

Math and Science Academy

Adopted: October 2, 2003

Revised: November 16, 2015

Revised: March 18, 2019

Revised: July 18, 2022

Revised: October 17, 2022

201.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the annual Math and Science Academy (MSA) Board of Directors (BOD) election is held in a fair and timely manner.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Electorate:** Any parent/guardian of one or more enrolled students who is listed in official enrollment forms. All staff members and current community members on the board. Any person who meets one or more criteria is entitled to only one ballot.
- B. MSA BOD:** Currently seated members of the MSA BOD.
- C. Election committee chair:** One member of the electorate who is not a candidate in the current election and is not related to any candidate in the current election. Appointed by the MSA BOD.
- D. Election committee members:** Members of the electorate who are not candidates in the current election and are not related to any candidate in the current election. Appointed by MSA BOD. The executive director or their designee shall be a member of this committee.
- E. Nominated Parent/Guardian Candidates:** Parents/Guardians who have self-nominated within the published time limits. Although provisions will be made for write-in candidates, only these candidates' names will appear on the printed ballots.
- F. Nominated Teacher Candidates:** MSA staff members with Minnesota Teaching credentials who are employed at 0.5 FTE or above as teachers and who have self-nominated within the published time limits. Although provision will be made for write-in candidates, only these candidates' names will appear on the printed ballots.
- G. MSA BOD contact person:** A seated member of the MSA BOD who has been selected to answer candidate questions about MSA BOD duties and activities.
- H. MSA List-Serv:** A school-owned and operated email list of MSA parent/guardians, staff, students, and interested community members.

I. MSA Website: A school owned Internet publishing service.

III. ELECTION ACTIVITIES

A. MSA BOD initiates election

B. MSA BOD appoints the election committee chair and election committee members in January.

C. Election Committee meets to:

1. Establish BOD election dates including:
 - .Nominations Open
 - i.Nominations Close
 - ii.Election Committee Meeting for approving nominations
 - iii.Election Begins
 - iv.Election Ends
 - v.Election Committee Meeting to certify results
 - vi.BOD Result Certification
 - vii.New Members Seated
2. Create the nomination form.

D. BOD approves timeline and nomination form at February meeting.

E. Nominations Open

F. The Election Committee and administration recruits parent/guardian candidates.

G. Nominations Close

H. Election Committee meets to:

1. Verify nomination eligibility with the eligibility procedure.
2. Create the ballot for approval by the BOD.
3. Create a marketing plan for approval for the BOD, including dates, profiles, and emails.

I. MSA BOD review detailed election plan and ballot sample.

1. The election committee will present a plan to meet this policy's balloting requirements.
2. This plan will provide details for every step of ballot creation, handling, and tallying.
3. The election committee will present a sample ballot to the MSA BOD for review. This sample will contain the complete candidate list, any instructions, and any other information that will appear on the ballots.

J. The election takes place according to an approved timeline.

K. Elections Committee Results Verification:

1. Must occur prior to the April MSA BOD meeting.
2. The date, time, and details are described in the election committee's plan.
3. Upon the completion of ballot tallying, the election committee will report the election results to the MSA BOD via email, postal mail, or some other date/time stamped means.

L. BOD result verification to take place no later than the May board meeting.

M. Administration or their designee notifies candidates of the results.

N. Seating of new BOD members to take place according to the bylaws.

O. No additional messaging will be distributed to MSA families and staff.

IV. ELECTION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

A. Overall requirements:

1. The election plan must describe the facilities, materials, and assistance required of the MSA BOD, administration, and staff.
2. The plan must describe the steps taken to ensure that individual ballots are anonymous.
3. The plan must describe the steps taken to ensure that balloting materials are distributed only to electorate members.
4. The plan must describe the steps taken to ensure that forged or fraudulent ballots can be identified and excluded from the tally. This should include protections against a single party altering the results.
5. If the plan makes provisions for distributing or publishing campaign information, the plan must describe how this information will be collected and published.

