to keep the scope of such contacts within reason, to permit adequate time to receive a response, and to generally remain cognizant of the superintendent’s other responsibilities and demands on their time.

**Disagreements with the Superintendent** – Always treat your fellow board members, the superintendent, and other administrators with respect. However, don’t be afraid to disagree on an issue. In fact, a discussion about an issue that reflects two or more views usually results in a better decision than if everyone agrees with the first solution offered. Be certain to debate the issue, not the person, and maintain decorum in debate.

Situation	District Protocol
I have general questions about the district.	<i>Have a conversation with the Superintendent.</i>
What if I disagree with a report or presentation to the board from the superintendent or other staff member?	<i>The meeting format should present itself for questions, comments and/or discussion. If the conversation would violate data privacy and/or employee rights, it may be best to either close the meeting and/or have direct conversation with the superintendent and board chair at a later date/time.</i>

### Communication with District Administrators and Staff

You will likely come in contact with district employees, including administrators, teachers, and other staff members. While there’s nothing wrong with talking to district staff, keep in mind that complaints should follow the chain of communication. Additionally, understand individual board members do not have authority to direct the work of district staff members. Directing requests through the superintendent can assist with appropriate prioritization, identifying information that may be readily available, and determining when it may be appropriate to have the full board weigh in regarding certain requests and project ideas.

**Discussing Your Child with Staff** – This can be a tricky area. No matter what you say about “speaking as a parent, not a board member,” it may be difficult for some teachers to separate your role on the board from your role as a parent. Some board members have indicated their significant others frequently take the lead in speaking to their children’s teachers. Make sure you’re not using your position as a board member to secure special treatment for your child. If there are issues you wish to discuss with a teacher, you should follow the normal procedures for contacting your child’s teacher to discuss them. Keep in mind that you do not relinquish your parental rights now that you’re a board member.

### Communication with Constituents Including Staff, Students, Parents, and Community

Identify the person contacting you and ensure you have their contact information. Seek to understand the situation or interest but, generally, do not agree or commit to resolve it personally as that is not the role of individual board members. Here are some general expectations:

- Do not agree to confidentiality or commit to limit your options of notification.
- Do not get involved in staff employment or contractual issues.



- Do not attempt to work with a parent who is working on behalf of an organized group rather than on behalf of their own student.
- When applicable, redirect the person to the appropriate staff person or administrator (Ms. Lehn or Mr. Tammi) to address the concern.
- Be alert to patterns of like concerns and notify the superintendent’s office of the possibility.
- If the concern raises governance or public relations questions, contact the board chair in addition to the superintendent.
- Avoid forming and communicating opinions about a board decision before the board has discussed it in a board meeting.

Situation	District Protocol
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent with concerns regarding the district.	<i>Please let them know to contact either the building principal or superintendent.</i>
If I get a phone call, email, or stopped in public from a constituent regarding the board’s decisions.	<i>Use active listening skills and validate the person’s concerns. Please let them know the Board acts as a majority and even if we agree or disagree with the majority we need to respect the decision.</i>
If I get an email that is addressed to the entire board with concerns from a constituent.	<i>The board chair will follow up with the superintendent and create an action plan on how to respond. There should only be one response coming from the school board.</i>
There is a situation that requires the district’s legal counsel to be contacted.	<i>Work directly with the superintendent for guidance.</i>

### Engaging with the Community

Be proactive. The board can engage key stakeholders by inviting and appointing them to participate in standing and ad hoc committees, advisory panels, focus groups, forums, and surveys to describe a vision for the district, set its goals, plan strategically, align resources with goals, and other actions offering them an opportunity to learn about public education and to influence governance decisions. Encourage all members of the community to visit their schools. Invite them to extracurricular activities, schedule a grandparents’ day, and offer tours. In public education, familiarity often breeds support.

Use a variety of means to engage community members, inform them about the district, and learn about their interests, priorities, and concerns. Print and electronic media, social media (be mindful of emerging trends for younger parents), the district’s website, and face-to-face conversations all play important roles in a year-round district campaign to inform and to be informed.

