

Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, August 3, 2026 3:15 PM

Tate Hall Conference Room, 615 Olof Hanson Drive, Faribault, MN 55021

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Meeting Minutes Review**

3. **Policies to Review from MSBA: None**

4. **Policies to Review for a Second Reading: None**

5. **Policies to Review Before Revision: None**

6. **Policies to Review Prior to a First Reading**

6.A. 104 - Vision, Mission, and Core Values

7. **Policies to Review for Reauthorization**

7.A. 120 - MSA Website and Social Media
Accessibility

7.B. 214 - Out of State Travel by School Board
Members

7.C. 401 - Equal Employment Opportunity

7.D. 531 - Pledge of Allegiance

8. **Adjourn**

Minutes of Policy Committee Meeting

Minnesota State Academies Board

A Policy Committee Meeting of the Minnesota State Academies Board was held on Monday, June 08, 2026, beginning at 3:15pm via Zoom.

Present: Terry Wilding – Superintendent, Katie Wangberg – Board Member, Heather Smisek – HR Director, Justin Cyboron – Director of Curriculum and Educational Programs, Brittany Thomforde – Director of Student Support Services

Absent: Hernan Moncada – Board Member

1. Call to Order: 3:17pm

2. Meeting Minutes Review: None (May meeting canceled)

3. Policies to Review from MSBA: None

4. Policies to Review for a Second Reading:

A. Policy 516 – Student Medication

- We received no feedback from site council and there are no revisions before sending back to the board for approval.

5. Policies to Review Before Revision: None

6. Policies to Review Prior to a First Reading: None

7. Policies to Review for Reauthorization:

A. Policy 410 – FMLA

- No revisions to this policy

B. Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence

- No revisions to this policy

C. Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect of Physical or Sexual Abuse

- No revisions to this policy

D. Policy 415 – Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults

- No revisions to this policy

E. Policy 506 – Student Discipline

- We did a good review of this policy last year. Section III C. Directors – We will search for a different word to use instead of “consult” as it sounds one sided. Terry will look into the most recent MSBA policies for all 5 of these and see if there’s any recent updates to incorporate.

8. MSA Parent/Student Handbook (Review of proposed revisions)

- Page 4 – Added policy and procedure links for viewing. Changed verbiage from “guiding beliefs” to “core values”.
- Page 6 – Changed Grading Policy. Standard based grading for ECE/Elementary is not fully implemented yet.
- Page 7 – Plagiarism and Cheating: Added inappropriate use of AI tools to create work that is not their own. Teachers will elaborate on what is ok and what is not.
- Page 8 – Food/Drinks: Used to state no carbonated beverages allowed, now states specifically soda or energy drinks.
- Page 9 – Post Secondary Enrollment Options: referred to state statute according to law.
- Page 9 – MSA Online Academy Classes: Clearly defined that our students are not eligible unless homebound.
- Page 11 – Make-up Work: Added a minimum of two days for each day absent with possible extensions based on extenuating circumstances.
- Page 14 – Self-Destructive Behaviors and/or Statements: Safety plan must be established prior to re-entry to the school program. Old language was too specific. We broadened the language to support students’ safe return to school.
- Page 15 – Athletics and Extracurricular Activities: We will create an athletic handbook for each campus – this is a work in progress.
- Page 17 – Personal Electronic Communication Devices: Broke this section out into MSAD and MSAB as students have different needs. Rules for middle and high school dorm students are more specific for bedtime.
- Page 18 – Personal Electronic Communication Devices: Inappropriate use of personal devices may lead to privileges being suspended.
- Page 19 – Conditions for Brining your Vehicle on Campus: Added “based on a reasonable suspicion” to vehicle search section. Added lend or share bikes at own risk. MSA assumes no responsibility.
- Page 23 – ECE Students/Extended ASP Events: Added that parents are responsible to pick their child up after 5pm.
- Page 26 – Family Participation and Approach Towards Addressing Behavior: Made only minor changes to this section.
- Page 27 – After School Program/Extended ASP Events: Added that parents are responsible to pick their child up after 5pm.
- Page 28 – Dormitory Facilities: Clarification on what is allowed in the dorm. Limitations on wall postings, etc.
- Page 29 – Dormitory Facilities: Changed language about visitors to the dorm to make it more clear that visitors are not allowed in dorm rooms. Students in another student’s room is not allowed.
- Page 30 – Food in Dormitory Rooms: Added adherence to nut awareness policy for allergies on campus.

