School Board Elections

The terms of four current school board seats are expiring on December 31, 2018 and elections for those seats will be held on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. The period for filing affidavits of candidacy for the office of School Board begins at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 and closes at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018.

Affidavits of candidacy are available during office hours in the Central Services Building, 1875 South Greeley Street, Stillwater, MN  55082. Affidavits of candidacy are filed at Central Services no later than 5 p.m. on August 14, 2018, along with a $2 filing fee or a petition with at least 500 signatures of eligible voters in place of the filing fee.

Persons who file an affidavit of candidacy for school board have until 5 p.m. on August 16 to request that their name be removed from the ballot; after August 16, the names of all remaining candidates will be included on the ballot.

For more information on school board elections, call Central Services 651-351-8455.

Board Membership

The school board is made up of seven citizens elected at large by voters in the district. Members are elected to four-year overlapping terms, with elections being held every two years. At the end of a four year term, members may run for re-election to successive terms. Voting takes place at the general election in November, and terms begin the first Monday in January thereafter.

Every year, at its first meeting in January, the school board holds an organizational meeting to elect officers and settle other routine business. The superintendent is an ex-officio member of the board who facilitates the work of the school board and is responsible to the board for providing leadership to the school district and carrying out board directives.
Board Job Description

The board’s job is to represent, lead and serve the district and to govern the organization by establishing expectations for student achievement and quality operational performance, and monitoring actual performance against those expectations. The board will develop policies, and set the direction required for high quality education and for the responsible stewardship of resources, both human and economic, on behalf of the Stillwater Area Public Schools’ community. The board delegates to staff, the responsibility to lead, manage and assess the programs and processes of Stillwater Area Public Schools.

The responsibilities of the board include:

- Legal responsibility for the care, management and control of the public schools in Stillwater Area Public Schools.
- Civic responsibility of providing quality education, a service essential to the life of the community.
- Economic responsibility for prudent management of public resources.
- Moral and ethical responsibility to function impartially to assure the greatest good to the greatest number at all times.

Board Governance

The Stillwater school board provides governance for the public education system to successfully achieve the ideals and goals set out in the strategic plan.

Governance is framed by the purpose for which an organization was created and is therefore concerned with activities of the highest level including goal setting, policy development and monitoring progress toward alignment with governance objectives.

The school board will assure that all of its members have the knowledge, skills and support necessary to exercise effective self-governance which will be achieved by:

- Supporting board governance work.
- Partnering with the superintendent and administrative team to ensure excellence in governance.
- Orienting new members on the board governance process.
- Considering recommendations of the Policy Working Group.
The Role of the School Board

As the entity legally charged with governing a school district, each school board is responsible to its community to govern efficiently and effectively. This obligation imposes some fundamental duties on the board.

**Vision**

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

- Provides direction through its planning and goal-setting efforts and by evaluating progress toward goal achievement.
- Develops a well-crafted district vision statement, goals, and outcomes that enable the board to monitor district performance and evaluate success.
- Ensures that the district vision, goals, and outcomes are articulated in written board policy, reflected in every part of the organization, and mirrored in the budget planning and implementation efforts.
- Uses clear, focused, attainable, and measurable goals and outcomes to make sure gains in student achievement are being made.

**Structure**

To achieve its vision, the board establishes a structure and hires a superintendent to accomplish that vision. An effective board:

- Creates an organizational structure and environment in which all students are provided the opportunity to attain their maximum potential.
- Selects and employs one person — the superintendent — as the district’s chief executive officer to lead and manage the district and holds the superintendent accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy.
- Evaluates the superintendent’s performance and its own performance annually.
- Delegates the authority to the superintendent to recommend and evaluate all district staff within the standards established by written board policy and subsequently acts on the superintendent’s recommendation(s) at its meeting(s) as required in statute.
- Understands that the day-to-day operations of the district will be conducted by the staff.
Accountability
The board is accountable to the community for constantly monitoring the conditions affecting the district as a whole. An effective board:

- Has a duty to itself and the community to determine whether the authority delegated to the superintendent is being used as intended.
- Uses data and other indicators as the basis for assessing progress toward district goals and compliance with written board policy.
- Recognizes the distinction between “monitoring data” (data used by the board to address accountability) and “management data” (data used by the staff for operations).

Advocacy
The board advances its vision by focusing on student achievement, partnering with the community, and being proactive in addressing issues that affect education on local, state, and national levels. An effective board:

- Uses ongoing, two-way communications to build trust and support among community, board, superintendent, staff, and students.
- Focuses on community-wide concerns and values that best support student achievement rather than being overly influenced by special interests.
- Utilizes a system of public relations that allows it to formalize the flow of information into and out of the district.

