

## BDD

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE/SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

A natural area of difficulty in maintaining smooth superintendent-school committee relationships is in dealing with problems that arise within a school system. Citizens of the community often will mention a problem to members of the Committee. The Committee member then faces the question of how to deal with this problem. If the Committee member takes action to solve the problem, they infringe upon the administrative function of the Superintendent-Director. If, instead, the Committee member calls the problem to the attention of the Superintendent-Director, the member's initial responsibility has been fulfilled. The Superintendent-Director then has the responsibility of dealing with the problem. Individual Committee members can promise no particular solution to a problem but can only promise that the problem will be investigated and handled by the administration.

The Superintendent-Director, on the other hand, has a responsibility to inform the Committee whenever an administrative decision or problem appears to be of such significance that the Committee might ultimately become involved in the situation. It is generally difficult to predict these situations accurately, but the Superintendent-Director should make every effort to do so in these particular cases.

The Committee should have contact regarding school matters with the staff only through the Superintendent-Director. The Superintendent-Director should be in a position to make all necessary contacts directly with the staff. As the executive officer of the Committee, the Superintendent-Director is the point of contact between the staff and the Committee. All problems connected with staff members should be handled by the Superintendent-Director.

The Committee, as the body designated by the state and the local citizenry, is charged with the responsibility for serving the interests of the people of the local school district. The Committee is charged also with the responsibility for the welfare of the teachers and other staff members whose lives are dedicated to the education of children and youth. The Superintendent-Director shares these charges and these dedications.

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. The Superintendent will assist the

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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.

The Committee has a unique responsibility in determining the broad general policies under which the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District will function. The Committee's principal function, other than adopting operational policies and approving the budget, is the selection of the Superintendent-Director.

The Superintendent-Director has a unique role in that they are the executive officer of the Committee and also the leader of the professional staff. The Superintendent-Director's primary responsibility, however, is to the students of the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District. All other responsibilities fall in line after this responsibility to children and young people. The roles of the Committee and the Superintendent-Director must not only be clearly understood, but definitively practiced to ensure the best possible school program. The mutual acceptance of roles is key to building the basic relationship of the Committee with the Superintendent-Director as its chief executive officer.

If the District is to prepare future generations to find answers to the problems that perplex our society, the leadership of the school system must continue to be strengthened. This will be done when the Committee and the Superintendent-Director, in a spirit of mutual understanding and confidence, form a strong and enduring partnership based upon a clear understanding of their respective roles and are dedicated to the betterment of the school district.

**Reference:** Effective School Board Meetings, Jack L. Davidson, Parker Publishing Co., Nyack, New York, 1970, pp. 165-167.

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