

School Committee Operating Norms

Before Meetings

- The Chair sets all School Committee agendas in accordance with Policy BEDB. Subcommittees may request agenda placement for items that have been reviewed, discussed, and voted on at the subcommittee level.
- Agenda materials should be posted at least three (3) school days in advance when possible, and no later than forty-eight (48) business hours prior to the meeting. Items without supporting materials may be removed.
- Questions regarding agenda materials may be submitted to the Chair and Superintendent in advance to allow staff to prepare answers. Responses shall be shared during the meeting to ensure transparency. This does not prevent questions from being asked during meetings but is intended to improve meeting efficiency.
- Committee members should receive regular updates from the Superintendent and building principals to remain informed about district operations, this may be accomplished through regular electronic newsletters.
- Members may subscribe to agenda and calendar notifications. Subcommittees are responsible for scheduling their own meetings and maintaining calendars.

At Meetings

- Meetings are conducted to promote efficiency, professionalism, and respect for presenters and the public.
- Committee members and the Superintendent will be seated at the meeting table. The Superintendent determines which administrative staff attend based on agenda needs.
- Presenters will present from the center table when called. Materials should be provided electronically and displayed when possible. Meetings will proceed if technical issues occur.
- Agendas focus on current district business and are prepared in accordance with policy. Written administrative reports may be provided without oral presentation.
- Members may request future agenda items; deliberation will occur only on posted agenda items. Public comment is conducted in accordance with Policy BEDH.
- Members should limit phone use during meetings. If non-committee matters require attention, members should step out.
- Subcommittees are expected to develop complete, documented proposals before bringing items to the full Committee for a first read or vote.

Between Meetings

- Committee members shall not contact district staff directly regarding School Committee business. All requests must be routed through the Superintendent via the Chair, in accordance with Policy BHC and established norms.
- When acting in a parent or guardian role, members must follow the district's established communication protocols.
- Subcommittees may schedule meetings independently. Administrative participation is optional and must be requested through the Superintendent. Meetings should be scheduled to minimize impact on staff workdays.

Role in Public and with Municipal Officials

- Members should be mindful that public statements may be perceived as representing the School Committee. Confidential matters and complaints must not be discussed publicly.
- Members should direct public concerns to appropriate channels in accordance with district communication protocols.
- When attending meetings of other public bodies, members may not speak or act on behalf of the School Committee unless specifically designated. Members should not deliberate or offer assurances regarding Committee business.
- Responses to public emails are governed by Policy BHE. School visits are governed by Policy BHC and are coordinated through the Superintendent's office.