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

- Takes full responsibility for its activity and behavior.
- Encourages its members to express their individual opinions, respect others’ opinions, and vote their conscience.
- Speaks with one voice after reaching a decision.
- Spends its time on board work rather than staff work.
- Provides for orientation and ongoing training for all board members.
- Follows its established policies, including the chain-of-command, by directing people with concerns to the appropriate staff.
- Sets an example of respectful and civil leadership.

Used with permission from MSBA
City Council vs. ‘Policy Governance’ School Board: What is the Difference?

For a public that is generally more familiar with city council structures, school board roles can often be confusing. Simply put, school boards govern, and city councils manage.

For Stillwater Area Public Schools, that means following the governance model of leadership that has the administration operating the schools according to the policies and goals set forth by the school board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Council Members</th>
<th>School Board Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manage the “hows” at the tactical level of the organization.</td>
<td>Govern through policies and budgets and by defining “why and what we’re providing” but not “how”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Represent a portion of the community</td>
<td>Are accountable to all residents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain an individual voice after council action.</td>
<td>Have a unified voice after board action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operate individually.</td>
<td>Operate as a whole board with no individual member authority.</td>
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School Board Member Commitments

Meetings
Membership on the school board requires attendance at a variety of meetings held every month as well as participation on committees.

Regular meetings
In general, the school board holds business meetings open to the public at 6 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Meetings are held at Stillwater City Hall, 216 North 4th Street, Stillwater, MN 55082. These meetings are cablecast live on Valley Access Channels cable channel 15 and streamed live on the district website. They are also stored on the district website for viewing at a later date.

Work Sessions
The school board occasionally will hold a work session to study a topic further. These sessions are held at Central Services, 1875 South Greeley Street, Stillwater, MN 55082.

Open Meeting Law
Unless otherwise allowable under state statute, all school board meetings must be open to the public so that the public has the opportunity see and hear all discussion, testimony and votes.
Public Comments
During each regular meeting the school board allows for open forum during the meeting. Open forum provides the community an opportunity to address the full board on a particular issue. Speakers are allowed five minutes to present their comments or concerns. In general the board does not hold a discussion on that which is presented. Questions raised by the public during open forum are often referred to the appropriate personnel if follow-up is necessary.

Committees
Individual school board members are assigned to serve on board and district committees. Committee assignments are made in January of each calendar year. Such assignments for 2018 include:

**School Board Representative to:**
- Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)
- East Metro Integration District (EMID)
- MN State High School League (MSHSL)
- Northeast Metro 916
- Partnership Plan
- Teachers-Administrators-Board (TAB)
- Schools for Equity in Education (SEE)

**School Board Working Groups 2016**
- Finance and Operations
- Legislative
- Personnel
- Policy
- Community Engagement

Time Commitment
The actual time commitment required varies depending on the board member and the number of issues the school board is addressing at any given time. Typically, a board member could expect to devote anywhere from 15-25 hours a month studying issues, attending meetings and responding to and communicating with community members.

Compensation
Like most Minnesota School Boards, Stillwater Area Public Schools offers a stipend for school board service. Members of the Stillwater school board receive a stipend of $4,750 for each board member with the board chair receiving an additional $500 for a total of $5,250.
Mission
The mission of Stillwater Area Public Schools, in partnership with students, family and community, is to develop curious individuals who are active and engaged leaders in an ever-changing world by challenging all students as they travel along their personalized learning pathways.

2018 Board Goals
As board members we are morally and legally responsible for an equitable and quality education for each and every student in our district.

The Stillwater Area Public Schools’ Board of Education ensures outstanding learning opportunities for the social, emotional and academic growth of every student in our school district through authentic partnerships and meaningful communication with our community, parents and students. Every decision is made with a commitment to equity for all students and for future generations impacted by our actions.

• We provide our stakeholders with regular updates on student achievement along with continual plans to enhance student learning in our district.
• We ensure that our systems of management and oversight are clearly defined.
• We invite ongoing dialogue and partnership with our community to learn from their knowledge and to enhance learning for our students.

Portrait of a Graduate
Our Portrait of a Graduate defines the skills and attributes we expect our students to develop through their experience in our schools. The Portrait is our commitment to the community to help create students who are:

- Communicators
- Collaborators
- Critical Thinkers
- Creators
- Self-Advocates

Based on real feedback from thousands of people in our community, the Portrait is now being used as the foundation of our planning - from the district-level right down to the classroom.

In developing our strategic plan, teachers and staff find ways to incorporate experiences that allow students to practice and develop these skills at all levels - from preK through high school.

Check out our School Improvement Plans at stillwaterschools.org/WBWF to see what this looks like in action.