While accentuating the positive — student successes and district progress — don’t neglect the negative. Be the first to let the community know about clouds looming on the horizon, and what the board is doing to dispel them. The board should be ambassadors for the district by scheduling dialogues with a cross section of the community — preferably in their neighborhoods as well as in online forums. And be prepared to address negative comments and feedback in a positive, proactive manner.



In addition, consider the varying expectations of the district’s constituents. The parents of seniors may have far different expectations than the parents of kindergartners, and elderly community members with no students in the district may want completely different types of communication.

### Communication with the Media

It's important to handle media interactions with care to maintain the veracity and unified voice of the board. Maintaining a unified voice is crucial as it ensures all board communications are consistent, clear, and reflect the collective decisions and strategic direction of the board. This unified approach helps to build trust and credibility with the community, stakeholders, and the media.

Situation	District Protocol
If I am approached by the media regarding a concern or board decision.	<i>A board member is allowed to voice their opinion with the media.</i>

### Communication on Social Media

Social media plays a significant role in board members’ responsibilities. To use social media effectively while avoiding potential pitfalls, remember your posts should reflect well on your role and set a good example for students and the community. Be careful not to share personal, confidential, or legally protected information about students, employees, or board members. Opt for face-to-face or telephone conversations for private matters instead of using social media. Control your emotions and avoid posting in anger or frustration, as negative statements can have lasting consequences and may lead to legal issues. Always use polite language and refrain from abusive, profane, or offensive comments. Additionally, avoid posting on behalf of the district or sharing commercial messages linked to the district. Use social media primarily for listening, making announcements, and gathering feedback rather than conducting board business. Finally, ensure you comply with all relevant laws and district policies, including those related to acceptable use, harassment, discrimination, and privacy. Your online actions should always reflect the values and responsibilities of your position within the district.

Situation	District Protocol
I know about an upcoming district event that should be featured on social media.	<i>Work directly with the building principal or superintendent</i>
I saw a post containing false or misleading information regarding the board or district.	<i>Work directly with the Board Chair and superintendent to come up with an action plan on how best to respond.</i>

### Using a District Email

You should use a district email account for your board communications. While this creates another account to monitor, the extra effort is well worth it. As an elected official, your communications related to your office are presumed to be public data unless a provision of law makes part or all of the email private. Your emails may contain private personnel data ([Minn. Stat. 13.43](#)), private educational data ([Minn. Stat. 13.32](#)), correspondence with a private individual ([Minn. Stat. 13.601](#)), or protected medical information.



Members of the public may request access to public government data for any reason. Government entities must respond to these requests, and any work required to separate private data from public data, known as redaction, cannot be charged to the requester. The government entity must keep public data readily accessible, and redacting private data is its responsibility. Often, decisions about redaction need to be made by legal counsel, which adds to the expense.

If you use a personal or work email account, access to the public data may require you to turn over the personal or work device on which the emails are stored. If you use a district email address, the district’s computer system can be searched to respond to public data requests. As a result, you do not have to worry about your personal or work devices being unavailable or about your personal or work information being shared with others.

Using a separate email account also separates your board work from personal or business correspondence. This reduces the number of emails that need to be searched in preparation for responding to a public data request, saving the district time and money.

Another reason this separation is helpful is in how you think about your emails related to board work. Remembering the presumed public status of what you write in emails to other board members, the superintendent, and other district personnel about board work can save you from explanations and embarrassment. Public data may end up on the local news or social media, so it is wise to keep this in mind as you compose emails related to board work.

A final consideration is the potential to violate the OML. If a two-way communication about board business occurs among a quorum of the board (or a quorum of a board committee), it results in an OML violation, and the emails create a record of the violation.

**Communicating with Board Members Via Email** – To ensure OML compliance, you are strongly discouraged from using email to communicate with other board members about issues within the board’s realm of authority, except for procedural elements like establishing meeting dates and locations. Generally, you should use email only for one-way communications to and from the board chair or superintendent to distribute information.

