

NATICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee Meeting
April 11, 2022
6:30 PM
School Committee Retreat - Training Room, Third Floor, Town Hall

Posted Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022 @2:25PM

School Committee Retreat - Open meeting 6:30PM

Posted In Accordance with Provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25

OPEN SESSION

- Roll Call

PUBLIC SPEAK

Public Speak is scheduled for a period of fifteen minutes. Each speaker will be permitted a maximum of three minutes during which time they can speak about topics within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the School Committee Chair.

Special Meeting Item

1. School Committee Norms
2. Review of Current Section B Policies
3. Scope of Possible Strategic Planning Subcommittee
4. Review of Subcommittee/Liaison Assignments

Agenda items will be addressed in an order determined by the chair. Times are approximate.

ITEM TITLE: School Committee Norms
DATE: 4/11/2022
ITEM TYPE: Discussion
ITEM SUMMARY:
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
RECOMMENDATION:

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	File Name	Type
SC Norms Update	SC_Norms_-_Updated_-_12.8.20_(1).pdf	Cover Memo
DRAFT SC Norms	DRAFT_SC_Norms_8.16.21_with_suggested_miniterial_changes.pdf	Cover Memo
MASC Norms with Checklist	MASC_Norms_with_checklist.pdf	Cover Memo
Doroth Presser	Doroth_Presser.pdf	Cover Memo
Minutes 3.1.22	Minutes_-_3.1.22.pdf	Cover Memo

Natick School Committee Values

As a committee, we collectively agree to make student achievement our first priority. Be it an academic or social/emotional focus, student achievement needs to be the strongest variable we consider when making decisions. Professional respect and collegiality cannot supersede student achievement as a determinant for making decisions.

School Committee will advocate for all students in the Natick Public Schools. With multiple priorities and limited resources, we have a responsibility to determine the best use of the available resources to deliver the greatest benefit to the full student population.

Purview

To enhance collaboration between the School Committee and Superintendent, both must understand and respect the obligations and limitations of the committee's mandated purview.

School Committee Purview (provided by the MASC)

Policy

Official goals and objectives – set goals and monitor progress

Mission and vision statements – articulate vision and values

District policy manual

Student handbooks

Collective bargaining agreements

Strategic plans

Legal documents filed by counsel

Grant applications

Regional agreements

Budget/Fiduciary

Employer of Record for Collective Bargaining Agreements

Hire/Evaluate the Superintendent – use evaluation process to generate accountability and improved performance

Personnel Functions

Hire/retain legal counsel

Advise and consent on

Assistant Superintendent

Business Manager

Special Education Director

Physicians, nurses, attendance officers

Set district personnel policy

Job descriptions

Number of positions funded

Establish compensation for principals and others not set by collective bargaining

Superintendent's Purview (provided by the MASC)

Chief administrative/educational officer with executive authorities

Management of the schools

Authority for personnel

Supervises principals who are "site-based managers"

Responsible for implementing the policies of the district

Initiates policy and budget proposals

Manages the budget approved by the School Committee

Hired by and reports to the School Committee

Natick School Committee/Administration Collaborative Norms

School Committee seeks a balanced perspective relying upon feedback from both new and veteran members - in concert with the opinions and recommendations from our professional educators - when serving on the committee.

Members are expected to ask the questions necessary to make a decision with a reasonable degree of comfort. Good faith is a baseline expectation, both from School Committee and for administration, of all requests for additional information.

The committee and administration will work collaboratively to formulate and establish both longer duration goals – three to five years – as well as annual goals to create a clear priority for district time, energy, financial resources, and deliverable expectations. Both School Committee and administration will work collaboratively to determine appropriate timing to address interim issues when they arise such that the overarching priorities are not minimized. Responsiveness needs to be appropriately balanced with a commitment to a focused strategy.

The strategy formulated to pursue goals, whether budget, academic, or operational, should be agreed upon between the superintendent and the whole School Committee. Strategy shall not be decided upon by a subset of the Committee.

Should a new focus be affirmed by a majority School Committee decision, a discernment process will be undertaken to determine next steps. Based upon the variables of each request, the next steps for development may range from a request for additional information from administration or a subcommittee may be convened if the request is more extensive or potentially undeveloped. The determination for what level of response may be warranted will be determined by the Chair and the Superintendent.

If NPS Administration is not fully comfortable with a new School Committee request, the School Committee expects and encourages that they will share their reservations honestly and directly with the committee. Both the Administration and School Committee will work to find common ground to develop a productive process and useful investigation.

School Committee seeks to encourage communication with all community stakeholders. It is our responsibility to share appropriate information with the community and to share feedback and perspective from the community with administration to provide necessary context.

Requests for agenda items or new topics/ideas for discussion, from any committee member will be honored by the chair. However, the chair will use his/her best judgment as to when the requested items will be scheduled on an agenda. Considerations will include timeliness, natural synergies with other agenda items, the ability of the administration to gather required information, and the number of items already on planned agendas. A proposed timeline for requested agenda items will be shared regularly, through leadership updates or other means, so that committee members know when their request will be honored and addressed.

The superintendent will provide the Committee with regular updates and ongoing communication between meetings, which may include, but is not limited to, email updates, in person meetings, etc. All communications will comply with Open Meeting Law requirements.

All sub-committees and liaisons will regularly share information out to all committee members. The frequency of such communication shall depend upon the schedule of the sub-committee or school/community group meetings. Every effort will be made to ensure all members have accurate and timely information from any meeting that occurs with a smaller subset of the committee of an affiliated group (SEPAC, NEF, etc.) The committee will revisit sub-committee and liaison assignments each year to confirm or rotate membership or representation.

All new committee members should read the policy manual within their first few months on the committee. With policy being a major responsibility of the committee, it is imperative that all members are aware of the policies that govern the district and for which they are directly responsible for upholding. The policy manual is extensive and creates a baseline of knowledge and expectation for each member.

Content share among a quorum of members outside of an open meeting must be ministerial and debate is not allowed. Members are asked to share ministerial information via email rather than text. Sharing of one's opinion with more than three members verbally, via email or via text, is considered debate and is a violation of Open Meeting Law. Members shall not share opinions no matter the issue. Furthermore, School Committee email and any texts sent during public meetings are matters of public record and subject to Open Meeting Law.

The School Committee seeks to have efficient and informative meetings, limiting redundancy in questions or statements as much as possible. As such, the chair will be the designee to express gratitude to presenters and guests during public meetings.