- Page 30 – Contact with Parents/Families: Added language about tech devices and phone usage specific to elementary, middle and high school students. Simplified electronic devices section.
- Page 31 – Television, Videos, Games, and other Electrical Equipment: Added that unrated movies/videos must be preapproved by student life staff. Must have prior approval and supervision for unrated video games.
- Page 33 – Dormitory Schedules and Activities: Added that older students may be expected to set alarm and wake up on their own. Dorm hours – visitors or tours are not allowed without approval while school is in session. Our ultimate goal is to protect students.
- Page 38 – Facts about Suspension and Expulsion: Added that the determination of consequences is based on evidence gathered by administrators. MSA is not a court system.
- Page 53 – Nutrition/Food Services: Changed language to iterate that MSA participates in the MN Free School Meals Program, and we encourage families to complete an Educational Benefits Application with a link that will be there in July.

9. Adjourn: 3:53pm

Policy #: 104
Title: VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES-GUIDING BELIEFS
Date of Initial Approval: 09-16-2020
Revision/Re-authorization Dates:
Reviewers: MSA Superintendent; MSA Board

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear statement of the purpose, vision, and guiding beliefs for the Minnesota State Academies (MSA).

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Minnesota State Academies believes that a vision, mission, and guiding beliefs for MSA should be adopted. The vision statement should be an overview of what MSA strives to provide for our students. The mission statement should be based on the beliefs and values of the MSA community, should direct any change efforts, and should be the basis on which decisions are made. ~~The guiding beliefs should provide structure and support regarding day-to-day operations of MSA programs.~~

The MSA board, on behalf of, and with extensive participation by the MSA community, should develop a consensus among its members regarding the nature of the programs that the MSA board governs, the purposes it serves, the constituencies it should consider, and the results MSA programs intend to produce.

III. VISION STATEMENT

MSA empowers every student to achieve, care, and thrive ~~in an ever-changing world.~~

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

~~MSA empowers students to thrive in school and life through an accessible, inclusive, and language-rich educational environment, supported by statewide resources and professional expertise for parents, families, community partners, and educational programs across Minnesota.~~

~~MSA provides a rigorous, student-centered educational program in a fully accessible, language-rich environment to maximize each student's full potential.~~

~~Additionally, MSA provides statewide resources and professional expertise to parents, families, partners, and educational programs in Minnesota.~~

V. CORE VALUES

- 1. Student-Centered Excellence:** We prioritize student learning, growth, independence, and well-being across academics, social development, and life skills in every decision.
- 2. Accessibility & Language Equity:** We ensure that every student can fully participate and succeed by providing full access through ASL, Braille, assistive technology, and inclusive practices.
- 3. Belonging & Identity:** We honor culture, identity, and diverse lived experiences by creating inclusive opportunities for students to engage in academic, social, and extracurricular experiences.
- 4. Family & Community Partnership:** We value families, community members, school districts, and statewide partners as vital collaborators in supporting student success.

5. **Collaboration & Statewide Impact:** We partner with families, districts, and statewide stakeholders to expand access, share expertise, and strengthen outcomes.

~~VI. CURRENT GUIDING BELIEFS~~

~~MSA Believes:~~

- ~~● Families are valued partners in fostering the development of each student's full potential.~~
- ~~● Students are the primary focus of all decisions and they will have opportunities to participate in decision-making.~~
- ~~● Students thrive by becoming independent, active, lifelong learners to the greatest extent possible.~~
- ~~● Students' development of understanding, appreciation, and respect for individual and cultural diversity is valued.~~
- ~~● Students require an accessible language and communication-rich environment so continuous opportunities for planned and incidental learning can occur in and outside the classroom.~~
- ~~● Students require ongoing opportunities to directly interact with a variety of peers and role models to develop positive self-identity, as well as social-emotional and advocacy skills.~~
- ~~● Students gain valuable life skills and benefit from other learning opportunities in a safe, caring, supportive, and accessible environment during school, after school (Student Life*), and community-based activities.~~
- ~~● Students must be given the tools necessary to locate, access, and use resources/supports within their school and community.~~
- ~~● Students prepare for a successful transition to education, work, and citizenship after graduation through an array of quality programs, services, and the use of state-of-the-art technology.~~
- ~~● Students achieve communication competency and gain access to the world by maximizing their use of assistive technology.~~
- ~~● All staff members need to have high expectations for all students, so that students can develop high expectations for themselves.~~
- ~~● All instructional and residential staff members are responsible to provide appropriate resources, universal design for learning, and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.~~
- ~~● All staff members require ongoing quality professional development and support to optimize their ability to meet the needs of students.~~

- ~~All staff members are responsible for contributing to the achievement of the school's vision, mission, and guiding beliefs.~~
- ~~All MSA community members thrive with effective communication and collaboration.~~
- ~~MSA is a valued resource for information and outreach activities to support students, parents, families, and school districts statewide.~~

For Our Blind, Visually Impaired, and Deafblind students, MSA Believes:

