



2017-2018 School Committee Operating Protocols

The primary objective of the School Committee is to improve student achievement. Members of the School Committee will abide by the following protocols as individuals and as a committee.

- The Superintendent and the School Committee represent the needs and interests of all students in the District and place the students' interests above all others in their decisions, while remaining within the limitations of a voter-approved budget.
- Members of the Committee will make no independent commitments or take any independent actions that relate to the School District. When School Committee members attend meetings of other committees or boards, they will speak as individuals. They may only speak for the Committee when designated to represent the Committee. We shall recognize that authority rests with the decision of the School Committee.
- School Committee members will establish a vision, create policy, approve a budget and assure accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching, learning and facilities.
- Members agree to leave the day-to-day operations, including business transactions, to the Superintendent and staff. It is the School Committee's responsibility to evaluate the Superintendent's effectiveness in these matters.
- School Committee members recognize the Chairperson as the official voice of the School Committee. School Committee members will channel requests for information, reports and data through the School Committee Chair.
- School Committee members will conduct business through a set agenda that is tied to District goals. Emerging items shall be addressed in subsequent meetings through planned agenda items unless it is determined by the School Committee Chairperson that it would be detrimental to delay the issue until a subsequent meeting. Requests to add items to an agenda shall be made to the School Committee Chairperson.
- Recognizing the importance of proactive communication and avoiding surprises, School Committee members will, whenever possible, contact the School Committee Chair in advance of a meeting if they have questions or concerns about an agenda item, or will ask the chair at least 48 hours prior to a meeting that an item be placed on an agenda.
- School Committee members will attend meetings on time and be well-prepared to discuss agenda items. While at meetings, members will stay focused on the agenda items and will not engage in communication outside of the agenda item being discussed.
- When making decisions, School Committee members will keep an open mind, utilizing the best information available including: research, best practices, public input and financial considerations. Members will debate issues and not each other. Members will analyze carefully and debate fully, whenever necessary, prior to making decisions.

- School Committee members will vote according to their convictions, will avoid bias and will uphold and support the decisions of the majority of the Committee once a decision has been made. Positions will not be used for personal or partisan gain.
- All members will maintain the confidentiality of privileged information and will respect the Open Meeting Law.
- Members will refer constituent concerns and complaints, including issues relating to District personnel, to the Superintendent or the School Committee Chair.
- A School Committee meeting is a business meeting that is held in public - not a public meeting. The committee values communication between all stakeholders of the community and will make every effort to ensure meetings are effective and efficient. Comments made at a meeting that are not part of the agenda will be tabled to a future meeting.
- The School Committee recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with town officials and actively seeking their support to improve the District.
- The School Committee will demonstrate professional and collegial relations with one another. To this end, members will work to maintain trust and mutual respect between and among each other, the Superintendent and the administration by treating everyone with dignity and respect, even in times of disagreement.
- Members recognize the importance of honoring agreed upon operating protocols and norms, and agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when discussions get off track.

Approved by NRSC 9/27/17