



NASHOBA Regional School Committee

Nashoba Regional School District School Committee Manual

Adopted: November 8, 2017
Revised: May 8, 2019
Revision Adopted: May 8, 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
District Mission Statement	1
School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office	1
School Committee Officers	1-2
• Duties of the Chairperson	
• Duties of the Vice Chairperson	
• Duties of the Secretary	
School Committee Members Authority and Duties	2-3
New School Committee Member Orientation	3-5
School Committee Professional Development	5
• School Committee Conferences	
• Conventions and Workshops	
School Committee Powers and Duties	5-8
• Personnel Matters	
• Budget Planning	
• Budget and Fiduciary Responsibilities	
• Evaluation of Superintendent	
• Negotiations	
School Committee Self – Evaluation (Policy BAA)	8
NRSD School Committee Protocols	9-10
Behavior Problems at Public Meetings	10
Communication	10-12
• With District Personnel and the Schools	
• With Students	
• With Parents, Guardians, Families and Community	
• With Outside Institutions	
• Social Media	
Subcommittees, Advisories and Liaisons	12-17
School Committee Meetings	17-21
• Agendas	
• Public Participation at School Committee Meetings	
• Open Meeting Law	
• Minutes of Meetings	
Appendix	22

INTRODUCTION

The NRSD School Committee Manual is intended to serve as a brief guide for School Committee members' roles, responsibilities, protocols and best practices. For detailed information about serving on the School Committee, please refer to MASC's *Charting the Course: An Orientation Program for Massachusetts School Committee Members*.

The NRSD School Committee Manual will be reviewed annually by the Personnel Subcommittee (PSC), with input from the Committee as a whole. The revised Manual will be approved at the School Committee Goals Meeting in June. Revisions will include but not limited to updates to policies (The Chair of the Policy Subcommittee will provide the Chair of the PSC with any updates to policies referenced in the Manual), the School Committee Calendar and Operating Protocols.

DISTRICT MISSION

The mission of the Nashoba Regional School District is to educate all students to their fullest potential in a safe, caring environment to become critical, creative, reflective thinkers and positive contributors to the global community.

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.

From the Town Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive and sign a receipt for a copy of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and Executive Sessions in particular.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

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/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson will:

- Sign the instruments, acts and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee;
- Collaborate with the Superintendent in the building of the Committee's agendas;

- Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings;
- Appoint subcommittees;
- Call special meetings of the Committee as is necessary;
- Act as the public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others;
- Conduct School Committee meetings in an orderly fashion.

As the presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chairperson will:

- Call the meeting to order at the appointed time;
- Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order;
- Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings;
- Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference;
- Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members;
- Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee;
- Answer all parliamentary inquiries;
- Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

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

Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all School Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town. The Superintendent's Administrative Assistant fulfills this role at regular School Committee meetings. A member of the School Committee is elected each year to serve as Secretary for executive sessions.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY & DUTIES

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from State laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a committee legally in session. The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member. No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee. The School Committee will function

as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

- To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and school department;
- To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education;
- To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives and programs of the town's public schools;
- To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his or her share of the work;
- 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;
- To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students;
- To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made;
- To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support;
- To refer questions and complaints to the Superintendent's Office;
- To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

Upon election to the SC, new members will meet with the Superintendent and the SC Chairperson for a preliminary orientation to the SC. It is important to have an understanding of the SC's functions, policies and procedures as soon after election as possible. There is a lot to learn, and it will take time to absorb it all. New members will receive the following material at orientation, please take time to review this material.

The materials include:

- Selected School Committee Policies:
- SC By-Laws (AAA), SC Powers and Duties (BBA), SC Member Authority (BBAA), SC Member Ethics (BCA) and School Committee Meetings (BE)
- Open Meeting Law Guide
- Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees
- Robert's Rules of Order "Cheat Sheet"

Additionally, new SC members are required to complete, within one calendar year of their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation is required by state law, specifically Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 71, section 36A, as amended on December 24, 2002. Orientation must include the following topics, but it is not limited to a review of these topics:

- School Finance
- Open Meeting Law
- Public Records Law
- Conflict of Interest Law
- Special Education Law
- Collective Bargaining
- School Leadership Standards and Evaluations
- Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members

The Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, will contact you to register you for the Massachusetts Association of School Committee (MASC) workshop, "Charting the Course," which fulfills the new SC orientation requirements of the state law. You will need to give a copy of your certificate of completion for "Charting the Course" to your Town Manager and the Superintendent's Executive Assistant.

Available on the District Website (www.nrsd.net): Additional School Committee Policies

- Past, current and proposed District Budgets
- Collective Bargaining Agreement, Unit A
- Collective Bargaining Agreement, Unit C

Student and Staff Handbooks for each school are also available on the district website on each school's webpage. The district schools, and the town and grades they serve, are:

- Center School (Stow, grades PreK-5)
- Hale Middle School (Stow, grades 6-8)
- Florence Sawyer School (Bolton, grades PreK-8)
- Mary Rowlandson Elementary School (Lancaster, grades PreK-5)
- Luther Burbank Middle School (Lancaster, grades 6-8)
- Nashoba Regional High School (located in Bolton, for students from all 3 towns in grades 9-12)

Your orientation will also cover these important topics:

Arranging visits to schools or the administrative offices

Requesting information regarding school district operations

Responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs

Handling confidential information

You will be given a form called, "New School Committee Member Set Up" that asks for information needed to add you to the District email and list serve. There is also a "Criminal

Offender Record Information (CORI) Acknowledgement Form." This double-sided document must be completed and submitted with a driver's license or other identification so the district can perform a "CORI Check." This needs to be completed and approved before you visit the schools where you may have unmonitored contact with the students. Please complete both forms and return them to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out directly to Chairperson.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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 convention. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members will participate at a given meeting
2. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel expense policy for staff members
3. 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

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 and fiduciary responsibility.** The School Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget. As elected local officials, School Committee members have a fiduciary responsibility to their constituents that include a "Duty of

Care,” “A Duty of Loyalty,” and the responsibility to ensure that district finances are sufficiently transparent to protect the public interest.

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.

Personnel Matters

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law. He/She will perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties that a majority of the Committee may direct.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School Physician, School Nurses. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

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

Budget Planning

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

The Budget planning process follows a timeline pattern that recognizes three key time periods. The preliminary budget is presented in December to the School Committee as a starting point in the finalization of the budget. In late January, a budget workshop is held that includes all key school district leaders who review with the School Committee salient points regarding their department and school requests. The Regional District School Committee shall, in accordance with Section 16B of Chapter 71 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, prepare and adopt a budget and present this budget to each of the Towns comprising the District on or before March 15th for the next fiscal year

School Committee Budget and Fiduciary Responsibilities

The School Committee reviews and approves the school district budget and then monitors the expenditures thereafter over the course of the fiscal year. They collaboratively establish with administration appropriate reporting processes to aid in that oversight. The School Committee also reviews and signs warrants to authorize appropriate payments, including payroll. Adjustments may need to be made during the course of a fiscal year, as recommended by administration, then reviewed and voted on by School Committee members.

The major portion of income for the operation of the public schools is derived from local property taxes, and the School Committee will work to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

Evaluation of the Superintendent

In 2012, Massachusetts public school systems introduced a new educator evaluation system for teachers, other full-time professional educators, principals, administrators and Superintendents. The Superintendent is responsible for overseeing the evaluations for the administrators and principals. The School Committee is responsible for evaluating the Superintendent.