- ~~The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)* is foundational to the instructional program and provides a pathway to independence.~~
- ~~Instruction in Braille and the use of Braille throughout the student's educational program, as appropriate to the strengths and needs of the student, is vital for maximizing students' literacy and academic development.~~
- ~~Accessible Educational Materials (AEM: Braille, large print, audio, digital) are vital for maximizing every student's academic, cognitive, social-emotional, and self-identity potential.~~
- ~~Orientation and Mobility (O&M) skills are vital for students to know where they are and how to safely navigate their world.~~

For Our Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind students, MSA Believes:

- ~~Having a cultural and linguistic perspective of Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind people is a core value.~~
- ~~A comprehensive, bilingual (American Sign Language & English) education that results in proficiency in both languages is vital for maximizing every student's academic, cognitive, social-emotional, and self-identity potential.~~
- ~~Providing auditory, spoken, and tactile language services, as appropriate to the strengths and needs of the student, is an important component of our bilingual instructional program.~~
- ~~Ongoing direct communication using American Sign Language with peers and staff is a foundational aspect of our program.~~

VII. REVIEW

The MSA board will review and reauthorize MSA's Vision, Mission, and **Core Values Guiding Beliefs** every three years during the annual board organization meeting. The MSA board will conduct a comprehensive review of the vision, mission, and **core values guiding beliefs** every five to seven years as part of the accreditation process.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement)

Minn. Rule Parts 3501.0010-3501.0180
Minn. Rule Parts 3501.0200-3501.0270

Policy #: 120
Title: MSA WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY
Date of Initial Approval: 11-16-2017
Revision/Re-authorization Dates: 12-16-2020; 09-27-2023
Reviewers: MSA Superintendent; MSA Director of Community Engagement

I. PURPOSE

Minnesota State Academies (MSA) is a state agency and a school district. As part of our accountability and function as a government agency, it is the right of all members of the public to access public information. MSA is committed to providing access to all individuals – with or without disabilities – who wish to access MSA websites, documents, applications, or services to obtain information or resources.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Some users may not be able to see, hear, or process information in particular formats, may have difficulty reading or understanding text, or may not be able to use a keyboard or mouse. We have developed our information, websites, and web content to ensure compatibility with common adaptive technology by utilizing the State of Minnesota's Accessibility Standard, which is based on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines **2.2**, in the development of our products and services. Users may access the Minnesota IT Services website for additional information.

The State of Minnesota Accessibility Standards can be found at:

<https://mn.gov/mnit/government/policies/accessibility/>

III. PROCEDURES FOR ENSURING ACCESSIBLE WEBSITE AND/OR SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

- a. Content developed by MSA staff that is posted on our websites and/or social media must be carefully developed to maximize accessibility for everyone. This includes the following:
 - i. For all videos, add captions, voice-over, and a short video description.
 - ii. For written material, ensure that the material is compatible with common screen-reading software.
 - iii. For pictures, add a short picture description.
 - iv. Video and picture description may be added to "alternate text" if desired.
 - v. On our websites, the following statement must be posted: "The MSA *[website or social media page]* may contain links to non-MSA publications and websites. MSA has no control over the accessibility of those non-MSA publications and external websites. Links are provided as a service to our audience, in an effort to provide additional information where applicable."
 - vi. On our social media pages, if we provide a link to non-MSA publications and/or websites, the same statement (above) must be posted in the comments section.
- b. MSA websites navigation must include the following accessibility features as outlined on the MNIT website.

- i. Common Look and Feel: pages should have a simple design, with a similar layout, making site navigation easier.
 - ii. Skip Navigation: allowing users to go directly to the substantive content of the webpage.
 - iii. Accessible Images: Images on the website contain alternative text, which assistive technologies can read aloud to the user to provide access to information presented visually.
 - iv. Adjustable Text Size: Text size can be increased with the web browsers' text size adjustment feature.
- c. Content on MSA websites and social media sites must adhere to the State of Minnesota Accessibility Standard.

Policy #: 214
Title: OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL BY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS
Date of Initial Approval: 06-12-2018
Revision/Re-authorization Dates: 06-02-2021; 10-25-2023
Reviewers: MSA Superintendent; MSA Fiscal Services Director

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to control out-of-state travel by MSA board members as required by law.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

MSA board members have an obligation to become informed on the proper duties and functions of a board member, to become familiar with issues that may affect the Academies, to acquire a basic understanding of school finance and budgeting, and to acquire sufficient knowledge to comply with federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and MSA policies that relate to their functions as board members. Occasionally, it may be appropriate for board members to travel out of state to fulfill their obligations.

