Holbrook School Committee

Member Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Holbrook School Committee

Thank you for serving on the Holbrook school committee! Your commitment to serve the children of Holbrook is one of the most important responsibilities you can undertake.

In your role as a school committee member, you will work with the other committee members on complex issues, including setting goals and policy, deciding the budget, negotiating contracts, supervising the superintendent, and advocating at the local, state, and federal levels for our students. Central to your success as a committee member is your ability to create and maintain effective working relationships with your fellow committee members, the superintendent, other administrators and school staff, municipal leaders and staff, parents, students, and the community at large.

You are expected to share a commitment with the other committee members to provide an exceptional educational experience for all students, to be willing to become well versed in public education and the Holbrook Public Schools, and to have a sincere desire to be a part of a high-functioning governing body that takes the responsibilities of public service seriously.

You can expect to work with the other school committee members as part of a team despite any differences. We welcome your commitment and contributions.

Mission and Vision

The mission of the school committee, superintendent, administrative personnel, and staff of the Holbrook Public Schools is to cultivate inspired, creative, and well-rounded lifelong learners who possess the integrity and self-direction necessary to be contributing community members who value and understand diversity.

The Holbrook Public Schools offer all students multiple pathways to optimize their own potential for academic excellence, leadership, and social and emotional wellness. Teachers work from a rigorous curriculum aligned with state standards that incorporate the Common Core standards, and they use forms of data that support innovative approaches to teaching. Student success is anchored in the high expectations of teachers who are part of a professional, collaborative culture that demands a continuous focus on instructional improvement. Every student feels safe, cared for, and appropriately challenged and supported in schools that are fully staffed and technologically integrated. Student successes are celebrated within and across schools as well as throughout the broader community. Parents and the community are connected to the daily life of Holbrook Public Schools through consistent, multidirectional, and multimodal communication, which builds external support for and pride in the district, schools, teachers, and students. As a result of high quality teaching, meaningful partnerships, and well-resourced schools, students contribute to the Holbrook community as self-directed, creative, and inspired learners who are ready to tackle contemporary issues.

Guiding Principles

- All students can achieve at a high level.
- All decisions will be data driven and made with the best interests of our students in mind. Major initiatives will have thorough analysis including financial, student achievement, and market comparative data.
- Representatives of major stakeholders will have opportunities to voice opinions and help shape decisions.
- Curricular and co-curricular opportunities will be fair across the district.
- District employees should feel valued, empowered, and energized in their jobs.
- The School Committee will make every effort to provide the resources and latitude to all district employees to excel in educating the children of Holbrook.

OVERVIEW OF THE HOLBROOK SCHOOL COMMITTEE

For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the school committee and between the school committee and administration, we, the members of the Holbrook School Committee, do hereby publicly commit ourselves to the following operating protocols.

The School Committee consists of five members who are elected to three-year terms. The Committee is an independent body entrusted by law with broad powers and important duties. Following the enactment of the Educational Reform Act in 1993, which restructured, and in some ways, curtailed the powers of Massachusetts School Committees, the School Committee has the power to:

1. Establish educational goals and policies for the schools in the district consistent with the requirements of law and statewide goals and standards established by the Board of Education;

2. Review and approve budgets for public education in the district; and,

3. Select, evaluate annually, and, if necessary, terminate the Superintendent.

It is also the role of the Committee to evaluate the effectiveness of its policies and the Superintendent's implementation of them and to serve as the employer for the district for collective bargaining purposes.

The People We Represent

The school committee is responsible to the people of Holbrook to represent the needs and interests of all children in the district. It is the school committee's responsibility to set the tone and promote a positive image for the school system. We accept our roles as ambassadors of the school system, promote support for public education, spread news of the district's successes, and always look for ways to improve.

How We Conduct Business

The committee conducts its business through a set agenda. As much as possible, all materials relevant to the meeting are made available in advance. Emerging items will be addressed in a future agenda, as required by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. We acknowledge that a school committee meeting is a meeting held in public, not a public meeting. The school committee approaches decision-making with open minds. Research, best practice, public input, and financial impact are all considered. We uphold and support the decision of the majority of the school committee once a decision has been made. We maintain the confidentiality of privileged information and respect the Open Meeting Law. The school committee helps establish vision, create policies, and ensure accountability to sustain continuous improvements in teaching and learning. The superintendent and administration manage the daily operations of the district. Individual school committee members do not have authority; only the school committee as a whole has authority. When school committee members attend meetings of other committees or boards as liaisons from the school committee, they speak as individuals and not for the committee, except when reporting a decision of the majority of the school committee. We recognize the importance of working collaboratively with town officials to improve our schools and seek ways to enlist their support for our efforts.