The Superintendent is formally evaluated once a year and also provides the School Committee with a review of his/her goals at mid-cycle (January/February). The annual goals are the basis for the review. The annual goals are set each year by the Superintendent in partnership with the School Committee.

Throughout the year, the Superintendent gathers evidence of his/her performance based upon the annual goals established prior to the start of the school year. Additionally, School Committee members are responsible for gathering information based on their observations, feedback and other appropriate sources as evidence of the Superintendent's performance. The End of Cycle Summative Evaluation of the Superintendent will occur prior to the election of new School Committee members.

Negotiations

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units.

The role of School Committee by Mass General Law Chapter 150E is to be the legal representative of management. Union negotiations are arguably one of the two most important roles of the School Committee, the other being to select a highly qualified

Superintendent. The School Committee must ensure that the management position is understood and fully represented. Management includes the School Committee, Superintendent, Principals, and all other direct managers within the school system. Each School Committee member signs final union contracts. These signatures carry tremendous responsibility. The signatures confirm that each School Committee member personally supports the final contract as a document that fully represents management, the best interests of student achievement, the best interests of the town, and fairness and equity with labor.

At most, three Committee members should be on the negotiating team to avoid having a quorum. The Committee should select representative agents who are responsible to understand the School Committee's parameters and to keep the full Committee informed of developments. There should never be any surprises between the agents and the full Committee; if there are, it is the School Committee's responsibility to correct that situation. More information can be found in Mass General Law, Nashoba Regional School District Public School Policy, and Massachusetts Association of School Committees as referenced below:

- Nashoba Regional School District Public Schools Policy Manual- Section H
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees - www.masc.org
- MGL Chapter 150E - Laws related to Collective Bargaining, arbitration, mediation, strikes and work actions, procedures to take in case of a work action, and many other important elements of employee relations.
- MGL Chapter 268A - Conflict of Interest Laws
- MGL Chapter 39, Sections 23A-C - Open Meeting Law
- MGL Chapter 32B Section 19, 21 & 22 - Contributory Group General or Blanket Insurance for persons involved in service to their counties, cities, towns, districts, and their dependents

School Committee Self-Evaluation (Policy BAA)*

The School Committee will evaluate its progress in improving performance, and promoting a positive culture that supports the Superintendent, administrators, staff, students, and families.

This is accomplished annually by performing a self-evaluation of performance against goals and protocols which have been previously established. This self-evaluation will inform the developments of future goals and provide the committee with feedback for improving performance. The School Committee will also conduct a mid-year discussion of progress toward goals.

NRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROTOCOLS

The primary objective of the School Committee is continuous improvement in overall student achievement. Members of the School Committee will abide by the following protocols as individuals and as a committee:

1. 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.
2. 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. School Committee members shall recognize that authority rests with the decision of the School Committee.
3. School Committee members will work with the superintendent to establish a vision, create policy, approve a budget and assure accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching, learning and facilities.
4. 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 pursuant to the DESE's Model System for Educator Evaluation.
5. 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.
6. Members recognize that the Chair presides over the meeting, facilitates discussion and enforces the rule that only the speaker recognized by the chair has the floor.
7. 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. At each regular School Committee meeting, the agenda will include "Items to be considered for next or future agendas." Requests to add items to an agenda shall be made to the School Committee Chairperson, who with the superintendent, will determine the suitability for the agenda – if an item is not suitable for the agenda, a reason will be provided.
8. 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. The decision to place such an item

on the agenda will be at the discretion of the SC chair, in consultation with the superintendent. If an item is not suitable for the agenda, a reason will be provided.

9. School Committee members will attend meetings on time and be well-prepared to discuss agenda items. Members who are unable to attend a meeting shall notify the Chair in a timely fashion. A quorum of 5 members is required in order for the School Committee to meet.
10. While at meetings, members will stay focused on the agenda items and will not engage in communication outside of the agenda item being discussed and will limit discussion solely to 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.
11. 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. Prior to bringing an item to a vote, the chair will poll the committee to see if members have sufficient information to make an informed decision. If the majority of members indicate in the affirmative, the vote will proceed.
12. Members will refer constituent concerns and complaints to the Superintendent or the School Committee Chair.
13. All members will maintain the confidentiality of privileged information and will respect the Open Meeting Law. Violations of the Executive Session portion of the Open Meeting Law will be reported to the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office for investigation
14. Members recognize the importance of honoring our agreed upon operating protocols and norms, and agree to take responsibility for reminding one another (through the chair) when discussions get off track, personal or redundant.

Behavior at Public Meetings

The Chair of the School Committee should be particularly careful in ruling a member out of order, and members should understand the consequences of some of the disturbing behaviors that could diminish their credibility. Some of those behaviors common in public boards include:

1. Returning continuously to a point that has been addressed or dismissed.
2. Vanity time or self-promotion before the audience or a special constituency.
3. Promoting oneself at the expense of other members (For example, a member who insists that, "I'm the only person on this board who cares about children.")

4. Lack of attentiveness to colleagues or speakers by diverting to electronic diversions like computers, cell phones, pads and other devices.
5. Inability to stop talking.

The same standards apply to the public. Additionally, certain behaviors are considered “out of order” based on Robert’s Rules of Order. Most frequent of these include:

1. Making a personal or ad-hominem attack against a member or another person.
2. Attacking a member’s motives (as opposed to the purpose of a motion).
3. Overt rudeness.
4. Disturbing the assembly, including being disruptive.

COMMUNICATION

NRSD has created communication protocols for Curriculum & Instruction, Grades K-8 and 9-12; Transportation; Students Discipline; Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities; Facilities/Building/Grounds; Technology & Acceptable Use; and, Special Education. Detailed protocols are in the SC Manual Appendix.

Communication with District Personnel and the Schools

Members will be mindful of how their decisions affect the work and effectiveness of the staff. The relationship between School Committee and district personnel is indirect. The Superintendent will serve as the liaison between School Committee and district staff. The Committee may also use surveys, meetings, and other forms of communication to gather and assess feedback from staff.

The schools must create opportunities for stakeholders within, and external to, the system to interact and build relationships. School Committee members are welcome to attend events at the schools as a member of the public. School Committee members may not visit a school in their official role as a member of School Committee without informing the Superintendent and school principal before scheduling the visit. Members do not have the authority to direct, criticize, or discipline staff members. It is important for School Committee members to communicate concerns with the Superintendent, who will then take responsibility for any subsequent responses with specific schools and personnel.

Communication with students

The School Committee benefits from hearing the opinion of students on issues affecting their education and the overall social, intellectual, and extracurricular climate of the schools.

Students may address the School Committee by speaking at the beginning of our public meetings, or by asking the NRSB Student Representatives to the School Committee, teachers, principals, and/or other school personnel to speak on their behalf.

Communication with parents, guardians, families, and community

In our deliberations, the Committee will strive to listen to a wide range of feedback from the full spectrum of communal stakeholders-including parents, families, and guardians of our students. Community members and leaders may offer feedback to the School Committee in many ways; asking to speak directly at the beginning of our public meetings and outreach to individual Committee members. We greatly value public input and continuously seek ways to maintain and improve effective communication. Our preferred method of communication is email so that questions and/or requests can be accurately shared with the Superintendent for resolution. It is important to realize that any correspondence received by a School Committee member becomes a public record and may be called for review at any time.

Members will ensure that decisions and actions are performed in a public and transparent manner-with the sole exception of the topics that legally permit and require School Committee to adjourn to executive session. These exceptions aside, the public will always be informed of Committee decisions and the rationale.

