



**Your MSBA Staff**

Greg Abbott



**Get On Board!**

*Tips and Timelines for School Board Candidates*



# Your MSBA Staff

- Greg Abbott,  
Director of Communications





# Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)

- THE professional organization for Minnesota's publicly elected school boards
- A non-profit, voluntary organization – founded in 1920
- Offers a variety of services for school boards—legislative, policy services, board development, superintendent search
- The primary provider of professional development for school boards in the state of MN





# What is a School Board?

- A body of locally elected individuals who represent the communities they serve
  - ✓ Whose power and authority are granted by the state
  - ✓ Whose purpose is to ensure effective, efficient, and equitable delivery of high quality education to **all** the school district's students through adoption of policy
  - ✓ Whose important task is to hire, direct, and evaluate the superintendent



# Should I Run for the School Board?

- Why do you want to run?
  - ✓ Are you concerned about more than a single issue in your school district?
  - ✓ Are you concerned about helping all students achieve?
  - ✓ Are you interested in problem solving?
  - ✓ Do you want to be a member of a team?
- If not, why are you running?



# What Qualities Make a Good School Board Member?

Outstanding school board members are:

- ✓ Focused on student achievement
- ✓ Passionate about public education
- ✓ Able to make difficult decisions
- ✓ Strong communicators, who are 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 a team member



# How to Become a Candidate

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



# Filing for Candidacy

- School districts filing period
  - ✓ Early August filing for school districts without primaries
  - ✓ 2024 dates: July 30 – August 13
- Candidates must file an affidavit of candidacy with the school district clerk
  - ✓ The filing fee is \$2.00



# Eligibility Requirements

- Must be at least 21 years old
- Must be an eligible voter
- Must be a school district resident for at least 30 days prior to election
- Must not be a sex offender.

NOTE: You can run for election if a district employee, but if you earn more than \$20,000 per fiscal year you must quit the job to be on the board.



# Financial Reporting

- Whenever a campaign has either received or spent \$750, it triggers a requirement for candidates to file a campaign finance report.
- All candidates – no matter how much money is raised -- must file a campaign financial report *certification of filing* seven days after the election.
- Forms can be found in the campaign finance manual you receive when filing.



# Financial Reporting

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

## CAMPAIGN FINANCIAL REPORT CERTIFICATION OF FILING

### Instructions

Each county, municipal or school district candidate or treasurer of a committee formed to promote or defeat a ballot question shall certify to the filing officer that all reports required by *Minnesota Statutes 211A.02* have been submitted to the filing officer or that the candidate or committee has not received contributions or made disbursements exceeding \$750 in the calendar year. The certification shall be submitted to the filing officer not later than seven days after the general or special election. (*Minnesota Statutes 211A.05, subdivision 1*)

### Campaign Information

Name of candidate or committee

Office sought by candidate (if applicable)

Identification of ballot question (if applicable)

### Certification

Select the appropriate choice below, and sign.

- I do swear (or affirm) that all campaign financial reports required by Minnesota Statutes 211A.02 have been submitted to the filing officer.
- I do swear (or affirm) that all campaign contributions or disbursements did not exceed \$750 in the calendar year.

Signature of candidate or committee treasurer

Date





# Fundamental Roles of School Boards

- School boards are most effective when they focus on the big picture:
  - ✓ Making policy
  - ✓ Setting goals
  - ✓ Engaging stakeholders
- School boards hire, direct, and evaluate the performance of a superintendent who handles the day-to-day management of the school district (CEO)



# The Ultimate Elected Volunteers

## School Board Members:

- Are concerned with the welfare of all children
- Are part of a school board team that has oversight of school district decisions
- Attend required training
- Receive little compensation
- Are held to a very high ethical standard



# Know the Law

- School board meetings are subject to the Open Meeting Law (Minn. Stat. § 13D.05)
  - ✓ Public entities must do business in the open unless a statutory exception allows a closed meeting
  - ✓ The public has the right to observe open meetings
  - ✓ Public participation is determined by board policy
  - ✓ Special meetings must be officially posted
  - ✓ A quorum of school board members must be present



# Know the Law

- Data privacy laws (Minn. Stat. § 13 and Federal Law)
  - ✓ School board members need to maintain the privacy or confidentiality of certain types of data
  - ✓ Some of the laws provide significant consequences for wrongful disclosure



# Public Records

- Data in all forms however stored (paper or electronic)
- E-mail communications
  - ✓ Are recoverable
  - ✓ School board members should use separate school district-provided e-mail addresses for school board correspondence
  - ✓ See if the school district can archive school board members' e-mails
- School board members should follow school district policy (200 Policies)