Natick School Committee Operational Norms – To be shared with new members/not for website.

All members should assume that other members are acting with the best of intentions toward students, the school district, and fellow committee members. Members are encouraged to speak directly with another member about personal/non-process based concerns. Members are also encouraged to focus on issues rather than personal intent or person. Process-based concerns should be directed to the chair.

Each member is equal to the other. No one member is more or less important than the rest. Collaboration and consensus amongst the seven members is what allows the committee to move forward. Members need to respect when an individual interest has not gained majority committee support and will agree to put their specific interest aside.

Email any questions in advance of a meeting to the superintendent and the chair, by the Sunday before a Monday meeting if at all possible, so that presenters are given an appropriate opportunity to come prepared with responses to the meeting. Early notice is respectful of the presenter and allows for a better exchange of info within a meeting. Answers to questions deemed relevant or potentially useful to the entire committee will be sent to all for information purposes only.

To streamline communications, all requests for information from the superintendent will go through the chair. The chair may then refer the member to the superintendent or provide information and answers.

No member of the committee shall contact any member of administration without prior consent of the superintendent, which will not be unreasonably withheld. The Superintendent will either respond directly or direct the communication to the appropriate administrator.

Members requesting information from the administration are asked to copy the chair, and understand that if the request has not been approved by a majority of the committee then it will be treated as if it came from any other member of the public.

No request requiring work or response will move forward to administration without majority support of the committee.

Members preparing motions in advance of a meeting are asked to share the motion/s with the chair and superintendent prior to the meeting.

During meetings, the speaker--as determined by the chair--has the floor and other members of the committee should not interject or begin speaking until recognized.

Given that all text messages sent during public meetings are subject to Open Meeting Law, text messaging during meetings is not permitted.

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If more than one member of the committee is interested in serving on a town committee, sub-committee or as a representative to a school and/or community, the School Committee will accept nominations during an open meeting and will then take a vote to select the representative. Unless a deadline prohibits it, the Committee will discuss the opportunity at one meeting and vote for the representative at the next full meeting.

The chair of the School Committee - ONLY - speaks to the media, responds to email, and speaks officially for the committee. The chair will copy all Committee members and administration on responses to email. If a member is named within the body of a received email, the chair will confer with said member before responding so that the perspective of that member can be included in the response. Individual members may respond to emails that are sent to them directly, but the chair will respond to all emails that are sent to the whole committee.

1-2 members will be designated to monitor social media posts in the community. If a post needs to be addressed, the committee member may draft a response or check in with the chair to confirm accuracy of the response. The member may then post the response.

The School Committee will designate a member to work with the chair and the administration on written statements or communications that are time-sensitive and may need to be shared prior to discussion at a public meeting. Preparation of written statements will comply with Open Meeting Law.

Natick School Committee Member Expectations

Integrity is critical. Each member serves as a representative of School Committee, and indirectly of Natick Public Schools, at all times. Be respectful of that responsibility.

As a School Committee member, you are no longer perceived by staff as just a parent. Your service does not alter your ability to advocate for your child/ren while serving on the committee, but be respectful of the anxiety that your service as a School Committee member may cause for some staff when advocating on behalf of your child/ren as a parent/private individual.

Similar to School Committee members as parents, please recognize that in community meeting settings, you are perceived as a member of the School Committee. This does not limit your ability to speak as a private citizen or in your capacity in another elected office. However, committee members should be aware that their comments can be perceived (rightly or wrongly) as the position of the School Committee, even if the member makes the community aware that they are speaking in a different capacity.

Discretion is critical. SC members have access to multiple different types of sensitive information - legal cases, contract negotiations, grievances, Executive Session - which require unequivocal confidentiality.

Agendas are released the Thursday before a meeting. Come prepared to meetings having reviewed agenda materials.

Should any committee member not adhere to the norms outlined above, the chair will, in collaboration with another appropriate member, address the situation in such a manner that the issue can be resolved.

DRAFT - 8.19.21

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UPDATE TITLES HERE

Deputy Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation

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~~Business Manager~~

~~Director of~~ Special Education ~~Director~~

~~Physicians,~~

~~Nurses,~~

~~A~~ttendance officers

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The committee and administration will work collaboratively to formulate and establish both longer duration goals – the district strategic plan – as well as shorter term objectives and outcomes aligned to yearly school improvement plans. This creates a clear priority for district time, energy, financial resources, and deliverable expectations.

The strategy formulated to pursue goals, whether budget, academic, or operational, should be agreed upon between the superintendent and the School Committee as a whole. Strategy shall not be decided upon by a subset of the Committee.

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School Committee seeks to encourage communication with all community stakeholders. It is the School Committee's collective responsibility to share appropriate

information with community stakeholders and to share feedback and perspective from community stakeholders with administration to provide necessary context.

The items on the School Committee agenda should clearly communicate the role the School Committee should play and the action the School Committee should take. Agenda items should reflect the purview of the School Committee, the priority of the Committee, and the district strategic plan.

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PROTOCOLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

An Annotated Review of Samples of Personal Norms,
Statements of Principles and Beliefs, and Meeting Best Practices

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEES

10th Edition - Revised – July 2020

A WORD ABOUT “NORMS AND BELIEFS”

School Committee members are elected public officials, selected by their fellow citizens to act in their interests and empowered to act as they see their duty to work for the children of their community. Although rules of order are essential to an effective public meeting, personal norms and protocols to guide individual or group behaviors are neither established in law nor subject to imposition by anyone outside the board itself. Many people think it is demeaning and condescending to attempt to prescribe behaviors on those whom the people have chosen to represent them, especially adults who are perfectly capable of managing themselves. MASCC has encouraged effective School Committees to find their own balance and to encourage collegiality, diligence and diligence in their work. We respectfully offer these recommendations, based on the work of several Massachusetts School Committees, as voluntary guidelines to help make their meetings productive and effective. We have annotated most of these model norms, beliefs and protocols to put in perspective recommendations for model practices, noting that one person’s norms and protocols may be another person’s unwillingly imposed standards. Democracy demands the individual use one’s best judgment as one perceives it rather than succumbing to the will of another, whether it is resolving a matter of policy, fulfilling your fiduciary responsibilities, or providing leadership.

