

## **Section B: Board Governance and Operations**

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## **File: BA - SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS**

The School Committee has oversight of and responsibility for the school district. The Committee's decisions will influence the course of education in the 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 support practices that produce educational achievement. The Committee accomplishes this while effectively managing the resources available to the school district. The Committee fulfills this responsibility by formulating and adopting policies, selecting an executive officer to implement the policies, and evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BAA - EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

The School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Governance
2. Operations
3. Member Relations
4. Committee/Superintendent Relations
5. Strategic Planning and Fiscal Management
6. Community Relations
7. Conduct of Meetings

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and discuss next steps.

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 improve if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BBA - 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 a 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. Policymaking:** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
- 2. Appraisal and Self-Evaluation:** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
- 3. Provision of financial resources:** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school district to carry out the Committee's policies.
- 4. Public relations.** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means 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 goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing 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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BBAA - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY**

### **Authority**

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in 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 the office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

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.

### **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, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, 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 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 they are one of a team and must 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.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BBBC - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION**

A current School Committee member who submits a 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 or she holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

Established by law

SOURCE: MASC

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BBBE - UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT**

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

As provided in the law, the School Committee will notify the Selectmen 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 Selectmen, so that 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.

SOURCE: MASC

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BCA - 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 adherence 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:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in their relations with their community should:

1. Realize that their primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that their basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that they are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. Remember that they represent the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from their Committee activities.

A School Committee member in their relations with their school administration should:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which 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 the administration.

3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging their professional duties and hold them responsible for acceptable results.

4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in their relations with their fellow Committee members should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that they alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.

2. Realize that they should not make statements or promises of how 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 their own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems

5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SOURCE: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, 5/22/64

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BDA - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at its first regular meeting following the District's annual elections, will elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a representative to the King Philip Regional School Committee, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

The Superintendent of Schools will call this meeting to order. The Chair will be elected and the meeting turned over to the Chair.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. 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.
2. Upon election, the new Chair will preside, calling for the election of a Vice-Chair and Secretary, and representative to the King Philip Regional School Committee, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.
3. The Chair may appoint subcommittees as needed.

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: March 18, 2021

## **File: BDB - 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. They will perform those duties that are consistent with 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 public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as 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 them.

**Secretary**

The Secretary 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.

**King Philip Representative**

A representative will be elected to the King Philip Regional School Committee with all the rights and privileges of the Committee.

**Treasurer**

The Treasurer for the Town serves as the Treasurer of the School Committee.

SOURCE: MASC

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BDD - SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP**

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within their scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school district. 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, the Superintendent may seek guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever they wish. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, they will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction. 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.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BDFA - 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 which 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 school 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.

SOURCE: MASC

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BDFA-E-1 - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent and review of the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education and by the School Committee.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.
3. The means to address student performance.
4. Professional development for the school's professional staff.
5. The enhancement of parent/guardian involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline.
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child.
7. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate, except that:
  - a. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and
  - b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BDFA-E-2 - SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The written school improvement plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent for approval and the School Committee for review no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school council be aware of certain expectations regarding the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. Focus on improvement of student learning.
2. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
3. Align with the mission of the School District and any goals and policies of the School District.
4. Be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements.
5. Clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented.
6. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
7. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
8. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent does not review the school improvement plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BDFA-E-3 - 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 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 stipulate 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 agendas and minutes of all school council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BE - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

- 1. Regular meeting:** the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly
- 2. Special meeting:** an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with state law.

SOURCE: MASC

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

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions

BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BEC - 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 Chair (or, in their absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
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 Chair 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. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
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 School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

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

SOURCE: MASC

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BEDA - 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 may be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. However, a minimum of 48 hours prior to each meeting the Committee shall cause to be posted a listing of each subject the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting (the agenda). Notification of a change in a regular meeting time, place, or agenda and notification, including agenda, of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

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

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BEDD - 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.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BEDF - 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. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

SOURCE: MASC

Updated July 2012

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 3 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BEDG – 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. The Assistant to the Superintendent may record the minutes in lieu of the Secretary of the School Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. The date, time, place, the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting, a summary of each subject, and a list of documents and exhibits used at the meeting,
2. 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.
3. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved. Minutes of all meetings shall be created and approved in a timely manner which is defined in regulation as within the next 3 meetings of the body or within 30 days, whichever is later.

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.

SOURCE: MASC, July 2018

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10; 940 CMR 29.00

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know; BEC, Executive Session

NOTE: Specific comments and/or discussion should only be included in the minutes as a result of a vote of the Committee. The minutes are not a transcript of the meeting. Documents used during a School Committee meeting become part of the official record and must be maintained, based upon their content, in accordance with the Commonwealth's Municipal Public Records Retention Schedule.

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BEDH - PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires individuals to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear public comment.

Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the School Committee. It is an individual's opportunity to express an opinion on issues within the School Committee's authority.

To ensure the ability of the School Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. The public comment segment shall not exceed 15 minutes unless extended by the Chair. All speakers are expected to present their remarks in a respectful manner.
2. Speakers will be allowed up to three (3) minutes to present their material and must begin their comments by stating their name and address. The Chair may permit extension of this time limit, in extenuating circumstances.
3. Topics for discussion should be limited to those items within the School Committee's scope of authority. The authority of the School Committee primarily concerns the review and approval of the budget of the district's public schools, the performance of the Superintendent, and the educational goals and policies of the district's public schools. Comments and complaints regarding school personnel (apart from the Superintendent) or students are prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of School Committee authority.
4. The Chair of the meeting may terminate speech which is not constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats that are likely to provoke a violent reaction and cause a breach of the peace, or incitement to imminent lawless conduct, or contains obscenities.
5. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the presiding Chair before or after the meeting. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting. Comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of Wrentham School Committee.

Here are the general rules for the Committee's public comment period:

1. Public Comment shall be for a period of no more than 15 minutes, unless extended by the Chair, and shall generally follow the Superintendent's Report. The Committee reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.

2. Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themselves by name and address and shall speak for no longer than 3 minutes. No citizen may speak more than once without permission of the Chair. All citizens shall speak to the full Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators.

3. Individuals may address topics on the agenda, items specified for public comment, or items within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. The Chair shall rule out of order any individual who fails to honor the guidelines or who addresses a matter inappropriate for public comment.

4. Any Committee member may direct questions to the speaker through the Chair in order to clarify comments of the speaker.

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

SOURCE: MASC, Revised January 2020

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BEE - SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS**

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. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy on public participation (SC Policy BEDH).

The Chair of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and 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 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.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BGB - POLICY ADOPTION**

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be 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.

To permit time for 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. The policy will be discussed at a School Committee meeting. The Superintendent and/or any advisory Committee assigned responsibility in the area will present the policy. The School Committee will discuss the policy and provide directions for any redrafting.
2. The policy will be discussed at a subsequent School Committee meeting. The School Committee will discuss, adopt, or reject the policy.

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.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BGC - POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW**

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, 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 commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

**File: BGF - 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 two-thirds 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.

SOURCE: MASC

APPROVED: March 18, 2021

## **File: BIA - NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION**

In accordance with the requirements of 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 election as possible. Each new member shall be given or provided direct online access to 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 Ethics/Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. A copy of the district's budget
- E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. Student and staff handbooks

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 established School Committee policy.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

APPROVED: March 18, 2021