Communication with outside institutions

School Committee members may be called upon to represent the district to outside institutions, such as agencies, community organizations, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other school systems. In such a capacity, the member will be mindful to represent the School Committee as a whole. Additionally, it is important to report in a timely manner to the rest of the Committee and the community during our public meetings on the content of those meetings and future actions.

Social Media

Elected officials have an unrestricted right to use their personal internet or e-mail accounts to establish blogs, social media sites, or other vehicles, however, they should be mindful that:

- All communication made electronically in your capacity as a public official is considered public even when you are using your personal e-mail account or blog. This includes responding to constituents with your personal, rather than public, e-mail account.
- Using social media to mobilize opposition to your colleagues or to undermine their credibility, while allowable under the principles of free speech, may undermine your ability to serve effectively with them on the board.

- While public figures like elected officials, including the School Committee, are subject to the criticism and attack in various forms of media, most of the school district employees are not public figures and comments constituting libel or slander could result in action against the public office holder. (In addition to elected officials, the Superintendent is a public figure.)

School Committee members must be prepared to deal with the consequences of their blogs, Facebook pages, letters to editors, or other items distributed electronically.

SUB-COMMITTEES, ADVISORIES AND LIAISONS

Sub-Committees of the School Committee.

From: MASC Best Practices Regarding Subcommittees of the School Committee

Most School Committees have Policy BDE in their policy manual, which outlines the creation and, in very general terms, the responsibilities of subcommittees.

A **subcommittee** is a subset of school committee members, less than a quorum, that meets with a particular objective related to the work of the full committee.

The NRSD School Committee has subcommittees that routinely meet: the Policy, Personnel and Budget & Finance. The SC can also create ad hoc subcommittees that tackle a particular task and are discontinued when the work is complete.

The purpose of a subcommittee is to help the full committee make the most efficient use of its time. A subcommittee can also serve other purposes, such as distributing leadership among the committee members and developing leadership capacity. It can allow members to participate in areas of particular interest or expertise. And, it can help members develop knowledge and expertise in areas they may not be familiar with. Subcommittees often help with efficiency by doing preliminary work and reporting back to the full committee. For example, a Policy Subcommittee may work with the administrators to recommend changes or additions to the policy manual. This is much more efficient than trying to craft or edit policy at the committee table during a business meeting.

In order for subcommittees to be effective, they must have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. A subcommittee that meets without clear objectives wastes the time of its members. It may also run the risk that it will start to pursue their own projects, which may not be in keeping with the will of the full committee.

Another caution in creating subcommittees is to make sure that the work they are doing is within the purview of the school committee.

Subcommittees cannot take any actions on their own. They can only bring recommendations to the full committee for approval.

An **advisory committee** is different than a subcommittee. Subcommittees are composed only of school committee members. Advisory committees, on the other hand, are formed by the school committee and contain membership of non-school committee members, such as parents, community members and faculty. They are generally formed for a specific purpose and are dissolved when the purpose is complete. A superintendent search committee is one example of an advisory committee. Another might be a committee formed to study late start times and bring a recommendation to the school committee.

Using an advisory committee allows for a structured way to engage the community. It is also a way to utilize the expertise of people outside the committee on a particular topic.

Most school committees have Policy BDF in their policy manual, which defines the purpose of advisory committees.

A **Liaison's** participation on a committee is limited to observer versus involvement. Liaisons provide updates to School Committee. Currently, the SC has liaisons for the Mabel Hale fund in Stow and the District's SEPAC.

Communication between Subcommittee and School Committee

Minutes of subcommittee meetings should be made available to the full school committee. Any recommendations of the subcommittee should be clear, in writing and reflected in the subcommittee minutes.

The full committee agenda should, as appropriate, have a section to receive any reports and recommendations from the subcommittees. And, the full committee should take up any recommendations that require action by the full board.

In some instances, a proposal that comes before the full committee is referred to a subcommittee for further study and a recommendation back to the school committee. This can be an efficient way to study a proposal. However, care should be taken so that this doesn't become a bureaucratic procedure that bounces proposals back and forth while forestalling a resolution.

Subcommittees, Advisories and Open Meeting Law

Under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, all subcommittees and advisory committees of the school committee are considered public bodies and must abide by the requirements of the

OML. This means that meetings must be properly posted, held in public and accessible to the public, deliberations cannot take place outside of a properly posted meeting and minutes of the meeting must be kept. **Remember**, for small two-member subcommittees, this means the subcommittee meeting can't take place at the coffee shop or at someone's home. It means that phone conversations or emails to accomplish the work of the committee are out-of-bounds. Particularly for small subcommittees, awareness and adherence to the OML is important.

Subcommittee meetings are public meetings. However, when members of the school committee who are not on the subcommittee attend, they must attend as members of the public. They should not sit at the table, but rather in the seating area designated for the public. They may not participate in the discussion in any other way than any member of the public would. This means they would listen to the meeting and ask questions or make comments only when recognized by the Chair of the subcommittee.

NRSC Sub-Committees, Advisories and Liaisons:

Audit Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate as defined by the District By-laws • Provide regular updates to SC as required
Collective Bargaining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent NRSD on Units A & C contract negotiations • Provide updates to SC as appropriate
NRHS Facility Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect a SC representative as NRSD Facility Committee Chair • Verify identify steps/requirements with MSBA • Create/place ad in local papers to recruit community representatives including relevant background/experience • Assemble cross-towns group of community representatives to support potential go-forward (2 per town); include NRHS admin representative • Provide go/no-go recommendation on NRSD

	<p>SOI submission with MSBA to SC (October, 2017 SC meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create succinct presentation identifying go/no-go, costs and timeline. Present draft to SC. Upon SC approval deliver to each community
Warrant and Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create FY19 calendar of meeting dates and key topics • Review bi-weekly warrant, recommend for SC approval • Review Budget/Actual expenditures monthly, review SC agreed upon reports as needed, elevate areas for discussion to SC • Recommend list of new, proposed NRSD specific reports to SC for adoption • Approve each meeting's minutes at next scheduled meeting
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create FY19 calendar of meeting dates and key topics • Support Superintendent in developing annual goals • Guide SC in Superintendent mid-cycle and year-end evaluations • Recommend Superintendent's annual compensation change • Review job descriptions and salary ranges; recommend for SC approval • Prior to new school year, revise SC manual and present as recommendation to SC. Include updates to policies. • Review job descriptions and salary recommendation for new Positions, including substantive changes to existing positions for recommendation to Superintendent. • Approve each meeting's minutes at next scheduled meeting

Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create FY19 calendar of meeting dates and key topics • Continue NRSD Policy suite review with MASC and recommend for SC adoption • Follow Policy BGC • Champion new NRSD-specific policies as recommended with guidance from MASC • Serve as NRSC liaison to MASC for policy revisions due to regulatory/legislative changes • Provide PSC with changes to polices and new policies for inclusion in the SC Manual as needed. • Approve each meeting's minutes at next scheduled meeting
NRSD School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council Liaison (SEPAC) Liaison*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend SEPAC meetings • Participation limited to observer versus involvement at-the-table; provide updates to SC
Technology Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Technology meetings • Participation limited to observer versus involvement at-the-table; provide updates to SC

 Indicates Subcommittees, advisories and liaison roles that are inactive for current school year

*The Nashoba Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is mandated by Massachusetts Law. F-SEPAC is run by volunteer parents and is a district-wide resource and support to parents and guardians of children with special needs.

