

Work Session

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 6:00 PM

Board Assembly Room, 1250 West Broadway Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

1) **Call to Order and Roll Call**

2) **Work Session Topics and Discussions**

2)a. Review Board Governance Policies and Resources

2)b. Work Session Topics Planning

2)c. Transformation Process

3) **Adjournment**



MINNEAPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board Work Session

Sept. 16, 2025

Topics

Review board governance policies and resources

Work session topics planning

Transformation process

Review board governance policies and resources

Policy Chapter 8000: Board of Education

Board Organization (8000-8140) (9 policies)	Meetings (8200-8299) (4 policies)	Operations (8500-8599) (8 policies)
<p>8000: Legal Status</p> <p>8110: Purposes And Role Of The Board</p> <p>8111: Code Of Ethics</p> <p>8112: Governing Rules</p> <p>8114: School Board Election Districts</p> <p>8115: Membership And Quorum</p> <p>8116: Vacancies On The Board</p> <p>8120: Standing Committees</p> <p>8140: Board Officers</p>	<p>8200: Annual Meeting</p> <p>8210: Meetings Of The Board Of Directors</p> <p>8220: Agenda</p> <p>8231: Voting</p>	<p>8500: Board Director Development</p> <p>8505: Director Travel</p> <p>8510: Conflict Of Interest</p> <p>8520: Policy Development</p> <p>8525: External Representation And Memberships</p> <p>8530: Regulations</p> <p>8540: Board Evaluation Of Educational Programs</p> <p>8550: Communications And Community Relations</p>

Policy 8111: Code Of Ethics

- [Policy 8111: Code Of Ethics](#) sets our governance norms/standards
- Agreements of how board members understand and will carry out duties
- Six sections framed as “I will” statements
 - a. [AS A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD](#)
 - b. [IN PERFORMING THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER](#)
 - c. [TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD](#)
 - d. [IN MEETING MY RESPONSIBILITIES TO MY COMMUNITY](#)
 - e. [IN WORKING WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND STAFF](#)
 - f. [IN FULFILLING MY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER](#)

AS A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, I WILL

1. Attend school board meetings.
2. Come to the meetings prepared for discussion of the agenda items.
3. Listen to the opinions and views of others (including, but not limited to, other school board members, administration, staff, students, and community members).
4. Vote my conscience after informed discussion, unless I abstain because a conflict of interest exists.
5. Support the decision of the school board, even if my position concerning the issue was different.
6. Recognize the integrity of my predecessors and associates and appreciate their work.
7. Be primarily motivated by a desire to provide the best possible education for the students of my school district.
8. Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a school board member.

IN PERFORMING THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, I WILL

1. Focus on education policy as much as possible.
2. Remember my responsibility is to set policy – not to implement policy.
3. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
4. Recognize that my responsibility, exercised through the actions of the school board as a whole, is to see that the schools are properly run – not to run them myself.
5. Work through the superintendent – not over or around the superintendent.
6. Delegate the implementation of school board decisions to the superintendent.

TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, I WILL

1. Respect the rights of others to have and express opinions.
2. Recognize that authority rests with the school board in legal session – not with the individual members of the school board except as authorized by law.
3. Make no disparaging remarks, in or out of school board meetings, about other members of the school board or their opinions.
4. Keep an open mind about how I will vote on any proposition until the board has met and fully discussed the issue.
5. Make decisions by voting in school board meetings after all sides of debatable questions have been presented.
6. Insist that committees be appointed to serve only in an advisory capacity to the school board.

IN MEETING MY RESPONSIBILITIES TO MY COMMUNITY, I WILL

1. Attempt to appraise and plan for both the present and future educational needs of the school district and community.
2. Attempt to obtain adequate financial support for the school district's programs.
3. Insist that business transactions of the school district be ethical and open.
4. Strive to uphold my responsibilities and accountability to the taxpayers in my school district.
5. Communicate actively with the community and interpret the needs and attitudes of the community, to the best of my ability.

