



# New Board Member Orientation YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

There is a great deal for new board members to learn about the roles and responsibilities in providing effective leadership for the community in fulfilling its vision and mission for quality education of all students. In addition to the state-mandated 18.5 hours of training completed within their first 12 months of school board service, MSBA recommends that the local board president and superintendent provide district-level orientation to the new school board members in order to provide a smooth transition into effective board service. Consider organizing the printed materials into an indexed notebook or orientation manual.

While printed materials are useful reference tools, they cannot take the place of personal interaction. Board presidents and superintendents are encouraged to conduct learning sessions for new board members. These learning sessions may be conducted over several months so that the new board members have time to process the information and develop questions regarding their governance role.

The following suggestions are offered as guidance for board presidents and superintendents who want to get new board members off to a good start. In addition, including all board members in the sessions may provide an opportunity for continued board professional development to strengthen governance practices. Check out the ***New Board Member Resources*** on the MSBA website at [www.mosba.org](http://www.mosba.org), to find these and other resources.

- CBM New Board Member Training Schedule
- A Few Basics of Board Service
- Foundational Principles of Effective Governance
- Nepotism and Conflict of Interest
- Sunshine Law Basics
- Board Member Ethics
- School Board Members and Confidentiality

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**PRIOR TO FIRST BOARD MEETING**

**FIRST THREE MONTHS (APRIL - JUNE)**

**FOUR TO SIX MONTHS (JULY - SEPTEMBER)**

**SEVEN TO NINE MONTHS (OCTOBER - DECEMBER)**

**TEN TO TWELVE MONTHS (JANUARY - MARCH)**

PRIOR TO FIRST BOARD MEETING	NEW BOARD MEMBER	BOARD PRESIDENT	SUPER-INTENDENT	BOARD SECRETARY
Schedule orientation with the new board members, board president and superintendent	✓	✓	✓	
Provide your contact information to the board secretary	✓			✓
Provide and explain electronic access and /or equipment, if needed		✓		✓
Register for <b>MSBA CBM Essential training</b> for new board members (meets state requirement)	✓			✓
Examine the <b>new board member resources</b> on the MSBA website	✓	✓	✓	
Communicate first board meeting details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Date, time and location of meeting</li> <li>□ Board packet delivery date, method and expectations</li> <li>□ Basic parliamentary procedures used during board meetings</li> <li>□ Procedures for taking oath of office and board reorganization</li> <li>□ Standards of dress; what to expect</li> </ul>		✓		✓
Explain the Sunshine Law and corresponding district policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Posting the agenda</li> <li>□ Keeping minutes</li> <li>□ Closed sessions</li> <li>□ Electronic communication</li> <li>□ Confidentiality; provide copy of School Board Members and Confidentiality (under <u>Resources for Board Presidents</u> on MSBA website)</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
Provide copies of or access to board policies		✓		✓
Provide district information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Contact information for board members and superintendent</li> <li>□ Board meeting schedule for the year</li> <li>□ District calendar</li> <li>□ Map of geographical boundaries and attendance zones for district and buildings</li> <li>□ Organizational chart of district administration and management staff</li> </ul>			✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓

Check out the New Board Member Resources on the MSBA website at [www.mosba.org](http://www.mosba.org), to find more resources.

WITHIN FIRST THREE MONTHS (APRIL - JUNE)	NEW BOARD MEMBER	BOARD PRESIDENT	SUPER-INTENDENT	BOARD SECRETARY
Explain the laws and corresponding district policies regarding nepotism and conflict of interest		✓	✓	
Examine policies regarding board governance ( Section B of MSBA Policy Manual)		✓	✓	
Explain district communication protocols: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Process for board meeting agenda development and requesting agenda items</li> <li>□ Process of communication between the board and superintendent; board and staff; among board members; board and media</li> <li>□ The chain of command and procedures for responding to concerns from patrons and/ or staff</li> <li>□ Procedures for visiting schools</li> <li>□ Procedures for seeking advice from legal counsel</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
Provide a district overview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ District accreditation status and areas of strength and needed improvement</li> <li>□ District priorities outlined in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) or strategic plan</li> <li>□ District plans such as professional development; long-range facilities; safety and security; schedules for program and curriculum evaluation, etc.</li> <li>□ District financial status, including proportionality of funding; bond indebtedness; district audits; and the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR)</li> <li>□ Introduction to central office staff members</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
Explain the upcoming budget development and approval process		✓	✓	
Explain the expectations regarding board participation at district and community events		✓		
Register for <b>MSBA CBM Essential training</b> for new board members, if you have not already done so	✓			✓

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WITHIN FOUR TO SIX MONTHS (JULY - SEPTEMBER)	NEW BOARD MEMBER	BOARD PRESIDENT	SUPER-INTENDENT	BOARD SECRETARY
Provide training on the superintendent evaluation process and tool		✓		
Share the district communication plan for providing information to the community (i.e. district newsletters; website organization and updates; alerts; media)		✓	✓	
Share the district communication plan for receiving input from the community (i.e. community involvement in planning; providing public comment at board meetings; annual surveys; community forums; committees)		✓	✓	
Provide a tour of the district campus to become familiar with locations of all buildings, including maintenance and transportation facilities		✓	✓	
Provide copies of or access to minutes from previous open board meetings		✓		✓
Explain the newly released District Report Card and Annual Performance Report (APR)		✓	✓	
Register for <b>MSBA CBM Essential training</b> for new board members, if you have not already done so	✓			✓

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## WITHIN SEVEN TO NINE MONTHS (OCTOBER - DECEMBER)

	NEW BOARD MEMBER	BOARD PRESIDENT	SUPER-INTENDENT	BOARD SECRETARY
Explain key district instructional programs and assessments (i.e. reading and math programs; college and career readiness; technology implementation; assessment practices)		✓	✓	
Explain the district evaluation process for administrators, teachers and staff		✓	✓	
Explain the process for the superintendent summative evaluation		✓	✓	
Explain the terms of the current superintendent contract		✓		
Explain the current salary schedules and employee benefits		✓	✓	
Explain the status of district facilities: building maintenance projects; current and/or future construction projects		✓	✓	
If you have not fulfilled the state training requirement, register now for the <b><u>MSBA CBM Essential training</u></b> for new board members	✓			✓

Check out the *New Board Member Resources* on the MSBA website at [www.mosba.org](http://www.mosba.org), to find more resources.

WITHIN TEN TO TWELVE MONTHS (JANUARY - MARCH)	NEW BOARD MEMBER	BOARD PRESIDENT	SUPER-INTENDENT	BOARD SECRETARY
If you have not fulfilled the state training requirement, register now for the <b><u>MSBA CBM Essential training</u></b> for new board members	✓	✓		✓
Explain the Collective Bargaining process, if applicable		✓	✓	
Explain the process for filling district vacancies		✓	✓	
Explain the process for developing and approving next year's budget		✓	✓	
Explain the procedures for program evaluation and curriculum review and revision processes		✓	✓	
Explain programs for specialized populations ( i.e. Title I, ELL, gifted, preschool, special education) and schedule for program review		✓	✓	

**Resource List**

Board Member Handbook (2013). Des Moines, IA: Iowa Association of School Boards.

New Board Member's Resource Handbook (2014). Austin, TX: Texas Association of School Boards.

Orienting New School Board Members On The Way to Becoming a High-Performing Board Team (2014). Springfield, IL: Illinois Association of School Boards.

A School Board Member's Resource Guide: First Year Orientation (2014). Lansing, MI: Michigan Association of School Boards.

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