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SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school district has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school district. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of the public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
4. Establishing practical and simple goals.
5. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

SOURCE: MASC

Approved: June 13, 2019, September 2, 2021

Reviewed: June 13, 2019, September 2, 2021

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

At regular intervals, the School Committee will evaluate the procedures and practices relating to the effectiveness of their meetings, operations, and relationships. All attempts will be made to assess said procedures on an annual basis. The following areas are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee - Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and Committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if an evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the public school system. It consists of five (5) members, each elected on a non-partisan ballot by the people for terms of three (3) years. Elections for the School Committee occur annually as part of town-wide elections.

It owes its existence to the Massachusetts General Laws, which decree that each public school system will be governed by a School Committee. The School Committee

Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the State's educational policies and guide the educational process.

The School Committee possesses all powers and duties conferred upon it by state law. Certain legislative powers are also granted to the Committee by the town charter and code. The Committee alone may determine policies and practices and employ staff to implement its direction for the proper education of the children of the town of Canton.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees

Approved: June 13, 2019, September 2, 2021

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Policy Development.** The Committee is responsible for the development of legislation to guide administrative action and continuous academic achievement in the District.
2. **Superintendent Oversight.** The Committee is responsible for hiring, supervision and evaluation of the Superintendent.
3. **Financial Direction.** The Committee is responsible for review, monitoring and approval of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. **Community Engagement.** The Committee is responsible for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. **Educational Planning and Evaluation.** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational, health, and safety goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuous improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

Personnel Matters

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent there to, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School Physician, School Nurses, and Supervisor of Attendance. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37](#) specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: [BB](#), School Committee Legal Status, [BDG](#), School Attorney

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

1. The Committee shall be the policy-forming body of the Canton Public Schools and with the assistance of the Superintendent of Schools and administrative staff, shall establish general policies governing the operation of the schools. Having adopted these policies, the Committee shall designate to its chief executive officer, the Superintendent of Schools, the authority to carry them out, and shall require of them such reports as are deemed necessary to determine both the manner in which they have been administered and the wisdom of the policies themselves.

The Committee, on the basis of policies established, shall determine the general scope and nature of the educational program, including such matters as the number and types of schools and departments to be maintained, and the variety and character of the services to be provided.

The Committee shall have the power to select and terminate the Superintendent, review and approve budgets for public education in the District and establish educational goals and policies for the schools in the district consistent with the requirement of law and statewide goals and standards established by the Board of Education.

2. The School Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and fix his/her/their compensation. A Superintendent employed under this section (S.71 SEC. 59) or section 60 or 63 shall manage the system in a fashion consistent with state law and the policy determinations of that School Committee. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Committee may also establish and appoint positions of Assistant Superintendent or Associate Superintendent who shall report to the Superintendent. The School Committee shall fix the compensation paid to such Assistant or Associate Superintendents. The School Committee shall approve or disapprove the hiring into said positions.

3. The School Committee shall appoint one or more school physicians and registered nurses and assign them to public schools within its jurisdiction; shall provide them with all proper facilities for the performance of their duties, and shall assign one or more physicians to the examination of children who apply for health certificates required by Section 87 of Chapter 149.

4. A School Committee may award a contract to a Superintendent of Schools or a School Business Administrator for a period not exceeding six years. The contracts may provide for the salary, fringe benefits, and other conditions of employment including, but not limited to severance pay, relocation expenses, reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of duties or office, liability insurance, and leave for said Superintendent of Schools and School Business Administrator. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a School Committee from voting to employ a Superintendent of Schools who has completed three or more years' services to serve at its discretion.

5. The School Committee ensures that the Superintendent adopts suitable descriptions of qualifications for employment in various types of positions, salary schedules, and other personnel policies.

6. Each year, as required by law, the Committee shall adopt an annual budget, after due consideration of such administrative and financial reports as may be required. The Superintendent will submit a complete preliminary budget by December 15 to the budget subcommittee.

7. The Committee shall determine all financial policies, not specifically defined by state law, and shall exercise general supervision over the finances of the school system in keeping with regular budgetary procedures.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37; 71:38; 71:48; 71:50; 76:19; 76:20 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws Relating to school Committees. Rules and Regulations of the Committee.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

The School Committee shall have and exercise all of the powers of the system granted by the Commonwealth and not reserved herein to the voters of the system. Members of the School Committee have authority over school matters only when performing duties as a member of the School Committee and not as an individual.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her/their office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, with the regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and with the policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.
2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the town's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her/their share of the work.
5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
6. To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she/they are one of a team and must support, abide by, and carry out all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

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File: BBBA/BBBB

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the town from which he/she/they are elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will swear the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on their official duties as a member of the Committee.