B. Balloting material requirements:

1. The ballot must provide space for write-in candidates for each seat.
2. The ballot must provide voting and submission instructions.
3. The plan must describe the procedure for creating, distributing, collecting, and tallying the balloting materials. The people, locations, and conditions under which these activities occur must be described.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124E (Charter Schools)

Minn. Stat. § 317A (Nonprofit Corporations)

Election Plan Template

I. Election Committee Appointed in February

- A. The Board of Directors (BOD) approves an overall election plan including key dates.
- B. The BOD appoints members to an Election Committee.
 - 1. The Election Committee shall consist of three or more members of the MSA community.
 - 2. The Election Committee creates a detailed election plan.
 - 3. The Election Committee members are not candidates in the current election and are not related to any candidate in the current election.

II. Candidate Nominations Begin in February

- A. The Election Committee notifies the MSA community of the upcoming election to include:
 - 1. The date and times of the election,
 - 2. The number of positions open on the BOD,
 - 3. A description of the BOD duties,
 - 4. The process of nominating candidates for the election,
 - 5. A nomination form to include a Board Candidate Questionnaire.
- B. Blank nomination forms are placed in the office.
- C. Blank nomination forms are placed in staff member internal mail boxes.
- D. Nomination forms and information are sent home with students.

III. Candidate Nominations End in March

- A. All candidate nomination forms are due in the office by 4:30 pm Friday before the next BOD Meeting (preferably two Fridays before).
- B. The Election Committee prepares a voting guide using the information obtained from the Board Candidate Questionnaire.
- C. The Election Committee creates the ballots, and creates instructions for completing and submitting the ballot.
- D. Election Ballots, the Instructions for Ballot Completion, and Candidate Voting Guides are approved at the March BOD meeting.

IV. Distribution and Collection of Election Materials in March and April

- A. Candidate Voting Guides are updated on line by the office manager and plans for a Candidate Forum are finalized, if desired.
- B. Election materials are distributed the Friday following their approval at the March BOD meeting.

C. Election materials shall include:

1. Outer envelope with the name and address of the eligible voter stamped with "Ballot Material".
2. Inner envelope preaddressed to MSA (both address and return address to ensure anonymity) to be used by the voter to submit the ballot. This envelope shall be stamped with "Ballot Materials" to ensure authenticity.
3. The official MSA BOD ballot. Each ballot shall be stamped with "Ballot Materials" to ensure authenticity.

D. One set of election materials is addressed and mailed (USPS) to each eligible voter not currently on MSA's staff. One set of election materials is addressed and placed in each MSA staff member's internal mail box. Individuals eligible to vote include:

1. Each natural parent, step parent, foster parent, or legal guardian of a student enrolled at MSA shall have one vote.
2. Each paid Staff (teacher and non-teacher) shall have one vote.
3. Each MSA Community BOD member shall have one vote.
4. No person shall receive more than one set of ballot materials, nor shall any person have more than one vote.
5. A list of eligible voters, to whom election materials were sent or delivered, shall be maintained by the election committee. Two members of the election committee shall verify the accuracy of this list.
6. If a person, not on the list of eligible voters, provides evidence supporting placement on the eligible voter list, then this person shall be added to the eligible voter list and shall be provided election materials either in person, through the mail (USPS), or by having the material placed in the internal mail box.

E. There is no provision to provide election materials to eligible voters except as described in these procedures.

F. Submitting and Collecting Ballots

1. Each completed ballot shall be sealed by the voter in the preaddressed ballot envelope (only one ballot per envelope will be accepted and counted) and returned to MSA by USPS, or in person, during the voting period approved by the BOD.
2. All ballot envelopes shall remain sealed until they are counted by the election committee.
3. A ballot box shall be located in the main MSA office during normal school hours.
4. All ballot envelopes shall be placed in the ballot box and remain in the ballot box until counted by the election committee.
5. The ballot box shall be directly monitored at all times. Anytime the ballot box cannot be monitored (i.e. during personal breaks or at the end of the business day) it shall be locked in a secure location.

