



School Board Meetings

Updated March 19, 2020

If your school board wishes to hold an emergency meeting

Please see the [MSBA COVID-19 Information and Resources](#) page for guidance

Your school board *may choose to hold* a scheduled meeting in the meeting location

1. All meetings should follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for meetings during a health pandemic: (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>)
2. CDC guidance on the number of people gathering at a location depends upon the local situation. Your district may determine the appropriate gathering size. This may include a determination that a gathering of any size is not feasible due to the health pandemic (see below)
3. If a meeting appears that it will be over capacity:
 - a. Individuals may be asked to leave voluntarily
 - b. A request to a group to limit attendance to a representative may be made
 - c. Media should be given priority to remain in light of the media's capacity to inform the public about the meeting
4. Hand hygiene, social distancing, and other practices should be followed

Your board may cancel the meeting. Best practices when cancelling a meeting include:

1. Notification to local media; individuals who have filed a written request for notification of special school board meetings; and staff, including local bargaining units
2. Public notification by posting on the school district website and principal bulletin board and through other communication means used to contact families and the public

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Your school board may meet by telephone conference call or other electronic means

[Minnesota Statutes 13D.021](#) permits school boards to hold a meeting by conference call or other electronic means.

A meeting may be conducted by telephone or other electronic means so long as the following conditions are met:

1. The school board chair, the school district's chief legal counsel, or the superintendent determines that an in-person meeting or a meeting conducted under section [13D.02](#) is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under chapter 12;
2. All school board members participating in the meeting, wherever their physical location, can hear one another and can hear all discussion and testimony. Each school board member participating in a meeting by telephone or other electronic means is considered present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum and participating in all proceedings;
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;
4. At least one school board member, the school district's legal counsel, or the superintendent is physically present at the regular meeting location, unless unfeasible due to the health pandemic or emergency declaration; and
5. All votes are conducted by roll call, so each school board member's vote on each issue can be identified and recorded.

Public access to the meeting by conference call or other electronic means

If telephone or another electronic means is used to conduct a meeting, to the extent practical, the school board shall allow a person to monitor the meeting electronically from a remote location. The school district may require the person making a connection to pay for the documented additional cost that the school district incurs as a result of the additional connection.

Notice of meeting by telephone conference call or other electronic means

If telephone or another electronic means is used to conduct a regular, special, or emergency meeting, the school board shall provide notice of the regular meeting location, of the fact that some members may participate by telephone or other electronic means, and of the provisions of subdivision 3. The timing and method of providing notice is governed by section [13D.04](#) of the Open Meeting Law.

Recommendations

If practical, it is a good practice to record school board meetings held under 13D.021. If practical, the recording should be made available for public viewing.

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If practical, it is a good practice to live-stream school board meetings held under 13D.021. In addition, setting up a remote viewing area near the meeting location may be a good practice. If a remote viewing area is created, it should comply with the CDC's recommendations regarding social distancing, hand hygiene, and other precautions.

Your board may convert all future regular meetings to teleconference meetings pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 13D.021 until further notice

- a. Your board may take this action at a board meeting

Sample Motion/Notice

*The following language offers guidance for your district to consider. Your district may wish to consult with district legal counsel.

Due to the current federal and state emergency declarations and guidance about limiting person-to-person contact due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, all meetings of the (name of school board) will be conducted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 13D.021— Meetings by Telephone or Other Electronic Means until further notice.

Consistent with the federal and state guidance, the [board chair] has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the current health pandemic.

Choose (a) or (b)

- (a) As a result, the __ (date) __ (name of school board) __ meeting will take place at (time) (location) __ with one or more board members possibly participating by telephone or other electronic means. *[if at least one board member, the superintendent, and/or the school district's legal counsel will be at the regular meeting location]*

OR

- (b) Due to the health pandemic, it is not feasible for at least one board member, the superintendent, or the school district's legal counsel to be physically present at the regular meeting location. It is also not feasible for the public to attend at the regular meeting location due to the health pandemic.

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes 13D.021, members of the public are not permitted to attend this meeting due to the current health pandemic. Persons may monitor this meeting from a remote location by [identify the means by which a person may join the call/other electronic means—and include live-stream information if applicable].

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