

# Serving your Community as a School Board Member

## McFarland School District



The McFarland School District Board of Education provides oversight that enables the public education system to successfully achieve the ideals and goals identified in the District mission, vision, and strategic plan with students at the center. The Board of Education utilizes a policy governance model as the method for providing this oversight.

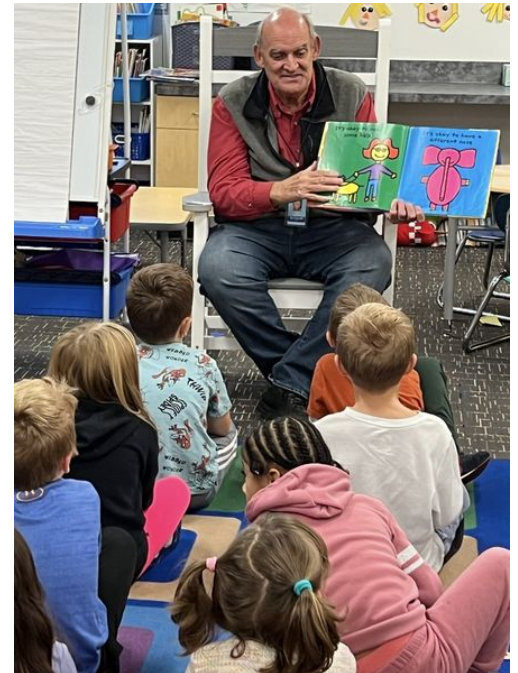
### What is policy governance?

Policy governance is the process of providing strategic leadership to a school district by the Board of Education. 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 of 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;
- self-evaluating their performance as a board; and
- engaging in external monitoring that helps the Board to exercise confident control over organizational performance.



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

## School District Roles

### Public and Parents/Guardians

- Primary educator of the child (parents/guardians)
- Elect School Board members
- 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 the school district through implementation of Board policies

### Principals and Administrators

- Create school-based plans that align with the district’s strategic plan
- Implementation of policies and procedures
- Partner with student caregivers

### Staff

- Educate students
- Implementation of policies and procedures

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## Strategic Framework

### Our Mission

**Meeting the needs of every learner, every day.**

### Our Vision

**An equitable and inclusive community  
committed to student belonging, achievement, and growth.**

### Our Commitments

- **Belonging:** We commit to providing welcoming and inclusive space for learners to be seen, heard, and valued as their authentic selves.
- **Growth:** We support each other in taking risks to grow professionally and positively, with the belief that all students can learn at high levels.
- **Safety:** We create an environment where all members of the school community feel physically, mentally, and emotionally safe.
- **Celebration:** We acknowledge the positive and the possible in our students, our staff, our community, and one another.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We strategically use data and high-quality instruction to advance student belonging, achievement, and growth.
- **Relationships:** We collaborate and build positive, trusting partnerships with our district and our community.
- **Communication:** We engage in clear, comprehensive, and consistent communication to make informed decisions.
- **Compassion:** We strive to teach empathy and kindness to create a community of acceptance for our differences and respect for ourselves and others.

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## Board of Education Member Commitments

### Membership

Membership on the Board of Education requires attendance at regular meetings held every month, along with any special meetings that are scheduled. Board members also participate on District committees and serve in liaison roles.

### 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 first and third Monday of each month. School Board agendas, meeting calendar, and meeting recordings are posted online at

[www.mcfarland.k12.wi.us/district/school-board.cfm](http://www.mcfarland.k12.wi.us/district/school-board.cfm)

### 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.

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

### Open Meetings 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.

### Public Participation in School Board Meetings

The School Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on District matters.

To permit fair and orderly public expression, the Board may provide a period for public comment at any regular meeting of the Board and publish rules to govern such comment in Board meetings.

“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.



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## 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 often include:

#### SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES

- Professional Staff Employee Relations Committee
- Support Staff Employee Relations Committee
- Joint Village of McFarland-McFarland School Board Planning Committee

#### SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Educational and Community Organizations

- Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Delegate
- Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESA) 2 Representative
- WVA (WI Virtual Academies) Representative
- Business and Education Partnership Representative

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

## Compensation

Payment for McFarland School Board Members is set annually at the Annual Meeting-Budget Hearing. Currently, this amount is set at \$3700 annually.

## 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 30 hours a month studying issues, attending meetings and responding to and communicating with community members.

## School Board Membership

The School Board is made up of five citizens elected at large by voters in the McFarland School District. Members are elected to three-year overlapping terms, with elections for at least one seat 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 in late April. 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 including President, Vice-President, Clerk, and Treasurer. 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.





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## Responsibilities

As the elected governing body of the McFarland 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 McFarland Schools.
- Providing neutral, factual information to the public regarding referendums.
- Determine student expulsion orders.



## 2023-24 School Board Members

Craig Howery  
*Board President*  
Term expires: 4/2026  
howeryc@mcfbsd.org

Tom Mooney  
*Board Vice-President*  
Term expires: 4/2025  
MooneyT@mcfbsd.org

Bruce Fischer  
*Board Clerk*  
Term expires: 4/2024  
FischeB@mcfbsd.org

Meghan Fessler  
*Board Treasurer*  
Term expires: 4/2025  
FesslerM@mcfbsd.org

Kate Green  
*Board Member*  
Term expires: 4/2024  
GreenK1@mcfbsd.org

Aaron Tarnutzer  
*Superintendent of Schools*  
TarnutA@mcfbsd.org 608-838-4550

Angie Straub  
*Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board*  
StraubA@mcfbsd.org 608-838-4550

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# On April 2, 2024, voters of the McFarland School District will elect two residents to serve on the five-member McFarland School District (MSD) Board of Education

## Required Paperwork

The following documents must be submitted by **Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 5:00 pm** in the McFarland District Office located in McFarland High School. Please be prepared to show ID and register at the main MHS office if arriving during the school day:

### 1. Campaign Registration Statement (Form CF-1)

### 2. Declaration of Candidacy (Form EL-162SD)

### 3. Nomination Papers for Nonpartisan Office (Form EL-169)

- a. Minimum of 100 Signatures are required (recommended number of signatures is 125).
- b. Make sure each nomination form is filled out completely and correctly in order to avoid disqualification.
- c. The back of Form EL-169 has complete instructions.
- d. School District Restrictions: You (and anyone helping you) are prohibited from distributing nomination papers and campaign literature, or gathering signatures, on school district property during normal school hours or during scheduled school activities.

## Key Dates & Filing Requirements

- **December 1, 2023:** The earliest date nomination papers can be circulated
- **January 2, 2024:** The candidate deadline for filing all documents needed to establish eligibility to appear on the ballot
- **January 9, 2024:** Deadline for drawing of ballot order
- **February 20, 2024:** Spring Primary election
  - A primary is only held when the number of candidates is more than twice the number of vacant seats on the School Board.
  - We only have two open seats, so if there are four or less candidates, a primary is not needed. If we have five or more candidates, a primary is required.
- **April 2, 2024:** School Board Election
- **April 9, 2024:** Board of Canvassers Meeting Deadline
- **April 22, 2024:** Elected Board Members take office