Situation	District Protocol
I have questions regarding an email I received from the board chair or superintendent.	<i>Connect with the person that sent the email and share your question. If the board member does not feel comfortable doing so, they should contact either the Board Chair or Supt and share their thoughts.</i>
Another board member emailed me regarding board business.	<i>School Board members can email each other, but they need to be careful not to violate open meeting laws. The majority of official business should be discussed at the school board meeting.</i>
I have important information that everyone on the board needs to know before the next board meeting.	<i>This information can be shared with the Superintendent and the Supt can decide on an appropriate method so this information can be shared with the Board.</i>



# References for Further Information

- [MSBA's Board Development and Recognition Program](#)
- [MSBA Legal Requirements for School Board Members](#)
- [MSBA Common Acronyms Used in Education](#)
- [MSBA Glossary of Educational Terms](#)
- [MSBA School Finance Guide](#)
- [MSBA Election Manual](#)
- [MDE – School Finance Reports](#)
- [MN House Research – Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators](#)



# Board Meetings and Governance

Board meetings are pivotal gatherings that dictate the course of educational policies and decisions within a district. Governed by a structured framework, these meetings encompass various types, from regular sessions to emergency convenings, each serving distinct purposes and following legal mandates outlined in Minnesota statutes. Moreover, the operational norms, roles of board officers, and adherence to parliamentary procedures shape the conduct of these meetings, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability. In this comprehensive overview, we delve into the intricacies of board meetings, covering everything from meeting types and legal obligations to procedural guidelines and public participation protocols.



# Meetings of the Board

## Types of Meetings

**Regular Board Meeting** – Regular meetings of the board are held according to an established schedule. The schedule must be kept on file at the district office. No additional notice required unless the date, time, or place of the regular meeting is changed. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 1.](#)

**Special Meeting** – The board may hold a special meeting to conduct business as needed. A special meeting can provide extra time for presentations, such as review of building-level outcomes, or to deal with an issue that arises but is not likely to be ongoing. A special meeting requires three days' notice (posted on the district's main bulletin board and either published in the official newspaper or mailed/delivered to those persons requesting notice) of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Board discussion and action must fall within the posted purpose(s) of the meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 2.](#)

**Emergency Meeting** – The board may hold an emergency meeting called to deal with a situation that requires immediate board consideration and possible action, such as a response to a school fire, a school safety issue, etc. The board determines when an emergency meeting is needed. Good faith effort must be made to notify the news media that have requested notice in the same manner as notice is given to board members. If the situation allows for a three-day notice, hold a special meeting. [Minn. Stat. 13D.04, Subd. 3.](#)

**Organizational Meeting** – The first meeting in January will be devoted to business required for the proper organization of the board. The agenda may include:

- Seating new members including administering the ceremonial oath of office
- Electing officers for chair, vice-chair (optional), clerk, and treasurer
- Setting the dates, time, and location(s) for regular board meetings
- Setting board member compensation
- Establishing standing committees and committee members
- Passing a [Resolution for Combined Polling Places](#)
- Determining time, place, and manner for public comments
- Designating district depositories
- Selecting the official newspaper and the district's legal counsel

## Open Meeting Law (OML)

The Open Meeting Law ([Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D.](#)) is intended to preserve the rights of the public to observe actions and decisions of its representatives. To satisfy this, all meetings of the board will be open to the public for attendance, and a schedule of the board's regular meetings and working sessions will include times and locations and shall be kept on file at the district office. (See the Closed Meeting Law Chart link below for exceptions). Additionally, the board will ensure a schedule of meetings is posted on the district's website. The OML applies to all meetings of the public body and, in general, meetings of its committees and subcommittees. For the law to apply, a quorum (a majority of the members of the board) must be present. Although the responsibility to ensure meetings are properly noticed lies with



the board, this operational activity is typically carried out by the staff member who functions as the clerk to the board.

### **Closed Meetings**

Minnesota’s OML requires all board meetings to be open to the public with few exceptions. A public body must begin in an open meeting and state on the record the specific grounds permitting the meeting to be closed and describe the subject to be discussed. A majority vote is needed to close the meeting, with the time and place announced at the public meeting before going into closed session. Please review [Minn. Stat. 13D.05](#) before proceeding to close a meeting. For specific questions, consult with legal counsel.