SAMPLE NORMS AND BELIEFS

How We Govern

1. We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a meeting of the School Committee that is held in public – not a public meeting, and we will make every effort to ensure that **Committee meetings are effective and efficient.**¹
2. School Committee members agree to thoughtfully seek and support solutions that will provide the greatest benefit to students. Once the School Committee has taken action, **Committee members will support the official position of the School Committee.**²
3. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to oversee the hiring, evaluation and handling of personnel issues; it is the responsibility of the School Committee to **evaluate the Superintendent’s effectiveness** in these matters.
4. We acknowledge the **importance of subcommittees**, and the Superintendent agrees to utilize them to focus on a specific topic in-depth and to prepare for presentation, deliberation and possible action by the full School Committee.
5. School Committee members agree to recognize and respect that their **authority exists when a quorum of the Committee meets and not as individual Committee members.**

¹ This is an important distinction because the public does not have an inherent right to speak or participate without recognition by the chair or entitlement through your municipal charter.

² Some individuals object to this provision because it stifles dissent and disagreement. It is important to note that “supporting the official position of the school committee” does not preclude principled disagreement or future attempts to change policy, but simply not to undermine the work of the majority’s policy of the district.

How We Communicate

1. It is our responsibility to set the tone for the entire school system, and we will make every effort to promote a positive image for our school system. The Superintendent will be visible in the community, and **we will operate transparently and respectfully, maintain confidentiality, and respect the Open Meeting laws.**
2. The Superintendent and the School Committee recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree that **there will be no surprises.**³ If School Committee members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the Superintendent well in advance of a meeting.
3. We agree that discussion will be limited to the agenda, and **items will not be added to the agenda** unless it is determined by the Superintendent and the School Committee Chairperson that it would be detrimental to delay the issue until a subsequent meeting.⁴
4. The Superintendent will share an annual planning calendar with School Committee members. If a member wishes to add an item to a future agenda, he or she should make a request to the Superintendent or the School Committee Chairperson.⁵ In turn, they will consult other members, as well as the **annual planning calendar to gauge interest and alignment.**
5. School Committee members agree to **refer important questions and concerns** they receive from members of the school community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will investigate and provide all Committee members with the information needed to respond to an issue.⁶
6. School Committee members will **channel requests for information**, reports and data through the Superintendent and the School Committee Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.⁷
7. The Superintendent intends to seek comprehensive solutions to problems and will create **clear structures for decision-making.** In the spirit of continuous improvement, these structures may be revisited at any time.
8. The Superintendent and School Committee recognize the importance of **working collaboratively with City officials** to improve our schools, and we will actively seek ways to enlist their support in our efforts.

³ "Surprises" is a relative term, but it is appropriate to make sure that superintendents are aware of important issues or challenging questions that will be posed at a meeting. This does not preclude a member from asking a question or raising a point that arises during the course of a discussion or debate that, despite the most noble of intentions, could not be anticipated. This is often linked to "full disclosure" noted below.

⁴ Massachusetts law precludes the school committee from raising an issue that could not have been reasonably anticipated by the chair. This protocol as stated on the list imposes an additional responsibility upon members not to push for discussions for which the superintendent or staff may be unprepared. While it is a good idea to allow the superintendent and chair to have the discretion to make a determination, a principled school committee member who feels genuinely that a late-breaking issue is important should not be discouraged from asking colleagues to take up a matter that is critical to some but not to others.

⁵ The agenda is the property of the school committee. Developing the agenda is often delegated to the chair or to the superintendent and chair.

⁶ This is a best practice to follow. However, citizens have an unrestricted right to contact their elected officials and this right may not be abridged by the superintendent or chair. Once you have listened respectfully to your constituents and asked if they have approached the appropriate administrator, you should quickly make the referral to the superintendent.

⁷ Requests for information, reports or tasks to be performed have taken on the title of "vanity projects." They are problematic because they require the time and attention of the superintendent or staff and may not be of interest to the rest of the school committee. For that reason, it is often a policy that these requests are channeled through the school committee as a body or through the chair. However, as is stated, it is critical to the longevity of the superintendent that information be shared with everyone.

How We Improve

1. School Committee members and the Superintendent recognize the **importance of professional growth and development**, and they agree to participate in experiences designed to further their knowledge and understanding and to advance the work of our public schools.
2. In addition, School Committee members will **participate in formal training** organized by the Superintendent and the School Committee Chairperson and conducted by organizations such as the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and/or Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS).
3. All new School Committee members will **participate in an orientation session**, and if desired, a School Committee mentor will be assigned.
4. The Superintendent and the School Committee agree to set aside time on an annual basis for **self-evaluation and to review our progress** toward adhering to agreed upon norms and beliefs.
5. We recognize the importance of **honoring our agreed upon norms and beliefs**, and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.

*[These norms and protocols were adapted from original work by the Taunton School Committee in 2012.
MASC notes that reasonable individuals will have rational disagreements about meanings or appropriateness of
terms from time to time.]*

OTHER NORMS, BELIEFS AND PROTOCOLS THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAY CONSIDER

Come to Meetings Prepared⁸

Creating an Environment for Full and Free Debate, or “Civil Discourse” in a Safe Environment⁹

Addressing Issues and Avoiding the Ad Hominem Attack¹⁰

Obligation to Represent All Students

Obligation to Utilize Vision, Planning, and Policy Making in Decision¹¹

Full Disclosure¹²

Blogging and Social Media¹³

Expectations for the Chair and Other Officers¹⁴

Set Appropriate Examples for the Employees in the School District¹⁵

⁸ Nothing slows down a meeting more than taking time to explain that information which is in the pre-meeting packet for review.

⁹ This targets intellectual bullies or others who would intimidate colleagues from raising or addressing important questions. It also speaks to those who would demand “civil discourse” as a vehicle to silence principled critics who may become passionate. Nothing should prevent a member from raising one’s voice in passionate argument as opposed to shouting down someone else’s point of view.

¹⁰ While it can be tempting to attack the individual making an argument as a way of refuting that perspective, members are encouraged to focus on the issue and the facts rather than on personalities.

¹¹ This generally is expressed with a specific intent of avoiding intrusion into administrative decision making or general school district day-to-day operations. It is a help in defining the criteria a school committee will use in determining whether an important matter falls under the legal authority, policy responsibility or fiduciary obligation of the school committee, or administrative duties of the superintendent.

¹² Full disclosure includes not only providing all information necessary for administrators to respond as well as that which is of interest to the rest of the school committee. There are also implications for disclosing conflicts of interest and other matters under the state ethics law.

