



8550

Electronic Communication

Policy 8550

Original Adoption: 08/11/2009
Revision Dates: 8/14/2015
Review Dates: 07/18/2012

Effective Date: 8/15/2015

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Education, Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis Public Schools is committed to operating through the requirements of the Open Meeting Law. Electronic communication possibilities create special circumstances that, unless addressed, could lead to unintentional violations of that commitment. The purpose of this policy is to establish how individual directors should use electronic communications to communicate with each other and with the public.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Use of electronic communication (e-mail, blogs, and social media) should conform to the same standards of judgment, propriety and ethics as other forms of school board related communication.
- B. Directors shall not use e-mail as a substitute for deliberations at duly called and noticed board meetings or for other communications or business properly confined to board meetings.
- C. Board members should be aware that electronic communications, including attachments, received or prepared for use in board business or containing information relating to board business are likely to be regarded as public records, which may be inspected by any person upon request, unless otherwise made confidential by law.
- D. Board members shall avoid reference to confidential information about employees, students or other matters in electronic communications because of the risk of improper disclosure. Board members should comply with the same standards as district employees with regard to confidential information.
- E. Electronic communication of meeting materials should generally be conducted in a one-way communication from the Clerk or Clerk's designee to the Directors.
- F. Inquiries regarding meeting materials should be directed directly back to the Clerk or the clerk's designee. If the clarification, or answer to the inquiry is one of value to other Directors, the Clerk or Clerk's designee may send follow-up materials or information to the Board.
- G. During a public meeting Directors shall not communicate via electronic means with members of the public. Directors may communicate with District Staff or other Board Members on process issues.



- H. Directors wishing to share information with other members should do so through the Clerk or Clerk's designee. Such information shall not invite response or discussion outside of a public meeting. Any materials so distributed that relate to agenda items must be made available to the public.
- I. Directors may communicate with one other Director via electronic means.
- J. Directors shall not forward individual communications to other directors.
- K. Directors who receive list-serve distributions, electronic newsletters, or participates in electronic discussion forums where other Directors are likely to participate should not reply to any distribution or comment so that the reply is copied to the entire distribution group, or any part of the group that might include other Directors. The Director may reply directly to a sender of a message.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies regardless of whether the electronic communication is taking place:

- A. on a:
 - 1. district-provided computer, or electronic device,
 - 2. personal computer, or electronic device,
 - 3. computer or electronic device provided by the Director's employer
- B. through a:
 - 1. district provided e-mail account,
 - 2. personal e-mail account or address
 - 3. social network page or website
 - 4. email address provided by the Director's employer.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D (Open Meeting Law)

Cross References:

MPS Policy 1040 (Student and Staff Data Protection)
MPS Policy 6415 (Internet and Educational Network Use)
MPS Policy 8210 (Meetings of the Board of Directors)
MPS Policy 8220 (Agenda)