IN WORKING WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND STAFF, I WILL:

1. Hold the superintendent responsible for the administration of the school district.
2. Give the superintendent authority commensurate with their responsibilities.
3. Assure that the school district will be administered by the best professional personnel available.
4. Consider the recommendation of the superintendent in hiring all employees.
5. Participate in school board action after considering the recommendation of the superintendent and only after the superintendent has furnished adequate information supporting the recommendation.
6. Insist the superintendent keep the school board adequately informed at all times.
7. Offer the superintendent counsel and advice.
8. Recognize the status of the superintendent as the chief head of MPS and a non-voting, ex officio member of the school board.
9. Refer all complaints to the proper administrative officer or insist that they be presented in writing to the whole school board for proper referral according to the chain of command.
10. Present any personal criticisms of employees to the superintendent.
11. Provide support for the superintendent and employees of the school district so they may perform their proper functions on a professional level

IN FULFILLING MY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, I WILL

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local laws relating to my work as a school board member.
2. Comply with all school district policies as adopted by the school board.
3. Abide by all rules and regulations as promulgated by the Minnesota Department of Education and other state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over school districts.
4. Recognize that school district business may be legally transacted only in an open meeting of the school board.
5. Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using my school board position for personal gain.
6. Take no private action that will compromise the school board or administration.
7. Guard the confidentiality of information that is protected under applicable law.



bit.ly/MPSBoardHandbook

School Board Handbook

Updated August 2025

Purpose and Use

This handbook is designed to serve multiple audiences (community members, potential candidates, students, staff, and the board itself) with the same purpose: to support transparency, accessibility, and understanding of the structure and operations of the Minneapolis Board of Education (School Board).

The handbook is not intended to address every aspect of school board service, but rather provide an overview on key areas. Each section has a set of additional resources at the end with links to more information.

Handbook sections

About Minneapolis Public Schools

- Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan; Org. Chart

School Boards 101

- Authority, Responsibilities, and Limitations; Duties; Superintendent Role

Elections

- School Board Candidate Requirements; Candidate Filing and Reporting; Legal Requirements Once Elected; Election District Maps

The Minneapolis Board of Education

- Current Members; Structure, Organization, Operations, and Compensation; Officers; Governing Rules; Meetings

Policies and Regulations

Governance road map

Our Mission

Minneapolis Public Schools exists to provide a high quality, anti-racist, culturally responsive education for every Minneapolis student.

Our Vision

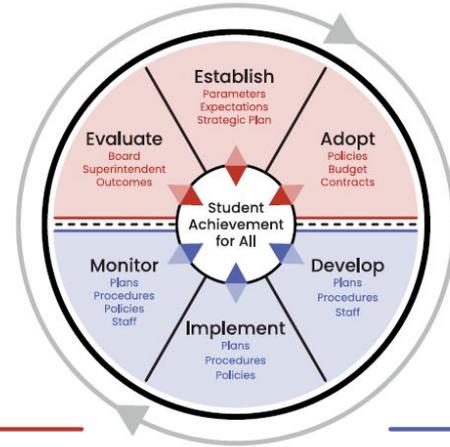
All students – regardless of their background, zip code, and individual needs – WILL receive an anti-racist, holistic education that builds essential knowledge to prepare students for success.

Our Commitment

To achieve our vision, we will intentionally focus and prioritize resources and actions to significantly improve the experiences of Black students, Indigenous students, students of color and their families.

We Value

- Equity, representation, and anti-racism
- Physical and emotional safety, and well-being
- Relationships, trust and communication
- Shared decision making and voice
- Transparency and accountability
- Evidence-based strategies



The School Board Governs
Setting expectations and parameters

The Superintendent Manages
Providing leadership and supervision

Governance

Management

VS

- Why?
- To what end?
- At what cost?
- Through what policies?

- What?
- When?
- How will this get done?
- Who will be responsible for doing it?

Adopted from the MSBA School Board Governance Model

Meeting topics calendar



bit.ly/MPSBoardMeetingTopics

Meeting Topics Calendar (Tentative)

Topics and agenda items are subject to change, but below are key recurring items by month and meeting type for planning purposes.

January



February



March



April



Questions & Discussion

Work session topics planning

Work sessions

- Discussion at August retreat to modify the approach to discussion meetings
- Shifting committee of the whole meetings to work sessions instead
- Board-determined topics, ideally planned out for the year in advance
- Nine work sessions scheduled per year (no work session in June, July, or December)
- More topics suggested by board members than meetings
- Some could be provided as written reports
- Discuss suggestions to inform a plan for determining topics

Suggested topics from board members

- Ableism in education
- Librarians/Libraries/IT investment
- Cart model vs. 1-1 data
- New ELA adoption rollout
- Subscriptions, costs, and their use
- Middle Schools
- Raising graduation rates strategies
- Heritage Language Pathways
- Career & Technical Education (CTE)
- Special Education
- Curriculum
- Community Engagement
- Budget
- Transformation
- Strategic Plan
- Community Education
- Turning EDIA recommendations into action

