



A World-Class Community of Learners

203 Governing Rules for the School Board

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide governing rules and standards for the general operation of the School Board.

II. General Statement of Policy

The School Board will approach its task in a manner which emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, with clear distinction of board and staff roles, looking to the future more than the past or present, and proactivity rather than reactivity.

To facilitate optimum effectiveness, the School Board members will recognize the School Board's responsibility as being generally focused on establishing policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary procedures development to the superintendent. Exceptions will include legally required School Board review and approval actions as specified in policy. Certain School Board policies will direct the superintendent and staff to achieve certain results; others will establish constraints to act within acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics. All School Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the superintendent, who will be held accountable by the School Board for following the policy directives of the School Board.

An orderly School Board meeting allows School Board members to participate in discussion and decision of school district issues. Rules of order allow School Board members the opportunity to review school-related topics, discuss school business items, and bring matters to conclusion in a timely and consistent manner.

Clear standards for School Board relationships with the news media, dealing with the need for legal advice, and access to administrative support for information needs will promote informed and effective teamwork on behalf of the students and citizens of the school district.

III. Governing Manner

- A. The School Board shall strive to keep its major involvement with the intended long-term impact of the school district, not with the administrative or programmatic means of attaining the ends desired.
- B. The School Board shall direct, control, and inspire the school district through the careful deliberation and establishment of policies.

- C. The School Board shall strive to fulfill its lawful and designated powers and authority with respect to funds, raising of funds, property, contracts, textbooks and educational materials, and legal actions and suits.
- D. The School Board shall enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to attendance, policy-making, legal actions, principles, respect of clarified roles, speaking with one voice, and self-policing of board tendencies to stray from rigorous governance.
- E. The School Board shall strive to be accountable to the general public for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of its obligations as a body. It will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the board to usurp this role or deter this discipline.
- F. The School Board will strive to be an initiator of policy and responsible for its own performance.

IV. Delegation to the Superintendent

- A. The superintendent is authorized to establish procedures for policy, make all decisions, take all actions, and develop all activities which are needed to implement School Board policies. The School Board may, by revising or extending its policies, restrict or limit the superintendent's authority, but will respect the superintendent's choices so long as the delegation continues. This does not prevent the School Board from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.
- B. Only the School Board, by majority vote, has authority over the superintendent. Information may be requested by a board member or board committee, but if such request in the superintendent's judgment requires a substantial amount of staff time, the request may be deferred to the whole board for consideration. A board member who is also a parent may maintain their parental rights for access to information as appropriate. Any parental request for information is considered separate from their role as a board member.
- C. School board members shall direct requests for information primarily to the superintendent or designee. The administration will furnish all School Board members with information prepared at the request of an individual School Board member.
- D. The superintendent may not perform, allow or cause to be performed any act which is unlawful or violates School Board policy. If the superintendent deems it necessary to violate a School Board policy, he or she shall inform the School Board in a timely manner.

V. Order of Precedent

Order of Precedent for School Board meetings shall be as follows:

- A. Minnesota statutes where specified;
- B. Specific rules of order as provided by the School Board consistent with Minnesota statutes; and rules of the Minnesota Department of Education.

- C. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised (latest edition) where not inconsistent with 1 and 2 above.
- D. Custom and usage.

VI. Securing Legal Services

- A. The superintendent is empowered to seek legal counsel as deemed necessary during the normal course of business and within the limits of the budget.
- B. If there are legal concerns involving the School Board and the superintendent, the School Board chair is empowered to seek legal counsel on behalf of the School Board with concurrence of the Board.

VII. News Media/School Board Relations

- A. When the School Board issues news releases and/or responds to questions from the media, the official spokesperson for the School Board will be the School Board chair or designee.
- B. Board agenda materials will be made available to the public at the same time they are delivered to School Board members. Items of new School Board business shall not be given to the public other than through release of School Board agenda materials.
- C. When individual School Board members speak to the news media, they shall issue a standards disclaimer that emphasizes: "These are my personal views and do not necessarily reflect the views of the full School Board."
- D. The School Board Chair and the superintendent's office will collaborate on all media responses according to the guidelines established under School Board policy.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. 13D (Open Meeting Law)
Minn. Stat. 123.09, Subds. 6, 7 and 10 (School Board Matters)
Minn. Stat. 123B.14 (Officers)

SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Adopted December 21, 1999
Revised April 16, 2013
Revised April 16, 2019