How We Communicate

We work together to build trust between school committee members, the superintendent, and administrators by treating everyone with dignity and respect. The superintendent and the school committee recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree there will be no surprises during an open meeting. If school committee members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the superintendent or chair in advance of the meeting. Personnel complaints and criticisms received by the school committee or its individual members are directed to the superintendent. The school committee encourages others to follow the district's chain of command policy. We clearly define success and accountability for the school committee, superintendent, staff, and students. We revise our protocols as needed as part of the committee's self-evaluation.

Holbrook School Committee's Scope of Authority

1. SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S REPRESENTATIVE VOICE: We, the Holbrook School Committee, believe that all students can achieve at high levels. We will represent the needs of all students in the district. We will strive to balance the needs of staff, parents and the community to achieve this goal.

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL OPERATIONS: The Superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the district, including oversight of the hiring, professional development, evaluation, and resolution of personnel issues of all district staff, with the few exceptions of senior management noted by Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) that include input from us. The Superintendent will advise the School Committee on operation-related matters as needed.

3. SUPERINTENDENT AS PRIMARY SPOKESPERSON FOR THE DISTRICT: The Superintendent is responsible for addressing any important questions and concerns from the school community. These may include issues of curriculum, facilities, personnel, and so forth. The Superintendent shares responses with committee members as needed.

4. SUPERINTENDENT AS PRIMARY SPOKESPERSON FOR THE STAFF: The Superintendent represents the staff, having received input from all stakeholders (principals, union leaders, central administration, etc.) before presentations to us for decisions.

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE: The committee is responsible for the evaluation of the Superintendent's effectiveness in his/her/their leadership over the operations of the district and all other assigned duties.

6. CHAIN OF COMMAND: The committee will respect the district's chain of command and will expect all others to do the same. In addition, we recognize that the single official 'voice' of the School Committee is the Chair or his/her/their designee.

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROLE IN GOAL SETTING, POLICY, BUDGETS, AND DISTRICT EVALUATION: The committee is responsible for exercising co-leadership with the Superintendent in the vision, planning, policy making, evaluation, and advocacy for the mission of continuous improvement of student achievement in the district.

8. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADVOCACY FOR STUDENTS: The committee will advocate that all students have the right to be treated with respect and deserve an equal access to a quality education.

9. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROLE IN EVALUATION OF DISTRICT SUCCESS: The committee is responsible on a regular basis to evaluate the success of the district in achieving realistic goals for student achievement.

10. SCHOOL COMMITTEE POSITIVE IMAGE: The committee will conduct ourselves in a professional manner that reflects positively on our schools, students, and Holbrook. We will lead by example and model the values enshrined in our schools and demanded of our students and staff.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION (Policy Reference BIA)

Upon election or appointment, the new member is sworn in by the town clerk. The town clerk provides information on the online ethics course, which must be completed within two weeks. After the course is completed, the new member prints the receipt and sends it to the Town Clerk's Office.

New members meet with the chairperson and superintendent of schools to learn their responsibilities relating to the committee's method of operating and to the district's policies and issues.

Each new school committee member is required to complete at least eight hours of orientation training within one year of joining the committee. Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) offers a course titled Charting the Course: An Orientation Program for New and Veteran School Leaders. Attendance at this program meets the eight-hour orientation requirement for new school committee members. This orientation includes 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, the roles and responsibilities of school committee members, and other appropriate information.

Each new member receives the *Holbrook School Committee Member Handbook* and any other materials the chair and/or superintendent determine to be necessary.