MGL, Section 71B, Section 3 states:

The school committee of any city, town, or school district shall establish a parent advisory council on special education. Membership shall be offered to all parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. The parent advisory council duties shall include but not be limited to: advising the school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities; meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs. The parent advisory council shall establish by-laws regarding officers and operational procedures. In the course of its duties under this section, the parent advisory council shall receive assistance from the school committee without charge, upon reasonable notice, and

subject to the availability of staff and resources. Each year, the School Committee appoints a SEPAC Liaison.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The NRSB School Committee typically holds its public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month when school is in session. School Committee meetings for the upcoming school year are published on the District website in the spring.

An Executive Session, when necessary, is held at the conclusion of the public meeting; however, at the Chairperson's discretion, Executive Session can be held before the regular meetings as well. In case of a conflict, the Committee will reschedule any meeting based on the availability of the members.

In addition to its meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, the School Committee holds special meetings throughout the year. These meetings include a goal setting workshop in June, a budget workshop scheduled on a Saturday in January, and additional meetings during budget preparation season (January-March) as needed. School Committee members are also invited to participate in Tri-Town meetings, typically three or four each year, where school committee items are placed on the agenda of a joint meeting of the towns' select boards.

The School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

1. Regular meeting: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly;
2. Special meeting: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics;
3. Executive Sessions: Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when allowed bylaw:
 - The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
 - Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.
 - Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
 - The deployment of security personnel or devices.
 - Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.

- Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
- To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
- 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.
- To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
- To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDAS

The Chairperson of the School Committee, collaborating with the Superintendent, will arrange the order of items on meeting 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.

At the June SC goal-setting workshop, the SC Chair will present a draft Planning Calendar for the upcoming school year, which includes those items that require annual review and/or presentations. Such items include but are not limited to department reports and reports of assessment data. At each SC meeting, under "Items to be considered for Next Agenda," the chair and the superintendent will ask the committee to review the items on the Planning Calendar and recommend additions or changes to upcoming agendas. A sample planning calendar can be found in the Appendix.

Items of business may be suggested by any School Committee member, staff member or citizen. 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 may provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee for a limited time of three minutes unless otherwise noted by the Chairperson in accordance with district policy.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members three to five (3-5) days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting. If the need arises for additional item(s) and supporting materials to be added to the agenda outside the constraint referenced above, the Chairperson of the School Committee shall alert committee members to the changes to the agenda and supporting materials and provide the documents electronically as soon as possible prior to the meeting.

Current and past agendas, and meeting materials are posted on the district website.

SAMPLE AGENDA:

- I. Call to order
- II. Citizens' Comments (see public participation at School Committee Meetings)
- III. Student Representative Report (A designated NRHS student will report on activities with a focus to high school activities, but may include other school events.).
- IV. Superintendent's Report (The Superintendent reports on current school-district items for the purpose of information dissemination only.).
- V. School Committee Chair Updates (The School Committee Chairman will report on appropriate school committee items for the purpose of information dissemination only.).
- VI. New Business (New Business items constitute items requiring first time presentation to School Committee for discussion, decisions, or votes on motions.).
- VII. Old Business (Old Business items are items that have been previously presented to the School Committee and for various reasons become returning items for follow-up discussion.).
- VIII. Sub-Committee Reports – The chair of each sub-committee will provide a brief summary of their meeting if one was held since the previous School Committee meeting.
- IX. Correspondence (The item of Correspondence refers to any appropriate correspondence of note that the School committee and/or public needs to be made aware of, and/or requires specific follow-up.).
- X. Consent Agenda (The Consent Agenda allows for a process whereby the proposed agenda may be approved in one action, for any/all items, rather than filing motions on each item separately.).
- XI. Items to be considered for Next Agenda (see School Committee Agenda, page 17)
- XII. Adjourn

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 encourages citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with district operations and programs of our local public schools. Citizens may wish to share their comments with the Committee publicly. In doing so, they must abide by the following:

1. During each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The Chairperson shall determine the length of the public participation segment.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present material which must be related to an agenda item of that meeting. The Chair may extend the time allotted.
3. Non agenda items may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.
4. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chair may terminate that individual's privilege of address.
5. All remarks will be addressed to the Chair.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the committee will not hear complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the School Community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members. (ref. School Committee Policy Section B)

Open Meeting Law

There are four main sections under the Open Meeting Law:

- Open Meeting Law
- Public Participation
- Remote Participation
- Executive Session

School Committee meetings are subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, MGL c30A, §19 and must be open to the public. The statute defines a meeting as "a deliberation by public body with respect to any matter within the body's jurisdiction." the School Committee, as a public body, must provide notice to the public at least 48 hours in advance, except in emergencies, but excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays.

Minutes of Meetings

The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law was revised in 2010 and provided more clarity on meeting minutes. In brief, minutes must now contain a summary of matters discussed where

previously the minutes needed mention only the subjects raised, motions made, and actions taken.

School committees vary in terms of the level of detail in minutes. Most currently provide a brief summary that is sufficient to meet the standard that a citizen-reader will be able to understand what was discussed. It is not necessary, nor expected, that minutes will be verbatim transcripts, report on every school committee member's comments, or summarize every public comment made during public comment period. School Committee Secretaries are encouraged to create minutes sufficient for a lay person to capture the sense of the meeting and all actions taken.

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 review of executive session minutes shall take place at least as often as annually. Each year, the Chair or his/her designee will forward the executive session minutes of the previous calendar year to the School Attorney. Upon consideration of the School Attorney's recommendation, the School Committee will vote to release the executive session minutes of the previous calendar year in conformity with Massachusetts General Law, c.30A sec.22.

Appendix

The following documents can be found on the district website; www.nrsd.net,

By-Laws (Policy AAA)

School Committee Meeting Calendar

School Year Calendar

NRSD Organizational Chart

Appendix Attachments

Appendix I – Sample Planning Calendar

Appendix II - NRSD Central Office Depts. Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix III - Financial Terms Glossary

Appendix IV - SC Terms Glossary

Appendix V - Acronyms Used in the Educator Evaluation System

Appendix VI – NRSC Education Acronyms

Appendix VII - School Committee Members FAQ

Appendix I – Sample Planning Calendar

NRSD School Committee FY18-19 Initiatives Calendar – September 12, 2018

JULY	AUGUST (29 th)	SEPTEMBER (12 th – 26 th)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LBMS Natures Classroom Trip Approval (8/29) • NRHS Endowment Final Grant Approvals (8/29) • Central Office Org. Chart (8/29) • Center School Donations Acceptance (8/29) • Staff Professional Development Update (8/29) • Extended School Year Update (8/29) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Student Safety (9/12) • Facilities Update (9/12) • FY18 Year End Financial Update (9/12) • June/July Treasurer Report (9/12) • Accountability Presentation (9/12) • Chromebook Summer Maint. Plan Update (9/12) • Superintendent 18-19 Goals (9/26) • Building Safety Update • SC Manual Revision • School Handbook Review FY19 • District Communication Plan
OCTOBER (10 th – 24 th)	NOVEMBER (7 th)	DECEMBER (5 th – 19 th)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY20 budget timeline • Transitions Program update • School Choice Recommendation • Food Services • HR Update • Pupil Services Update • Leach Field Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Choice Hearing/Vote • Employee Insurance Review • Capital Plan Update • Athletics Update • Extended Day Update • MCAS Results • Technology Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRHS Program of Studies Review/approval • Preliminary FY20 Budget to SC • Digital Learning Update • Executive Session Minutes Review
FY20 Budget planning		

