

Joint Site Council

Wednesday, September 9, 2026 2:00 PM

Faribault MN, 615 Olof Hanson Drive, Faribault, MN 55021

1. **Welcome and Roll Call**
2. **Open Meeting Law Training**
3. **Site Council Updates**
4. **Breakout Sessions:**
 - **MSAB Elections and Committee Development**
 - **MSAD Committee Development**
5. **Adjournment**

Open Meeting Law: What You Need to Know



Minnesota State Statutes, Chapter 13D:



Minnesota's Open Meeting Law (OML) ensures transparency, accountability, and public trust in government decision making

DUTIES OF THE MSA BOARD

(Minn. Stat. 125A.62)

- Governing body of MSA, oversees both campuses. Supervises the superintendent
- Establish and appoint members to Site Councils at both campuses
- Ensure representation from stakeholder groups
- Members appointed by the Governor, but Site Councils may recommend board appointments

PURPOSE OF THE SITE COUNCIL (from Bylaws)

- A. Conduit for communication between students, staff, and stakeholders and the MSA Board.
- B. Review and provide input on proposed policies, procedures, program development, and upcoming projects at MSA.
- C. Develop plans and complete tasks related to MSA activities, events, and school goals.

DUTIES OF THE SITE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- Represent your stakeholders and share their input with the Site Council.
- Site Council makes recommendations/requests to the board (the Vice Chair brings these recommendations to Board regular meetings).

Why OML Exists

- Prevents decisions in secret
- Keeps the public informed
 - Imagine if all board decisions were made in private emails or in secret meetings – how would that affect trust?
- Gives the public a chance to observe and engage
 - Note: OML does not guarantee the right to speak or participate, just to attend



What is a "Meeting"?

- When a quorum (majority) of a body is present AND
- They discuss, decide, or receive information about official business

Types of meetings

- Regularly scheduled meetings
 - scheduled in advance
- Special meetings
 - Any meeting not on the regular schedule, focuses on specific agenda items (cannot discuss other items not on agenda at the last minute in special meetings)
- Emergency meetings
 - (urgent circumstances, like disasters)
- Closed meetings
 - Only to discuss not-public data (such as employee performance or private educational data)

Other OML Rules to Know

- Materials given to members must also be available to the public
- If voting takes place, all votes must be recorded
- Email CAUTION (more on that later):
 - Fine for logistics like asking to add items to the agendas, meeting reminders
 - Risky if discussing or deciding business - this can become a "meeting"
- Meetings must be in places open to the public
 - If virtual, access information must be shared (i.e. Zoom link made public)
- Avoid serial meetings (meeting/emailing with other members 1:1 in a row or small groups at a time to avoid quorum)

Penalties for Violations

- \$300 fine for intentional violation
- 3 violations = removal from office
- Courts may award attorney fees to complainants (up to \$13,000)
- Actions taken in violation still stand, but members may be personally liable

Email & OML: What's OK vs. What's Not

OK: Staff emails agenda to all members

Risky: One member asks all other members for input on a situation (opinion on a topic being proposed for consideration)

Violation: 4 out of 7 members email each other about changing a school policy

You all have MSA email addresses for this purpose

Guidance from MN Data Practices

- Avoid "reply all" discussions among a quorum
- Never use email to deliberate or decide issues
- Keep email use limited to logistics, scheduling, or sharing information

Sources:

- Minnesota Data Practices Office
 - [Mn.gov/admin/data-practices](https://mn.gov/admin/data-practices)
- Minnesota OML
 - Chapter 13D
- MSA Board statute
 - 125a.62
- Moberg v. Independent School District 281 (1983)
 - Defined OML