



Where School Boards Learn to Lead



Running for School Board

It's About the Students!

A candidate guide from the Minnesota School Boards Association

How to become a school board candidate

School board members are elected during the November General Election on either odd or even years. Terms are four years, and at least three members are on the ballot during each election. Most school board members are elected at-large.

A primary must be held if a school district has approved a resolution to be part of the primary election system AND if more than two candidates file for a precinct seat, or if there are more than double the number of candidates as there are at-large seats.

Filing Period	Eligibility	Financial Reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are two filing periods for school districts. For districts with primaries, the filing dates will be in May. For districts without a primary, filing dates will be in August.• Candidates must file an affidavit of candidacy with the school district clerk. The fee is \$2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 21 years old.• Eligible voter.• District resident for at least 30 days prior to election/appointment.• Not convicted of a felony.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candidates must file a campaign financial report no later than seven days after the election. This report indicates whether a candidate has either received \$750 in campaign contributions or spent \$750 on the election.



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What qualities make a good school board member?

Trust, teamwork, integrity, commitment, vision, courage, and respect

After nearly 100 years of working with school boards, Minnesota School Boards Association staff have identified common traits among outstanding school board members. Board members have no individual authority; an effective board acts as a whole and respects staff expertise. Good board members develop skills over time through experience and continued training. Board members who run on a single issue or for personal gain create discord and aren't effective leaders who can improve student achievement.

Outstanding school board members are:

- motivated by the best interests of all students.
- passionate about public education.
- able to make difficult decisions.
- strong communicators, willing to listen.
- believers in the democratic process.
- willing to spend time and energy on school board business.
- committed to governance training.
- able to function as part of a team.
- collaborative.
- trusted.

MSBA's Standards for School Board Leadership

Conduct & Ethics, Vision, Structure, Accountability, and Advocacy & Communication

As the entity legally charged with governing a school district, each school board is responsible to its community for governing efficiently and leading effectively to provide for equitable education, resulting in high student achievement.

The following five standards are essential to being an effective, high-performing school board team:

Conduct & Ethics: The school board, as a whole, provides leadership to the community on behalf of the school district by conducting its business in a fair, respectful, legal, and responsible manner.

Vision: The school board, with community input, envisions the educational future of the community and then formulates the goals, defines the outcomes, and sets the course for the school district.

Structure: The school board, to achieve its vision, establishes organizational and physical structures for student and staff success.

Accountability: The school board is accountable to the community for constantly monitoring the conditions affecting the school district as a whole.

Advocacy & Communication: The school board advances its vision at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

School boards put the **PUBLIC** in education

School board service is one of the most important responsibilities a citizen can undertake. The school board's standards and decisions will affect a generation of students, your community, and society.

Governing on a public school board is a challenging job with long hours and difficult decisions. However, it is rewarding to watch students succeed and lead productive lives as a result of the educational opportunities you helped create.

As a school board member, your decisions must reflect what is best for all students. This demands a strong commitment to serving your community.

If you are willing to devote your time and talents to meeting these challenges, then we applaud your decision to run for your local school board. MSBA is ready and willing to serve you. In addition to state-mandated training, the Minnesota School Boards Association has a complete school board orientation series, as well as advanced training and on-site full board in-services. We look forward to working with you.



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