Topics to consider from the administration

- Budget development (1-2)
- Joint annual meeting with MPRB in August (1)
- Special Education

Note: Updates on strategic plan and prioritized strategies moved to regular business meetings in:

- November (aligns to state timeline on Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness plan report)
- March
- June

Questions & Discussion

Transformation process

Resolution and next steps

- Follows work at June and August retreats
- Includes the definition and directives developed at the retreats
- Not intended to direct the development of specific recommendations or plans, but rather produce information to advise next steps in the process, once the board receives the requested information
- To be voted on at the October regular business meeting

Draft resolution

WHEREAS, in December 2023, the Board adopted [Resolution 2023-0072](#), initiating a school transformation process; and

WHEREAS, the directives provided in Resolution 2023-0072 have been completed; and

WHEREAS, the Board held two retreats in June and August 2025 to discuss next steps in the school transformation process.

Draft resolution

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Special School District No. 1 (Minneapolis Public Schools) hereby approves the following definition for the transformation process:

MPS' transformation is a district-wide effort to reimagine a district where every student thrives – academically, socially, and emotionally – through a well-rounded, culturally sustaining education that engages and prepares contributing citizens.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Special School District No. 1 (Minneapolis Public Schools) directs the Superintendent to provide initial information, by the end of March 2026, on the following topics:

Continued on next slide

Draft resolution

1. Cost/benefit analysis for any physical changes, with rationale
2. Consolidation of schools/sites/programs
3. Closing of schools/sites
4. Repurposing schools/sites
5. Impact to class sizes and programming (arts, languages, etc.) and any unforeseen costs
6. Advantages/disadvantages and K-8 schools including:
 - a. Test score comparisons
 - b. Behavioral concerns
 - c. Retention
 - d. Programming (academic, electives, after school, etc.)
7. Increasing enrollment to reach an adequate number – looking at varying pathways, increasing early childhood, possible K-8's, potential impacts, recommendations from the Dual Immersion Language Task Force, and for existing magnet programs outside of dual language, lowering class sizes, marketing, investing near charters, open enrollment, and guaranteeing more music/arts.
8. Create strategies for attracting new families highlighting dual language programs, IB, etc.
9. Strategies for creative community engagement opportunities across the district (ex. Door knocking).
10. Examine area meetings.
11. Look at the same conversation starters and pieces across the city.
12. When seeking information from a group, we need conversation from and with those people – not consulting groups (i.e., work directly with those who are disabled when designing Special Education).

Questions & Discussion

TO: MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOE & SUPERINTENDENT

FROM: DEBORAH L. KEYS WRITE, ASSOCIATE, RAY & ASSOCIATES, INC.

It has been a privilege to collaborate with you during this important period for Minneapolis Public Schools. The dedication and openness displayed by board members and leadership underscored the collective commitment to serving students, families, and the broader community. Your willingness to engage in challenging dialogue and reflect deeply on both past practices and future aspirations speaks volumes about your shared vision and determination.

It is evident that the commitment to continuous improvement, transparency, and teamwork is not just spoken, but demonstrated through your actions and thoughtful participation. The conversations we shared were both candid and insightful, reflecting the collective desire to advance the mission of Minneapolis Public Schools and support the well-being of every student, educator, and community member.

August 26, 2025

During the opening session, the stage was set by revisiting the results of the communication styles survey. It was determined that the team has a unique make up that focuses heavily on one side of the “wheel.” The results are captured in the diagram below:



Our next discussion focused on revisiting the conditions that could be holding challenges in place at MPS. This was connected to the quote in the article below. The team was asked, “What is MPS’ Water?”

