

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its 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 problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee 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. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
3. Establish practical and simple goals.
4. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

NOTE: This category is for goals the School Committee sets for its own operations in contrast to goals set for the school system, instruction, etc. The policy may relate to the process of goal setting or may set forth the operational goals established, as in the policy above.

Once Goals are set, this will need to have a link.

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EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

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

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee 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 Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the city's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of city government, the School Committee has, unlike other city 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. According to the Worcester City Charter, the Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall chair the committee, and six members elected at-large.

Established by law

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
Worcester City Charter, Article 4, Section 4-1(a + b.)

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

[Link](#)

File: BBA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it 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 its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Legislative or policymaking.** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. **Appraisal.** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. **Provision of financial resources.** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. **Public relations.** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. **Educational planning and evaluation.** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.
Worcester City Charter Sec. 4-1(d)

REF.: BBA-E, School Committee Powers and Duties

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

File: BBA-E

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

1. At all meetings of the School Committee, four (4) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHAIR

2. The School Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall be the Chair, and six (6) members. The six (6) members other than the Mayor shall be elected-at-large for terms of two (2) years each by plurality voting. The biennial election shall take place in every odd numbered year.
3. A Vice-Chair shall be chosen at the meeting in January of the year ensuing, from the members of the School Committee by a viva voice vote, each member present answering to his/her name of the person for whom he/she votes. The Clerk or other proper officer shall record every such vote.
4. The seats of the members, with the exception of the Chair, should be numbered and determined by lottery and they may not be changed unless by permission of the Chair.
5. The Mayor shall be Chair of the City Council and Chair of the School Committee. He/she shall have no power to veto but shall have the same powers as any other member of either such body to vote upon all measures coming before it.
6. The Chair shall call the School Committee to order at the time appointed for the meeting and shall preside and cause the records of the last regular meeting and subsequent special meetings to be presented or read, and if they are found correct, the School Committee shall declare them approved. The Clerk of the School Committee shall create and maintain an accurate record of all meetings of the School Committee and all of its committees, including executive sessions, setting forth the date, time and place, the members present or absent and a summary of the discussions on each subject. The record shall include all documents and other exhibits, such as photographs, recordings or maps, used by the School Committee or any committee thereof at any open session or executive session.
7. The Chair shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools and shall co-sign all contracts entered into and signed by the Worcester School Department.
8. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties, except the co-signing of contracts, unless authorized by the Mayor, or the Chair in his/her absence and shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools.
9. No member of the School Committee, including the Chair, shall exercise authority outside of Committee meetings nor exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools unless such authority has been specifically delegated to him/her by statute or is consistent with state statutes.
10. The School Committee by its vote or as individual members of the School Committee shall deal with any School Department employee through the Superintendent, its executive officer, who under the general direction of the Committee, is charged with the care and supervision of the public schools. Individual School Committee members may deal with School Department employees, without notice to the Superintendent, concerning day-to-day matters of a routine nature regarding the administration of the school system, as long as such dealings would not cause any disruption in the course of the performance of that employee's duties. In those situations where the definition of "routine" is in question, that issue may be resolved by the Superintendent.

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11. The Chair shall have the power to open the session at the time the School Committee is to meet, by taking the Chair, and calling the members to order; to announce the business in the order in which it is to be acted upon; to recognize members entitled to the floor; to state and to put to vote all questions which are regularly moved and to announce the result of the vote; to enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members; deciding all questions of order (subject to an appeal to the committee by any member who submits the question to the entire School Committee). The Chair cannot close debate unless by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the School Committee present.
12. The Chair shall observe the following procedures in conducting the meetings:
 - a. recognizing members in order of request to be heard
 - b. acting upon the motion on the floor before other motions are entertained
 - c. discouraging argumentative and repetitive discussion
 - d. relinquishing the Chair when desiring to engage in discussion or debate of the agenda item
13. When a question is under debate the Chair shall receive no motion but:
 - to refer
 - to hold to a certain day/indefinitely
 - to allow debate to continue on a motion to hold
 - to amend
 - to move the question
 - to file
 - to adjourn
14. As a matter of protocol, the Chair while presiding at regular School Committee meetings shall be seated between and flanked by the Superintendent and the Clerk of the School Committee.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

