



New Board Member Orientation Year At-a-Glance

The learning curve for new board members is high. New school board members must learn about their roles and responsibilities in providing effective leadership for the community in fulfilling its vision and mission for quality education for all students. In addition to the state-mandated training, MSBA recommends that the local school board chair assign each new board member a mentor. The mentor(s) and superintendent provide district-level orientation to the new school board members in order to provide a smooth transition into effective school board service. With this in mind, consider organizing the printed materials into an indexed notebook or orientation manual.

While printed materials are useful reference tools, they cannot take the place of personal interaction. School boards are encouraged to conduct learning sessions for new board members. These learning sessions should be conducted over several months so that the new board members have time to process the information and develop questions regarding their governance role.

The following suggestions are offered as guidance for mentors and superintendents who want to get new board members off to a good start. In addition, including all board members in the sessions may provide an opportunity for continued board professional development to strengthen governance practices. MSBA's website, www.mnmsba.org, provides other resources and, as always, please contact your MSBA with any questions.

Prior to First Board Meeting	New Board Member	Mentor	Superintendent	Board Admin. Assistant
Schedule an orientation with the new board member(s), board chair, board mentor, and the superintendent	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assign/introduce the new board member(s) to their mentor(s)		✓		
Provide contact information to the board administrative assistant	✓			✓
Provide and explain electronic access and/or equipment, if needed		✓		✓
Register for MSBA training for new board members (Phase I/II)	✓			✓
Register for the MSBA Leadership Conference	✓			✓
Examine the board member resources on the MSBA website	✓	✓		
Communicate first board meeting details with new board members:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Date, time, and location of the meeting		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board packet delivery date, review method and expectations		✓	✓	

Prior to First Board Meeting, Cont'd	New Board Member	Mentor	Superintendent	Board Admin. Assistant
Review with new board member(s):				
<input type="checkbox"/> Board calendar (meeting dates - timelines)		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for taking oath of office at board organizational meeting		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board culture and climate		✓		
Explain the Open Meeting Law (Policy 205)		✓	✓	
Explain limits of electronic use for board communications including email, social media and texting		✓	✓	
Provide new board member(s) access to and/or copies of:				
<input type="checkbox"/> District policies		✓		✓
<input type="checkbox"/> District mission, vision and beliefs statements		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> District World's Best Workforce and strategic plan		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board goal statement		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> District calendar		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide board minutes from previous year				✓
Provide a hard copy and review the following policies:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Board meeting procedures and format (Policy 203.1)		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda format - preparation and dissemination (Policy 203.5)			✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Public participation at board meetings and chain of command (Policy 206)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board policy development: adoption, review, evaluation and oversight (Policy 208)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board member code of ethics (Policy 209)		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Conflict of Interest (Policy 210)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of committees/advisory groups (Policy 213)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide copies of discipline policy and/or student handbooks (Policy 506)				✓
Become familiar with district office and procedures:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour district office facilities and services			✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meet district office staff			✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board compensation and expense reimbursement policy, procedures and provide forms (expense voucher, etc.)				✓

Within the First Three Months - January to March	New Board Member	Mentor	Superintendent	Board Admin. Assistant
Explain the following board processes:				
<input type="checkbox"/> School board communication protocols		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Process of communication between the board and superintendent, board and staff, among board members, board and media		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chain of command and procedures for responding to concerns from patrons/staff		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for visiting schools		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures and authority for seeking advice from district legal counsel (Policy 202)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expectations regarding board participation at district and community events		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review process for school board self-evaluation		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review strategic plan		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget development, approval process, and adopted budget for the year		✓	✓	
Review documents related to superintendent's employment:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment contract		✓		
<input type="checkbox"/> Job description		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation form process, criteria, and timeline		✓	✓	
Review process for development and approval of school calendar		✓	✓	
Review personnel related policies and documentation:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide copies of all master agreements and individual contracts			✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> PELRA			✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Tenure 122A.40 - .41			✓	
Attend MSBA Leadership Conference	✓	✓	✓	✓
Register for MSBA Officers' Workshop and Phase III/IV	✓	✓	✓	✓

Within Four to Six Months - April to June	New Board Member	Mentor	Superintendent	Board Admin. Assistant
Provide a tour of the district campus to become familiar with locations of all buildings (maintenance and transportation facilities)		✓	✓	
Explain the status of district facilities: building maintenance projects; current and/or future construction projects			✓	
Prepare for school district graduation				
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirements (Policy 613)		✓	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ceremonies and role of the school board		✓	✓	
Explain process and requirements of Meet and Confer		✓	✓	
Attend MSBA's Phase III/IV	✓	✓	✓	✓
Within Seven to Nine Months - July to September				
Explain key district instructional programs and assessments			✓	
Explain the district evaluation process for administrators, teachers and staff			✓	
Explain the current salary schedules and employee benefits			✓	
Plan to attend MSBA's learning opportunities				
<input type="checkbox"/> Register now for the MSBA Phase I/II training for new board members in August who haven't already attended	✓	✓	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for MSBA's Summer Seminar	✓	✓	✓	✓
Within Ten to Twelve Months - October to December				
Review the collective bargaining process, if applicable		✓	✓	
Review the process for developing and approving next year's budget		✓	✓	
Explain the procedures for program evaluation and curriculum review and revision processes			✓	
Explain programs for specialized populations (e.g., Title I, ELL, gifted, preschool, special education) and the schedule for program review		✓	✓	
Plan to attend MSBA's learning opportunities				
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for negotiations workshops every other year	✓	✓	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Register for MSBA's Leadership Conference in January	✓	✓	✓	✓