The school committee and superintendent help each new member understand the committee's functions, policies, and procedures. Upon request, each new member gets access to:

- The School Committee Policy Manual
- The Open Meeting Law
- Conflict of interest regulations
- The district's budget
- Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- Student and staff handbooks
- Other relevant materials at the discretion of the committee chair or superintendent

The chair or the superintendent also clarifies such policies as:

- Arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- Requesting information about school district operations
- Responding to community requests/complaints about staff or programs
- Handling confidential information

All new members are advised of all memberships and resources available to them as school committee members.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE (Policy Reference BDB)

Chairperson

The chairperson presides at all meetings of the school committee and performs other duties as directed by law, State Department of Education regulations, and the committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson:

- Signs any documents necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the committee
- Consults with the superintendent in the planning of committee agendas
- Confers with the superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between committee meetings
- Appoints any subcommittees of the school committee, subject to committee approval
- Calls special meetings of the committee, as necessary, subject to legal notification requirements
- Is the public spokesperson for the committee at all times, except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others
- Is responsible for the orderly conduct of all committee meetings

As presiding officer at all committee meetings, the chairperson:

- Calls the meeting to order at the appointed time
- Announces the business to come before the committee in its proper order
- Enforces the committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings
- Recognizes members who want to speak and protects the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
- Explains what the effect of a motion would be if it is not clear to every member
- Restricts discussion to the question when a motion is before the committee
- Answers all parliamentary inquiries, referring questions of legality to the appropriate legal authority
- Puts motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof. Like other committee members, the chairperson has the right to offer resolutions, discuss questions, and vote.

Vice Chairperson

Duties assigned to the vice chairperson include receiving guidance from and helping the chairperson perform the chairperson's enumerated duties. The vice chairperson acts as chairperson in the chairperson's absence.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for taking the minutes of all executive sessions. The secretary is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the minutes for all regular and special meetings.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON POSITIONS (Policy Reference BDE,BDF, BDFA)

Subcommittees of the school committee may be appointed by the chair or the committee itself and typically have two members. Details of which members are assigned to each committee can be found on the Holbrook Public Schools website and is updated regularly.

Subcommittees:

- Budget and Finance
- Capital Maintenance and Security
- Policy
- Contract Negotiations: Administrators, Teachers/Nurses, Professional
- Support/Secretaries, Custodians, Food Service
- Liaison Positions
- Sick Bank
- Permanent School Building Committee
- SEPAC/Parent Group
- Capital Improvement Committee
- HCAM
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Opioid Settlement Fund Committee

Ad Hoc Committees:

- Naming Committee
- Bricks/Banners
- Enrollment/Space Needs
- Strategic Planning

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (Policy Reference BIBA)

All members are encouraged to utilize the services and resources that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), the National School Board Association (NSBA), and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provide by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for school committee members. The school committee is committed, both individually and as an organization, to the principles of continuous improvement and ongoing education.

Some opportunities for professional development include these:

- MASC Annual Conference in Hyannis during November
- MASC workshops and classes
- National Advocacy Institute programs
- National School Boards Association Conference and Workshops

REPRESENTATIVE OPPORTUNITIES (Policy Reference BJ)

As a member of the school committee, you may have the opportunity to represent the committee at various functions. It is important to remember that you represent only yourself at these functions; you may not speak on behalf of the committee (unless predetermined by the committee). Nonetheless, your comportment and comments will reflect on the committee as a whole.

These functions may include but are not limited to the following:

- MASC Day on the Hill
- Holbrook High School graduation
- Various PTO and SEPAC events
- Town meetings and town wide events

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE (Policy Reference BIBA, BBAA, BCA, BDD)

Goals (Policy Reference BA, BAA)

The school committee is a goal-driven body charged with effectively using its resources to provide the best education possible for all students.

The superintendent, with input from district staff and community members, is responsible for the creation of a Strategic Plan every three to five years to establish a set of overarching goals for the district and should work with the committee to ensure the realization of these goals.

Each year the school committee and superintendent develop annual goals to accomplish the overarching goals. The annual goals should be guided by the Strategic Plan. The superintendent is responsible for implementing most of the annual goals, but the school committee monitors and oversees the process. Sometimes the implementation of a goal (such as hiring a superintendent or negotiating contracts with bargaining collectives) is the committee's responsibility, and it is incumbent upon the chair or his/her designee to ensure that this goal is accomplished.

The school committee also endeavors to create and work toward several professional practice goals to build on and improve procedures, practices, and collaborations between school committee members and at school committee meetings.

To ensure that progress is made each year, goals set by both the superintendent and the school committee follow the SMART goal format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound). These goals are evaluated at the end of each school year to determine how well they were addressed and as a starting point for establishing new goals for the subsequent year.

The full committee completes a school committee self-evaluation at the end of the school year to evaluate its operational procedures and practices. Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. This self-evaluation then forms the basis for setting new professional practice goals for the subsequent year.