NRSD School Committee FY18-19 Initiatives Calendar – September 12, 2018

JANUARY (2 nd – 16 th – 30 th)	FEBRUARY (13 th – 27 th)	MARCH (13 th – 27 th)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent mid year review • Employee Insurance review/recommendation • Athletic Fees & Vote • Facilities Update • Budget Workshop • Building Rentals Rate Review • Pupil Personnel Services Update on new programs • NRHS College Report Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR update including attrition • Budget Workshop FY20 • 2018-2019 SY Calendar • Digital Learning Update • Budget Public Hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY19 Budget final and vote • Recognize WCSA Scholars • FY20 Budget Final/Vote
FY20 Budget planning		
APRIL (10 th – 24 th)	MAY (8 th – 22 nd)	JUNE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent Year End Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Reorganization and vote • Superintendent final evaluation • Executive Session Minutes Review • RC Reorganization and Vote • SC 2019-2020 Meeting Calendar • Treasurer Report • School Handbook Review FY20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19-20 SC Goal Planning • Summer Warrant Signature Vote • DIP (District Improvement Plan) • 2019-2020 SC Goal Setting Workshop

Appendix II – NRSD Central Office Depts. Roles and Responsibilities

NRSD Central Office Department Roles and Responsibilities

Business Office

The Nashoba Regional School District Business Office is responsible for all planning, development and management of the Regional School District's budget. In addition, the Business Office performs all duties necessary for the procurement and payment for all purchases made by the district according to Massachusetts General Laws. The office prepares and has financial oversight for personnel, facilities, state and federal grants, Food Services, the Extended Learning Program, Student Activity Funds, E-Rate, transportation, state reporting, and any other reporting requested by the Superintendent or School Committee. In addition to the aforementioned duties, the office staff and manager attend meetings, create presentations, and make recommendations in regards to such duties.

Extended Learning Department

The Extended Learning and Enrichment Department for the NRSD provides before and after school care and enrichment programs for students in grades K through 5. Our sites are located in Bolton, Stow, and Lancaster. Caring staff engage students in a variety of activities and clubs that encourage exploration, creativity, artistic expression, and safe physical play. Since students of different age groups/ages come together, students learn important life skills such as collaboration, problem solving, the importance of empathy, and communication. Social emotional learning is a key ingredient in the Extended Learning Program. High School students are also part of the staff exposing them to the role of educators as they consider a career in education. The Extended Learning Department also offers weeklong Vacation Camps during February and April to students K – 8. These fun camps cover diverse interests from STEM to Zumba in order to engage our students in personal discovery. Students who participate in the district's Extended Learning Program are given many opportunities to take risks and expand their knowledge, which help boost their self-esteem and confidence.

Facilities Department

The Nashoba Regional School District Facilities Department oversees the daily operations of 7 physical buildings ensuring that each facility is fully operational each day. The Facilities Department formulates plans for the future such as budgeting for annual expenditures and long term capital expenditures. The department is responsible for overseeing all construction projects, inspecting, maintaining and repairing mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems to ensure optimal operating results. The department ensures all buildings are state and federal compliant. The Facilities department oversees and manages staff to ensure all janitorial duties are met in each building including snow and ice removal all while remaining in compliance with local, state and federal regulations.

Food and Nutrition Department

The Department of Food and Nutrition provides nutritionally balanced, great tasting and eye appealing food & beverages to the Nashoba Regional School District's students and staff. Serving Breakfast at The Hawkeye Café

at Hale Middle School and The Green Zone Café at the Nashoba Regional High School allows students and staff at these facilities the opportunity to a morning meal as well. The staff is trained in food production, safety and service allowing all of the NRSD Food and Nutrition Team to be able to serve all of our customers in the best way.

Health Services

The Department of Health and Wellness at Nashoba Regional School District is responsible for coordination, evaluation, and supervision of school health nursing educators and programs that address medical and mental health and risk behaviors of students. The Nurse Coordinator develops school policies and protocols to address student wellness and assumes responsibility for compiling, maintaining, and filing all reports, records and all aspects of Essential School Health Services for all students. The Health Department carries out duties to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations relating to medical and mental health needs of all students. The Health and Wellness Department holds monthly meetings to address emergency preparedness and health and wellness activities for the district, coordinates with community partners, and conducts parent/community forums.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Office provides overall direction and administration related to the management of employees. This includes recruitment, onboarding, employee relations, compensation and benefits, and labor law compliance. They provide advice and support to administrators in contract interpretation and compliance, performance improvement and support of the collective bargaining process. The Human Resources Office maintains employee personnel files and records of attendance, licensure, and employee benefits. In addition to the typical human resources functions, the office supports the district payroll and treasurer functions, including monitoring and maintaining employee benefits and deductions, deduction reporting and transmissions, insurance deposits, 403 B processing and reporting related to the Affordable Care Act.

Pupil Personnel Services

The Office of Pupil Personnel Services advocates and supports all students in the district from ages 3 through 22. The office collaborates with parents, faculty and community members in the identification and prevention of concerns that may impact student learning.

Special Education Office (SPED)

The Special Education Office supports complete oversight of the special education department including district programs, IEPs, out of district placements, Section 504, Response to Intervention, OT, PT, Speech, Vision, Mobility, and counseling services district wide. The department also coordinates grant writing and fiscal management (including circuit breaker and Medicaid), specialized transportation, Vocational Services and is the liaison to the Robert F. Kennedy School in Lancaster, MA.

Superintendent's Office

The Superintendent is the top executive in the school district. The Superintendent's Office has the primary responsibility to oversee all day to day activity within the entire Nashoba Regional School District. The office is actively involved with, and provides support for, all schools in the three communities – including

administration, staff, students, and parents. It is at the forefront of working with the other district-wide units that operate within the Central Office building. It acts in a liaison role with the communities, municipal, state, and federal representatives. The Office provides guidance, leadership, supervision, and management to the district at large.

Teaching and Learning Department

The Department of Teaching and Learning is responsible for supporting and coordinating curriculum, instruction and assessment across all schools. The department supports teachers and administrators in the development of curriculum and assessments, collection and analysis of data, selection and implementation of resources and tools, coaching, professional development, assisting with online MCAS testing and management of educational grants. In addition, the support of curriculum, instruction and assessment extends to overseeing the district's English Language Education program, home schooling and professional partnerships with local private schools. Other responsibilities include the coordination of the district websites, management of the educator evaluation system, overseeing the shared curriculum repository, online library catalogs and other academic online tools that require staff and student accounts.

Technology Office

The Nashoba Regional School District Technology Department is fully integrated with the daily operations of school activities involving technology. The Technology Department is tasked to make sure technology runs smoothly in all buildings, and is able to provide ample support for all users. In recent years, the Tech Department has played a key role in online security and privacy protections for our users. They also help the Facility Department develop plans to improve building security by repairing/upgrading security cameras, door access and PA systems. Key areas that the Tech Department is actively involved in are multiple program setups, configuration, ongoing upgrade and support, school operation programs, business operation programs, teaching and learning programs, technology management, cyber security management, building safety and security management.

Financial Glossary of Term

Appropriation – An authorization granted by a town meeting, city council or other legislative body to expend money and incur obligations for specific public purposes. An appropriation is usually limited in amount and as to the time period within which it may be expended. (See Encumbrance, Line-Item Transfer, Free Cash)

Capital Improvements Program – A blueprint for planning a community's capital expenditures that comprises an annual capital budget and a five-year capital program. It coordinates community planning, fiscal capacity and physical development. While all of the community's needs should be identified in the program, there is a set of criteria that prioritizes the expenditures.

