2024-2025 School Committee/Superintendent Protocols
Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District

As elected members of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee, we, including the Superintendent, accept the high honor and trust that has been placed in us to ensure that the students of the District receive the best education possible. To that end, we hereby commit to the following in the conduct of our business:

1. Members of the Committee will make no independent commitments or take any independent actions that relate to the School District. When School Committee members attend meetings of other committees or boards, they will speak as individuals. They may only speak for the Committee when designated to represent the Committee.

2. The Superintendent and the School Committee represent the needs and interests of all students in the District and place the students' interests above all others in their decisions, while remaining within the limitations of a voter-approved budget.

3. The School Committee will establish a vision, create policy, approve a budget, and assure accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching, learning, and facilities. Members agree to leave the day-to-day operations, including business transactions, to the Superintendent and staff. Members of the School Committee recognize that authority rests only with the majority in its decisions.

4. School Committee members will channel requests for information, reports, and data through the Superintendent and the School Committee Chair rather than to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member of the Committee has equal access to this information in a timely manner. Recognizing the importance of proactive communication and avoiding surprises, School Committee members will, whenever possible, contact the School Committee Chair and/or the Superintendent in advance of a meeting if they have questions or concerns about an agenda item, or will ask the Chair at least 48 hours prior to a meeting that an item be placed on an agenda.

5. If an individual School Committee member receives an email relevant to overall District policy or operations, they will forward it to the full School Committee and the Superintendent.

6. School Committee members will attend meetings on time and be well-prepared to discuss agenda items. While at meetings, members will stay focused on the agenda items and will not engage in communication outside of the agenda being discussed. When making decisions, School Committee members will keep an open mind, utilizing the best information available including: research, best practices, public input, and financial considerations. Members will debate issues and not each other. Members will analyze carefully and debate fully, whenever necessary, prior to making decisions.

7. Administration will endeavor to make materials for School Committee meetings available the Friday before the meeting. The School Committee will recognize that some circumstances will not always make this possible. In any event, we recognize that having background materials available for School Committee members is a best practice.

8. School Committee members will vote according to their convictions, will avoid bias, and will uphold and support the decisions of the majority of the Committee once a decision has been made. Positions will not be used for personal or partisan gain.

9. All members will maintain the confidentiality of privileged information and will respect the Open Meeting Law.

10. Members will refer constituent concerns and complaints, including issues relating to District personnel, to the appropriate person within the District chain of communication.

11. A School Committee meeting is a business meeting that is held in public – not a public meeting. The Committee will make every effort to ensure meetings are effective and efficient.

12. The School Committee recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with town officials and actively seeking their support to improve the District.

13. The School Committee will demonstrate professional and collegial relations with one another. To this end, members will work to maintain trust and mutual respect between and among each other, the Superintendent, and the administration by treating everyone with dignity and respect, even in time of disagreement. All voices and concerns of individual School Committee members shall be given equal weight and significance.

14. Recognizing the importance of honoring these protocols, members will respectfully remind each other when they get off track.

Adopted on November 7, 2024 by the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee

Dana Allara, Chair

Amy Kunberger, Vice Chair

David Rolito, Secretary

Julia Campbell, Assistant Secretary

Jennifer Carr

David Frenkel

Trenton Honda