



SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY AS A
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER



Mequon
Thiensville
SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Mequon-Thiensville Board of Education provides oversight that enables the public education system to successfully achieve the ideals and goals set out in the Strategic Plan. The Mequon-Thiensville School District Board of Education utilizes a governance model to achieve the strategic goals of the organization.

What is governance?

Governance is the process of providing strategic leadership to a school district in the form of an elected board member. It entails the functions of:

- setting a strategic vision,
- revising, reviewing and developing policy,
- reviewing and approving a budget that is aligned with the strategic plan,
- overseeing and monitoring organizational performance, recruiting, hiring and evaluating the superintendent, and
- ensuring overall accountability within the school district.

The Board will assure that all its members have the knowledge, skills and support necessary to carry out excellence in governance, which will be achieved by:

- training new members and candidates, as well as maintaining and increasing current member skills and knowledge; and
- engaging in external monitoring that helps the Board to exercise confident control over organizational performance.

School District Roles

Public and Parents

- Primary educator of the child (parents)
- Elect School Board members on educational issues
- Vote on levy requests

Board of Education

- Hiring, supervision and appraisal for one employee: the superintendent
- Development of policies that govern schools and creation of district mission/vision/values
- Engagement with the public
- Approval of budgets

Superintendent of Schools

- Management and operation of school district through implementation of Board policies

Principals and Administrators

- Create school-based plans that align with the district's operational plans and vision
- Support for the superintendent
- Implementation of policies and procedures

Staff

- Educate students
- Support for superintendent, principals and administration
- Implementation of policies and procedures

What does it mean for a school board to operate under policy governance?

For a public that may be more familiar with municipal forms of government that manage the day-to-day operations of the organization, school board roles can often be confusing. Simply put, school boards govern rather than manage, appointing a superintendent to oversee and manage district operations. For the Mequon-Thiensville School District, that means following a governance model of leadership that has the administration operating the schools according to the policies and goals set forth by the School Board.

The Board of Education governs through policies and budgets and by defining “why and what we’re providing.”	The Board of Education has and maintains a unified voice after Board action.
The Board of Education operates as a “committee of the whole” with no individual member authority.	The Board of Education is accountable to all residents and students.

Strategic Framework

Our Mission

Together, we ignite each student’s passion for learning, preparing for a life of infinite possibilities.

Our Vision

Each student, every time, empowered to succeed.

The Focus of Our Strategic Plan

- Goal 1: Academic Achievement and Growth for Each Student
Provide instruction and support informed by achievement and progress measures to ensure the academic growth of each student.
- Goal 2: Students' Future Success
Provide each student with the information, opportunities, and skills needed to understand and access pathways toward their future career aspirations.
- Goal 3: Student Belonging and Well-Being
Foster collaboration and develop relationships to enhance the safety, connectedness, and well-being of our students.
- Goal 4: Workforce Environment
Cultivate a workplace environment where professional growth is a priority to strengthen employees’ belonging and impact.
- Goal 5: Stakeholder Relationships
Produce meaningful communication and engagement opportunities with all stakeholders to build strong relationships and trust across the school community.



Meetings

Membership on the Board of Education requires attendance at a variety of meetings held every month as well as participation on District committees and community group assignments.

OPEN MEETING LAW

Unless otherwise allowable under state statute, all Board of Education meetings must be open to the public so that the public has the opportunity to see and hear all discussion, testimony and votes.

Regular Business Meetings

The Board shall hold a meeting at least once each month on a date and at a time and place determined annually by an annual calendar and approved by a vote of the majority of the Board. In general, the Board of Education holds its Regular Business Meetings on the third Monday of each month. The Board currently hosts Hybrid Board Meetings which are held in both the Range Line Conference Room and via Zoom and begin at 6:00 p.m. Meeting schedules and agendas are posted online at <https://www.mtsd.k12.wi.us/board>.

Working Meetings

The School Board also holds Working Meetings to study issues in more depth. No formal action is taken during work sessions of the Board. They are generally held on the first Monday of each month and begin at 6:00 p.m. Working Meetings are also Hybrid Meetings held in the Range Line Conference Room and via Zoom.

Additional Special Business or Closed Session meetings are scheduled as needed.

Public Participation in School Board Meetings

Excerpts from Policy #9125

The Board recognizes the value of participation by the public in deliberations and decisions on school district matters. The public is welcome to participate under guidelines designed to enable the Board to conduct the business before it, and to complete the planned agenda.

Public comment shall occur at a time as defined on the agenda of a "Regular Meeting" or "Special Meeting" under the agenda item "Citizen Communication and Comments".

Public comment may also occur after a "Report and Discussion" item is presented to the Board. This format is intended to give the public the opportunity to comment on an item that has just been presented. The President will ask for comments relating specifically to that topic/presentation.

"Working Board Meetings", which present the Board's opportunity to give feedback to the Administration on topics under development and prior to any formal presentation, will not include the opportunity for public participation. Citizens are always welcome to write or phone the Superintendent or Board with their comments. Closed Meetings will not contain space for public comment as stipulated under Wisconsin Statute.