¹³ Blogs are unrestricted devices for constitutionally protected free speech. In some cases, they can have the status of legitimate media to exercise freedom of the press as well. However, they can also be vehicles to upstage or undermine colleagues or school administrators. No one can force an elected official to restrict the use of them, but it is a good idea for school committee members to exercise discretion and good judgment in maintaining a web site, social media page, or blog.

¹⁴ The chair is the servant of the school committee, not the master. As such, the chair must represent both school committee members and citizens, present or absent, to ensure that the meetings are fair and that all members are treated equally and fairly. Other than presiding and the duties inherent in that role, the chair takes one’s authority from the membership. The chair recognizes that the agenda is the property of the membership, not the chair or the superintendent.

¹⁵ Everyone watches the school committee: Do you entertain calls from citizens, staff or other elected officials? Do you intervene in personnel matters? Are you focusing on student achievement or political advancement? Staff take their cues from the board. If school committee members engage in practices that may undermine the administrative leadership, faculty and parents will often encourage those inappropriate practices for personal advantage.

Protocols Worksheet - How do we do Business?

Issues ¹⁶	Do We have a concern in this area?	How will we handle this?	Do we need a written protocol?	Do we need a policy?
<i>Committee Room Layout</i>				
<i>Seating arrangement at Committee table</i>				
<i>Placement of the Superintendent and staff in the Committee room</i>				
<i>Developing the Committee meeting agenda</i>				
<i>Structure of the Committee agenda</i>				
<i>Placing something on the Committee agenda</i>				
<i>Getting questions answered about items on the agenda before a meeting</i>				
<i>Public input at Committee meetings</i>				
<i>Deliberation at Committee meetings</i>				
<i>Informal Committee reports at Committee meetings</i>				
<i>Allowing the majority vote to set direction for the school district</i>				
<i>Bringing up new ideas</i>				
<i>Bringing agenda items back for further discussion</i>				
<i>Explaining "no" votes</i>				
<i>Length of meetings</i>				
<i>Sharing expertise on issues</i>				
<i>Inability of member to stop talking (logorrhea)</i>				

¹⁶ Issues often relate to the following areas – Effective Meetings, Board/Member relations, Board/Superintendent relations, Board/Staff relations, Board/Community relations.

SAMPLE –AND BELIEFS

Issues ¹⁶	Do We have a concern in this area?	How will we handle this?	Do we need a written protocol?	Do we need a policy?
<i>Inappropriate use of electronic devices</i>				
<i>Individual Committee member requests for information</i>				
<i>Individual Committee member requests for action</i>				
<i>Handling complaints from the community</i>				
<i>Handling complaints from staff</i>				
<i>Handling complaints from Committee members</i>				
<i>Addressing concerns of the community</i>				
<i>Use of subcommittees</i>				
<i>Use of work sessions</i>				
<i>Requesting information from staff</i>				
<i>Committee member role in public</i>				
<i>Committee/member communications</i>				
<i>Committee/Superintendent communications</i>				
<i>Committee Staff communications</i>				
<i>Visiting Schools</i>				
<i>Self-evaluation of governance team effectiveness</i>				
<i>Confidentiality</i>				
<i>Handling of email</i>				
<i>Superintendent Evaluation</i>				
<i>Goal setting and planning</i>				
<i>Reaction when not in the majority</i>				



Why did you run for School Committee?

I'd spent 12 years on the Finance Committee – 11 of them as chair of the Education and Learning Subcommittee. It was very clear to me in that time that few, if any, SC members really understood the budget – both the process and what was included in the budget. Most of my time on FinCom, Dr. Sanchioni had said to me, "Why do you keep asking questions about the budget? Just give me my money and leave me alone." When I maxed out on FinCom, I decided that, especially with a new Superintendent, I had skills and knowledge that could benefit the committee, the schools, and the superintendent.

What do you see as the role of the individual member, the Chair, the Superintendent?

Individual member: to advocate for the entire district (in addition to budget, policy, hiring & evaluating the Superintendent and negotiations)

Chair: Herding cats! Set the agenda, run and control the meetings, speak publicly for the committee

Superintendent: Run the district. Advise the SC on things like curriculum, proposed budget needs, and policies in need of development or amendment.

What does "team" mean to you and what is getting in the way of the School Committee being a team?

Team – I've been a member of many teams – sports when I was younger; as a member and leader of Audit teams, as chair of other committees.

Team means doing whatever you can/need to move the whole group forward. Everybody needn't be experts in every aspect of a project IF you can trust that the others share your view of teams.

Current SC has no trust in each other or in some cases in the Superintendent, Some members seem to think that a meeting is the best time to play "gotcha"

There doesn't seem to be a shared belief or understanding of what is and isn't our sandbox.

What's blocking the Committee from being more productive and what specific recommendations might you have?

- Members not abiding by our norms, and in one case saying she doesn't have to because she didn't vote on them and they are too controlling. For example, we have a norm that says once the committee votes a decision, even if you didn't support the action, members are expected to get on board when in public. This member told members of the public that there was no plan for a topic
 - Just because another committee opts to do things differently doesn't mean their way is "best practice" or even that it's "best practice for them"
 - Lack of trust. Lack of understanding of the position. Lack of respect for the job, the process, other members and the Superintendent and her staff & faculty
 - Stop gaslighting people – claiming that the Superintendent was aware of, if not involved in election misconduct. When asked for proof, which she claimed she had, she has never produced a shred of evidence.
 - Stop blaming other people. Stop mis-representing what others say and stop claiming it's you that has been mis-represented when your own evidence doesn't support your assertion.
 - o Anna wrote, "It has been suggested to me by a member in the policy meeting that the policy has been unevenly executed across our organization. That is incorrect. Each principal emailed me this week to certify this is the case."
 - o Catherine objected writing that what she had said was. "It feels as if our volunteer policy has been applied inconsistently this year."
 - o That is a distinction without a difference!
 - o Recusal happened because "she wasn't trained enough"
- Stop using meeting time to push for something because it affects your kid – even if doing what you want would harm others. Just stop!

- I believe the chair needs to step in more often to shut down some things.
 - o Our level of certainty on any decision is "a reasonable degree of comfort" not "beyond a reasonable doubt."
 - o Members will respect when an individual interest has not gained majority committee support and will agree to put their specific interest aside. This includes making offers to the community for a project the committee has not voted to support.
 - o "All members should assume that other members are acting with the best of intentions toward students, the school district, and fellow committee members." While we (or at

least I) may not say something in the way you would prefer, no one is trying to make you feel bad or to discount your opinion or minimize you in any way.