*For more information regarding closed meetings, see [MSBA’s Closed Meeting Law Chart](#).*

### **Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology**

In the ever-evolving landscape of governance, technology has become an indispensable tool for facilitating communication and collaboration. Section 13D.02 of the Minnesota Statutes acknowledges this reality by outlining the conditions under which meetings governed by section 13D.01 can be conducted using interactive technology.

*For more information regarding remote meetings, see [Minn. Stat. 13D.02 Meetings Conducted by Interactive Technology](#).*

# **Meeting Operations**

### **Attendance of Meetings**

All board members are expected to attend all meetings. However, it is recognized that scheduling conflicts will occur.

Please notify either the superintendent and/or board chair if a member is unable to make a board meeting. This can be done with a phone call, email or text message.

### **Location of Meetings**

The board shall meet on the third Wednesday of each calendar month with the meetings beginning at 7:00 p.m. and the other meetings beginning at 8:00 p.m. Whenever the regular meeting falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the next business day.

### **Voting**

Each elected member of the board will have one vote. A roll call vote will be taken when required by law or when requested by any board member.

### **Quorum of the Board**

In order for a board meeting to be official and before any action can be taken by the board, at least a quorum of board members must be present. In the absence of a quorum, the only official action that the board may take is to adjourn the meeting. The gathering of a quorum constitutes a meeting if “members



discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of the district.”

### **Parliamentary Procedure During Meeting**

Associated Policies – [MSBA Policies 203 – Operation of the School Board – Governing Rules](#) and [203.1 – School Board Procedures](#); Rules of Order.

### **Presiding Officer**

The chair will preside over all board meetings. If the chair is unable to preside, the vice-chair (if one has been appointed), will perform the duties of the chair. Should both the chair and vice-chair be unable to preside, the clerk will perform the duties of the chair. In the unlikely event that the chair, vice-chair, and clerk are unable to preside, the treasurer will perform the duties of the chair.

### **Superintendent’s Role in Board Meetings**

The superintendent is a key person at all board meetings. The superintendent and chair commonly plan the meeting agenda together. The superintendent makes certain the meeting room is set up as required and all tools needed are available, such as audio or visual recording equipment, internet access, microphones, etc. Each item on the agenda is introduced by the chair; however, for discussion or action items, the superintendent or a designee is often asked to explain the issue. The superintendent’s recommendation should be solicited before a vote is taken.

### **Board Committees**

Committees may be established to address recurring needs of the board. Committees are in place to make the board’s work more efficient and effective. They serve in advisory capacities and bring recommendations to the full board for decision making. Board committees should meet as often as necessary to accomplish their work and should meet only when there is substantive work to be done.

All meetings of committees or subcommittees shall be open to the public in compliance with the Open Meeting Law, and notice shall be given as prescribed by law.

#### 2025 Committee Members

Community Education	Malisa Schue and Vickie Hasbargen
MN State High School League	Scott Mai and Emily Lindley
Vo-Ag Advisory Committee	Brian Dreher and Scott Mai
Continuing Ed Committee	Malisa Schue and Vickie Hasbargen
B.R.I.C.	Brian Dreher and Jake Hasbargen
Employee Interview Committee	Emily Lindley and Brian Dreher
North Country Vocation Coop	Scott Mai
Negotiators	Emily Lindley and Vickie Hasbargen
MSBA Legislative Liaison	Vickie Hasbargen



Northome Scholarship Committee	Malisa Schue
Kelliher Athletic Coop Representative	Emily Lindley
Meet & Confer - Northome	School Board Members
Indus Scholarship Committee	Scott Mai and Jake Hasbargen
Indus Campus Committee	Vickie Hasbargen, Jake Hasbargen, Emily Lindley

