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SCHOOL COMMITTEES' OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committees are responsible to the people for whose benefit the Schools have been established. The Committees' current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committees and each of their 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 concerns.

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

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committees 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. Establish practical and SMART district goals.
5. Conducting a periodic review of performance against these goals.

FIRST READING: April 2, 2024

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ADOPTED: May 7, 2024

SOURCE: Joint Committee & Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

File: BAA

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEES' OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Committees will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committees will measure their 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. 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 a School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committees complete their self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committees 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 Committees believe that their performance will improve if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

File: BAB

NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND TERM OF OFFICE

- A. The Dover School Committee and the Sherborn School Committee shall each consist of five (5) members who shall serve a term of three years. The terms will be staggered so as to maintain continuity on each Committee.
- B. The Regional School Committee shall consist of six (6) members—three (3) from each community. One member shall be elected from each community each year for a term of three years. The terms will be staggered so as to maintain continuity on the Committee.
- C. The Dover-Sherborn Union 50 Superintendency Committee shall consist of six (6) members—three (3) from each of the Dover School Committee and the Sherborn School Committee. There shall also be, as observers, three non-voting members of the Regional School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.:

Ann. Laws of Massachusetts

M.G.L. 41:1; School Committee; Number; 71: 63

Agreement between the Towns of Dover and Sherborn with Respect to the Formation of a Regional School District, as Amended

File: BB

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committees are the governing boards of the municipalities' public school district. Although they function as duly elected Committees of their respective municipal governments, the School Committees have, unlike other municipal boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

Three members each from Dover and Sherborn, as established in the Dover Sherborn Regional School District Agreement, govern the Regional School Committee. Five members each on the Dover and Sherborn School committees.

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

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

File: BBA

SCHOOL COMMITTEES' POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committees have all the powers conferred upon them 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 their directions for the proper education of the students of the community.

The Committees take a broad view of their functions. - They see them as:

1. **Legislative or policymaking**. The Committee responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement their policies.
2. **Appraisal**. The Committee are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of their policies and their implementation.
3. **Provision of financial resources**. Committee are responsible for adoption of budgets that will enable the District to carry out the Committees' policies.
4. **Communications**. Each Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the community informed about the schools and providing an avenue for community feedback.
5. **Educational planning and evaluation**. The Committee are responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committees and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School Districts.

Personnel Matters

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Union 50 Superintendency Committee and by vote of the Regional School Committee. The Superintendent shall directly report to each 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.

The School Committees shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Business Manager, Director of Student Services, School Physician, School Nurses, and Supervisor of Attendance. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

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

File: BBAA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of School Committees derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of each School Committee have authority only when acting as a committee legally in session.

The School Committees 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 a Committee, by virtue of their office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the Districts or command the services of any school employee.

School Committees function as bodies and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of a 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 school district.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect one's 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 all students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that each member is one member of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the District 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.

File: BBBA/BBBB

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

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

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn 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 Town Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign a receipt for, 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. 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.

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

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 their respective town in which they hold office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

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

File: BBBE

FILLING VACANCIES

- A. If there is a vacancy on either the Dover School Committee or the Sherborn School Committee, the remaining members of that Committee shall give written notice within one month thereof to the select board, who, with the remaining members of that Committee, shall, after one week's notice, fill such a vacancy by ballot. The select board shall fill such vacancy if a Committee fails to give notice within the time specified. A majority of the ballots of the officers entitled to vote shall be necessary for such election. The person so appointed or elected shall perform the duties of the office until the next annual election.

- B. If there is a vacancy on the Regional School Committee during the term of office of a member, a successor shall be appointed to serve until the next annual election of such member's town by the remaining members of the Committee from such town, and a successor shall then be elected for the unexpired term, if any.

LEGAL REFS.: Ann. Laws of Massachusetts M.G.L. 41:11; Appointment to fill vacancy.
 Agreement between the Towns of Dover and Sherborn with Respect to the
 Formation of a Regional School District, as Amended

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 students
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 a 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 member 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 exists 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.

File: BDA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, each School Committee, at its first regular meeting following the town(s') annual elections, will elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice-Chair (Region), and a secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. The Superintendent shall serve as Chair Pro-Tem until a chair is elected.

A majority of the members of a 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 (Region) and secretary, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.

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, each School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:16A
 M.G.L. 71:63

File: BDB

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICER DUTIES

DUTIES OF THE CHAIR

The Chair of each 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. The Chair 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 on matters about which the Committees have deliberated, except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.
8. For joint meetings of the three Committees, the Chairs and the Vice Chair of the Region will meet with the Superintendent

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 (Region)

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. The Vice Chair will attend agenda setting meetings with the Superintendent in the planning of joint meetings between three

Secretary

File: BDD

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committees will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within the Superintendent's scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the Districts. While the Committees reserve the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, they normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from their executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent may seek guidance from a Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, the Superintendent will submit the matter to a Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committees in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committees all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep Committee members adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

File: BDE

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committees 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. Each subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The Committee Chair, subject to approval by the Committee, will appoint the subcommittee chair and its members.
3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
5. All subcommittees of the School Committees are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

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

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

File: BDF

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEES

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

1. Advisory committees may be created by a 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 a 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 a Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by a School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.
6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. The assignment a School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. The resources a School Committee will provide.
 - d. The approximate dates on which a School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to a 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.
7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.
8. School Committees possess certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to a School Committee.
9. Advisory committees created under this policy are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

A 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.

CROSS REF.: JIB, Student Involvement in Decision-making

File: BDFA

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

The School Committees believe 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 a School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school.

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 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.

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.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law. 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 Committees upon request.