- Our job is primarily political in nature. We are elected to serve and it is our job to secure a budget sufficient to meet our identified needs and goals. As such, the Committee needs to do a better job of staying on our side of the field (policy, budget, collective bargaining, strategic planning & goal setting) and stay out of management and implementation issues.

Natick School Committee Values

As a committee, we collectively agree to make student achievement our first priority. Be it an academic or social/emotional focus, student achievement needs to be the strongest variable we consider when making decisions. Professional respect and collegiality cannot supersede student achievement as a determinant for making decisions.

School Committee will advocate for all students in the Natick Public Schools. With multiple priorities and limited resources, we have a responsibility to determine the best use of the available resources to deliver the greatest benefit to the full student population.

Natick School Committee/Administration Collaborative Norms

Members are expected to ask the questions necessary to make a decision with a reasonable degree of comfort. Good faith is a baseline expectation, both from School Committee and for administration, of all requests for additional information.

Natick School Committee Operational Norms

All members should assume that other members are acting with the best of intentions toward students, the school district, and fellow committee members. Members are encouraged to speak directly with another member about personal/non-process based concerns. Members are also encouraged to focus on issues rather than personal intent or person. Process-based concerns should be directed to the chair.

Translate the education goals into dollars and cents

Selected to be on Anna's Committee

Focus on getting through Malone budget crisis

Open the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Roll Call

Henry Haugland
Cathi Collins
Donna McKenzie
Hayley Sonneborn
Catherine Brunell
Shai Fuxman
Julie McDonough

Dorothy Presser from Massachusetts Association of School Committes

Short Presentation - Natick School Committee Norms Workshop

Current SC Norms:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DeublWxzUHoy244V_0wLyJrsRsZYWp9Le5UuWxDL7rg/edit?usp=sharing

Norms for Superintendent and School Committee

Norms for School Committee

School Committee

Asking the big questions

Bridge between community and superintendent

Superintendent

Figures out the operational piece

Bridge between staff and committee

Promoting trust and mutual respect

Balanced governance - informed monitoring - 50,000 governance role

Basic statements

- Every member was elected to the School Committee
- The School Committee has one employee
- The superintendent has one employer (School Committee as a whole gives direction to the superintendent)

How do we utilize the superintendent's time efficiently. Not so much giving direction but individual members taking up too much of the time of the superintendent.

Goals and Strategic plan are the focus of the district. This can wait. This belongs in a building. If I have an issue, is it an issue now. If I have an issue, where do I take it? Does it belong with the superintendent. Can it wait? Belongs in a different time or place?

Norms

All information or questions should go first to the chair and then the chair figures out the next step.

Not going to make personal attacks

Presentations - why we are getting the presentation and what is the decision to be made.

Purview of School Committee is important.

What are the questions we need to ask that are in our purview?

Solutions

Norms

All information or questions should go first to the chair and then the chair figures out the next step.

How to give time back to the superintendent. Chair decides the when and how.

Ask questions you need related to the decision you need to make. Clarity around the decision you need to make.

Not going to make personal attacks

Comment on ideas and not editorialize what other members are saying. Not label other people's actions in negative ways. Assume positive intent. "I" statements.

Progress toward your goals - purpose of presentation

Presentations to make a decision on budget, policy,

The superintendent knows the questions ahead of time so that the decision is not delayed.

No surprises - no "gotcha."

The information is available to you when you need to make the decisions.

Not enter into debate ahead of time with the questions

Not interrupt people when they are talking. Won't get up and walk out of a School Committee meeting.

Calendar is published in advance. Review calendar and understand the information that a member will need to make the decisions.

Focus on kids - keep this vision.

Don't create hostile environment

Respect boundaries and lives. Determine time frame for responses.

Focus on agenda items and fact-based questions.

Read materials and read the materials that have already been presented. Try to limit duplicate questions.

Put meeting materials (presentations) in a folder to easily find.

Speak with permission of the chair

Motion to adjourn - Shai
2nd - Cathi

All in favor - yes.

ITEM TITLE: Review of Current Section B Policies
DATE: 4/11/2022
ITEM TYPE: Discussion
ITEM SUMMARY:
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
RECOMMENDATION:

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	File Name	Type
Policy Manual Section B as of 4.7.22	Policy_Manual_Section_B_as_of_4.7.22.pdf	Cover Memo

SECTION B

BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

BA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
BAA	EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES
BB	SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS
BBA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
BBAA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: AUTHORITY AND DUTIES
BBBA/ BBBB	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE
BBBC	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION
BBBE	UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT
BCA	CODE OF ETHICS
BDA/BDB/ BDC/BDD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING, OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS
BDE/BDF	SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES
BDFA	SCHOOL COUNCILS
BDFA-E-1	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
BDFA-E-2	SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
BDFA-E-3	CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS
BDG	SCHOOL COMMITTEE ATTORNEY
BE	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEC	EXECUTIVE SESSIONS
BEE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

BEDA	NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEDB	AGENDA FORMAT
BEDD	RULES OF ORDER
BEDF	VOTING METHOD
BEDG	MINUTES
BEDH	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BG	SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT
BGB	POLICY ADOPTION
BGC	POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW
BGE	POLICY DISSEMINATION
BGF	SUSPENSION OF POLICIES
BGD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES
BHC	SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
BHE	USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
BIA	NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION
BID	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
BIBA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS
BJ	SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
BK	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

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.

The School Committee will apply these principles to its goal setting as follows:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Developing an educational vision and engaging in short and long-term strategic planning to guide policy decisions including those regarding budget, curriculum, student assessment, employee and personnel, staff development and facilities management.
3. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
4. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
5. Establish practical and simple goals.
6. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

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.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the town's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town 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.

State law provides that:

"Every town at its annual [town election] shall,, except when other provision is made by law or by charter, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:

... Three or more members of the School Committee for terms of not more than three years....In any case where three or more members of a board are to be elected for terms of more than one year, as nearly one-third as may be shall be elected annually."

The Natick Town Charter established School Committee membership as seven members.

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

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

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.
6. **Personnel.** The Committee shall select and terminate the Superintendent. The School Committee will also confirm the appointment of the Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager, and Director of Special Education.