Budget (Policy Reference DA, DB, DBC, DBG, DBJ, DGA)

The superintendent and the district's business manager prepare the budget calendar and submit it to the school committee during the fall of the prior fiscal year. In subsequent months, principals and administrators prepare and submit budget requests, which the superintendent and business manager then review. In January/February the superintendent and business manager present an overview of the proposed operating budget for the coming fiscal year. This begins the formal public portion of the budget process. A detailed budget presentation follows, and a meeting of the Budget/Finance Subcommittee is held if deemed necessary. The school committee holds a public meeting on the budget in February/March and the committee votes on the proposed budget after hearing from all stakeholders in the district.

During the course of the fiscal year, three committee members are required to sign payroll warrants and accounts payable warrants to allow for the release of checks on a rotating basis established by the business manager. New committee members meet with the superintendent and chairperson at the beginning of their term to review procedures and responsibilities for this process.

Policy (Policy Reference BG, BGB, BGC, BGE, BGF, CH, CHD)

The formulation and adoption of 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.

Policies are principles adopted by the school committee to chart a course of action. They describe what is wanted and may include why and how much. Policies are meant to be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in solving daily problems yet specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the school committee are framed and meant to be interpreted in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and other regulatory agencies of various levels of government.

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so they can be used consistently as a basis for school committee action and administrative decisions, the committee reviews, and if necessary, revises its policies on a regular basis.

Superintendent Evaluation (Policy Reference CBI)

The superintendent meets with the school committee at least once each year for the purpose of discussing district goals and objectives, the superintendent's job description and performance, and the working relationship between the superintendent and the committee.

Throughout the year, the superintendent provides evidence of his/her performance based on annual goals established at the start of the year. Additionally, school committee members are responsible for gathering information based on their observations, feedback, and other appropriate sources as evidence of the superintendent's performance, including but not limited to the following:

- Evidence of instructional leadership and links to student achievement
- Reports and research prepared by the superintendent for review by the committee
- Recommendations from the superintendent on a range of subjects
- Personnel recommendations
- Involvement in collective bargaining negotiations
- Advice and counsel to committee members when requested
- The quality of the budget proposed by the superintendent and the appropriate linkage to district goals and needs
- Fulfillment of professional duties (e.g., timely preparation and presentation of the budget, ensuring that all educators are evaluated as required by law, filling all necessary positions)
- Performance at school committee meetings where members make recommendations, address questions, speak to the committee or the public, and reflect the values of the district
- Relationship with municipal officials
- Interactions with the public
- District morale, which can be linked appropriately to the superintendent's leadership

The superintendent is evaluated in accordance with the standards and procedures mandated by the DESE under the educator evaluation regulation 603 CMR 35.00. The evaluation is publicly shared at a posted scheduled school committee meeting.

Negotiations (Policy Reference HA, HB, HF)

According to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 15OE, the role of a school committee is to be the legal representative of management. Union negotiations are arguably one of the two most important roles of the school committee, the other being to select a highly qualified superintendent. The negotiating team comprises the superintendent, school committee attorney, and two members of the school committee. By law, the Holbrook Town Manager and each school committee member are allowed a vote on all district contracts. Holbrook Public Schools has five units for negotiation: administrators, teachers/nurses, professional support/secretaries, custodians, food service workers.

Hiring Responsibilities (Policy Reference BBA)

The school committee is responsible for appointing the following personnel:

- Superintendent
- Assistant superintendent (upon recommendation of the superintendent)
- School business administrator
- Director of student services, school physician, registered nurses

COMMUNICATION (Policy Reference KDB)

As an elected official representing the Holbrook Public Schools, each member of the school committee commits to actively seeking input from a variety of stakeholders, listening carefully to all viewpoints, and maintaining broad understanding of the important issues confronting the schools and the town at large. We uphold the value of clear, timely, and honest communication with relevant constituencies. We are eager to hear the community's voices and, in turn, we resolve to communicate publicly our decisions, actions, and rationales. Our goal is to maintain an open, two-way system of communication with the community while following the protocols outlined elsewhere in this handbook. We also commit to ongoing assessment of our communication systems and to continuous improvement.

Communication with District Personnel Members (Policy Reference BHC, CCB)

When communicating with staff employed in the district, committee members should always remain cognizant that they possess no authority outside the authority of the full school committee. Any feedback received from district personnel that relates to district operations should be relayed to the appropriate administrative authority, usually the person's immediate supervisor. When this is unclear, the concerns should be communicated to the superintendent. Unless otherwise indicated by the superintendent, members should not discuss specific concerns of staff members during a school committee meeting.

