

## School Board Member Ethics

**Members of the Board of Education accept the responsibility to improve public education in the district. To that end, all Board members will:**

1. Remember that the first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of all students attending the public schools.
2. Obey the laws of Missouri and the United States.
3. Recognize that individual Board members have no authority to speak or act for the Board.
4. Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies.
5. Delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent.
6. Encourage ongoing communications between Board members and stakeholders.
7. Render all decisions based on the available facts and independent judgment rather than succumbing to the influence of individuals or special interest groups.

8. Make every effort to attend all Board meetings.
9. Become informed concerning the issues to be considered at each meeting.
10. Improve boardsmanship by studying educational issues and by participating in in-service programs and training.
11. Support the employment of staff members based on qualifications and not as a result of influence.
12. Maintain a process of regular and systematic assessment of the education system in order to provide accountability for the school district.
13. Avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof.
14. Refrain from using their Board positions for the benefit of family members, business associates or themselves.
15. Express personal opinions but, once the Board has acted, accept the will of the majority.
16. Refrain from divulging confidential information presented during closed sessions, except when required by law.

## Common Motions

1. Amending the motion (majority vote required): "I move to amend the motion by (striking out \_\_\_\_, adding \_\_\_\_ or substituting \_\_\_\_)."
2. Refer to a committee (majority vote required): "I move we refer this matter to a committee." If the motion passes, the president assigns the matter to an existing committee or creates one.
3. Postpone (majority vote required): "I move we postpone consideration of this motion until \_\_\_\_".
4. Table (majority vote required to table and to remove from the table): "I move to lay this item on the table." Tabling a motion means to set it aside temporarily. It is often confused with postponement.
5. Reconsider (majority vote required): "I move to reconsider \_\_\_\_." A motion to reconsider can only be made during the same meeting in which the matter was voted on and must be made by someone who voted on the prevailing side.
6. End debate and move to an immediate vote (two-thirds vote required): "I move the previous question" OR "I call the question."

## Missouri Sunshine Law Basics

**What groups are subject to the Sunshine Law?**

- School Board
- Committees created by or at the direction of the Board to report to the Board or the superintendent

**What are the basic requirements of the Sunshine Law?**

- Post notice of meetings
  - Open: Date, time, place, agenda giving public notice of matters to be considered.
  - Closed: Date, time, place, reference to statutory reason meeting is closed.
- Allow public to attend open meetings
- Take minutes of all meetings
- Allow public access to open records

**What are the basics of voting?**

- All Board decisions must be made by motion and vote.
- Roll call votes are required for:
  - motions to go from open to closed session
  - all motions in closed session.
- No voting by secret ballot.
- Generally, motion passes if majority of the quorum votes affirmatively.
- Majority of the entire Board needed to:
  - Employ a person.
  - Pay a bill.
  - Issue a warrant (bill).
  - Make a contract.
  - Declare property surplus (most districts).

## For more information

[www.msbanet.org](http://www.msbanet.org) or call 800-221-MSBA (6722)

## Summary of Statutory Reasons to Close Meetings, Records & Votes

The meeting, record, or vote may be closed when the record or discussion involves: (Numbers indicate the corresponding section of §6 10.021, RSMo that must be included in meeting notice.)

1. Legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving the district and any confidential communications between the district or its representatives and its attorneys.
2. Leasing, purchase or sale of real estate by the district where public knowledge of the transaction might adversely affect the price.
3. Hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting particular employees by the district when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded.
6. Scholastic probation, expulsion or graduation of identifiable students, including records of individual test scores.
7. Testing and examination materials prior to the test or, if the test is to be given again, before it is given again.
9. Preparation for negotiations with employee groups.
11. Bid specifications prior to finalization or publication.
12. Sealed bids, proposals and related documents and any documents related to a negotiated contract prior to entering into the contract or rejecting all proposals.
13. Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings, or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment.
14. Records that are protected from disclosure by law.
17. Confidential or privileged communications between the district and its auditor.
18. Operational guidelines and policies for use in responding to or preventing terrorist incidents.
19. Existing or proposed security systems and structural plans of real property owned or leased by the district.
20. A record that identifies security systems or access codes or authorization codes for security systems.
21. Records that identify the configuration of components or the operation of a computer, computer system, computer network, or telecommunications network, and would allow unauthorized access to or unlawful disruption of the district's system.
22. Credit card numbers, personal identification numbers, digital certificates, physical and virtual keys, access codes or authorization codes used to protect the security of electronic transactions between the district and another business.

## Questions for Good Decision Making

- Will this action have a positive impact on students?
- How does this align with our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)?
- Do data and research support this decision?
- What does our Board policy say about this issue?

## Electronic Meetings and the Law

- Any discussion of public business by a quorum of Board members (or a quorum of a Board committee) is a meeting that must be posted and minutes taken, so be careful not to discuss public business with multiple Board members (or committee members) using e-mail or texting.
- One or even all Board members can participate in an open Board meeting (or committee meeting) electronically via teleconference, videoconference, Internet chat or E-mail, or Internet message board and may vote in that meeting as long as the votes are not taken by roll call.
- A Board member can participate electronically in a closed Board meeting, but the Board member cannot vote in the meeting unless one of these exceptions applies:
  - o The Board member participates by videoconference; or
  - o There is a district emergency, a quorum of the Board is physically present at the meeting, and the minutes reflect the nature of the emergency.

## Parliamentary Procedure

All MSBA member districts have access to a professional parliamentarian, free of charge.  
Contact Dr. Leonard Young at (816) 289-9103 or e-mail [drleonardyoungprp@yahoo.com](mailto:drleonardyoungprp@yahoo.com).

Important Dates	
April	Board elections and reorganization
April 15	Last date to notify teachers and principals whether contracts are renewed
May 1	Deadline to file personal financial disclosure reports with the Missouri Ethics Commission, if required
May 15	Deadline to provide contracts to teachers and principals
June 1	Deadline for tenured teachers to resign in writing
June 30	Deadline to pass budget
July 1	Beginning of new fiscal year
July/ August/ September	Tax rate hearing held
Sept 1	Deadline to set tax rate (most districts)
Sept 15	Deadline to adopt or readopt conflict of interest policy (BBFA). The policy must be sent biennially to the Missouri Ethics Commission within 10 days after adoption.
October 1	Deadline to set tax rate (certain districts)
December/ January	Candidate filing & typical months for superintendent summative evaluation