

General School Committee Operations and Relations

A. Quorum

A simple majority of School Committee members will constitute a quorum unless otherwise provided by law. With no quorum present the meeting cannot be called to order and no formal meeting can take place.

B. Voting Method

A majority vote of all members present is required for the election of officers or for any other action unless otherwise indicated in the Rules and Regulations. The ayes and nays on any vote shall be recorded whenever any member of the Committee present requests it. Any vote passed by the majority, although not unanimous, thereby becomes the will of the Committee and shall be supported as such by the Chairman when speaking for the Committee.

C. Minutes

The Superintendent will provide an individual to keep complete records of the action of School Committee meetings. These minutes shall be kept in an official minute *binder* that shall be stored in the office of the Superintendent. Copies of all minutes, including executive session minutes that have been released, shall be posted on line, and available to the public.

D. Special School Committee Meetings

Special meetings may be called for either of the following purposes:

1. To enable the Committee to concentrate and take action on a single item of business
2. To enable the Committee to take emergency action between regular meetings

The Committee as a whole may call special meetings, by the Chairman, or by the Committee secretary upon written request of three Committee members. When possible, they shall be announced in advance at a regular meeting of the Committee.

Except for emergencies, each special meeting must be posted to the town website with an accompanying detailed agenda of items the chair reasonably believes will come before the committee and Committee members notified, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to such meeting as to time, place, and purpose of such meeting (Saturdays, Sundays and holidays do not count in the 48 hour timeframe).

All special meetings shall be open to the public and press, but no public discussion shall be heard on items other than those related to the call of the meeting. Only business related to the call of the meeting shall be discussed or transacted by the committee at a special meeting.

E. School Committee Member Conflict of Interest

No member of the Committee or agent of such member shall sell materials or services to the school department without permission of the Board of Selectmen expressed in a vote that shall appear in its records with the reasons therefore.

F. School Committee-Superintendent Relationship

The Harvard School Committee believes that enacting policies is the most important function of a School Committee and that the execution of the policies should be the function of the Superintendent.

Delegation by the School Committee of its executive powers to the superintendent provides freedom for the Superintendent to manage the schools within the framework of the School Committee's policies and frees the Committee to devote its time to policy-making and appraisal functions. This delegation of authority in no way absolves the Committee of its legal responsibilities.

The School Committee holds the Superintendent responsible for carrying out its policies within established guidelines and for keeping the Committee informed about school operations.

In an effort to keep the School Committee informed the Superintendent will notify committee members as promptly as possible of any happenings of an emergency nature that occur in the schools.

G. Legal Counsel

The School Committee may employ a legal counsel for general purposes. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek his/her services to counsel and represent the school system at various times. The Committee may also seek the advice of town counsel on certain issues.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. The counsel will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with the requirements of the school law, to enable the counsel to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

APPROVED: October 23, 2006
AMENDED: January 9, 2012