15. Every member, when about to speak, shall respectfully address the Chair, and wait until He/she is recognized, shall confine him/herself to the question under debate and avoid personalities, and speak for no more than five (5) minutes except with the consent by majority vote of the School Committee (excluding Committee reports). Discussion on a single subject at a School Committee meeting will be limited to one hour or until each School Committee member who wishes to speak is given an opportunity to do so.
16. No member speaking shall be interrupted by another, but by calling to order for explanation.
17. Motions shall be carefully worded to avoid confusion and more complicated motions shall be written and submitted to the Clerk to insure that all motions are clearly understood.
18. Agenda items filed by School Committee members shall be concise and specific, shall contain no redundant verbiage or opinions or conclusions and should be worded to avoid confusion.
19. Any member present must vote either "Yea", "Nay" or abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest in which case he/she shall state the nature of the conflict under Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws.
20. Motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote and a roll call of the members of the Committee present shall be as follows:

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- a. amend, repeal, rescind or annul any part of the By-Laws or Rules of Order (It also requires previous notice.)
 - b. suspend the Rules
 - c. move the question
 - d. rescind previous vote
 - e. limit or extend one's limit of debate
21. Any action voted by the School Committee shall be effective 48 hours after said meeting.
 22. No action of the School Committee shall be reconsidered unless the motion to reconsider is made within forty-eight (48) hours of the date the vote to be reconsidered was taken, excluding legal holidays, Saturdays and Sundays, with the Clerk of the School Committee. The motion for reconsideration can be made during the meeting at which the action to be reconsidered was taken provided that the motion to reconsider is approved by two-thirds of the members of the School Committee who are present. The reason for reconsideration must be included as part of the backup with the caveat that the entire item would be open for discussion.
 23. An item to be reconsidered shall be the first item on the agenda for action at the next regular meeting. The motion cannot be postponed, amended or referred to Committee.
 24. Items to be reconsidered or held concerning personnel or organizational patterns shall be reconsidered or acted upon within two (2) weeks of the date of the vote to be reconsidered or held was to be taken.
 25. No more than one (1) motion for reconsideration of any vote shall be entertained.
 26. No member of the School Committee shall vote on any question or serve on any committee where his/her private interest is immediately concerned or where a conflict of interest exists as defined by state statutes and/or judicial interpretation.

No Mayor or member of the City Council or School Committee and no Officer or employee of the City shall directly or indirectly make a contract with the City, or receive any commission, discount, bonus, gift, contribution, or benefit from, or any share in, the profits of any person making or performing such contract, unless the Mayor, such member, officer or employee, immediately upon learning of the existence of such contract, or that such contract is proposed, shall notify in writing the Mayor, City Council or School Committee of the nature of his/her interest in such contract, and shall abstain from doing any official act on behalf of the City in reference thereto. In case of such interest on the part of an officer whose duty it is to sign such contract on behalf of the City, the contract may be signed by the Vice-Chair or any other officer of the City duly authorized thereto by the Mayor, provided, that when a contractor with the City is a corporation or a voluntary stock association, the ownership of less than five (5) percent of the stock or shares actually issued shall not be considered as involving an interest in the contract within the meaning of this section, and such ownership shall not affect the validity of the contract, unless the owner of such stock or shares, is also an officer or agent of the corporation or association, or solicits or takes part in the making of the contract.

A violation of any provision of this section shall render the contract in respect to which such violation occurs, voidable at the option of the City. A person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one (1) year, or both.

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27. All School Committee meetings shall terminate no later than midnight. Items that are still pending action at that time shall be carried forward as the "First Items of Business" at the next regular or special School Committee meeting.
28. When an item is filed by a member of the School Committee and that item is to be referred either to a Standing Committee, Special/Ad-Hoc Committee or the School Administration, debate will be limited to opposition, amendment, clarification or supplementation of a motion except for the member who filed the item who, in addition to the debate, may also introduce the item.
29. The Clerk of the School Committee will forward by blind carbon copy the items for the agenda for each School Committee meeting to the School Committee members on the Wednesday prior to each Friday's delivery inquiring as to an interest in co-sponsoring the various items on the agenda.