Committees and Other Assignments

Committee, liaison and representative assignments

Individual School Board members are assigned to serve on board committees, as board representatives to schools, and as district representatives on local and state educational organization committees and task forces.

Such assignments for 2023-24 include:

SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES

- Policy Committee
- Legislative Committee

SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Educational and Community Organizations

- Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Delegate
- Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESA) 1 Representative

The MTSD Board President serves as liaison to the following community organizations (as needed):

- Mequon City Council
- Thiensville Village Board
- Mequon Thiensville Chamber of Commerce

Board members also attend a variety of events sponsored by Mequon and Thiensville civic and educational organizations.

Community Engagement

To allow stakeholders the opportunity to provide timely and meaningful feedback to the Board on various issues, the Board may, at its discretion, meet with school auxiliary organizations and community groups.

Annually, a majority vote is taken to determine if the Board or its designee may meet with District school auxiliary organizations. These discussions are intended for the Board to be able to listen to informed stakeholders and provide an official platform for information sharing.

Board Policy 9212: Stakeholder Communication and Engagement



Time Commitment

The actual time commitment required varies depending on the Board member and the number of issues the School Board is addressing at any given time. Typically, a Board member could expect to devote anywhere from 15 to 25 hours a month studying issues, attending meetings and responding to and communicating with community members.

Compensation

The Board of Education in the Mequon-Thiensville School District is one of a few in the State of Wisconsin who perform their public service on a voluntary basis.

Board of Education Membership



The School Board is made up of seven citizens elected at large by voters in the Mequon-Thiensville School District. Members are elected to three-year overlapping terms, with elections for at least two seats held every year. At the end of a three-year term, members may run for re-election to successive terms. Voting takes place during spring elections in April, and terms begin with the Board business meeting thereafter. If a vacancy occurs in the middle of a term, the School Board names an appointee to serve until the next district election.

At the annual organizational meeting in April or May, the Board elects officers. The Superintendent is an ex-officio member of the Board who facilitates the work of the Board and is responsible to the Board for providing leadership to the District and carrying out Board directives.

2023-24 School Board Members

Shelley Burns

Board President

Term expires: 4/2024

sburns@mtsd.k12.wi.us

414-712-4512

Wendy Francour

Board Vice-President

Term expires: 4/2026

wfrancour@mtsd.k12.wi.us

262-242-4647

Kate Barikmo

Board Member

Term expires: 4/2026

kbarikmo@mtsd.k12.wi.us

262-674-4197

Paula Taebe

Board Member

Term expires: 4/2024

ptaebel@mtsd.k12.wi.us

262-339-9936

Andrew Hopkins

Board Member

Term expires: 4/2024

ahopkins@mtsd.k12.wi.us

414-303-7906

Paul Buzzell

Board Treasurer

Term expires: 4/2025

pbuzzell@mtsd.k12.wi.us

262-389-5221

Jason Levash

Board Clerk

Term expires: 4/2025

jlevash@mtsd.k12.wi.us

920-540-6150

Dr. Matthew Joynt

Superintendent of Schools

mjoynt@mtsd.k12.wi.us

262-238-8504

Responsibilities

As the elected governing body of the Mequon-Thiensville School District, the School Board is responsible to:

- Establish policy. The administration implements policy and supervises school operations.
- Employ and evaluate the Superintendent, the chief administrator who oversees all operations of the School District.
- Advocate for students with policy makers.
- Establish and approve the annual budget.
- Set the annual local school levy.
- Work with the administration to determine the district's educational goals.
- Interpret the needs of the community regarding the educational program.
- Communicate with stakeholders.
- Ratify employee contracts.
- Authorize development and revision of curriculum and student services.
- Approve expenditures and ensure that proper facilities and equipment are available to support teaching and learning in all Mequon-Thiensville Schools.

School Board Elections

Filing for Candidacy



On April 2, 2024, voters of Mequon and Thiensville will elect three residents to serve on the seven-member Mequon-Thiensville School District (MTSD) Board of Education.

The terms of three current School Board seats are expiring in April 2023, and elections for those seats will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

Deadline for Filing of Declarations of Candidacy and Campaign Registration Statements

No later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, all candidates for school board are required to file a Declaration of Candidacy (Form EL-162sd) and a Campaign Finance Registration Statement (Form ETHCF-1) with the school district clerk. Every candidate must file a Campaign Finance Registration Statement regardless of any dollar amount that will be received, incurred, or disbursed.

Location for Filing

Mequon-Thiensville School District
5000 W. Mequon Road

The filing office will remain open until 5:00 p.m. to receive candidate's filings on the day of the filing deadline (January 2, 2024).

For more information on School Board elections, contact the Board Secretary at craimann@mtsd.k12.wi.us or 262-238-8504.



Thank you for considering serving your community as a School Board Member!