Communication with Students

The primary objective of the school committee is to establish policies that ensure the academic achievement of all students. The school committee benefits from hearing students' opinions on issues affecting their education and the schools' overall social, intellectual, and extracurricular climate. Students may address the school committee by speaking during the public input portions of school committee meetings or by asking the school committee's student representatives to speak on their behalf. We value the input of our students.

Communication with Municipal Leaders (Policy Reference KLG, KLJ, KLK)

Holbrook has a rich tradition of service by elected and appointed committees, boards, officials, administrators, and their staff. The school committee is eager to work with community leaders in the service of public education. We affirm the importance of maintaining a productive, collegial, and efficient working relationship with all municipal leaders in the pursuit of excellence in our schools. Members may not always agree on our priorities, but the school committee commits to collaboration, to explaining our decisions carefully, and to resolving disagreements in a harmonious and respectful manner

Communication with Parents, Guardians, Families, and Community Members (Policy Reference KA)

All stakeholders in the district are encouraged to maintain a healthy dialogue with community members to keep everyone up to date on the committee's actions. We ensure that our decisions and actions are performed in a public and transparent manner, with the sole exception of the topics that legally require the school committee to adjourn to executive session. These exceptions aside, the public is always informed of committee decisions and their rationale.

How to Respond to Constituent Complaints (Policy Reference GBK, KE)

The school committee's policy on handling complaints from the public is clearly defined in policy KE. While members of the community, including parents and students, have the right to contact elected officials, school committee members often lack the authority to resolve problems brought to their attention. When addressing complaints from constituents, committee members should direct them to the proper chain of command so that complaints can be addressed by those as

close to their origins as possible. The proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School committee

The committee expects the professional staff who receive complaints to address them courteously and make a proper reply to the complainant. Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit the complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints are disregarded.

Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members (Policy Reference BHE)

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), text messages, social media postings, Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

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 an 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.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Schedule of Meetings (Policy Reference BEDA)

Regular meetings are usually scheduled the second Thursday of every month from September through August. If the second Thursday falls during a vacation week, the meeting is adjusted appropriately. An updated list of meeting dates can be found on the Holbrook Public Schools Website.

Agenda Format (Policy Reference BEDB)

Every school committee meeting has an agenda that:

- Serves as the steering mechanism for each meeting.
- Enables logical organization and preparation for each meeting
- Informs committee members of the items and issues to be discussed
- Provides guidelines necessary for the conduct of the meeting in an efficient, well-organized, and effective manner
- Is kept on file, as per law, and can be cited as the record of what transpired
- Serves as the basis for the preparation of the minutes
- Allows the superintendent to ensure that items and matters to be reported and acted on are brought to the committee's attention

The school committee chair works with the superintendent to develop the agenda for each school committee meeting. Too many items on the agenda may adversely affect the length of the meeting. The time needed for each agenda item is estimated to ensure a reasonable meeting length with enough time allocated to discuss each item. Ideally, school committee agendas are designed so that the meeting is dedicated to focused, informed discussion on student achievement and progress toward the district's educational goals and priorities.

Meeting agendas, along with the necessary documents and materials, are emailed to school committee members.

Types of Meetings (Policy Reference BE, BEC)

The committee regularly uses four types of meetings:

Regular: An open meeting for official legal actions, presentations. This meeting is televised.

Special: An official legal action meeting may be called between regular meetings to consider specific topics. These meetings typically include a school committee retreat.

Reorganization: At the first meeting after the town's annual election, the school committee elects from its membership a chair, vice chair, and secretary, all of whom hold their offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. This meeting contains a full agenda.

Executive Session: All meetings of the school committee are open to the public and media. However, the committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when allowed by law. These reasons are limited to the following:

- The reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health—rather than professional competence—of a single individual or the discipline or dismissal of (including the hearing of charges against) a member of the committee, a school department employee, student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law, including requiring the committee to hold an open session if the individual requests it.
- Strategy for nonunion negotiations or collective bargaining sessions with nonunion personnel.
- Strategy for collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
- The deployment of security personnel or devices.
- Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
- Real estate transactions, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
- Compliance with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in aid requirements.
- The consideration and interviewing of applicants for the superintendent's position by a preliminary screening committee. This exemption applies only if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on obtaining qualified applicants. It does not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.
- To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
- To discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive, or other proprietary information.