The School Committee members will complete a form and forward it back to the Clerk of the School Committee on or before the Monday prior to each meeting by putting their initials next to the item(s) they wish to co-sponsor.

The Mayor will read the names of the co-sponsor(s) for each item prior to its discussion at each School Committee meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEES

30. All items, petitions or remonstrances addressed to the School Committee shall be filed with the Clerk and presented by the Chair or by a member in his/her place who may explain the subject thereof. No action shall be taken by the School Committee or one of its Committees on any petition unless the principal petitioner of any petition before the School Committee shall be notified that his/her petition is to be heard and/or final action is to be taken by the School Committee. Reports may be referred to the proper Standing Committee for discussion and recommendation before presenting the reports by a Standing Committee to the full School Committee.
31. All Committees shall be appointed by the Chair unless otherwise ordered by the School Committee. Each School Committee member shall serve on no less than two standing committees. The member first named shall be Chair. A majority of each Committee shall constitute a quorum. All reports made by Committees to the School Committee shall be presented by the Standing Committee Chair. No report of business and items voted shall be made to the School Committee unless agreed to in Committee actually assembled and approved by vote of majority of the members of the Standing/Special Committee. Minority reports may be given by members of the Standing Committee as long as the issues raised were discussed in the Standing Committee.
32. There shall be appointed Standing Committees of the School Committee as follows:
 - a. Accountability and Student Achievement
 - b. Finance and Operations
 - c. Governance and Employee Issues
 - d. Teaching, Learning and Student Supports
33. Each Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) School Committee Members.

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34. If an item is referred to a Standing Committee and has no action for two consecutive meetings of the Standing Committee, the maker of the original item has the option to request the Clerk of the School Committee to return the item to the full committee.
35. The principal petitioner of any petition to be heard by a Standing Committee of the School Committee must be notified of the date, time and place at which his/her petition is to be heard. No petition may be voted by a Standing Committee of the School Committee unless the principal petitioner has been notified as specified above.

VACANCIES ON APPOINTED COMMITTEES

36. Whenever a vacancy occurs among School Committee Officers, or in any Committee, the same shall be filled by election or appointment in the same manner and by the authority which first elected the officer or appointed the Committee.
37. When an order, resolution, item or petition relates to a subject which may properly be examined and reported upon by a Standing Committee of the School Committee, such order, resolution, item or petition shall upon presentation be referred to such Committee.
38. All petitions, communications, items or any matter before the School Committee may be referred as follows:
 - a. to a Standing Committee of the School Committee
 - b. to a Special Committee of the School Committee
 - c. to the Superintendent/Administration
39. All items referred to Administration for study and recommendation shall include in the item a suggested date for a report back to the full Committee. The length of time allowed for the study shall be determined by its complexity. The Committee shall be aware of the limited time available for study items during budget preparation and hearing months. The direction, scope and intent to the study shall be specific.
40. On occasion, when there are items of interest involving participation by guests, residents and/or non-residents or groups in the audience, items may be brought forward early in the meeting.
41. A petition, resolution, order, communication or other matter acted upon unfavorably by the School Committee including placing on file such petition, order, or other matter or the substance thereof, shall not again be docketed on the School Committee Calendar for consideration by the School Committee within a period of three (3) months of such unfavorable action unless previously authorized by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Committee Members present.

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MEETINGS

42. Regularly scheduled meetings may be of two (2) kinds: business and/or educational. The meeting may be held for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the School program, or the development and discussion of policy, and may be held at various schools throughout the City.
43. Special meetings or emergency meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee, or in his/her absence or disability by the Vice-Chair, by three (3) members collectively, in the event that the Chair fails to act, upon due notice as specified in the By-Laws. Ordinarily no business shall be transacted except that for which the meeting is called. For special meetings, at least forty-eight (48) hours notice must be given in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.
44. Recessed/adjourned meetings shall serve as a continuation of a regular meeting, and not as a special or called meeting.
45. The minutes of any open session, whether approved or in draft form, shall be made available upon request by any person within ten (10) days of the request to the extent required by subsection 22(e) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The minutes of any executive session, the notes, recordings or other materials used in the preparation of such minutes and all documents and exhibits used at the session, shall be withheld from public disclosure to the extent provided by subsection 22(f) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The Mayor shall, at reasonable intervals or as otherwise required by subsection 22(g)(2) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25, review any previously unreleased minutes of all executive sessions and determine whether continued non-disclosure under the Open Meeting Law is warranted. In conducting this review the Mayor may seek the advice and assistance of the Superintendent, Clerk of the School Committee, the City Manager or City Solicitor. The Mayor shall file a report containing such determinations at the next regular meeting of the School Committee.

