

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school district 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 District. 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 the 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 its accomplishment.
2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
4. Establish practical and simple goals.
5. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

CROSS REF.: ADA School District Goals and Objectives

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

State law provides that:

Every town at its annual meeting shall in every year when the term of office of any incumbent expires, and except when other provision is made by law, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:

...Five... members of the School Committee for terms of three years ...

The Medfield School Committee is the governing board of the Medfield School District. Although it is a committee of town government, it owes its existence to the Massachusetts General Laws, which decree that each public school district shall be governed by a School Committee.

The Town Charter establishes five as the number of School Committee members to be elected at regular town elections for terms of three years.

Established through statute

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws relating to School Committees.
Medfield Town Charter 5-1

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties
BBAA, School Committee Member Authority
BBB, School Committee Elections

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 district 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.
6. **Personnel Matters**
The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to 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.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School

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Physician, School Nurses, and Supervisor of Attendance. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37](#) specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: [BB](#), School Committee Legal Status

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 their 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 District.
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 town's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect their 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.

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7. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.
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 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.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

An existing School Committee member who submits their resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates their duties at the time of their resignation unless they state in that resignation a specific time at which the resignation will take effect.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town or city which elected them to the Committee, they shall be deemed to have vacated their office.

A member who intends to resign their position on the School Committee shall do so subject to the Town Charter, which states:

"Any person holding an appointive or elective office may resign his/her (sic) office by filing a resignation with the town clerk, and such resignation shall be effective immediately, unless a time certain is specified therein when it shall take effect."

Established by Law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.[41:2](#); [41:109](#)
 [Medfield Town Charter 9-1](#)

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the Medfield School Committee occurs for any reason, the Board of Selectmen and the remaining members of the Committee share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the School Committee shall notify the Selectmen that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. After one week's notice has been given by the Committee to the Selectmen, so that voters of the town may have the opportunity to state their candidacy, the two governing bodies will meet to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected shall fill the seat on the Committee until the next town election, at which time a member shall be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

Established through statute

LEGAL REF.: [M.G.L. 41:11](#)

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 the school administration; and (3) relationship to fellow Committee members.

A Medfield School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

- Realize that their primary responsibility is to the children.
- Recognize that their basic function is to be policymaking and not administrative.
- Remember that they are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
- Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
- Remember that they represent the entire community at all times.
- Accept the office as a Committee member as a means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from their Committee activities.

A School Committee Member in their relations with their school administration should:

- Endeavor to establish sound, clearly-defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
- Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
- Act only on the recommendations of the chief administrator in all matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.
- Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging their professional duties and hold them responsible for acceptable results.
- Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee member in their relations with their fellow Committee members should:

- Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that they alone cannot

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bind the Committee outside of such meetings.

- Realize that they should not make statements or promises of how they will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
- Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions.
- Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of their own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help and information on school problems.
- Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at the regular meeting scheduled immediately before the beginning of each school year, will elect from its membership a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Recording Secretary and a Financial Secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

In the event the Chair and Vice-Chair are no longer members of the School Committee, the senior member (years served) will act as the Chair Pro-Tem.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. The Superintendent will open the meeting and call for nominations from the floor. The Chair will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
2. Upon election, the new Chair will preside over the meeting, calling for the election of a Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, and Financial Secretary, in that order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring prior to the next scheduled organizational meeting will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.

Following election of officers at the organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

The officers of the School Committee shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, and Financial Secretary, elected at the annual organizational meeting.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee, shall have the right to vote on all questions before the Committee, and shall sign all contracts.

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 their office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee 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

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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.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Chair.

The Recording Secretary shall keep a faithful record of all proceedings of the Committee, with notations of all discussions. The Recording Secretary shall in general act as corresponding agent of the Committee.

The Financial Secretary shall work with the Superintendent in financial matters and see that financial statements are presented to the Committee at regular intervals.

CROSS REFS.: BCA, School Committee Organizational Meeting
 DI, Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
 Medfield Town Charter: [Chapter 10](#)

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee will have no standing subcommittees. It may, however, establish special subcommittees at its annual organizational meeting. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The subcommittee Chair and its members will be appointed by the Committee Chair, subject to approval by the Committee.
3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
5. A subcommittee will be dissolved by the Committee upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the Committee at any time.
6. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

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

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

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 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 is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.
6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. The assignment the School Committee wishes 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.