III. APPROPRIATE TRAVEL

Travel outside the state is appropriate when the board finds it proper for board members to acquire knowledge and information necessary to allow them to carry out their responsibilities as board members. Travel to other out-of-state meetings for which the member intends to seek reimbursement from MSA should be preapproved by the board.

IV. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Reimbursable expenses include transportation, meals, lodging, registration fees, required materials, parking fees, tips, and other reasonable and necessary expenses which are referenced in MSA Policy #740. Generally, it is expected that the MSA Business Office will be arranging most of the travel expenses prior to the activity (transportation, lodging, registration fees, reasonable accommodations outlined in MSA Policy #440 and/or required materials, etc.) and reimburse board members for only "out-of-pocket" expenses that occur during the trip. Exceptions to this must be approved by the board.

V. REIMBURSEMENT

- A. Requests for reimbursement must be itemized on the official MSA form for non-state employees and are to be submitted to the Superintendent's office. Itemized receipts for lodging, commercial transportation, registration, and other reasonable and necessary expenses must be attached to the reimbursement form.
- B. Automobile travel shall be reimbursed at the mileage rate set by the state of Minnesota. Commercial transportation shall reflect economy fares and shall be reimbursed only for the actual cost of the trip.
- C. Amounts to be reimbursed shall be within the board's approved budget allocations, including attendance at workshops and conventions.
- D. Amounts for reimbursement shall follow the same guidelines and regulations that determine reimbursement for all other school employees. (MSA Policy #740)

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 2 (School Board Member Training)

Minn. Stat. § 471.661 (Out-of-State Travel)

Minn. Stat. § 471.665 (Mileage Allowances)

Minn. Op. Atty. Gen. 1035 (Aug. 23, 1999) (Retreat Expenses)

Minn. Op. Atty. Gen. 161b-12 (Aug. 4, 1997) (Transportation Expenses)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 212 (School Board Member Development)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 412 (Expense Reimbursement)

MSA Policy #740 – Special Expense/Out-of-State Travel Policy

Policy #: 401
Title: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
Date of Initial Approval: 11-17-2011
Revision/Re-authorization Dates: 01-19-2012; 11-21-2013; 06-12-2018; 06-02-2021; 10-25-2023
Reviewers: MSA Superintendent; MSA Human Resources Office

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants for employment at the Minnesota State Academies (MSA) and MSA employees.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The policy of the Minnesota State Academies is to provide equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. MSA does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status, or veteran status. MSA also provides reasonable accommodations for disabled employees.
- B. The Minnesota State Academies prohibit the harassment of any individual for any of the categories listed above. For information about the types of conduct that constitute impermissible harassment and MSA's internal procedures for addressing complaints of harassment, please refer to MSA Policy #413 regarding harassment and violence.
- C. This policy applies to all areas of employment including hiring, discharge, promotion, compensation, facilities, or privileges of employment.
- D. It is the responsibility of every MSA employee to follow this policy.
- E. Any person having a question regarding this policy should discuss it with the MSA Human Resources Office.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq. (Age Discrimination in Employment Act)
29 U.S.C. § 2615 (Family and Medical Leave Act)
38 U.S.C. § 4211 et seq. (Employment and Training of Veterans)
38 U.S.C. § 4301 et seq. (Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act)
42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities)
42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 402 (Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 405 (Veteran's Preference)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSA Policy #413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSA Affirmative Action Plan

Policy #: 531
Title: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Date of Initial Approval: 01/22/2004
Revision/Re-authorization Dates: 01/23/2014; 11/16/2017; 10/21/2020; 09/27/2023
Reviewers: MSAB/MSAD Directors; MSA Superintendent

I. PURPOSE

The Board of the Minnesota State Academies recognizes the need to provide instruction in the proper etiquette, display, and respect of the United States Flag. The purpose of this policy is to provide for recitation of the pledge of allegiance and instruction in school to help further that end.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Students attending the Minnesota State Academies shall recite or sign the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. The recitation or signing will be conducted:

- A. By each individual classroom teacher or the teacher's surrogate; or
- B. Over a school intercom or video-distribution system by a person designated by the school principal or other person having administrative control over the school.

III. EXCEPTIONS

Any student or staff may decline to participate in recitation or signing of the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Students and staff must respect the choice of others to not recite or sign the pledge.

IV. INSTRUCTION

Students will be instructed in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag and in patriotic exercises.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 121A.11, Subd. 3 (Pledge of Allegiance)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.11, Subd. 4 (Instruction)

[Note: Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by students and instruction of students as provided in this policy are required by statute. Also, the statement in Part III., above, must be included in the student handbook or a policy guide. A local school board or a charter school board of directors may waive these statutory requirements by a majority vote taken annually. If the local school board or charter school board of directors waives the requirement to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, it may adopt a district or school policy regarding the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.]