When meeting in executive session, the committee should follow these procedures:

- The committee first convenes in an open session for which due notice has been given.
- The chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) states the purpose of the executive session by designating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
- 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.
- The chairperson or presiding member states before entering the executive session whether the committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session. Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session must be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

Characteristics of Effective Committee Members

- Effective committee members:
- Are prepared for meetings
- Focus on students
- Respect fellow members
- Represent the community
- Monitor not manage

PROCEDURES: QUORUM AND OPEN MEETING LAW

School committee members should familiarize themselves with the Open Meeting Law and are encouraged to read it in its entirety for a more complete understanding. There are four main sections of the Open Meeting Law:

- Open Meeting Law
- Public Participation
- Remote Participation
- Executive Session

School committee meetings are subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.l.c.30A, §19 and must be open to the public. The statute defines a meeting as "a deliberation by a public body with respect to any matter within the body's jurisdiction."

A deliberation is an oral or written communication through any medium, between or among a quorum of members of a public body. A quorum is a simple majority of the members. Whether or not a communication constitutes a meeting subject to the law depends on four factors:

- The communication must be between members of a public body;
- The communication must constitute a deliberation;
- The communication involves a matter within the body's jurisdiction; and
- The communication does not fall within an exception listed in the law.

There are five exceptions to the definition of a meeting under the Open Meeting Law:

- Members of a public body may conduct an on-site inspection of a project or program; however, they cannot deliberate at such gatherings;
- Members of a public body may attend a conference, training program or event; however, they cannot deliberate at such gatherings;
- Members of a public body may attend a meeting of another public body provided that they communicate only by open participation; however, they cannot deliberate at such gatherings;
- Meetings of quasi-judicial boards or commissions held solely to make decisions in an adjudicatory proceeding are not subject to the Open Meeting Law; and,
- Town meetings are not subject to the Open Meeting Law.

The school committee, as a public body, must provide notice to the public at least 48 hours in advance of their meeting, except in emergencies, but excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. The agenda for the meeting is sent to the town clerk, who posts it on line and in the Town Hall, where it is conspicuously visible to the public at all hours.

The school committee is required to create and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings, including executive sessions. Minutes, exhibits, and other materials must be approved in a timely manner, and existing minutes must be made available to the public within 10 days or upon request, regardless of whether they have been approved. However, any documentation involving the performance evaluation of an individual's professional competence or used in deliberation about employment or appointment of individuals are not subject to the disclosure requirement of the Open Meeting Law.

APPENDIXES

Acronyms

HPS	Holbrook Public Schools
DESE	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
ELL	English language learner
ESP	Education support professional
FCSN	Federation for Children with Special Needs
FTE	Full-time equivalent
FY	Fiscal year
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
MASC	Massachusetts Association of School Committees
MCAS	Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System
MEOE	Massachusetts Executive Office of Education
MSBA	Massachusetts School Building Authority
MTRS	Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System
MTSS	Massachusetts Tiered System of Support
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NSBA	National School Boards Association
OPEB	Other post-employment benefits
RTTT	Race to the Top
SEI	Sheltered English Immersion
SEL	Social-emotional learning
SEPAC	Special Education Parent Action Council
SOI	Statement of interest
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

New School Committee Member Checklist

_____ Get sworn in by the town clerk and receive a folder with Open Meeting Law, campaign finance reporting, and ethics training information.

_____ Attend a reorganization meeting after the swearing-in ceremony.

_____ Complete online state ethics training.

_____ After completing the ethics class, send a copy of the certificate to the town clerk and the superintendent's secretary.

_____ Obtain email address and access key from IT Department.

_____ Register for Charting the Course with MASC.

_____ After completing the class, send a copy of the certificate to the town clerk and the superintendent's secretary.

_____ Obtain and review the *Holbrook School Committee Handbook.*

_____ Review *District Policy Manual.*

_____ Arrange to meet with the superintendent and/or chair to review schedules and procedures for school committee meetings.

_____ Review school committee liaison assignments with chair.

_____ Obtain copies of and review the following documents:

a. Current budget
b. Collective bargaining agreements
c. Strategic Plan
d. Student handbook
e. Employee handbook
f. Administrative contracts
g. District goals
h. Superintendent goals
i. School committee goals