From the Municipal or District Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign an acknowledgment of, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

From the Municipal or District Clerk, newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign an acknowledgment of, within 30 days of taking office, a copy of the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's Summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. As municipal employees, all School Committee members shall receive a copy of said summary annually.

Members of the School Committee and employees of its schools are subject to the provisions of the "conflict of interest" statute, Chapter 268 A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth.

All School Committee members shall, within 30 days of taking office, and every 2 years thereafter, complete the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's online training program. Upon completion of the online training program, members shall provide notice of such completion to be retained for 6 years by the Municipal or District Clerk.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Established by law

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30A:20](#); [41:1](#); [41:107](#); [76:5](#); [268A:27-28](#);

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File: BBBC

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates School Committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town or district in which he/she/they hold office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

Established by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

Approved: June 13, 2019, August 12, 2021

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File: BBBE

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, the Select Board and the remaining members of the Committee share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the School Committee will notify the Select Board that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. After one week's notice has been given by the Committee to the Select Board, so that the voters of the town may have the opportunity to state their candidacy, the two governing bodies will meet to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected will fill the seat on the Committee until the next town election, at which time a member will be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:11

Approved: June 13, 2019, October 7, 2021
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adhere to those state laws which apply to School Committees since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

- A. Community responsibility
 - B. Responsibility to school administration
 - C. Relationships to fellow Committee members
-
- A. A School Committee member, in his/her/their relations with his/her/their community, should:
 1. Realize that his/her/their primary responsibility is to the children.
 2. Recognize that his/her/their basic function is to be policy-making and not administrative.
 3. Remember that he/she/they is/are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once he/she/they are made.
 4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
 5. Remember that he/she/they represents/represent the entire community at all times.
 6. Accept the office as a Committee member as a means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her/their Committee activities.
 - B. A School Committee member, in his/her/their relations with his/her/their school administration, should:
 1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies that will direct and support the administration.
 2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside of the administration.
 3. Act only on the recommendations of the chief administrator in all matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.
 4. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her/their professional duties and hold him/her/them responsible for acceptable results.
 5. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for a solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.
 - C. A School Committee member, in his/her/their relations with his/her/their fellow Committee members, should:
 1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she/they alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
 2. Realize that he/she/they should not make statements or promises of how he/she/they will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.

3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in executive sessions.
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her/their own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help and information on school problems.
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

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File: BDA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at its first regular meeting following the Town's annual elections, will elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Clerk, each of whom will hold his/her/their respective office for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

In the event the Chair and Vice Chair are no longer members of the School Committee, the senior member (years served) will act as the Chair Pro-Tem.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum

At the annual organization meeting the order of business shall be as follows:

1. Meeting called to order by the Superintendent of Schools
2. Nominations for the office of Chair will be made from the floor. The Chair will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
3. Upon election, the new Chair will preside, calling for the election of a Vice Chair and Clerk, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.
4. Determination, of date and time of regular meetings
5. Adoption of rules and regulations
6. Adjournment
7. Return to regular meeting agenda

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.

Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

SOURCE: MASC

Approved: June 13, 2019, Oct. 21, 2021

Reviewed: June 13, 2019

Revised: June 13, 2019, Oct. 21, 2021

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/She/They will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her/their office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be the public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except when this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chair will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice Chair

The Vice Chair of the Committee will act in the absence of the Chair as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her/them.

Duties of the Clerk

The Clerk of the Committee will act in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her/them. Additionally, if the Recording Secretary is unable to fulfill his/her/their duties, the Clerk will fulfill those duties.

- **Duties of the Recording Secretary/ Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent**

The Recording Secretary /Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:36](#)

Note: The Treasurer of the town serves as Treasurer of the School Committee.

Approved: June 13, 2019, Oct. 21, 2021

Reviewed: June 13, 2019

Revised: June 13, 2019, Oct. 21, 2021

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be appointed by a vote of the School Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her, their scope as an executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent may seek guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, they will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction, unless there are urgent or unanticipated circumstances that require immediate action by the Superintendent.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

Approved: June 13, 2019, August 12, 2021

Reviewed: June 13, 2019, July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021

Revised: June 13, 2019, August 12, 2021

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee shall appoint members to subcommittees at their annual organizational meeting for a period of one year. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The Committee chairperson, subject to approval by the Committee, will appoint the subcommittee chairperson and its members.
3. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
4. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

Approved: June 13, 2019
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Revised: June 13, 2019

File: BDF

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.
2. If an advisory committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. The assignment the School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. The resources the School Committee will provide.
 - d. The approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees, and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
 - f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press.
 - g. These committees are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.
6. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.
7. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.