46. All meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public except for executive sessions as described below:

Executive sessions shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 30A §§ 18-25.

No executive session shall be held until the School Committee has first convened in open session for which notice has been duly given, a majority of the members have voted to go into executive session, and the vote of each member is recorded on a roll call vote and entered into the minutes, the Chair has cited the purpose for an executive session, and the Chair has stated before the executive session if the School Committee will reconvene after the executive session.

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47. Regular meetings of the School Committee shall be held on the first Thursday and the third Thursday of the month and shall convene at 7:00 p.m., at a place so designated on the School Committee Agenda of business, unless by a majority vote, the School Committee determines another day, time and/or place.
48. If a School Committee Meeting is scheduled during a school vacation period, it will be postponed to the following Thursday.
49. During the months of July and August, meetings will be held as follows:

July meeting:	third Thursday in July
August meeting:	Thursday prior to the opening of school
50. The School Committee shall conduct a public hearing relative to the Minority Deisolation Plan at its first meeting in December each year. At the hearing, the School Committee will review the results concerning the implementation of the plan and will make the necessary changes in an effort to maintain the correct minority/majority percent at each school. The School Committee will vote the revised plans for the schools that require changes and any other amendments necessary prior to the opening of school.
51. Individuals shall have an opportunity to be heard at a meeting of the School Committee in regard to any matter considered thereat; the time allowed for each person shall be limited to five (5) minutes unless the Chair, with the approval of the School Committee, suspends the rules.
52. The conduct of meetings of the business of the School Committee shall be in accordance with the laws of the State, and except as otherwise provided in accordance with the rules of parliamentary practice laid down in Robert's Rules of Order.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

53. An item not on the calendar of a special meeting shall not be considered nor acted upon.

ADJOURNED MEETINGS

54. The School Committee may recess/adjourn any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting to a time and place specified in the order of recess/adjournment. Less than a quorum may so recess/adjourn from time to time. If all members are absent from any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting, the Clerk of the School Committee may declare the meeting recessed/adjourned to a stated time and place, and he/she shall cause a written notice of the recess/adjournment to be given. When a regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting is recessed/adjourned, the resulting recessed/adjourned regular meeting, is a regular meeting for all purposes.

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55. Any hearing being held, or noticed or ordered to be held, by the School Committee at any meeting, may, by order or notice of continuance, be continued or recontinued to any subsequent meeting of the School Committee provided, that if the hearing is continued to a time less than twenty-four (24) hours after the time specified in the order of hearing, notice shall be posted immediately following the meeting at which the order or declaration of continuance was adopted or made.

56. At every regular meeting of the School Committee the order of business shall be as follows:

Call to Order - Statement of Purpose of Meeting
Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem
Roll Call
Approval of Records
Motion for Reconsideration
Immediate Action
Communications and Petitions
Reports of Standing Committees
Personnel
Report of the Superintendent
General Business
Adjournment

57. An agenda of business shall be prepared on the Thursday prior to the meeting and sent or delivered to each Member of the School Committee the following day. All items of whatever description, including Standing Committee reports which may require action by the School Committee, shall be presented to the Clerk no later than 12 noon on the Wednesday in the week preceding the Thursday meeting. Papers or items presented after that hour on such day will not be considered until the next meeting except as follows:

A supplemental agenda may be prepared following the completion of the regular agenda if the item is of an emergency nature which requires the immediate attention of the School Committee and the item must carry an explanation of the emergency addressed. The Clerk shall prepare a list of all matters in the supplemental agenda to come before the School Committee and shall endeavor to deliver to each School Committee member a copy of the same no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to said meeting; or,

An item not on the calendar of the regular meeting may be brought up during such meeting only with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the School Committee present and then only for: 1) routine items introduced for referral to any committee or the Superintendent/Administration; or, 2) items introduced for immediate and final action for which time is of the essence.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

58. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.