### **District Policy 204.1B - Committees**

1. It is the policy of the school board to designate school board committees or subcommittees when it is determined that a committee process facilitates the mission of the school board.
2. A school board committee or subcommittee will be formed by school board resolution which shall outline the duties and purpose of the committee or subcommittee.
3. A committee or subcommittee is advisory in nature and has only such authority as specified by the school board.
4. The school board will receive reports or recommendations from a committee or subcommittee for consideration. The school board, however, retains the right and has the duty to make all final decisions related to such reports or recommendations.
5. The school board also may establish such ad hoc committees for specific purposes as it deems appropriate.
6. The school board reserves the right to limit, create or abolish any standing or ad hoc committee as it deems appropriate.
7. A committee of the school board shall not appoint a subcommittee of that committee without approval of the school board.
8. The school board will establish, by resolution, for each standing or ad hoc committee the number of members, the term and the charge or mission of each such committee.
9. The school board chair shall appoint the members of each standing or ad hoc committee and designate the chair thereof.
10. Procedures for School Board Committees:
  - a. All meetings of committees or subcommittees shall be open to the public in compliance with the Open Meeting Law, and notice shall be given as prescribed by law.
  - b. A committee or subcommittee shall act only within the guidelines and mission established for that committee or subcommittee by the school board.



- c. Actions of a committee or subcommittee shall be by majority vote and be consistent with the governing rules of the school board.
- d. The committee or subcommittee shall designate a secretary who will record the minutes of actions of the school board committee.
- e. The power of a committee or subcommittee of the school board is advisory only and is limited to making recommendations to the school board.
- f. A committee or subcommittee of the school board shall, when appropriate, clarify in any dealings with the public that its powers are only advisory to the school board.

**Associated Policies** – [MSBA Policy 213 – School Board Committees](#) and District Policy 204.1 - Operation of the School Board

### **Election of Board Officers**

Minnesota law is silent on the method of electing officers, except that the election must be by open vote and not by any form of secret ballot. [Minn. Stat. 13D.01, Subd. 4](#). Subsequently, the board may establish its own procedures, including procedures for nominating officers and voting procedures. The board will establish procedures in advance of the meeting so that everyone will know what to expect from the outset. The board must follow the procedures, but the procedures can be changed if the majority of the board members agree.

*For more information regarding officer elections, see [MSBA's First Monday in January Handbook](#).*

### **District Policy 201.1 - Election of School Board Members**

Unless a different date is permitted under the provisions of subdivision 22, the election in independent districts shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

#### Voting Precincts

To be the same as state/county precincts.

#### Polling Hours

The polls are set to be open as determined by state/county.

Three members will be elected during each even numbered calendar year school board election.

Candidates who are elected shall file the acceptance of election and oath of office form within thirty days of being elected and shall take office at the annual organizational meeting which is held at the regular business meeting of the Board of Education on the second Wednesday of January each year.

Candidates for the board must be residents of the district, qualified voters, twenty one years of age or older, and able to read and write the English language.

### **Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities**

Effective management and clear understanding of roles are essential for the smooth operation of board meetings. The [Guide to Board Meeting Roles and Responsibilities](#) provides a detailed outline of the duties and expectations for board members, the chair, the superintendent, and administrative staff



before, during, and after meetings. This comprehensive guide helps ensure all participants are well-prepared, meetings are conducted efficiently, and follow-up actions are clearly defined. It covers everything from agenda preparation and legal advice to maintaining a positive meeting atmosphere and accurate record-keeping.

## Data Privacy

It's essential to understand how data privacy relates to board meetings. When discussing district matters in board meetings, we encourage open dialogue. However, we need reasonable restrictions to ensure orderly proceedings and protect individuals' privacy and due process rights. These rights extend to both employees and students of the district. For employees, this includes the privacy of their personnel data. Similarly, students have privacy rights concerning their educational data. To uphold these privacy rights, we have procedures in place for handling agenda items and complaints.

**Associated Policies** – [MSBA Policies 406 – Public and Private Personnel Data](#), [515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#), District Policy 515 - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records and District Policy 419 - Public and Private Personnel Data

## Public Comments to the Board

The board recognizes the value of participation by the public in deliberations and decisions on district matters. However, the board retains the right to determine whether and how public comment may occur.

Citizens who wish to address the school board on a particular subject should identify the subject and identify agenda item(s) to which their comments pertain.

The school board chair will recognize one speaker at a time, and will rule out of order other speakers who are not recognized. Only those speakers recognized by the chair will be allowed to speak. Comments by others are out of order. Individuals who interfere with or interrupt speakers, the school board, or the proceedings may be directed to leave.

The school board retains the discretion to limit discussion of any agenda item to a reasonable period of time as determined by the school board. If a group or organization wishes to address the school board on a topic, the school board reserves the right to require designation of one or more representatives or spokespersons to speak on behalf of the group or organization.