Chapter 70 – The Chapter 70 program of state aid to public elementary and secondary schools. In addition to providing state aid to support school operations, it also establishes minimum spending requirements for each school district and minimum requirements for each municipality's share of school costs.

Cherry Sheet – Named for the cherry colored paper on which they were originally printed, the Cherry Sheet is the official notification to cities, towns and regional school districts of the next fiscal year's state aid and assessments. The aid is in the form of distributions, which provide funds based on formulas and reimbursements that provide funds for costs incurred during a prior period for certain programs or services.

Circuit Breaker – Special Education, Out of District placement relief from the state. Funds are received in year one and must be expended in the following year. All the previous year's funds must be expended.

D.E.S.E. – The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) oversees local school districts, which, in turn, oversee schools. Policies made by DESE will affect every Massachusetts district and their various schools across the state.

Debt Service – The repayment cost, usually stated in annual terms and based on the amortization schedule, of the principal and interest on any particular bond issue.

Deficit – The excess of expenditures over revenues during an accounting period. Also refers to the excess of the liabilities of a fund over its assets.

E & D – Excess and Deficiency (also called the "surplus revenue" account), the E & D is the amount by which cash, accounts receivable, and other assets exceed a regional school district's liabilities and reserves as certified by the Director of Accounts. The calculation is based on a year-end balance sheet, which is submitted to DOR by the district's auditor, accountant, or comptroller as of June 30. The regional school committee must apply certified amounts exceeding five percent of the district's prior year operating and capital costs to reduce the assessment on member cities and towns.

E-Rate – E-Rate is the commonly used name for the Schools and Libraries Program if the Universal Service Fund, which is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The program provides discounts to assist schools and libraries in the United States to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access. It is one of four support programs funded through a Universal Service fee charged to companies that provide interstate and/or international telecommunication services.

Education Reform Act of 1993 – State law that authorized the seven-year, Ch. 70 funding program for education and that established spending targets for school districts as a means to remedy educational inequities. Scheduled to end by FY00, the program has been extended, pending agreement on further reforms.

Encumbrance – A reservation of funds to cover obligations arising from purchase orders, contracts, or salary commitments that is chargeable to, but not yet paid from, a specific appropriation account.

Expenditure – An outlay of money made by municipalities to provide the programs and services within their approved budget.

Fiscal Year (FY) – Since 1974, the Commonwealth and municipalities have operated on a budget cycle that begins July 1 and ends June 30. The designation of the fiscal year is that of the calendar year in which the fiscal year ends. Since 1976, the federal government fiscal year has begun on October 1 and ended September 30.

Fixed Assets – Long-lived, tangible assets such as buildings, equipment and land obtained or controlled as a result of past transactions or circumstances.

Fixed Costs – Costs that are legally or contractually mandated such as retirement, FICA/Social Security, insurance, debt service costs or interest on loans.

Foundation Budget – The spending target imposed by the Education Reform Act of 1993 for each school district as the level necessary to provide an adequate education for all students.

Free Cash (Also Budgetary Fund Balance) – Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates shown on the tax recapitulation sheet, and unspent amounts in

budget line-items. Unpaid property taxes and certain deficits reduce the amount that can be certified as free cash. The calculation of free cash is based on the balance sheet as of June 30, which is submitted by the community's auditor, accountant, or comptroller. Important: free cash is not available for appropriation until certified by the Director of Accounts.

GASB 45 – This is another Governmental Accounting Standards Board major pronouncement that each public entity account for and report other postemployment benefits (See OPEB) in its accounting statements. Through actuarial analysis, municipalities must identify the true costs of the OPEB earned by employees over their estimated years of actual service.

General Fund – The fund used to account for most financial resources and activities governed by the normal town meeting/city council appropriation process.

Governmental Funds – Funds generally used to account for tax-supported activities. There are five different types of governmental funds: the general fund, special revenue funds, capital projects funds, debt service funds, and permanent funds.

House 1 or 1A – Designation given to the Governor's annual budget request, which is submitted to the House of Representatives by the fourth Wednesday of January. Except that a newly elected governor has eight weeks from the day he/she takes office to submit a budget. The budget is designated House 1 in the first year of the two year legislative session and House 1A in the second year.

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. National federal education law that ensures that schools provide special education services for students in need.

Indirect Cost – Costs of a service not reflected in the operating budget of the entity providing the service. An example of an indirect cost of providing water service would be the value of time spent by non-water department employees processing water bills. A determination of these costs is necessary to analyze the total cost of service delivery. The matter of indirect costs arises most often in the context of enterprise funds.

Line-Item Budget – A budget that separates spending into categories, or greater detail, such as supplies, equipment, maintenance, or salaries, as opposed to a program budget.

Local Aid – Revenue allocated by the Commonwealth to cities, towns, and regional school districts. Estimates of local aid are transmitted to cities, towns, and districts annually by the "Cherry Sheets." Most Cherry Sheet aid programs are considered general fund revenues and may be spent for any purpose, subject to appropriation.

MASC – Massachusetts Association of School Committees – the MASC Policy service is an invaluable resource to school committees as they develop guidelines that will help them and the staff in the decision making process. MASC is committed to providing reliable information and assistance in policy support services.

MGL – Massachusetts General Law – General Laws are Session Laws or sections of Session Laws that are permanent in nature and of general application. General Laws are codified according to subject matter in a multi-volume publication entitled the General Laws of Massachusetts. The official version of the General Laws is now published every two years, with cumulative pamphlets released periodically.

MV (McKinney Vento) Homeless Assistance Act – Federal mandate – Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal

access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other students and youth.

National School Lunch Program – Federally assisted meal program operating in public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

Net School Spending (NSS) – School budget and municipal budget amounts attributable to education, excluding long-term debt service, student transportation, school lunches and certain other specified school expenditures. A community's NSS funding must equal or exceed the NSS Requirement established annually by the Department of Education (DOE). (See Education Reform Act of 1993)

OPEB (Other Postemployment Benefits) – Employees of state and local governments may be compensated in a variety of forms in exchange for their services. In addition to a salary, many employees earn benefits over their years of service that will not be received until after their employment with the government ends. The most common type of these postemployment benefits is a pension. Postemployment benefits other than pensions generally take the form of health insurance and dental, vision, prescription, or other healthcare benefits provided to eligible retirees, including in some cases their beneficiaries. They may also include some type of life insurance. As a group, these are referred to as OPEB. (See GASB 45)

Revolving Fund – Allows a community to raise revenues from a specific service and use those revenues without appropriation to support the service. For departmental revolving funds, MGL Ch. 44 §53E½ stipulates that each fund must be reauthorized each year at annual town meeting or by city council action, and that a limit on the total amount that may be spent from each fund must be established at that time. The aggregate of all revolving funds may not exceed ten percent of the amount raised by taxation by the city or town in the most recent fiscal year, and no more than one percent of the amount raised by taxation may be administered by a single fund. Wages or salaries for full-time employees may be paid from the revolving fund only if the fund is also charged for all associated fringe benefits.

School Choice Revolving –The school choice program allows parents to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside. Tuition is paid by the sending district to the receiving district. Districts may elect not to enroll school choice students if no space is available

Special Revenue Fund – Funds, established by statute only, containing revenues that are earmarked for and restricted to expenditures for specific purposes. Special revenue funds include receipts reserved for appropriation, revolving funds, grants from governmental entities, and gifts from private individuals or organizations.