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59. All petitions filed, by a citizen, with the school committee will be heard by the school committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the school committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
60. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.
61. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
62. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.
63. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.
64. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

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

The School Committee 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 the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the 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 city's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her 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 the students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools 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.
11. School Committee members, within 1 year after their initial election or appointment, shall complete at least 8 hours of orientation concerning the responsibilities of their office at no cost to individual School Committee members.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the City of Worcester from which he/she is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

On the first secular day in the New Year, all newly elected School Committee member will take the oath of office before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the City 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.

LEGAL REFS.: Worcester City Charter Article Four, Sec. 4-1c
M.G.L. 30A:20; 41:1; 41:107
M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993

File: BBBA-E

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE/VACANCIES

Section 4-1 Composition. Term of Office and Powers.

- (a) Composition - The School Committee shall consist of the mayor, who shall chair the Committee and six members elected at-large.
- (b) Term of Office - School Committee members shall be elected for terms of two years each, beginning on the first secular day of January in the year following their election and shall serve until their successors are qualified.
- (c) Eligibility - Any voter shall be eligible to hold the office of School Committee member, provided, however, that he/she shall have resided within the City for one year immediately prior to the election.
- (d) Powers and Duties - The School Committee shall have all the powers which are conferred on school committees by general law and such additional powers and duties as may be provided by the charter, by ordinance, or otherwise. Its powers and duties shall include, but shall not be limited to the following.
 - (1) To take general charge of all the public schools in the city, including the evening schools and evening high schools, and all special programs conducted by the school department.
 - (2) To appoint a Superintendent of the Schools who shall be charged with the day to day administration of the school system, subject to policy directives adopted by the school committee. The School Committee may award a contract to the Superintendent of Schools for a term not to exceed six years, in accordance with section 41 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter, Article Four, Sec. 4-1d

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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 the city, town or District in which he or she holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:20; 41:1; 41:2; 41:107; 41:109
M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993

File: BBBE

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, said vacancy shall be filled in descending order of votes received by the candidate for the office who received the largest number of votes from the preceding regular municipal election without being elected, provided such person remains eligible and willing to serve. The board of election commissioners shall certify such candidate to the office to serve for the balance of the then unexpired term.

LEGAL REFS.: Worcester City Charter Article Four, Sec. 2-10 (a)

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 his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that he/she is 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 he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her 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 his/her professional duties and hold him/her 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 in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in executive sessions.
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her 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: BCB

BOARD MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 4-3 Conflict of Interest

Except as otherwise authorized by law, no member of the school committee shall, while a member thereof, hold any other office or position in the school department, the salary or compensation for which is payable out the city treasury.

REF: Worcester City Charter, Section 4-3

File: BDA

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
ORGANIZATION – MAYOR, VICE CHAIR**

Organization - The School Committee shall organize on the first secular day of January, in accordance with the procedures set forth for the organization of the city council in section. 2-2.

(a) Chair - The Mayor shall serve as chair of the School Committee and shall have the same power to vote on every matter coming before the School Committee, as any other member.

(b) Vice Chair - Once the School Committee shall have organized and at that meeting, the Committee shall elect one of its members, by majority vote of all the members elected, to serve as vice-chair. The vice-chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee at which the Mayor is not present.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter Section 4-2

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the 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. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her 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
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

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.

File: BDB

Duties of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Clerk

The clerk will keep accurate Minutes of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy reference notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the city.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36
 Worcester City Charter Article 4 Section 4-2(B&C)

Note: The treasurer of the city serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

File: BDC

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the 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.

Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the school committee may also establish and appoint the positions of:

Assistant or Associate Superintendent	M.G.L. Ch 71, S59
Business Administrator	M.G.L. Ch 71, S41
Director of Special Education	M.G.L. Ch 71B, S31A
Legal Counsel for General Purposes	M.G.L. Ch 71, S37F
Legal Counsel for Collective Bargaining	M.G.L. Ch 71, S37F
School Physician	M.G.L. Ch 71, S53
Registered Nurse	M.G.L. Ch 71, S53
Supervisors of Attendance	M.G.L. Ch 76, S19

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Ch. 71

File: BDD

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

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

File: BDE

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Chair of the School Committee appoints the chairs, vice chairs, and members of the following subcommittees for a period of two years:

Accountability and Student Achievement
Finance and Operations
Governance and Employee Issues
Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

These subcommittees are created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
2. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

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

REF. Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #32

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

File: BDF

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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

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

The chair 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.