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 MEMBERS: AUTHORITY AND DUTIES

A. PURPOSE: To define the authority and duties of the individual members of the School Committee.

B. POLICY:

1. Authority

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.

2. Duties: The duties and obligations of the individual Committee members may be enumerated as follows:

- a. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and policies and procedures of this School Committee and school department.
- b. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
- c. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of Natick's public schools.
- d. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect their share of the work.
- e. 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.
- f. To vote and act in Committee without bias for the good of the students.
- g. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that they are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
- h. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
- i. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
- j. To comply with the Ethics statutes as well as the accepted Code of Ethics for School Committee members. (File BCA)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

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

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the Town Clerk, newly elected or appointed 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.

Established by law and Town Charter

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23B; 41:1; 41:107
 M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993

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

Established by law

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

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the 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 will 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 will fill the seat on the Committee until the next town election, at which time a member will be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:11

CODE OF ETHICS

It shall be the constant endeavor of each School Committee member, representing all the citizens of Natick, to strive step by step toward ideal conditions for most effective School Committee service to their community, in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our representative democracy.

- a. A School Committee member in their relations with their community should:
 - 1) Realize that their primary responsibility is to each and every one of the children in the Natick school system without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
 - 2) Recognize that their basic function is to be policy making and not administrative
 - 3) Remember that they are one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made
 - 4) Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
 - 5) Bear in mind that it is as important for the Committee to understand and evaluate the educational program of the schools as it is to plan for the business of school operation.
 - 6) Devote time, thought and study to the duties and responsibilities of a School Committee member so that they may render effective and creditable service.
 - 7) Take the initiative in helping all people of this community to have the best possible information in a timely manner about their schools, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff, and school facilities.
 - 8) Remember that they represent the entire community at all times.
 - 9) 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 their Committee activities.
 - 10) Welcome and encourage active cooperation by citizens, organizations, and the media of communication in the district with respect to establishing policy on current school operations and proposed future developments.
- b. A School Committee member in their relations with their school administration should:
 - 1) Endeavor to establish sound, clearly-defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
 - 2) Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
 - 3) Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging their professional duties and hold them responsible for acceptable results.
 - 4) Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution, consistent with the administrative chain of command and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.
- c. A School Committee member in their relations with their fellow Committee members should:
 - 1) Work with their fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points at issue.
 - 2) Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that they cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
 - 3) Realize that they should not make statements or promises of how they vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
 - 4) Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in executive sessions.
 - 5) Share pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems both with members of their Committee and with members of other committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems.

- 6) Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed, and base such decisions upon all available facts in each situation, consistent with their honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING, OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

A. PURPOSE:

To define the duties of the various officers of the School Committee and their manner of election.

B. POLICY:

1. Organizational Meeting

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at an organizational meeting, held only for the purposes listed below, shall be scheduled for a date and time following the Annual Town Election and prior to the first regular meeting will elect from its membership a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Clerk all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

- a) The meeting shall be called to order by the Executive Secretary of the Committee (the Superintendent), who shall preside during and until the election of the Chairperson.
- b) Nominations for the office of Chairperson will be made from the floor. The Chairperson shall be elected by voice vote of the members participating either remotely or in-person and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
- c) No member may serve as Chairperson for more than two consecutive years except by a separate 2/3 vote of the Committee to permit the then Chairperson to be considered a candidate in (b., above). No member shall serve more than three consecutive years.
- d) Upon election, the new Chairperson will preside, calling for the election of a Vice-Chairperson and Clerk, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chairperson.
- e) Following the election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Clerk, the Recording Secretary, who shall not be a member of the School Committee, shall be appointed by the Committee.
- f) The Committee shall review subcommittee and liaison assignments and vacancies. To give members an opportunity to understand the commitment involved and/or express interest in an assignment, appointments to subcommittee and liaison positions shall occur at the next regular meeting.
- g) Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.
- h) Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such special business as scheduled on the agenda.
- i) The Student Representative (elected in accordance with Chapter 71, Section 38M) will begin his/her term at the beginning of the next school year.
- j) The retention of School Committee counsel shall be reaffirmed at each organizational meeting and reviewed at such time if the Committee feels appropriate.

2. Duties of the Chairperson: The Chairperson 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 or 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 Chairperson will:

- a. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders approved by the Committee in its name and behalf.
- b. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
- c. Confer with the Superintendent on matters that may occur between Committee meetings.

- d. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
- e. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary or requested in writing by members of the Committee.
- f. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
- g. Preside at all Committee meetings.
- h. Verify with the Superintendent annually that the Superintendent has completed reviews of direct reports.

If the Chairperson is unable to carry on the duties for an extended period of time, the School Committee will hold an organizational meeting and vote for a new Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson.

3. Duties of the Vice-Chairperson of Policy and Operations

The Vice-Chairperson of Policy and Operations will assume the duties of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent or incapacitated. In the absence of the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson at any School Committee meeting, the Executive Secretary (Superintendent) shall call for the election of a Chairperson pro tem by the members present.

4. Duties of the Clerk

The Clerk will be responsible for a record of the meetings being prepared in accordance with by-law and supervise the Recording Secretary, who takes the notes and review them prior to their acceptance by the School Committee. The Clerk is to attest to the minutes and sign on the line for this purpose in the official book in which they are entered.

5. Duties of the Executive Secretary

The Superintendent shall be elected by the Committee as provided by law and shall serve as Executive Secretary and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent there to, as the majority of the Committee may direct.

As Executive Secretary of the School Committee the Superintendent shall cause to be kept and accessible a record of the proceedings of the Committee and shall keep on file all reports, communications, papers, and documents relating to the business of the Committee or belonging to it.

He or she shall issue notices of Committee meetings; shall furnish each member, in advance, an agenda for the forthcoming meeting which he or she shall have prepared with the Chairperson; shall provide a copy of the record of previous meetings as soon as possible; and shall perform such other duties as may be required by the Committee.

6. School Committee-Superintendent Relationship

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his or 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:

- a. 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 or she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.

- b. 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.
- c. The Superintendent, after conferring with the Chairperson, shall notify members of the School Committee regarding any meetings between the Superintendent and the Chairperson touching on substantive matters, in a timely fashion.

7. Duties of the Recording Secretary (*Part of MASC Policy BDB*)

The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of School Committee meeting and shall have such other duties as the Committee and the Superintendent may determine.

