



## **MSBA School Board Meeting Guide (Updated September 9, 2020)**

As the 2020-21 school year begins, it is important to keep in mind that the peacetime state of emergency and pandemic declaration remain in effect.

The manner in which a school board holds its meetings is largely a matter of local control. A school board may choose to return to in-person meetings, depending upon its assessment of public health factors. These in-person meetings may continue to be held under [Minnesota Statutes 13D.021](#) (remote meeting statute) because the peacetime state of emergency and the pandemic continue.

MSBA recommends that school boards continue to provide remote access (and include remote access instructions in its meeting notices, etc.) as provided under [Minnesota Statutes 13D.021](#). This approach allows board members, staff, and/or members of the public whose health conditions (or those of people close to them) prevents them from attending an in-person meeting to participate in or watch the board meeting. Especially as the local public health or personal health situation can change from meeting to meeting, continued and consistent use of the remote meeting process can reduce uncertainty.

If the school board believes that meetings may exceed occupancy standards or other public health factors make public attendance infeasible, the school board may provide remote access for the public:

(3) members of the public present at the regular meeting location of the body can hear all discussion and testimony and all votes of the members of the body, unless attendance at the regular meeting location is not feasible due to the health pandemic or emergency declaration; [\[Minnesota Statutes 13D.021\]](#)

Social distancing, hand hygiene, and other public health and cleaning measures should be taken.

Your district can determine how it handles public comment. MSBA Model Policy 206 governs public participation.

Media may request access to the meeting location if the school board returns to in-person meetings. A school board should anticipate this likelihood as it contemplates a return to in-person meetings.