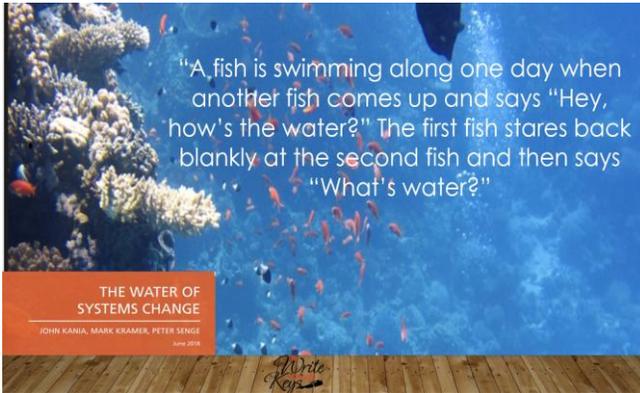
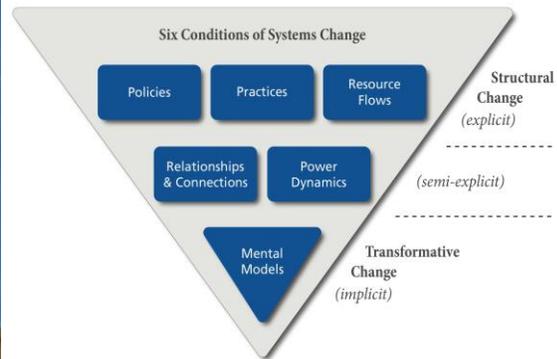


FIGURE 1. SHIFTING THE CONDITIONS THAT HOLD THE PROBLEM IN PLACE



What is MPS’ Water?

The “System” – white supremacy.	Not realizing they are in the water.	Past practices.
Expenses outpaced revenues.	Need to improve academic outcomes.	Accountability and transparency.
Unaware of what’s happening.	Fear and compliance.	Work on positivity in the district/lack of positive culture.
Transformation, the change, past practices. We know changes need to be made.	Ableism, school-prison pipeline.	Resistance to change.
Initiative fatigue.	Uncertainty of revenue from state.	Culture of legal constraints.

New comments were:

- How do we demonstrate that everyone is heard?
- Teaching and learning standardized.
- Momentum – where are we going?
- Better communications.
- Shared responsibilities.
- Agreement for making sure kids are educated.
- Process for asking what we want followed up.

The governance team had an opportunity to finalize the “District Transformation” definition. It is as follows:

DISTRICT TRANSFORMATION DESCRIPTION

MPS’ transformation is a district-wide effort to reimagine a district where every student thrives – academically, socially, and emotionally – through a well-rounded, culturally sustaining education that engages and prepares contributing citizens.

Last, the team had the opportunity to clearly craft a directive for Superintendent Salyes-Adams as follows:

AUGUST 26, 2025 – BOARD DIRECTIVE: PHYSICAL SPACE STUDY

Timeline: March 2026 Board Meeting

- **Initial draft in six months to include:**
 - Include a cost/benefit analysis for any physical changes. Why?
 - In service to our definition of school (district) transformation, and in order for us to take action, we would like information on:
 - Consolidation of schools/sites/programs
 - Closing of schools/sites
 - Repurposing schools/sites
 - with impact to class sizes and programming (arts, languages, etc.)
 - looking at unforeseen costs
 - K-8 Schools
 - Advantages/disadvantages
 - Test score comparisons
 - Behavioral concerns
 - Retention
 - Programming (academic, electives, after school, etc.)
- Increasing enrollment to reach the sweet spot – looking at varying pathways, increasing early childhood, possible K-8’s, potential impacts, and recommendations for existing magnet programs outside of dual language, lowering class sizes, marketing, investing near charters, open enrollment, and guaranteeing more music/arts.

Community Engagement – Directive:

- Create strategies for attracting new families highlighting dual language programs, IB, etc.
- Share with the Board strategies for creative community engagement opportunities across the district (ex. Door knocking).
- Examine area meetings again.
- Look at same conversation starters, pieces across city.
- When seeking information from a group, we need conversation from and with those people – not consulting groups (i.e., work directly with those who are disabled when designing Special Education).

Contingent on the timeline provided by the cost analysis results.

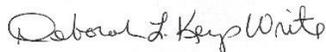
Next steps:

- Schedule work sessions (to replace COW) to have in-depth discussions about key areas of focus for the district transformation initiative to ensure strategic plan and current policy alignment;
- Review and revise the school board handbook (Ryan & Nandi) that will include board norms/protocols for effective governance practices;
- Continue to engage in professional learning opportunities to sharpen your governance skills and ability to monitor the work aligned with your district transformation directive.

Thank you for your continued commitment to this collective effort. Your insight and engagement are vital as you move into this next phase, focusing on authentic collaboration, innovation, and careful alignment with your goals. Your shared vision relies on open communication and a willingness to adapt as new information arises. Together, you can ensure that every decision reflects the voices and needs of those you serve, fostering a system where all families and students thrive.

Feel free to reach out to me at any time. I am here as your thought partner and to help support you during your “District Transformation: Through the Lens of Governing” journey.

Respectfully submitted,



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