REFERENCES:

71M.G.L.sec.36,38G,41,42.
MASC, School Committee Policy Manual
41 M.G.L. sec. 1,41. 107.
Town of Natick Charter

Note: The treasurer of the town serves as treasurer of the School Committee (*Part of Policy BDB*)

Revised by the Natick School Committee: April 212, 2021

SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

1. **Subcommittees:** The School Committee will reconstitute its subcommittees at its annual organizational meeting or at the following regular meeting of the School Committee. Subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.
 - a. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
 - b. The subcommittee chairperson and its members will be appointed by the Committee Chairperson, subject to approval by the Committee.
 - c. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
 - d. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
 - e. The Committee Chairperson and Superintendent will be ex-officio members of all special subcommittees.
 - f. 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.
 - g. The Chairperson of each subcommittee will provide copies of all subcommittee agendas and minutes to the School Committee.
 - h. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

NOTE: The open meeting law ~ and its exceptions ~ apply to both School Committee meetings and meetings of the subcommittees and task forces of the School Committee. The Chair of the subcommittee or the task force has responsibility for posting legal notice or all meetings.
2. **Task Forces:** The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of task forces (or advisory committees) to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.
 - a. Task forces may be created by the School Committee to serve to advise the Committee 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.
 - b. The composition of task forces will take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the task force. Members of the professional staff and/or students may be appointed to the task force as members or consultants, as found desirable.
 - c. Appointments to such task forces will be made by the School Committee; appointment of staff members to such task forces will be made by the Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
 - d. Tenure of task force members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.
 - e. Each task force will be clearly instructed as to its mission and time line as well as its relationship to the School Committee, the School Department and the media.

- f. Recommendations of task forces will be based upon research and fact.
- g. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of a task force must be submitted to the School Committee.
- h. The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its task forces and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any task force.

CROSS REF.: JIB, Student Involvement in Decision Making
BEC, Executive Sessions

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 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 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 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

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school 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 Elementary and Secondary 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 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 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 including any potential impact on any feeder or followon schools.
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 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.

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. 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 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 council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law 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 council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ATTORNEY

- A. PURPOSE: To define the relationship between the School Committee and its attorney.
- B. POLICY: The School Committee may use the services provided by the town counsel. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek his or her services to counsel and represent the school system at various times.
- However, because the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, the Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm - to provide additional legal services. The retention of School Committee counsel shall be reaffirmed at each organizational meeting and reviewed at such time if the Committee feels appropriate.
- 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 or her. He or 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 or 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. Requests by School Committee members for a legal opinion on any matter germane to the Committee's responsibilities will be made through the Chairperson, who will forward such requests, along with any related documents submitted by Committee members, to the School Committee's attorney. Any legal opinion so obtained shall be in writing at the request of the majority of the School 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 or she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.
- LEGAL REFS.: MGL 71:37E, 37F
- CROSS REFS.: BDA, School Committee Organizational Meeting

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LEGAL REFS.: MGL 71:37E, 37F

CROSS REFS.: BDA, School Committee Organizational Meeting

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:

Regular meeting: . A regular meeting of the School Committee shall be held on the first and third Mondays of each month unless otherwise voted by the Committee.

1.

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 in a matter compliant with the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A

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

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.
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.
2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee. (The only position that the school committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent.) This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening. The Chair shall declare such detrimental effect at the time of the executive session.
9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.

10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In exemption #1, 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 Committee will review executive session minutes for possible declassification at least quarterly.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee, its Chair or the District's Public Records Officer, shall render a decision on declassification no later than 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.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Subcommittees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel

Revised & Approved by the Natick School Committee: October 1, 2018

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings including those required by law, 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 or presiding officer 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.

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 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

AGENDA FORMAT

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

Items will be addressed in an order determined by the Chairperson.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed via email, webposting, or hard copy to School Committee members no less than four calendar days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press, and others upon request.

RULES OF ORDER

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

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

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or hand count and shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

Executive Session

A majority of the members of 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.

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

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 secretary 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), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.
2. Names of the members present or absent, 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. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.
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 Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10
 Town Charter and Bylaws

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

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 members of the Natick school community to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of the Natick Public Schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of members of the Natick school community on matters within the scope of their authority. These matters include the budget for the Natick Public Schools, the performance of the Superintendent, and the educational goals and policies of the Natick Public Schools.

In order that all 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 consistent with state and federal free speech laws:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives who have signed up to speak will be invited to address the Committee during its 15-minute public comment period, which shall be known as Public Speak. Public Speak shall occur prior to discussion of Agenda items, unless the Chair determines that there is a good reason for rearranging the order at a public meeting that is unrelated to deterring participation in Public Speak.
2. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner.
3. Speakers must begin their remarks by stating their name, town or city of residence, and affiliation. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting.
4. Public Speak shall concern items that are not on the School Committee's agenda, but which are within the scope of the School Committee's authority. Therefore, any comments involving staff members or students must concern the educational goals, policies, or budget of the Natick Public Schools, or the performance of the Superintendent.
5. Assuming that four (4) or fewer speakers sign up to engage in public comment, each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes each to present their material. If five (5) or more speakers sign up to engage in public comment, then each speaker will be allowed two (2) minutes each to present their material. No more than six (6) speakers will be accommodated at any individual meeting.
6. Large groups addressing the same topic are encouraged to consolidate their remarks and/ or select a spokesperson to comment at Public Speak.
7. Speakers may not assign their time to another speaker, and in general, extensions of time will not be permitted. However, speakers who require reasonable accommodations on the basis

of a speech-related disability or who require language interpretation services may be allotted a total of five (5) minutes to present their material. Speakers must notify the School Committee by telephone or email at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting if they wish to request an extension of time for one of these reasons.

8. The Chair of the meeting may not interrupt speakers who have been recognized to speak, except that the Chair reserves the right to terminate speech which is not Constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats, incitement to imminent lawless conduct, comments that were found by a court of law to be defamatory, and/ or sexually explicit comments made to appeal to prurient interests. Verbal comments will also be curtailed once they exceed the time limits outlined in paragraphs 5 and 7 of this policy and/ or to the extent they exceed the scope of the School Committee's authority.
9. Disclaimer: Public Speak is not a time for debate or response to comments by the School Committee. Comments made at Public Speak do not reflect the views or the positions of the School Committee. Because of constitutional free speech principles, the School Committee does not have the authority to prevent all speech that may be upsetting and/ or offensive at Public Speak.

Adopted and approved by the Natick School Committee on January 28, 2019.

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.