# The Work of the School Board

- Communicating with stakeholders
- Monitoring student achievement
- Approving collectively bargained employee contracts
- Advocating student needs to lawmakers
- Evaluating the Superintendent (CEO) of the school district

You are part of (for many towns) one of the largest employers in the community



# Five Standards for School Board Leadership

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

1. Conduct and Ethics
2. Vision
3. Structure
4. Accountability
5. Advocacy and Communication



# School Board Member Code of Ethics

- Be prepared for and attend board meetings
- Focus on student achievement
- Focus on the greater good
- Represent all stakeholders
- Support the decision of the school board
- Follow school board code of ethics policy
- Good conduct and ethics at and away from the board table



# Remember

- School board members have power only when sitting together at the board table
- Respect the school district's chain of command/responsibility
- A successful school board must function as a team with clear strategies and goals
  - ✓ You are 1 of a Board Team of 7/8 (including the superintendent)



# Professional Development

- School board members are required to receive training in school finance and management (MSBA's "Phase Orientation Series")
- Finance and management training is developed by MSBA in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)



# What Can You Do to Be Ready to Join Your School Board Team?

- Meet with the superintendent and school board chair to learn about the expectations of school board members in your school district
- Start attending board meetings, if you haven't already done so
- Familiarize yourself with the district's Strategic Plan and its goals



# When does your term begin?

- First Monday in January
- Organizational Meeting: *M.S. 123B.14 Subdivision 1 OFFICERS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS.*

## **Officer selection**

On the first Monday of January of each year, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the board must meet and organize by selecting a chair, clerk, and a treasurer, who shall hold their offices for one year and until their successors are selected and qualify.



# Campaign timelines

- What to expect
  - ✓ File for office July 30-Aug. 13. You have until Aug. 15 to withdraw
  - ✓ Bring \$2 with you to file. All information on your application is public
  - ✓ Read through the Secretary of State's Campaign Finance Manual
  - ✓ If you receive or spend more than \$750, you must file your finance report within 14 days. Additional reports due 10 days before election and 30 days after election



# Campaign timelines

- What to expect
  - ✓ Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5
  - ✓ You have 7 days after the school board canvasses to request a recount.
  - ✓ You must file your Campaign Finance CERTIFICATION OF FILING 7 days after the election.
  - ✓ If elected, you will receive an election certificate 7 days after the canvass (if you turn in financial form and there is no recount). You have 30 days to sign the certificate and accept the office.



# Campaign timelines

- What to expect
  - ✓ If you have spent or received more than \$750, you must turn in a campaign finance report within 30 days after the election.
  - ✓ Your term begins Jan. 6, 2025 (unless you won a special election, which can begin earlier.)



# Thank You!

- Elected school board members can call MSBA any time
- Minnesota School Boards Association  
1900 West Jefferson Ave.  
St. Peter, MN 56082
- [www.mnmsba.org](http://www.mnmsba.org)
- 507-934-2450 or 800-324-4459



# QUESTIONS?

- Elected school board members can call MSBA any time
- Minnesota School Boards Association  
1900 West Jefferson Ave.  
St. Peter, MN 56082
- [www.mnmsba.org](http://www.mnmsba.org)
- 507-934-2450 or 800-324-4459

# Powers of School Boards Provided by Minnesota Law

- **Care, management and control of school district affairs.**  
The school board is charged with the care, management and control of the affairs of the school district and consists of six members elected to four-year terms and a seventh member if so approved by the voters of the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 1.)
- **Powers.** The board must have the general charge of the business of the district, the school house, and of the interest of the schools thereof. The board's authority to conduct the business of the district includes, implied powers in addition to any specific powers granted by the legislature. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 1.)

# Powers of School Boards Provided by Minnesota Law

- **Rules-making, management responsibilities of the School Board.** The board must superintend and manage the schools of the district; adopt rules for their organization, government, and instruction; keep registers; and prescribe textbooks and courses of study. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subds. 7. and 8.)
- **Superintendents.** School districts maintaining a secondary school must employ a superintendent; the superintendent is an ex officio, non-voting member of the school board. (Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1.)

# Powers of School Boards Provided by Minnesota Law

- **General Powers of School Boards**. The school board issues bonds with voter approval; levies taxes; hires and discharges employees; contracts for services; purchases facilities and equipment; and lots more (furnishes school lunches, removes unauthorized vehicles, operates a wind energy conversion system, offers reward, authorizes use of credit cards, for example.) (Minn. Stat. § 123B.02.)