V. Vote Tallying in April

- A. Vote tallying shall be completed as soon as possible following the close of voting.
- B. Only ballots that are in the ballot box will be counted. All materials shall be removed from the ballot box and the ballot box shall be verified empty by two members of the Election Committee.
- C. Only ballots that are sealed in the approved envelope will be counted.
- D. Loose ballots and ballots in unsealed or unapproved envelopes shall not be counted. These invalid ballots shall be collected, marked to identify the discrepancy, and stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled as containing invalid ballots. These invalid ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.
- E. Only ballots actually received by the pre-determined deadline will be counted.
- F. Any ballots received after the pre-determined deadline shall not be counted and shall be stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled as containing ballots received after the deadline. These late ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.
- G. Two Election Committee members (Vote Counters) shall examine each completed Election Ballot and determine who received votes.
 - 1. If the intent is clearly marked on the ballot sheet and the two Election Committee members both agree on the validity of the ballot, the votes for each candidate are counted.
 - 2. If the voter's intention is not clear, no candidate will receive a vote. These invalid ballots shall be collected, marked to identify the discrepancy, and stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled as containing unclear ballots. These ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.
 - 3. No votes shall be counted for any candidate if too many candidates are marked on a ballot. These invalid ballots shall be collected, marked to identify the discrepancy, and stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled as containing ballots for improper number of candidates. These invalid ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.
 - 4. No votes shall be counted for any candidate if more than one ballot is contained in the ballot envelope. These invalid ballots shall be collected, marked to identify the discrepancy, and stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled for improper number of ballots in the official ballot envelope. These invalid ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.
- H. A running total of the number of votes cast for each candidate shall be maintained by a separate Vote Recorder. The vote count for each candidate shall be continuously projected for all Election Committee members to monitor (provisions for the public to witness the vote tally may be made, but are not required)
- I. A running total of the number of valid ballots is maintained by the Vote Counters and the Vote Recorder.
- J. If periodic comparison of the Vote Counters' running total with the Vote Recorder's running total do not match, the discrepancy must be resolved or vote tallying must start over.

- K. Upon completion of counting and recording, if the Vote Counters' running total matches the Vote Recorder's running total, vote tallying is complete. Otherwise, the discrepancy must be resolved or vote tallying must start over.
- L. All valid ballots shall be collected, marked to identify them as valid ballots, and stored in a container, such as an envelope, clearly labeled as containing valid ballots. These valid ballots shall be stored with all other ballots following ballot counting.

VI. Determination of Election Results in April

- A. Candidates are listed (along with the number of votes) in order from highest vote total to lowest vote total
- B. The teacher candidate(s) with the most votes (is) are declared the winner(s) of the open Teacher Seat(s).
- C. The parent candidate(s) with the most votes (is) are declared the winner(s) of the open Parent Seat(s).
- D. The community member candidate(s) with the most votes (is) are declared the winner(s) of the open Community Member Seat(s).
- E. The Election Committee verifies there are no more than four (4) teachers, no more than three (3) parents, and no more than two (2) community members on the new BOD, including continuing BOD members.
- F. The Election Committee prepares a written report for the BOD that includes all candidates' names, vote totals for each, and declared winners.
- G. The BOD chair and the Director are notified of the results.
- H. All candidates are notified by the BOD chair or the Director of the results.

VII. Elections Results Certified by the BOD in April

- A. The Election Committee shall present its written report to the BOD at the April meeting.
- B. The BOD discusses the report and determines any corrective actions, if necessary.
- C. The BOD votes to accept the election report.
- D. The BOD votes to certify the election results and releases the results to the public.

VIII. New board members are seated at the June meeting