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 Superintendent'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 that meeting.

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

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 out 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 containing public business 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 retained by the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 23B; 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 their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

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

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, except by vote of the town meeting. No member of the Natick School Committee shall be eligible to the position of teacher, or Superintendent of the Natick Public Schools.

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 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 recording secretary 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

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.

ITEM TITLE:	Scope of Possible Strategic Planning Subcommittee
DATE:	4/11/2022
ITEM TYPE:	Discussion
ITEM SUMMARY:	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	
RECOMMENDATION:	

ITEM TITLE: Review of Subcommittee/Liaison Assignments
DATE: 4/11/2022
ITEM TYPE: Discussion
ITEM SUMMARY:
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
RECOMMENDATION:

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	File Name	Type
SC Subcommittees April 2022	School_Committee_Subcommittees_April_2022_Draft.pdf	Cover Memo
Natick SC Handbook	NatickSchoolCommiteeHandbook.pdf	Cover Memo

Revised Date

SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

April 2021 to April 2022

Entity	Permanent Appointments	SC Members	Alternate(s)	Description/Time Commitment
Collective Bargaining Committees				
Education Association of Natick (Units A and B)	Director of HR, Superintendent, Chair & two other SC Members	Collins McDonough McKenzie		1/week for 8 weeks in spring during the negotiation year. Meetings are 3-5 hours.
Administrative Assistants	Director of HR	Collins Haugland		1/week (poss, Thurs) for 4 weeks in spring during negotiation year. Meetings are 2-3 hours.
Food Service	Director of HR	Collins		1/week for 4 weeks in spring during negotiation year. Meetings are 2-3 hours.
Paraprofessionals	Director of HR	Collins Haugland		1/week (poss Mondays) for 4 weeks in spring during negotiation year. Meetings are 2-3 hours.
Title 1	Director of HR	McKenzie Brunell		1/week for 4 weeks in spring during negotiation year. Meetings are 2-3 hours.
Custodial and Maintenance	Director of HR			
School Committee Subcommittees				
Policy Review	Superintendent Three SC Representatives	McKenzie Collins Brunell		Review and/or develop new policies to bring to the whole board for review and approval. As needed. (May or June)

Kennedy Middle School Building Committee	Anna Nolin Kirk Downing Peter Gray Andy Zitoli Town Administrator Facilities Director Other Appointees: Bruce Evans Jonathan Freedman Thomas Iskra Stephen Meyler, Chair Julian Munnich John Tracy Elizabeth Heffler – for safety meetings (non-voting member)	McDonough		Committee that exists only during Kennedy project. Meetings are approximately 1/month for 3 hours. Frequency varies depending upon stage of planning and/or construction.
Liaisons				
ACCEPT Board of Directors	Superintendent	--		
Audit Committee	One SC representative	Collins		Advisory Committee to BOS on proposed additional audits. See description HERE
Community Senior Center Liaison	One SC representative	McKenzie		Explore expanded role through Council on Aging
ELPAC	One SC representative	Fuxman		
Equity Task Force	Superintendent One SC representative	Nora Elbasha (student)		SC voted to designate SC representative to NHS student
Facilities Oversight Committee	Superintendent Director of Finance Two SC representatives	McDonough Cathi Collins		Current MOU between BOS and SC calls for JFOC to assist in managing joint facilities department. Provides oversight to FMB (facilities management board) comprised of TA and Supt. Meetings are sporadic, but may occur more frequently in the next few months (April 2019 and on) to review current structure of facilities dept. given proposed changes and current challenges.
Financial Planning Committee (FPC)	Superintendent Director of Finance Two SC	Collins Haugland	McDonough	Reviews financial picture of town and provides information from school dept. Provides input on plan for funding budgets. 1/month. Approximately 1.5 hour meetings. Typical meeting

	representatives / One Alternate			start time is 5:30 p.m.
Natick 180	Superintendent	Sonneborn		
Natick Education Foundation (NEF)	One SC Representative	McDonough		Natick Education Foundation monthly meeting. 1/month. Approximately 2 hour meeting. 7 p.m. start.
PCC Liaison	One SC Representative	Sonneborn		Monthly meeting in evening. Approximate 7 p.m. start. 1.5 hours in length.
Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP)	One SC representative	McKenzie		
SEPAC	One SC representative	Fuxman		Attend regular SEPAC meetings, which can occur every other month for approx. 2 hours. Attend SEPAC special events - approx. 4 per year. Meeting times 2 hours in length. 7 p.m. start.
SPARK Kindness	One SC representative	McKenzie		
Statewide Advocacy Efforts/Updates	One SC representative	Haugland		
Town Administrator Search Committee	Superintendent	--		SC designated superintendent as SC representative to TA search committee
TEC Board of Directors	Superintendent One SC Representative	Haugland		~6 meetings a year (not more than 1/month) in Walpole at TEC on Friday mornings.
Town Safety Committee	Director of Finance Transportation Coordinator One SC Representative	Do we need this?		Tues. mornings at 10am
Working Groups				
Teen Sleep	Three SC Representatives	McDonough Fuxman McKenzie		
Superintendent Advisory Groups				
Finance	Three SC Representatives	McDonough Haugland		

		Collins		
Space Study	One SC Representative	McDonough		

Page 1 - Title page - Natick School School Picture

Page 2 - Letter of welcome

To our Newly Elected School Committee Members,

Welcome and congratulations! We are grateful for your willingness to serve our community in its most important goal: the education of our young people. The purpose of this handbook is to help support/guide you as you become acquainted with the roles and responsibilities that you have so courageously undertaken as a member of the School Committee.

We do not want you to be overwhelmed, nor do we mean to suggest you must learn everything immediately. The handbook outlines the laws to which members must adhere and includes a number of guidelines to make the experience easier for you. Please remember we are all here for each other, so don't hesitate to ask questions (and make suggestions)!

Together we commit to doing our very best in support of the educational mission of the Natick Public Schools.

Natick School Committee Members

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Clerk

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*This handbook is reviewed and if the committee chooses, revised, at the end of each school year.

Natick Public Schools Vision Statement:

Our vision is to provide all students with personalized learning environments that promote deeper authentic learning experiences.

[pog-2019.pdf](#) : *Insert picture of POG here.*

School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office (Policy BBBA/B)

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the town from which he/she is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law. Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee.

From the Town Clerk, newly elected or appointed 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. Established by law and Town Charter LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23B; 41:1; 41:107 M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993