Tax Rate – The amount of property tax stated in terms of a unit of the municipal tax base; for example, \$14.80 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of taxable real and personal property.

TITLE I – Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) provides financial assistance to districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

Title IIA (Also known as Teacher Quality) – The purpose of Title IIA is to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality. This includes teacher preparation and qualifications of new teachers, recruitment and hiring, induction, professional development, and retention. In addition, Title IIA funds may be used to improve the skills and knowledge of principals for effective school leadership.

Trust Fund – In general, a fund for money donated or transferred to a municipality with specific instructions on its use. As custodian of trust funds, the treasurer invests and expends such funds as stipulated by trust agreements, as directed by the commissioners of trust funds or by town meeting. Both principal and interest may be used if the trust is established as an expendable trust. For nonexpendable trust funds, only interest (not principal) may be expended as directed.

Tuitions & Transportation Revolving-Funds received during any given school year from other public schools in Massachusetts who are sharing Special Education transportation costs or if we are receiving tuition for a student attending our district.

Unfunded Mandate – A requirement imposed by law, regulation or order without underlying financial support, thereby resulting in direct or indirect costs to the body made responsible for its implementation.

Unfunded OPEB Liability – This is the difference between the value assigned to the benefits (other than retirement) already earned by a municipality's employees and the assets the local government will have on hand to meet these obligations. While there is no requirement in Massachusetts to fund this liability, GASB 45 requires that the dollar value of the unfunded OPEB liability is determined every two years. (See GASB 45; OPEB)

User Charges/Fees – A municipal funding source where payment is collected from the user of a service to help defray the cost of providing the service. Note that any increases in the fees must satisfy the three tests set forth in the so called *Emerson case*. (See *Emerson College v. Boston*, 391 Mass. 415 (1984))

Glossary of Term

Abstention: A statement that the board member will not vote on the motion. Since voting is through either a yes or no position, a decision not to take a position is not counted as either a yes or no vote. An abstention is acquiescence to whatever the majority wants.

Ad hoc: From a Latin phrase meaning “for this special purpose.” An ad hoc committee of a board or of the Legislature is, therefore, one formed to direct attention to a single particular situation.

Adjournment: The closing of the meeting.

Appropriation Bill: A bill before the Legislature authorizing the expenditure of public money and stipulating the amount, manner and purpose for the expenditure items.

Arbitration: A process in solving labor-management disagreements whereby the items at issue are submitted to a third party, who hears the contentions of each side and renders a judgment on the contested issue. In binding arbitration, the parties are required to accept the decision, whereas in advisory arbitration, the parties are free to reject the arbitrator’s opinion.

Audit: An accounting of the district’s financial condition, which must be made annually. The annual audit must be made at the end of the fiscal year, but a board has power to have audits made at more frequent intervals.

Bid: An offer to furnish materials or services to a school district for a certain fee or charge.

Curriculum: The courses and instruction offered students by the district.

Fair Labor Standards Act: Federal legislation requiring that employees be paid at least the federal minimum wage and that hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week be compensated at one and a half times the regular rate of pay. Because administrators and teachers are exempted from the law, that act applies only to support employees.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA): A federal law passed in 1993 allowing employees meeting the eligibility requirements (employment for at least one year and at least 1250 hours actually worked in the twelve month period preceding the leave) are eligible for unpaid leave for specified purposes, the leave can extend up to twelve weeks in a twelve month period and the employer is obligated to maintain health insurance benefits during the leave period.

Freedom of Information: State law which requires districts to make copies of public records for the benefit of the public and to have records available for public inspection, subject to certain exceptions listed in the law.

Good Faith: A collective bargaining term. The statutory definition is that both parties in negotiations must be willing to consider proposals in an effort to find a mutually satisfactory basis for agreement and must be willing to discuss their respective contract proposals. Further, if either party objects to the other’s contract proposals, the objecting party must support its objections with rationale.

Grandfather Clause: Section of a bill making provisions of the law inapplicable to activities or individuals involved in the subject of the legislation prior to the enactment of the new legislation.

Grievance: An allegation by an employee that the district or its agent has misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated board policy or agreement with employees. In general, any employee complaint about his or her job conditions.

Head Start: A federal program providing educational programs for preschool students from low income families.

Impact Bargaining: A collective bargaining term used to describe the union right to demand negotiations over the impact of any changes that may affect conditions of employment.

Impasse: The time during the negotiations process after either side announces that agreement cannot be reached.

In Loco Parentis: Latin phrase meaning “in place of the parent.” A school has certain rights, such as the right to discipline a student, in the place of the parent while the student is under school supervision.

Least Restrictive Environment: Federal law requires students with disabilities to be placed so that they can, to the extent appropriate to their individual needs and abilities, be educated with disabled students.

Local Autonomy: Powers given to boards of education to make their own decisions in the operation of school district.

Mediation: The negotiations process by which a third party meets with contending parties and tries to reconcile their differences or persuade them to settle their disputes.

Minutes: The official summary of the proceedings of a board meeting, showing the manner and time of notice of the meeting, the members present and absent, the matters considered, and all actions taken by the board. For emergency meetings, the minutes must state the nature of the emergency for declaring the meeting.

Motion: A proposal by a member in a meeting that the board take certain action. According to Robert’s Rules of Order, a motion passes upon a majority of the votes cast, a quorum being present. “When a quorum is present, a majority vote, that is a majority of the votes cast, is sufficient for the adoption of any motion that is in order. “Thus, if 3 members of a 5- member board are present (a quorum), a 2 to 1 vote passes the motion. There are few exceptions.

National School Lunch Program: A program which seeks to make available to students enrolled in public schools a lunch, to provide nutritionally adequate meals that are acceptable to students, and to provide assistance to participants to ensure minimum meal requirements are met. The federal government provides grants to assist districts in serving nutritious lunches to students at low cost or for free.

Negotiations: Also called “collective bargaining.” The process by which representatives of the board and representatives of a recognized bargaining unit of employees meet to negotiate in good faith on wages, hours, fringe benefits and other terms and conditions of employment.

Nepotism: The bestowing of patronage by public officers in appointing others to positions who are related by reason of blood (consanguinity) or marital (affinity) relationship to the appointing public official. The word comes from the Italian “nepotismo,” which means “favoring of nephews,” the nephews being sons of supposedly celibate medieval churchmen, who started the practice of nepotism.

Parliamentary Procedure: The governing rules for how a board will conduct its meetings set out in bylaws, often times utilizing Robert's Rules of Order.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio: The number of students per teacher.

Reasonable Accommodation: It is discriminatory for an employer to refuse employment to, or discharge from employment, one who cannot meet the job requirements because of a disability if the employer could make "reasonable accommodations" which would permit the applicant or employee to perform the tasks of the job.

Reduction-in-Force (RIF): The process whereby employment is terminated because of a need to reduce the staff rather than because of any performance inadequacies of the employee.

Robert's Rules of Order: A book embodying parliamentary rules, first published in 1876 by Major Henry Robert and revised since then. These rules are not law, and thus are not binding upon meetings of a board of education.

Section 504: A federal statute providing that no otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Whereas P.L. 94-142 is concerned with the procedures and duty of developing a free appropriate educational placement for disabled students, Section 504 is broader in scope and concerns, for example, discrimination against disabled employees and making school buildings accessible to disabled persons.

Seniority: Employee status in relation to other employees according to years of employment within the school district.

Special Education: Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The term includes related services, if the service consists of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a disabled child.

Standardized Test: Same test given under similar controlled circumstances to many students.

Statute: A particular law enacted by the Legislature.