Matters proposed for placement on the agenda which may involve data privacy concerns, which may involve preliminary allegations, or which may be potentially libelous or slanderous in nature shall not be considered in public, but shall be processed as determined by the school board in accordance with governing law.

The school board chair shall promptly rule out of order any discussion by any person, including school board members, that would violate the provisions of state or federal law, this policy or the statutory rights of privacy of an individual.

Personal attacks by anyone addressing the school board are unacceptable. Persistence in such remarks by an individual shall terminate that person's privilege to address the school board.

Depending upon the number of persons in attendance seeking to be heard, the school board reserves the right to impose such other limitations and restrictions as necessary in order to provide an orderly, efficient and fair opportunity for those present to be heard.



# Agendas and Minutes

## Agenda Procedures

The board will conduct business during meetings through an adopted agenda that advances board work and district goals. The agenda serves as a roadmap for the meeting, outlining topics such as reports, presentations, discussions, and decisions. It is expected all board members will read the agenda and any supporting documents prior to the meeting. Each board member has the right to request additions, amendments, or revisions to the agenda prior to its adoption, and the board will determine if those changes are to be made.

The clerk or his/her designee shall prepare the agenda for each board meeting. Whenever a matter involving policy consideration is placed on the agenda, the superintendent shall advise the board of any policies previously adopted affecting such matter. Any member of the board may submit suggestions for items to be included on the agenda.

The agenda shall always allow for recognition and introduction of guests together with remarks for the good of the school district by any board member. All business items shall be submitted in writing and received in the superintendent's office at least six days before the meeting in order to insure being included on the written agenda.

The addendum agenda will be reserved for those items of an emergency nature only, as defined by the school board or superintendent.

Items of business not on the agenda may not be suggested from the floor for discussion and/or action at the same meeting except at the discretion of the chairperson or a majority of members present.

A ten minute time limit for each item on the agenda has been set with the option to increase time limit by board approval if necessary.

## Form of Agenda

Unless changed by a two-thirds vote of those present at each regular and adjourned business meeting of the board the order of business shall be as follows:

- 1.0 Call to Order by Chairperson
  - 1.1 Roll Call
  - 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
  
- 2.0 Approval of Agenda
  - 2.1 Main Agenda
  - 2.2 Addendum Agenda



- 3.0 Approval of Minutes
  - 3.1 Regular Meeting
  
- 4.0 Approval of District Invoices
  
- 5.0 Recognition of Visitors
  
- 6.0 Recognition of Accomplishments
  
- 7.0 Action Items
  - 7.1 Consent Items
  - 7.2 New Business
  - 7.3 Old Business
  
- 8.0 Discussion Items
  
- 9.0 Addendum
  
- 10.0 Administrative Reports
  - 10.1 Treasurer’s Report
  - 10.2 Committees
  - 10.3 Board Concerns
  - 10.4 Principal’s Report
  - 10.5 Superintendent’s Report
  
- 11.0 Next Meeting Date
  
- 12.0 Adjournment

## **Consent Agenda**

The superintendent, in consultation with the board chair, may place items on the consent agenda. A consent agenda is a part of the agenda that includes items typically approved together in one motion. These items may include meeting minutes, routine reports, personnel appointments, and other administrative matters. By grouping these items together, the board can streamline the meeting process and focus on more substantive discussions. If any board member wishes to discuss or vote separately on an item listed in the consent agenda, they can request to have it removed for individual consideration.

## **Meeting Minutes**

Minutes will be carefully recorded to include all actions of the board and all votes taken at a board meeting by the board’s clerk or designee. Minutes do not include discussion or editorial comments.



# References for Further Information

- [Copies of Meeting Minutes from the past year](#)
- [MSBA Board Meeting Agenda Calendar](#)
- [MSBA Sample Board Meeting Agenda](#)
- [MSBA School Board Ceremonial Oath of Office](#)
- [MSBA Guidelines with Meeting Minutes](#)
- [MSBA First Monday in January Booklet \(regarding the Organizational Meeting\)](#)
- [MSBA Parliamentary Procedure Overview](#)