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

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

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes 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 site 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 the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school District.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school site 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 following guidelines define the role of the school site 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.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

File: BDFA-E-1

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the school site 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 site council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School site 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 shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school site council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Section 18-25, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school site council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive agendas and minutes of all school site council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school site council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school site council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent and review of the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education and by the School Committee.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.
3. The means to address student performance.
4. Professional development for the school's professional staff.
5. The enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline.
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child.
7. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school site 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.

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written school improvement plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent for approval and the School Committee for review no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school site council be aware of certain expectations regarding the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. focus on improvement of student learning.
2. specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
3. align with the mission of the School District and any goals and policies of the School District.
4. be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements.
5. clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented.
6. include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
7. indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
8. delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent, 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 site council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent does not review the school improvement plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

SCHOOL ATTORNEYS

The School Committee may use the services provided by the city solicitor, and/or outside legal counsel.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. He/she 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 school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the 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, he/she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee 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 the 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

REF.: Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #42

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

File: BEC

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the 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 his/her 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 affect 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.

File: BEC

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.

The 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 the 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 will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the Clerk of the School Committee 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 agenda format shall be in full compliance with policy BBA-E, Paragraph 56.

The Committee 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 the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members the Friday prior to each meeting or for additional materials or items, 48 hours prior to the meeting, to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

RULES OF ORDER

The School Committee has an approved set of rules that govern the proceedings of the meetings.

If a ruling is needed on a topic being discussed which is not covered under the School Committee's rules, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings.

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

CROSS REF: BBA-E, Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or roll call and shall be recorded in the minutes. 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 Rules of the School 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 the 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.

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

REF: BBA-E Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the Clerk of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. a statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), indicating the time and the place.
2. names of the members present or absent, indicating arrival and departure times.
3. a complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, communications, and all business transacted. Motions and votes will be recorded in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding them. Reports and documents related to a formal motion may be referred to by subject and date.
4. 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.

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 Clerk of the School Committee who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

Specific comments and/or discussion should only be included in the minutes as a result of a vote of the Committee. The minutes are not a transcript of the meeting. Audio and/or videotapes of meetings may serve the purpose of preserving a record of discussions. They do not, however, have to be reflected in the minutes.

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

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

File: BEDH

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION 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 citizens of the District 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 the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.
2. All petitions filed, by a citizen, with the school committee will be heard by the school committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the school committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
3. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.

4. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
5. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.

File: BEDH

6. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.
7. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others, as it deems advisable, the School Committee 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 the Committee's policy.

The Chair of the 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 the Committee, or by others for the 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.

NOTE: The details pertaining to conduct of hearings (such as requirements for granting due process, rules of evidence, the making of records and transcripts, and so on), whether established by state law or by Committee action, may be included in the manual as a regulation coded BEE-R. Policies and procedures for special types of hearings -- such as those related to student suspension, staff dismissal, programs and accommodations for handicapped children, and so on -- are better filed under terms related to those specific topics.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

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

POLICY ADOPTION

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

1. Information item - distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item - reading of the 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 the Committee so directs.

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

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the 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.

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 Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

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

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

The Committee 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 regulation to have the 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 Dept. of Elementary and Secondary 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 the School Committee.

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

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. 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 the 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.

The School Committee's official policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the School Committee's office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee 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 the meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

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

School Committee 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 the Committee's 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 Committee authorization.

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), 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 School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the School Committee, or the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of law, each new School Committee member elected to the School Committee is required to complete, within one year of his/her 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.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, 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

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

File: BIBA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages 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 Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The clerk will maintain a calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee 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 REFS.: 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 be compensated in accordance with the provisions of the Worcester City Charter.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

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

It 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 the Committee and the staff.