Title I: Provides federal financial assistance to districts to meet the special education needs of educationally deprived children, that being children whose educational attainment is below the level appropriate for children of their age. Funding is to supplement services in reading, language arts and mathematics to identified students.

Title II: Federal financial assistance for schools under the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 3811 et seq., which consolidated the provisions of Titles I, II, IV, VI, VII and part of IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The law provides federal grants to develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated program to improve elementary and secondary school instruction in basic skills or reading, math, and language arts, as formerly authorized by Title II.

Title IX: Federal statute designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Truancy: Continued unauthorized absence from school by a minor student.

Unfair Labor Practice: Action by labor or management that violates specific provisions of state law or a negotiated agreement.

Appendix V - Acronyms Used in the Educator Evaluation System

Acronyms Used in the Educator Evaluation System

DDM - District Determined Measures

DESE - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

MCAS - Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

MOA - Memorandum of Agreement

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

NI - Needs Improvement

PTS - Professional Teacher Status

SGP - Student Growth Percentile

SISP - Specialized Instructional Support Personnel

SMART - Specific and Strategic, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Rigorous/Realistic/Results-Focused,
Timed and Tracked

Glossary of Acronyms

ACT - American College Test	IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
ADA - American with Disabilities Act	IEP - Individualized Education Plan
AESOP - Automated Substitute Placement & Absence Management	LEA - Local Education Agency
AP - Advanced Placement, a curriculum sponsored by College Board	MASBO - Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials
DESE - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	MASC - Massachusetts Association of School Committees
DI - Differentiated Instruction	MASS - Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
DIP – District Improvement Plan	MSBA - Massachusetts School Building Authority
DOR - Department of Revenue	MCAS - Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System
DPH - Massachusetts Department of Public Health	MGL - Massachusetts General Laws
ELA - English Language Arts	MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
ELL - English Language Learner	NEASC - New England Association of Schools and Colleges
FAPE - Free Appropriate Public Education	NREA – Nashoba Regional Education Association
FERPA - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act	NRSC – Nashoba Regional School Committee
FinCom - Finance Committee	NRSD – Nashoba Regional School District
FOIA - Freedom of Information Act	OCR - Office of Civil Rights
FTE - Full-Time Equivalent	PPE - Per Pupil Expenditure
FY - Fiscal Year (July 1 through June 30)	PT - Physical Therapist; Physical Therapy
GPA - Grade Point Average	PTO - Parent Teacher Organization
HR - Human Resources	RIF - Reduction in Force

RtI - Response to Intervention

SAC - School Advisory Council

SAT - Scholastic Aptitude Test

SEL – Social-Emotional Learning

SEPAC - Special Education Parent Advisory Council

SIP - School Improvement Plan

SIMS - Student Information Management System

SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SPED - Special Education

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics

SY - School Year

UDL - Universal Design for Learning

YRBS – Youth Risk Behavior Survey

FAQ

What is the time commitment of a School Committee member?

The School Committee (SC) meeting calendar is created and published prior to the start of the new school year. There are typically two SC regular business meetings a month. Meetings start at 6PM. Additionally, there is a goals workshop in June, and a budget workshop in January. Whenever possible, training workshops to review SC roles and responsibilities and to prepare for writing the Superintendent's evaluation, are scheduled to take place an hour prior to a regular meeting. If there is a need for an additional business meeting, it must be voted on in open session and approved by a majority of the committee.

School Committee members also are assigned to at least one Subcommittee and may be assigned to an advisory committee or as a liaison to a committee such as SEPAC. A list of Subcommittees, Advisories and Liaisons and their responsibilities can be found on pages 14-15 of the School Committee manual. Subcommittees typically meet once a month. Meeting schedules are determined by the committee once it is seated for the school year.

Additionally, it is expected that members attend their Town Meeting which is the first Monday in May. It is also "good practice" for members to attend the High School Graduation in June.

It is expected that SC members attend all meetings and refer to the calendar when scheduling personal business. If something comes up that prohibits attendance at a SC meeting, the member must notify the Chair as soon as possible. Meetings cannot be held without a quorum, 5 of 8 members.

Can School Committee members put items on the agenda?

The SC Chair and the Superintendent create a master planning schedule for the committee at the start of each school year. This calendar is continuously updated at the end of each School Committee meeting to reflect emerging topics and rescheduled items. An example of this calendar can be found in the Appendix of this manual. At each SC meeting, there is an agenda item, "Items for Future Agendas." This is an opportunity for members to suggest future agenda items. Scheduling of such items is at the discretion of the Chair and the Superintendent.

Can School Committee members request information from the Superintendent?

All requests for information from the Superintendent must be made through the SC Chair. The Chair may give permission for a member to contact the Superintendent, and that member must cc the Chair on all communication.

What can the School Committee do and what is it prohibited from doing?

School Committee Member Authority and Duties can be found on pages 2-3 of the School Committee Manual. School committee Powers and Duties are on pages 5-8 of the Manual.

With regard to prohibitions, MASC advises members to refer to *Charting the Course, Roles and Responsibilities* for a long list of examples and detailed information on this topic.

What does and does not constitute deliberation outside of the School Committee?

According to the OML, the definition of a deliberation is: "Oral, written or electronic communications on public business between or among a quorum of a public body." It includes not just issues that are being discussed by the committee at the moment, but any issues which fall within the purview of the committee. For example, if someone wanted to change school start time and talked to a quorum of others about it, then came to the committee with a full-blown plan that already had the support of the majority, that would constitute a violation of the law.

When is it appropriate to respond to a constituent and when is it appropriate to defer to the Chair? Please refer to *Charting the Course, Roles and Responsibilities*, page 12, IV, for detailed information on this topic.

Suggested items from FAQ from *Charting the Course*:

In order to be an effective School Committee member, what are some of the more important resource documents each member of the committee should have?

Every member of the committee should have access to an updated School Committee policy manual, the budget, collective bargaining agreements, administrators' contracts, district goals and objectives, the strategic plan, and student and staff handbooks.

What is the best way to clearly articulate the School Committee's official position regarding matters they have voted on?

The committee should have a written communication policy that outlines the procedures for communicating with the public, media, parents, staff, and students. Many committees delegate this responsibility to the Chair of the committee. It is important that official positions be clear and consistent to avoid confusion or misunderstandings.

Why is it necessary to contact the Superintendent and/or principal when a committee member wants to visit a particular school?

No matter how well intended, unannounced visits may be perceived by the staff as an attempt to meddle in school business. Once elected or appointed, School Committee members are viewed as elected officials who may be visiting for official reasons. Alerting administrators in advance sends a clear message that the purpose for the visit is to demonstrate support and interest. Advance notification also avoids visits from taking place when activities that cannot be interrupted, such as student testing, are taking place.

Involving parents and the public has become more and more critical in order to reinforce credibility in our schools. While schools have benefited from more involvement, there are some matters that must be left in the hands of the staff or committee. How can a School Committee explain that to the public?

Openly, honestly, and respectfully. Most people do not object to playing by the rules if they know what the rules are. School Committees should always be prepared to explain why a particular matter is outside of the public domain. References to the law, regulations, policies, or collective bargaining agreements usually clarify issues. There are always those who will not accept the information provided, but in those instances the committee will be assured they have handled the matter appropriately.

Who hires the attorney who represents the committee?

The School Committee does. This is usually done in consultation with the superintendent since he/she will very often be interacting with the attorney on behalf of the committee. Contact points for legal counsel will be determined by the school committee chair and the superintendent.