The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions that are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the District.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a School Council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the School Council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a School Improvement Plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

Approved: September 2, 2021
 Reviewed: July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021
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File: BDFA-E

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by the majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal, and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Section 18-25,* which stipulates that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive the agenda and minutes of all school council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee for information.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COUNCILS

1. Each of our five schools will have a School Council.
2. The Councils' role will be an advisory one; they will advise and assist the Principal in making decisions on important school matters.
3. Council members who are parents of students in school would be elected for two-year terms and would be eligible for re-election. Representatives from teaching staff and the community at large may be appointed by the Principal.
4. Duties of the School Councils:
 - a. Assist the Principal in the identification of the educational needs of the students
 - b. Assist the Principal in the review of the annual school budget.
 - c. Assist the Principal in creating a school improvement plan which will include at least the following elements:
 1. Adoption of educational goals (consistent with the state and district policies and goals)
 2. Impact of class size on student performance
 3. Professional development of staff
 4. Means of promoting parental involvement in the school
 5. Safety and discipline
 6. Means of ensuring a welcoming and tolerant environment for children and parents of diverse backgrounds
 7. Methods for meeting the diverse learning needs of students
 8. Means of encouraging and assisting the process whereby the learning needs of special needs students are met in the regular classroom.
 9. Means of utilizing human and other community resources to assist or enhance students' learning
 10. Extracurricular activities
 - d. The school improvement plan shall also address such further subjects as the Principal in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate.
 - e. Submission of the school improvement plan to the School Committee for review and approval each year.
 - f. Assist in the process of screening and interviewing applicants for school positions.

Approved:
 Reviewed:
 Revised:

File: BDFB

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As required by state law, the School Committee will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee. The student advisory committee is elected by the high school student body according to an election procedure approved by the School Committee.

The elected chairperson of the student advisory committee shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the School Committee, without the right to attend executive sessions unless such right is expressly granted by the individual School Committee. Said chairperson shall be subject to all School Committee rules and regulations and shall serve without compensation.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:38M

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BDG**SCHOOL ATTORNEY**

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her/them. He/she/they will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school law to enable him/her/them to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, he/she/they will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

The School Committee may use the services provided by the town council. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek his/her/their services to counsel and represent the District at various times.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E; 71:37F

Approved: August 12, 2021
 Reviewed: July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021
 Revised: March 1, 2018, August 12, 2021

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the School Committee shall normally be held on the first and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM, except during the months of July and August when they will ordinarily be held once per month. Meetings may need to be scheduled for other weeks as determined by holidays and other scheduling constraints.

All meetings shall end by 11 PM unless extended to a different time by a majority vote of the Committee members present.

All regular meetings shall be held at the Galvin Middle School Media Center unless otherwise voted by the Canton School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BEB

SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called upon the request of any (3) members to the Chairman. Notice of such meeting shall state the special matter or matters to be discussed. At such meetings, only the business for which the meeting was called shall be in order. Other matters may be discussed upon a majority vote of the Committee. Special meetings shall end at 11 P.M. unless extended to a time certain by a majority vote of the Committee members present.

LEGAL REF.: Rules and Regulations of the School Committee

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose of the executive session.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual.
2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. To consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the school committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent.) This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.

9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first case, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session. The Committee will review executive session minutes for possible declassification at least once each year.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

Established by law and Committee policy.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Subcommittees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all subcommittee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BEDB

AGENDA FORMAT

The Superintendent, conferring with the Chairperson of the School Committee, will arrange the order of items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members no less than three business days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

Approved: August 12, 2021
Reviewed: July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021
Revised: August 12, 2021

AGENDA FORMAT

At regular meetings, the following will be the customary order of business:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Routine Matters
 - 1. Minutes
 - 2. Bill Schedule
- C. Student Member Report
- D. Correspondence
- E. Public Comments/Questions
- F. Business Manager's Report
- G. Curriculum Director's Report
- H. Unfinished Business
- I. New Business
- J. Sub-Committee Reports
- K. Superintendent's Report
- L. Future Business
- M. Other Business
- N. Adjournment

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

QUORUM

Three (3) School Committee members will constitute a quorum unless otherwise provided by law. Major matters of school policy shall be decided by a majority vote of the full Committee; i.e. the actual membership of five. Major matters of school policy shall be interpreted to mean: as per Education Reform.

LEGAL REFS.: M.D.L. 30A:18; Rules and Regulations of the School Committee

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the Committee's approved policies and regulations.

The Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a majority vote.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or a hand count and shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.
2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.
4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A School Committee meeting is a meeting of a government body at which members of the body deliberate over public business. We welcome the attendance of members of the Canton community to view the School Committee as we conduct our regular business meeting so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our schools.

The Canton School Committee believes that the Canton School District community should have an opportunity to comment to the School Committee on issues that affect the District and are within the scope of the School Committee's responsibilities. We appreciate the opportunity to understand the wishes and ideas of the community during our meeting through presentation and public comment.

Any citizen who wishes to make a presentation to the School Committee on an item that is of interest to him/her and within the scope of the School Committee's responsibilities may request to be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. Such a request should:

- Be in writing and received by the Superintendent at least one week before the upcoming meeting date.
- Contain background statements that explain the scope and intent of the agenda item.

The Chair of the School Committee works with the Superintendent to formulate meeting agendas. Together they will determine if and when the item is to be taken up and all parameters required of the presenter.

In addition, the School Committee has set aside a period of time at each School Committee meeting to hear from the public via public comment. Public comment provides a brief forum in which an individual can express an opinion on issues within the School Committee's authority. It is not an opportunity for discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the School Committee. To ensure the School Committee's ability to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the rules and procedures for public comment set forth below are adopted. The Chair shall rule out of order any individual who fails to honor these guidelines.

1. Prior to the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to sign-up to address the School Committee. In certain instances, the Chair may elect to allow the public to sign-up for public comment after the meeting has begun and will provide instructions for participation. Priority will be given to those who sign up before the meeting.
2. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks respectfully. Topics for comment must be limited to items within the School Committee's scope of responsibility, with priority given to those listed on the meeting agenda for that evening. The School Committee's authority primarily concerns the review and approval of the District's public schools' budget, the Superintendent's performance, and the district's public schools' educational goals and policies. Therefore, any comments about individuals must concern the education goals, policies, or budget of the District or the performance of the Superintendent. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for the disposition of complaints involving individual staff members.

3. Public comment shall generally not exceed 30 minutes in total. The presiding Chair may permit an extension of this time limit in extenuating circumstances.
4. Public comment shall generally be scheduled to occur after priority business items on the agenda have been addressed in order to provide current information and context on which the speakers may base their comments. The Chair may elect to hold School Committee votes until after public comment when relevant and feasible.
5. Any citizen wishing to speak before the School Committee shall identify themselves by name and address, and then be allowed five (5) minutes to present their material. The Chairperson may permit an extension of this time limit.
6. All citizens shall speak to the full School Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators.
7. Any School Committee member may direct questions to the speaker through the Chair to clarify comments of the speaker.
8. The Chair of the meeting may not interrupt speakers who have been recognized to speak, except that the Chair, after a warning, may terminate speech which is not constitutionally protected because it constitutes genuine threats, incitement to imminent lawless conduct, is consistent with comments that were found by a court of law to be defamatory, and/or incorporates sexually explicit comments made to appeal to prurient interests. Verbal statements will also be curtailed once they exceed the five-minute time limit set forth in this policy and/or when they address issues that are not within the scope of the School Committee's authority.
9. No citizen may speak more than once during a public comment period without the permission of the Chair.
10. If a recitation from written comments exceeds five (5) minutes, the written comments may be presented to the School Committee before or after the meeting for the School Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.

Disclaimer: Public comment is not a time for debate or response by the School Committee to comments. Comments made during public comment do not reflect the views or the positions of the School Committee. Because of constitutional free speech principles, the School Committee does not have the authority to prevent all speech that may be upsetting and/or offensive made during public comment.

If the School Committee believes that an issue requires a dialogue with the District community, the School Committee may schedule a separate public hearing or listening session on that issue.

The School Committee adheres to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 20(f) governs public participation at open meetings covering all public bodies, which states the following-

- No person shall address a meeting of a public body without the permission of the Chair.
- All persons shall, at the request of the Chair, be silent.
- No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body.

- If, after a clear warning from the Chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the Chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting. If the person does not withdraw, the Chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.

Approved: January 7, 2021

Reviewed: December 3, 2020, December 17, 2020, January 7, 2021

Revised: December 3, 2020, December 17, 2020, January 7, 2021

File: BEDJ

POLICY ON THE SHOWING OF VIDEOTAPES/DVD AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. Any person who seeks to replay a videotape/DVD at a School Committee meeting will deliver the tape to the Superintendent at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.
2. The Superintendent will review the tape for content, relevance, and accuracy. In addition, the Superintendent will offer all School Committee members the opportunity to review the tape prior to its being shown at the meeting.
3. If the Superintendent determines that the tape should be shown, then he will so recommend to the School Committee. The Committee, acting on the Superintendent's recommendation, will then vote on whether or not the tape will be shown. Three or more members must vote in the affirmative in order for the tape to be shown.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BEE

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Hearings are formal procedures for public discussion of Canton Public School matters. Hearings may be initiated by the School Committee, such as for the final budget presentation, or be requested by the public or school employees for matters not resolved through administrative channels.