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7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.
8. 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.
9. Advisory committees created under this policy are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

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

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

SCHOOL SITE 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. Each school site council will be composed of the school principal who will serve as co-chair; teachers elected by the professional staff of the school; parents or guardians elected by the school parent/guardian group in consultation with the principal; non-parent or guardian community persons selected from interested citizens; and at the secondary level, students elected by the student body. The representative process must be approved by the Superintendent and the School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the School Site Council:

The School Site 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 School Committee.

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

[M.G.L. 71:38Q](#), [71:59C](#)

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS/EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The principals, in consultation with school site councils, shall adopt educational goals for the schools and shall formulate a school improvement plan to advance such goals. The schools' educational goals must include the student performance standard adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education and, consistent with any educational policies established for the district, shall assess the needs of the school in light of these goals.

The school improvement plan shall address the system-wide goals/core values adopted by the School Committee each year. The plan shall include an assessment of the impact of class size on student performance, and shall consider student to teacher ratios and other factors and supportive resources, and may include a scheduled plan for reducing class size. The plan shall address:

- professional development for the school's professional staff
- the allocation of any professional development funds in the annual school budget
- the enhancement of parent or guardian involvement in the life of the school
- safety and discipline
- the establishment of a welcoming school environment characterized by tolerance and respect for all groups;
- extracurricular activities;
- the development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of the children, including children with special needs currently assigned to separate programs, within the regular education programs at the school, and such further subjects as the principal, in consultation with the school site council, shall consider appropriate.

If said school improvement plan is not reviewed by the School Committee within thirty days of said School Committee receiving said school improvement plan, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

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.

Consensus shall be used by school site councils as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the principal and Roberts 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 which stipulates 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 for information.

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

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](#)

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions

BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

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 may be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. However, a minimum of 48 hours prior to each meeting the Committee shall cause to be posted a listing of each subject the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting (the agenda). Notification of a change in a regular meeting time, place, or agenda and notification, including agenda, of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

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

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

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File: BEDD, 1st Reading, 1/27/2022

RULES OF ORDER

Members of the School Committee shall arrive at agreement as to how the Committee will carry on its business. In a small group such as this body there is merit in permitting discussion of a subject without the making of a prior motion and in dispensing with other formalities so that the Committee's deliberations may be expedited. Therefore, the conduct of Committee business shall be informal, although procedures required by law and policy shall be observed (see references below).

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

CROSS REFS.: BDC, Executive Sessions
BDDE, Voting Method

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VOTING METHOD

Voting at all Medfield School Committee meetings shall be by voice. Roll call votes shall be used and recorded in the official minutes of the meeting when they are required by law or policy or when requested by a Committee member. In the case of split votes not polled by roll call, the name or names of those voting in the minority may be recorded at their request.

For passage, all motions shall be carried by a majority of those present and voting, with exceptions required by law or Committee policy.

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

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions

BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

MINUTES

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

Minutes shall specify:

1. The nature of the meeting (regular, special), the time, the place, and the approval of previous meetings' minutes.
2. Names of members present, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Motions shall be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote.
4. Items of significant information bearing on action.
5. Notation of formal adjournment.

The individual assigned the task of actually recording and transcribing the minutes shall do so as an agent of the recording secretary, a Committee member who bears official responsibility for the taking and keeping of the minutes. The minutes will be signed by the recording secretary and attested by the person who recorded them, following their approval by the Committee at a subsequent meeting.

If corrections are suggested by members and voted by the Committee, those sections shall be revised and shall be presented for Committee approval at a subsequent meeting.

The minutes shall become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings to review on the district's website, or during regular working hours by appointment in the District offices. Minutes are also posted on the Town of Medfield website. Minutes of executive sessions which have been released by the Committee may be viewed by appointment during regular working hours in the District office. The official minutes' book shall remain in the District office.

LEGAL REFS.: [M.G.L. 30A:22](#); [66:10](#);
[940 CMR 29.00](#)

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