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 and the appropriate School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C; C30A:18-15

File: BDFA-E

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Each Principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually.

This plan shall be written and submitted for approval to the Superintendent no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented and reviewed by the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school, consistent with District mission and goals, and the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.
3. The means to address student performance, with focus on improvement of student learning.
 - a. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
 - b. Clearly identify actions to be taken to implement the goals.
 - c. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
 - d. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.
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.
 - a. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every student.
7. The establishment of a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity.
8. 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.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent and/or the School Committee, 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.

File: BDG

SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The School Committees may use the services provided by town counsel. The Committees and the Superintendent may seek their services to counsel and represent the Schools at various times.

However, because the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, a Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide additional legal services.

It will be the duty of the counsel for a Committee to advise a School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. 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 to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the Schools will be made by a Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of a 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, they will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

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

File: BE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

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

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

File: BEA

MEETINGS

Regular Meetings

- A. Dover School Committee meetings generally will be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Chickering School.
- B. Sherborn School Committee meetings generally will be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Pine Hill School or at the Town Hall.
- C. Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee meetings generally will be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the middle school or other designated place.
- D. The annual meeting of the Dover-Sherborn Union Superintendency Committee shall be held as prescribed by law at a day and place agreed upon by the Chair of the constituent committees.
- E. The Committees shall meet in joint session at least three times each school year.
- F. It is the intent of each Committee not to consider a new item of business after 10:45 p.m.

Meeting dates and times are subject to change from time to time as determined by the School Committee or administration.

Summer Meetings

The Committees may, at their discretion, discontinue their sessions during the months of July and August.

Adjourned Meetings

Any Committee may adjourn any regular meeting because of the lateness of the hour or other pressing reasons, provided a majority of those attending so vote.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A: 20-22

File: BEC

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of a School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, a 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 the Chairperson's 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 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. 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. And 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.

A School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis 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.

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

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 a 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.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30A:18-25](#)

CROSS REF.: [BE](#), School Committee Meetings

File: BEDB

AGENDA FORMAT

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

Committees 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 a 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 a Committee Chair. 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 a School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members three days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

File: BEDD

RULES OF ORDER

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

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

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 a 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.

A quorum is defined as three (3) of five (5) on the Dover and Sherborn Committees and four (4) of six (6) on the Regional Committee.

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

File: BEDG

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of a Committee's actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of each School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the 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 a 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 at least 48 hours 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.

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

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. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals will sign in for an opportunity to speak during public comment. The public comment segment shall not exceed 15 minutes. All speakers are encouraged 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 city/town. The presiding 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 generally prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of School Committee authority.
4. The Chair of the meeting, after a warning, reserves the right to 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 the Dover, Sherborn, and Dover-Sherborn School Committees.
6. Sign up instructions will be provided for those who wish to participate in Public Comment.

File: BEDH

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

CROSS REFS: BE, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEC, EXECUTIVE SESSIONS
BEDA, NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

File: BEE

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as they deem advisable, School Committees 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 a Committees' policy.

The Chair of each 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 a Committee, or by others for a 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.

File: BG

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

School Committees will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom they delegate authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which School Committees will exercise their leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the Schools. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of their policies, School Committees will exercise their control over Schools' operations.

Policies are principles adopted by a school committee to chart a course of action. They 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, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

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

File: BGB

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of a School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of a 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 a 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 a Committee so directs.

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

Policies will be effective immediately unless otherwise specified on a date set by a 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.

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 Committees will review their policies on a regular basis.

In their review, the Committees will evaluate how policies have been implemented. They will consider feedback from school staff, students, and the community when revising policies, as appropriate.

The Superintendent is expected to call to the attention of the Committee all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

File: BGD

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing School Committees' policies. 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 a Committee.

Committees may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the Schools whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the Schools, but they will revise or veto such procedures only when, in a Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by a Committee.

Committees 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 procedures to have a 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 Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by School Committees.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

CROSS REF.: CHB, School Committee Review of Regulations

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 Committees and the procedures needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the Schools, to members of the School Committees, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the towns of Dover and Sherborn. 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 each 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.

School Committees' policy manuals will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent's office upon request.

File: BGF

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committees' 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.

File: BHC

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committees wish to maintain open channels of communication between themselves and staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to School Committees

All communications or reports to a Committee or any of their 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 a Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of a Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with a 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 Committees' deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committees' 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 Committees' problems, concerns, and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and 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 a Committee's authorization.

File: BHE

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), 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.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. School Committee members agree to use their school-provided email accounts for all committee-related email correspondence. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.[4:7](#); [30A:18-25](#); [66:10](#)

File: BIA

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 36A as amended on December 24th, 2002, each new 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.

School Committees and the Superintendent shall assist each new member in understanding Committee functions, as well as policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after 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 established School Committee policy.

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

CROSS REF.: BBBA/BBBB School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office

File: BIBA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committees encourage 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 Committees establish these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The School Committees will be made aware of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. Each Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school district.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committees 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 accordance with the travel reimbursement policy.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [40:5](#)

CROSS REFS.: [BID](#), School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
[DKC](#), Expense Reimbursements

File: BID

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, unless otherwise eligible under city or town charter or regional agreement. 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 their 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

File: BJ

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

School Committees, as agents of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committees are to meet their responsibilities to the residents and students of the towns, they 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. Committees will keep themselves informed of pending legislation and actively communicate their concerns and make their position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.
2. Committees will work with their 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 Committees' legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.
3. Committees will annually designate a person, who may or may not be a member of a Committee, to serve as their legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on a 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, a Committee's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by their School Committee.

File: BK

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

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

They 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 Committees and staff.