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others, as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The Chairperson of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing of the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and of any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee or by others for the Committee. To comment, citizens must be recognized by the chair, and all remarks must be addressed to the chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish to get a chance to speak, the chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BEEA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Nothing in these policies shall be construed as taking away the right to appeal to the full Committee in any matter. The full Committee shall be superior in authority to any school official or subcommittee.

In all cases arising under School Committee jurisdiction, or under any orders of the Committee, appeals may be taken from the decision of the teacher to the principal from the principal to the Central Office to the Superintendent or his/her designee and from the Superintendent to the Committee. The person so appealing to the Committee shall state in writing his grievance and the relief desired.

Any employee of the Committee shall have the right of appeal in the following manner:

1. Discussion of the problem with the employee's immediate supervisor.
2. A meeting with the Superintendent of Schools.
3. A letter to the Committee stating his/her grievance and the relief desired.
4. A meeting with the Committee.

These rules may be amended or repealed at any meeting by a vote of a majority of the Committee, provided notice shall have been given of such proposed action at a previous regular meeting.

LEGAL REF.: Rules and Regulations of the School Committee

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee develops policies and puts them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the actions of the School Committee and those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies constitute the basic method by which the School Committee exercises its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee exercises its control over school operation.

The Canton School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. Policies tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems and be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

POLICY ADOPTION

The adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies are adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

Any of the by-laws, rules or regulations may be amended by a majority vote of the members provided that at least one week's notice of such proposed action shall have been given at a previous meeting and entry thereof made in the minutes.

To permit time for the study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with agenda.
2. Discussion item - first reading of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory Committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting.
3. Action item - discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

No action of the Committee shall be reconsidered or rescinded at a subsequent meeting in the same calendar year, except by a vote of a majority of all the members of the Committee.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

To keep its written policies up-to-date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and for administrative decisions, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing responsibility of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reasons appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically review all policies and procedures for administrative updating and Committee review.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee. A veto requires a majority vote of the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks (Ref). These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.GL. 71:37H

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BGE

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Access to the policies is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent's Office or on the Canton Public Schools' internet site.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

Approved: August 12, 2021
Reviewed: July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021
Revised: August 12, 2021

File: BHC (also GBD)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe firsthand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms for any reason other than to expressly address the performance of their own children will inform the Superintendent of such visits. School Committee members make arrangements for visitations through the Principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

Approved: August 12, 2021
Reviewed: July 8, 2021, August 12, 2021
Revised: August 12, 2021

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), Internet web forums, Internet chat rooms, and electronic text messages.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the School Committee. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18; 66:10

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of the law, each new School Committee member elected to the School Committee is required to complete, within one year of their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies, and procedures of the Committee as soon after the election as possible. Each new member shall be given the following materials:

- A. A copy of the School Committee policy manual
- B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. A copy of the Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. A copy of the district's budget
- E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. Student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent determine to be necessary.

The Chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

- A. arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with the established School Committee policy.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36A

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops, and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The Committee secretary will maintain a calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions, and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accord with the travel expense policy for staff members.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those members who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations, and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, except that a member of a School Committee of a city, town, regional school district or superintendency union may be compensated for his/her services by a majority vote of the city council in a city having a Plan D or Plan E charter; in a city not having a Plan D or Plan E charter by a vote of the city council, subject to the provisions of the charter of such a city; in a town by a majority vote at a town meeting; and in a regional school district or school superintendency by a majority vote of the voting member towns authorized at their respective town meetings, the amount of such compensation, in each case, to be set by the respective cities, towns or groups of towns. No member of a School Committee in any town shall be eligible to the position of teacher or Superintendent of public schools therein or in any union school or superintendency union or district in which his/her town participates.

Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.

Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior School Committee approval.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:52

CROSS REF.: BIBA, School Committee Conferences, Conventions, and Workshops

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause.

To this end:

1. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national levels.
2. The Committee will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups in developing an annual, as well as a long-range, legislative program. One of the major objectives of the Committee's legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.
3. The Committee will annually designate a person, who may or may not be a member of the Committee, to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the Committee's behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts Legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the Legislature or Congress, the Committee's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the School Committee.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised:

File: BK

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee will maintain memberships in the state and regional School Committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

Approved:
Reviewed:
Revised: