

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The Arlington School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The Arlington School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
4. Establish practical and simple goals.
5. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The Arlington School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of Arlington School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee - Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

State law provides that:

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

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

The Arlington School Committee is the governing board of the town's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

Established by law

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

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

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Legislative or policymaking.** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. **Appraisal.** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. **Provision of financial resources.** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. **Public relations.** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. **Educational planning and evaluation.** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

Personnel Matters

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

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

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

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

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the Arlington 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 anyway by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No individual member of the Committee, any subcommittee, or any advisory committee to the School Committee will, by virtue of his or her office, exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee. All requests for administrative time to fulfill information, data, analysis or research requests shall be subject to majority vote of the School Committee or one of its subcommittees or advisory committees.

The Arlington 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. Any draft motions that are submitted by individual members in advance of a formal session shall be forwarded to the Committee's Executive Secretary, who shall in turn facilitate their further distribution, so as to avoid the appearance of deliberation outside the meeting.

In keeping with the spirit of the unit action concept, School Committee members should not accept any long-term or ongoing assignments within the schools except with the expressed permission of the full Committee. Specific visits by members, singly or in groups, to see programs or for any other committee business should be properly arranged and appropriate administration notified.

Duties

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

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and school department.
2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the town's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the committee or neglect his share of the work.

5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
6. To vote and act in committee impartially for the good of the students.
7. 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.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

Approved by School Committee January 12, 2012

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

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

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

From the Town Clerk, newly 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.

Newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign a receipt for, within 30 days of taking office, a copy of the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's Summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. As municipal employees, all School Committee members shall receive a copy of said summary annually. All School Committee members shall, within 30 days of taking office, and every 2 years thereafter, complete the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's online training program. Upon completion of the online training program, members shall provide notice of such completion to be retained for 6 years by the Town Clerk.

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

Established by law

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30A:20](#); [41:1](#); [41:107](#); [76:5](#); 268A:27-28;

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

The Arlington School Committee member may resign his office by filing a resignation thereof in the office of the town clerk, and such resignation shall be effective forthwith unless a certain time is specified therein when it shall take effect.

Should an Arlington School Committee member move out of the town which elected him/her to the Committee, he/she shall be deemed to have vacated his/her office.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:2, 41:109

SOURCE: Arlington

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

The Town Manager Act of Arlington provides that:

"When a vacancy occurs in the membership of the School Committee, the remaining members of the School Committee shall, after a one week's notice, fill such vacancy by ballot. A majority of the ballots of the members entitled to vote shall be necessary to such election. The person so appointed shall perform the duties of the office until the next annual election, at which the voters shall elect a member of the School Committee for the remainder of the un-expired term."

The School Committee shall by majority vote commence the process described below to fill the vacancy.

1. The School Committee shall inform the public through all available media, including the School Department's website, that a position on the School Committee is vacant. Per the Town Manager's Act, the opening shall be posted for one week.
2. The notice of vacancy shall invite all residents of the Town who are interested in serving to submit an application for membership on the Committee by a date certain. The notice shall include the date and time at which candidates can speak about their candidacy before an open meeting of the School Committee.
3. Said application shall include a statement of the candidate's reasons for serving on the Committee, a resume, and any other information the candidate wishes to present regarding his or her interest in serving on the School Committee.
4. All candidates for membership on the Committee shall be invited to an open meeting to make a case for their appointment, and each member of the School Committee may ask the candidates questions. The appearance of the candidates will be determined by lot prior to the first speaker. The order of the questions from School Committee members shall be by rotation. The Chair of the School Committee has the discretion to set an appropriate time limit for each candidate's presentation and for questioning by the School Committee.
5. Once all candidates have presented, the School Committee shall take a roll call vote to select the new member. Balloting shall continue until one candidate secures a majority. The candidate with the least amount of votes shall be excluded in the next round of balloting. Upon winning a majority, the new member shall begin service on the School Committee after taking the oath of office.

Approved and revised by Arlington School Committee March 8, 2012

SOURCE: Arlington

File: BBC

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER INSURANCE

Arlington School Committee members are indemnified, subject to appropriation, for expenses or damages incurred in defense of claims arising out of the exercise of their official duties.

Revised and Approved by School Committee: May 13, 2008

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above: (1) community responsibility; (2) responsibility to school administration; and (3) relationships to fellow Committee members.

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

1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly-defined policies, which will direct and support the administration.
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him responsible for acceptable results.
4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.

3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of their own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems.
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Officers of the Arlington School Committee shall be elected at an organization meeting held only for this purpose each year. The organization meeting shall be scheduled for a date and time after the annual town elections, and prior to the first regular School Committee meeting of the month.

Officers shall be elected separately for terms of one year. A majority vote of the members present shall constitute an election.

That member with the earliest date of Committee membership shall preside as Chairperson pro tempore until the new officers are elected. The Chairperson shall conduct the election of all School Committee officers, following the methods set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order*.

For the purpose of defining seniority of School Committee members under File BDA and File BDAA, the following rule shall apply. When two or more members are elected for the first time at the same election, and, when both members have had identical lengths of service on the Committee, the senior member shall be determined by the member receiving the greater number of votes received in the election in which the members were first elected.

Approximately one month prior to the School Committee Organizational Meeting, School Committee members interested in officer positions will notify the administrative secretary and/or Chairperson.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.

"At each organizational meeting the newly elected Chair shall read aloud the Standards and Norms of the Arlington School Committee, attached hereto as BDA-E, and invite each member to publically sign the document. All members shall be provided with BDA-E prior to the organizational meeting."

CROSS REFS.: BBB, School Committee Elections
 BDAA, Election of School Committee Officers
 BDA-E, School Committee: Norms and Standards
 BE, Regular School Committee Meetings

Revised: March 22, 2012

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NORMS AND STANDARDS

We, the Arlington School Committee, acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a meeting of School Committee members that is held in public and not a public meeting and that we will make every effort to ensure that meetings are effective and efficient. To that end, we acknowledge the importance of subcommittees and we and the Superintendent agree to utilize them to focus on specific topics in-depth and to prepare for presentation, deliberation, and possible action by the School Committee.

We, the Arlington School Committee, set forth these Standards and Norms that we will all commit to abide by as individuals and as a Committee:

1. Represent the needs and interests of all students in the district.
2. Exercise leadership in vision, planning, policy making, evaluation, and advocacy on behalf of the students and district, not in managing the day-to-day operations of the district.
3. Conduct our business through a set agenda. Emerging items will be addressed in subsequent meetings through agenda items.
4. Provide full disclosure. Each member will provide input, encouragement, express concerns and positions rather than withhold information from other members. When a Committee member feels that there has not been full disclosure, an objective process for revisiting the issue will be used.
5. Maintain an open environment where each member is empowered to freely express opinions, concerns, and ideas. Committee members will work together to clarify and restate discussions in order to strive for full understanding.
6. Keep an open mind and accept that they can change their opinions by recognizing that they are not locked into their initial stated positions.
7. Make decisions on information and not on personalities. Committee members will act with the best information available at the time considering data, the superintendent's recommendations, proposals, and suggestions. Committee members will strive to make the best decision at the time.
8. Debate the issues, not one another. The Committee will engage in critical thinking, expecting all Committee members to freely offer differing points of view as part of the discussion, prior to making a board decision.
9. Not take unilateral action. A Committee member's authority is derived only through a majority decision of the Committee acting as a whole during an open, public meeting.

10. Attend meetings well prepared to discuss issues on the agenda and will be prepared to make decisions, striving for efficient decision making.
11. Strive to have no surprises for the committee or superintendent. All members will receive the same information on all topics in a timely manner.
12. Strive to reach decisions by consensus. Discuss with respect, disagree without acrimony. When consensus is not possible, all members will publicly abide by the majority decision.
13. Understand and respect the chain of command as it concerns roles and responsibilities and direct others to do the same.
14. Review and revise our standards and norms, as needed, as part of the committee's self-evaluation.

Arlington School Committee adoption and approval on March 22, 2012

SOURCE: Arlington

ELECTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

It is the intent of this policy to encourage all board members to assume leadership roles based on their tenure on the Committee and interest in representing the Committee in a leadership capacity.

Nominations for each officer position - Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary ~ will be made from the floor at the School Committee organizational meeting, which shall be convened as described in File BDA. Each officer shall be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote for a particular office, the election shall be declared null and void, and nominations will be reopened.

Members willing to accept nomination for the office of Chair, Vice-Chair, or Secretary shall declare such willingness approximately one month prior to the Annual Town Election by providing written notice to the Chair and the Administrative Secretary. Senior members who have not held a particular office are strongly encouraged to submit their names as potential nominees.

For the purpose of defining seniority of school committee members under File BDA and File BDAA, the following rule shall apply. When two or more members are elected for the first time at the same election, and when both members have had identical lengths of service on the committee the senior member shall be determined by the member receiving the greater number of votes received in the election in which the members were first elected.

Ideally, the individual assuming the role of Vice-Chair will rotate into the role of Chair. The Committee considers it advisable that members complete at least two years with the Committee before serving as Chair and one year before becoming Vice-Chair or Secretary.

CROSS REFS.: BDA School Committee Organizational Meeting

Revised and approved by the Arlington School Committee March 23, 2010

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Arlington 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:

1. Sign, or cause to be signed when permissible, the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee
2. Perform such duties as prescribed by action of the School Committee.
3. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas
4. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings
5. Appoint all subcommittees and representatives to town committees when requested by other town officials, subject to approval by the School Committee
6. Serve as liaison, or designate another Committee member to serve as liaison between the School Committee and bodies not otherwise having formal School Committee representation including, but not limited to, the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and Town Meeting
7. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary
8. Arrange for orientation of new Committee members by the Superintendent and his/her assistants within two weeks after the organizational meeting.
9. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others
10. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

The Chairperson shall also be responsible for ensuring the appropriate, timely and informative presentation of the annual school budget, as well as other issues pertinent to the schools, to Town Meeting.

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

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time

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

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

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

Secretary

The Secretary will perform or cause to be performed the following:

- Keep an accurate journal of all committee meetings
- Comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings
- Render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:36

NOTE: The treasurer of the town serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

Revised: October 9, 2007

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer and professional leader of the school system. While the committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent may ask for guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEES

The Arlington School Committee acknowledges that the exercise of its responsibilities demands ever-increasing time and effort of Committee members. The division of some of the Committee's tasks among subcommittees is authorized with the hope of increasing efficiency in Committee operations. The subcommittee structure provides an opportunity to enrich the School Committees' deliberations by offering alternate conduits for introducing issues and ideas.

When the Committee finds it necessary or advisable, the Chairperson may appoint a subcommittee for a specific purpose, subject to the approval of the Committee. Certain standing subcommittees may be authorized by the Committee to continue from one year to the next, with new or renewed appointments made annually by the Chairperson. A subcommittee shall consist of no more than three members. Each special (ad hoc) subcommittee shall terminate upon completion of its assignment or at the annual organizational meeting, whichever comes first.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The subcommittee chairperson and its members will be appointed by the Committee Chairperson, subject to approval by the Committee.
3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
5. The Committee Chairperson and Superintendent will be ex-officio members of all special subcommittees.
6. A subcommittee will be dissolved by the committee upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the Committee at any time.
7. The subcommittee chair shall set the agenda for each subcommittee meeting and shall ensure that the agenda is distributed to all School Committee members three days prior to the subcommittee meeting. (E-mail distribution is permissible) In addition the subcommittee chairs will coordinate with the administrative secretary to ensure that meetings are posted and that arrangements are made for note taking and minutes preparation.
8. As soon as they are available, draft and approved minutes of each subcommittee meeting shall be distributed to all School Committee members at the next regularly scheduled School Committee Meeting.
9. Subcommittees shall report on their work at the full School Committee meetings.
10. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

The School Committee Chairperson shall appoint the Chairperson of each subcommittee and may be an ex officio member of all subcommittees.

CROSS REFS.: BDB, School Committee Officers
BEC, Executive Sessions

Revised: September 28, 2004

SOURCE: Arlington

Arlington Public Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES

There are five standing subcommittees that are appointed by the chair and remain in place until mid-May of each year or until new committees are appointed or reappointed, such appointments to be confirmed by majority vote of the School Committee.

Subcommittees - with their core charters — are:

1. Policies and Procedures

- Perform annual review of selected sections of School Committee policy manual.
- Develop recommendations for policy revisions, additions, or deletions, as initiated by the subcommittee, requested by the School Committee or Administration, or required by law.
- Hear requests for the full or partial suspension of selected policies, and forward recommendations regarding such requests to the full School Committee.

2. Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability

- Work with the Superintendent on the development of annual goals, objectives, and measures.
- Examine evidence of completion of annual goals and objectives, and report on the same to the full School Committee.
- Consider recommendations for curriculum changes, and receive complaints and recommendations concerning the effectiveness of instructional programs.
- Address special education issues referred to the subcommittee by the full School Committee.

3. Community Relations

- Work with community and governmental organizations to develop recommendations for the full School Committee concerning partnerships and joint activities.
- Consider applications by residents for appointment by the School Committee to advisory and other committees, and forward recommendations to the full School Committee.
- Develop communications strategies and plans to assist the Administration in publicizing and disseminating information about the activities of the Arlington Public Schools.

4. Budget

- Develop annual timeline for budget development, recommend public outreach activities, and coordinate - in consultation with the School Committee Chair and the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer - logistics surrounding the School Committee's annual budget hearing.
- Recommend improvements to budgeting and financial oversight procedures.
- Review budget recommendations and reports prior to their presentation to the School Committee and/or other venues.

5. Facilities and Property

- Review School Department capital plans, prior to their formal submission to the Capital Planning Committee.
- Consider proposals for the sale, lease, or declaration as surplus of School Department property, as well as granting of rights of way and easements, and forward associated recommendations to the full School Committee.
- Assist the Administration in the preparation of facilities maintenance and improvement plans, capacity reviews, and recommendations for associated funding and related action.

Subcommittees may assume other tasks, as requested by the School Committee Chair or referred by the full School Committee.

There should be a minimum of two subcommittee meetings per standing committee during the school year.

CROSS REF.: BDE, School Committee Subcommittees

Approved by School Committee, January 12, 2012

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LIAISONS TO INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS

There shall be one School Committee member appointed to each school in the District as a liaison. Appointments shall be made by the Chair and confirmed by vote of the full School Committee.

Wherever practicable, members shall not be assigned as liaison to a school where they currently have children in attendance.

Minimum responsibilities of liaisons shall be to:

- Connect with the principals and PTO/parent advisory council presidents or chairs at their assigned schools, provide contact information, and offer to attend meetings to provide district updates.
- Attend school events as practicable, and be available to respond to questions.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prevent School Committee member response to inquiries from and attendance at events of schools beyond those to which they are assigned as liaison.

Liaison assignments shall last from the time of appointments to the issuance of new assignments during or shortly following the School Committee's annual organizational meeting.

The School Committee Chair shall request that the PTO/parent advisory councils of the district's schools name liaisons to the School Committee.

Approved by the Arlington School Committee, January 12, 2012

Revised and approved by the Arlington School Committee, October 10, 2013

SOURCE: Arlington

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Arlington School Committee recognizes the advantages to the School Committee, the school department and the community of establishing advisory committees for specific purposes. The School Committee shall seek the advice of the Superintendent before establishing any advisory committee.

Types and Function

Advisory committees shall serve primarily as fact-finding groups to assist the School Committee and staff.

This policy describes the procedure which will apply to the composition, appointment, governance, and operations of advisory committees, unless otherwise specified by School Committee policy or applicable state or federal law.

The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.

The specific purpose for which each committee is established shall be clearly defined by the School Committee. An approximate or definite date shall be set for completion of the committee's objectives.

Method of Appointment

The method of appointment of advisory committees should be flexible and appropriate to the reason for which the committee is being created. However, the following shall be applied where appropriate:

1. Appropriate groups should be involved in recommending members.
2. The advisory committee should be broadly representative of the appropriate group(s) to be involved in or affected by the recommendations of the committee.
3. All appointments of citizens shall be confirmed by the School Committee, following a procedure to be specified and implemented by the Community Relations Subcommittee.
4. All appointments of staff members should be made by the Superintendent with the approval of the School Committee. When staff members are appointed to a citizens' advisory committee, they shall constitute a minority of such committee.
5. All vacancies occurring on an advisory committee should be filled as soon as possible, using the procedures stated herein.

Organization

1. Elect officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary.
2. Comply with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.
3. Conduct meetings on a regular schedule, sending notices of all meeting to all committee members, the School Committee, and Superintendent.
4. Meet at a convenient location provided by the school department.
5. Keep written records of meetings and communications.
6. Conduct its business within the guidelines of this policy on advisory committees and according to any additional instructions from the School Committee and/or the Superintendent. When appointed, each member shall receive a copy of this and any other relevant policies, as well as standard advisories for public bodies regarding compliance with the Open Meeting Law.
7. Tenure of committee members will be up to one year, unless the member is reappointed.
8. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. The assignment the School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. The resources the School Committee will provide.
 - d. The approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
 - f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press.
9. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.

Resources

Advisory committees shall be encouraged to draw upon a wide variety of resources both inside and outside the school system.

Requests for staff time to perform analysis or to satisfy major information inquiries shall be channeled through the School Committee liaison.

Personnel

Clerical and professional staff assistance shall be made available in keeping with the ability of the School Committee to provide it, as determined by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall designate a staff member to process requests for materials and clerical assistance for each advisory committee.

Material

Material necessary for notices, records, and reports shall be provided under the direction of the Superintendent or his designee insofar as the School Committee is able to provide the same.

Financial

After appropriation by the School Committee, the expenditure of any funds by an advisory committee shall be made only after approval by the Superintendent and under his/her direction.

Liaison

Liaison with the School Committee and administration shall be accomplished by attendance of a member of the School Committee and/or the Superintendent or his/her designee, at advisory committee meetings. A person designated to attend in place of the Superintendent shall report concerning all business of the committee, according to instructions from the Superintendent.

Reports and Correspondence

1. An advisory committee shall provide written timely progress reports to the School Committee.
2. At the end of the committee's assignment, a preliminary report shall be presented in writing to the School Committee Chairperson and the Superintendent, prior to preparation of the final report.
3. The final report shall be received by all School Committee members and appropriate administrators at least one week prior to the meeting at which the report is to be discussed for any possible action.
4. Any reports or publicity releases to the community or other concerned groups shall be made only through the Superintendent or his/her designee.
5. Any correspondence between the advisory committee and the School Committee which requires action shall be delivered through the School Committee liaison for presentation to the School Committee at least one week prior to a regular meeting.

Dissolution

The life of an advisory committee shall be for the school year in which it is appointed, unless its final report is accepted by the School Committee prior to the end of that school year or unless the School Committee, by majority vote at a regular meeting, continues the committee beyond either time.

The School Committee may, by majority vote at a regular meeting, dissolve an advisory committee at any time during the life of the committee. However, the Committee shall seek the advice of the Superintendent before taking any such action.

All current advisory committees shall be reviewed annually at the first meeting in June.

All advisory committees are subject to the Open Meeting Law.

CROSS REFS.: BDEA, School Committee Standing Committees
 JIB, Student Involvement in Decision-making

Approved by School Committee, January 12, 2012

File: BDFA

SCHOOL COUNCILS

This policy is designed to insure the consistent implementation throughout the Arlington Public Schools of provisions of Massachusetts General Law 71:59C which requires the establishment of School Councils in each of the public schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Superintendent and the Principals shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves and ensuring full compliance with law.

At each school there shall be a School Council composed in accordance with law, and elected as required therein. The School Committee encourages schools to hold School Council elections prior to the end of each school year in June. School Councils should be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the school building and community. School Councils are considered municipal agencies and their members are considered municipal employees for purposes of the conflict of interest law.

The school Principal shall co-chair the council, and will be responsible for convening the first meeting no later than forty days after the first day of school, at which meeting a co-chairman shall be selected.

The School Council shall meet regularly during the school year. Meetings of the School Council shall be subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, on the official Town bulletin board outside the Town Clerk's office, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. Each council is encouraged to set its calendar of regular meetings for the year at its first meeting of the school year, and to post these meetings on the District website and/or their own school website in addition to the posting required by Massachusetts law. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The School Council shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, shall assist in the review of the annual school budget and in the formulation of a school improvement plan.

The School Council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to the collective bargaining law.

At least once per year, the School Committee shall facilitate the provision of training for all interested School Council members, said training to be provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees or a comparable training provider.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25; 71:59C; 150E; 268A

Approved by Arlington School Committee, January 12, 2012

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal of each school, in consultation with the School Council, shall on an annual basis, in conformity with the provisions of law, develop and submit for approval by the Superintendent a school improvement plan. Said plan shall be prepared in a manner and form prescribed by the department of education and shall conform to the appropriate policies and practices of the Arlington Public Schools.

The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. Support of and tight integration with the approved district goals.
2. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education and by the School Committee consistent with district goals.
3. An assessment of the needs of the school consistent with district goals.
4. The means to address student performance consistent with district goals.

School improvement plans shall be submitted to the Superintendent each year for approval, as required by law. Approved plans will be received by the School Committee by November 30th of each year.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 69:11

Revised and Approved by School Committee: January 8, 2008

SOURCE: Arlington

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written school improvement plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent for approval and the School Committee for review each year in which the plan is to be implemented.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school council be aware of certain expectations regarding the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. Focus on improvement of student learning.
2. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
3. Align with the mission of the School District and any goals and policies of the School District.
4. Be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements.
5. Clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented.
6. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
7. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
8. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school council, and resubmit it for approval.

SOURCE: MASC

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

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

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

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

SOURCE: MASC

SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The increasing complexity of Arlington School Committee responsibilities requires legal advice in the best interests of the school department and the town.

However, because the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, the committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide additional legal services.

The Arlington School Committee may request the services of the legal counsel of the Town of Arlington on legal matters other than collective bargaining which come before it in the conduct of its business; or, may employ legal counsel when circumstances warrant, within the provisions of law.

The Arlington School Committee shall employ legal counsel for collective bargaining purposes on an annual basis within the provisions of law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E & F
 Town Manager Act, Sec. 28

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Administrative Assistant

The Arlington School Committee may employ an administrative assistant to help the Committee and its elected secretary in the tasks of record-keeping, correspondence, and the posting and recording of meetings. The administrative assistant shall report directly to the Committee, with the chair monitoring and managing the workload.

During periods when the administrative assistant is not available, the superintendent will arrange for a substitute.

The administrative assistant will be annually evaluated by the Superintendent with input from the Committee Chair, who may also solicit input from other members of the Committee.

Revised: November 9, 2004

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The meeting is the vehicle through which the School Committee must, as a unit, determine its course and make decisions in the exercise of its authority and responsibility. The Committee recognizes the value of an informed community and encourages attendance at its meetings.

Meetings of the Committee shall be classified as follows:

- organizational
- regular
- special
- adjourned
- emergency
- public hearing

Time and Place

All regular, special, and adjourned meetings and public hearings shall begin at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise voted by the Committee.

Meetings shall take place at the School Committee Room on the 6th floor, Fusco Building, Arlington High School, unless otherwise voted by the School Committee or unless an emergency requires otherwise, in which case the Chairperson and/or the Superintendent shall make appropriate arrangements.

Every meeting of the School Committee will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with state law.

Adjourned Meetings

An adjourned meeting shall be held only for the purpose of completing the business of a previous meeting's agenda, if the pending items of business cannot be added to the agenda of the next regular meeting. The time for an adjourned meeting shall be determined by a majority vote of the Committee members present at the time of adjournment of the unfinished meeting.

The administrative secretary will attempt to notify any member who was absent when the decision was made regarding the adjourned meeting.

Emergency Meetings

An emergency meeting may be called only under the most extreme conditions, when it is impossible for a Committee decision to be delayed the 48 hours required for a special meeting. Such a meeting may be called only by the Chairperson or Superintendent after consultation with legal counsel.

Every possible effort shall be made by the Chairperson and/or secretary to notify every member of the Committee.

Any decisions made at an emergency meeting shall be entered into the minutes of the next regular meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25; 66:17C

CROSS REFS.: BDA, School Committee Organizational Meeting
BE subcodes (all relate to School Committee Meetings)
BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

Revised and approved by School Committee 1/25/2011

SOURCE: Arlington

REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee shall schedule 20 Regular Meetings during each school year. Regular meetings shall be scheduled on Tuesday evenings, with specific dates to be set by a vote of the Committee at the time of the adoption of the annual school calendar.

The approved School Committee calendar shall be distributed to all Principals and administrators with instructions that every effort shall be made to avoid scheduling evening events on School Committee meeting nights.

Regular Meetings shall begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. and adjourn by 10:00 p.m., unless the rules are suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present. A time shall be set by majority vote of the Committee members present for completion of the business.

CROSS REFS.: BE and BD and subcodes (all relate to School Committee meetings)

Revised and approved by the Arlington School Committee 6/12/14

SOURCE: Arlington

SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Arlington School Committee may meet in special session for specific purposes (re-organization, etc.). Only the matter(s) which the meeting was called to consider may be discussed.

Special meetings shall be called by the administrative secretary either when so directed by the Chairperson (or Vice-Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson) or at the written request of a majority of the Committee.

At least 48 hours notice of a special meeting shall be given to each member by telephone call from the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or secretary, to be followed by delivery of written notice. If this direct contact fails, the posting of a letter by registered mail to a member's home or known temporary address will constitute notice. Notice shall be given to the public and press as required by law.

CROSS REFS.: BE, School Committee Meetings
 BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

SOURCE: Arlington

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chair (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chair or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the School Committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent.) This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.

9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first case, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first. When necessary, the School Committee may enter executive session to review and approve executive session minutes using reason 7 above and citing the Open Meeting Law.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

Established by law and Committee policy

SOURCE: MASC

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

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

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all subcommittee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

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

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

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

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

AGENDA FORMAT/PREPARATION AND DISSEMINATION

An agenda shall be provided for all regular, special, adjourned and planning meetings.

A tentative agenda for each regular meeting shall be determined by the chairperson in collaboration with the Superintendent. It shall be submitted to the administrative assistant of the Committee for preparation and delivery to the members, notice to the press, and posting on bulletin boards of all schools. The agenda and supporting materials, as gathered by the Superintendent, shall be sent to Committee members two workdays preceding the School Committee meeting, no later than 4:00 p.m., except for emergencies. Any items received by the administrative assistant later than 4:00 p.m. two workdays preceding the School Committee meeting shall be held and heard the following meeting, except for emergencies.

In addition, the administrative assistant shall provide the following to the Arlington Public Schools Direct of Technology to be posted on the website:

- School Committee agendas, posted with a disclaimer that the agenda is tentative and may be subject to change up until the time of the meeting
- School Committee minutes, motions and appropriate back up material
- Subcommittee agendas, posted with a disclaimer that the agenda is tentative and may be subject to change up until the time of the meeting
- Subcommittee minutes, motion and appropriate back up material

The following shall be included, but not limited to, items of business to be considered at each regular meeting:

- Public Comment
- Consent Agenda
- Superintendent's report
- Report of subcommittees and announcements

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the committee, or to expedite committee business.

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. Citizens may submit such requests to the school committee chair through the Committee's administrative secretary.

Copies of the final agenda shall be available to spectators at all open session meetings for which an agenda is required.

Whenever possible the materials for the meeting will be made available online to the public at the start of the meeting

Consent Agenda

Items that are considered to be routine shall be placed on the Consent Agenda and shall be enacted by one motion. The Agenda shall have an asterisk (*) next to each item placed on the Consent Agenda. There shall be no separate discussion of items placed on the Consent Agenda unless a member of the School Committee so requests, in which event the item shall be considered in its normal sequence on the agenda. Any one member of the committee may remove an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion. Items that may be placed on the consent Agenda may include but are not limited to the following: a) minutes of previous meetings, b) changes to the policy manual (second reading), c) field trips, d) warrant approvals, and e) other items that deemed to be routine by the Chair.

For the benefit of the public, the Chair will read the following paragraph and the list of items included in the Consent Agenda:

"All items are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence on the agenda. "

CONTRACT REFERENCE: AEA (UnitA&B)

CROSS REF: BEDH, Public Participation at School Committee Meetings

Revised and approved: November 20, 2014

SOURCE: Arlington

RULES OF ORDER

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

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

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

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

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

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

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

SOURCE: MASC

Updated July 2012

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

MINUTES

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

Minutes will include:

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.
2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.
4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

When approved, minutes of each meeting shall be forwarded to the Arlington Teachers' Association through its president.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

In addition, the administrative secretary shall provide the following to the Arlington Public Schools Direct of Technology to be posted on the website and notification of the posting to be distributed through parent lists:

- School Committee agendas, posted with a disclaimer that the agenda is tentative and may be subject to change up until the time of the meeting
- School Committee minutes, motions and appropriate back up material
- Subcommittee agendas, posted with a disclaimer that the agenda is tentative and may be subject to change up until the time of the meeting
- Subcommittee minutes, motion and appropriate back up material

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public Right To Know

Revised: October 20, 2005

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The length of the public comment period shall be 20 minutes unless the Chair chooses to extend the time.
2. Speakers shall identify themselves and will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening.
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 through the Chair of the meeting.
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 personal 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.
7. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A School Committee Meeting is a meeting of a government body at which members of the body deliberate over public business. We welcome the attendance of members of the school district community to view your School Committee as it conducts its regular business meeting.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 20(f) governs public participation at open meetings covering all public bodies.

Chapter 30A:20 [Notice, Remote Participation, Public Participation, Certification]

(f) No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.

The School Committee believes that the school district community should have an opportunity to comment to the Committee on issues that affect the school district and are within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities. Therefore the Committee has set aside a period of time at each School Committee meeting to hear from the public. In addition, if the Committee believes that an issue requires a dialogue with the school district community, the Committee may schedule a separate public hearing on that issue.

Any citizen who wishes to make a presentation to the School Committee on an item which is of interest to him/her and within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities may request to be placed on the agenda for a particular meeting. Such request should be in writing and should be received by the Superintendent of Schools at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. Such request should contain background statements which would explain the scope and intent of the agenda item. The Chair of the Committee works with the Superintendent to formulate the meeting agendas. Together they will determine whether or not to place an item on the agenda and if the item is to be taken up they will also determine when to place an item on the agenda and all parameters to be required of the presenter.

Here are the general rules for the Committee's public comment period:

1. Public Comment shall be for a period of 20 minutes and shall generally follow the opening of the meeting. The Committee reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.
2. Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themselves by name and address and shall speak for no longer than 3 minutes. No citizen may speak more than once without permission of the Chair. All citizens shall speak to the full Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators.
3. Individuals may address topics on the agenda, items specified for public comment, or items within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. The Chair shall rule out of order any individual who fails to honor the guidelines or who addresses a matter inappropriate for public comment.

4. Any Committee member may direct questions to the speaker through the Chair in order to clarify comments of the speaker.

SOURCE: MASC

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The Chairperson of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the Chair, and all remarks must be addressed to the Chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the Chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Arlington School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

Changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives will require revisions, deletions, and additions to the policies of present and future School Committees. The School Committee will welcome suggestions for ongoing policy development.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Arlington School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented in the following sequence:

1. Discussion item - (first reading) of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; committee discussion and directions for any redrafting, at the same meeting
2. Action item — discussion, adoption or rejection at a subsequent regular or special meeting.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

CONTRACT REFS.: AEA (Units A and B), II-C
AEA (Unit C), XXV-B

REVISED AND APPROVED: October 9, 2007

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis but not less than every five (5) years. Dates of review and revision shall be placed on each policy.

The policies and procedures subcommittee shall present recommendations to the School Committee for policy development or amendment as prescribed within these policies and procedures.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the administrative assistant to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

CROSS REF.: BGCA, Policy Appeal Process
 APS Policy Manual Introductory Page

Revised: March 9, 2004

SOURCE: MASC/ Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a procedure to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All physical policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They may be subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The Committee's administrative assistant will keep and maintain a calendar of actions required by the various policies. This calendar will summarize, by policy and by month, the required actions of the School Committee and the School Department. The administrative assistant will endeavor to update this calendar promptly as policy changes are adopted by the School Committee, but in any event not less than once per year, by the end of March.

The School Committee's official policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent's office.

SOURCE: MASC

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of Arlington School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The Arlington School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee from administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe firsthand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the Principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text messages, social media postings, internet web forums, and internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee Chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic mail correspondence between and among members of the School Committee, or the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.[4:7](#); [30A:18-25](#), [23B](#); [66:10](#)

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of law, each new School Committee member elected to the School Committee is required to complete, within one year of their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Ethics/Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given or provided direct online access to the following materials:

- A. A copy of the School Committee policy manual
- B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. A copy of the Ethics/Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. A copy of the district's budget
- E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. Student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent determine. The Chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

- A. Arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. Requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. Responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. Handling confidential information

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

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:36A](#)

CROSS REF.: BBBA/BBBB School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the Arlington School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. A calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops will be maintained by the Committee secretary. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will accord with the travel expense policy for staff members.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.
5. Exchange of ideas through joint meetings with neighboring School Committees.
6. Exchange of ideas through joint meetings with other boards or committees of the Town of Arlington.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION

Arlington School Committee members shall serve without compensation. However, members shall be entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending workshops, meetings, and conferences, which will aid in performance of their duties as Committee members. Reimbursement will be at rates comparable to that permitted staff members on authorized trips.

1. No member of a School Committee in any town shall be eligible for the position of teacher, or Superintendent of public schools therein, or in any union school or superintendency union or district in which his town participates.
2. Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.
3. Unreimbursed expenses by School Committee members shall be characterized as contributions to the Arlington Public Schools.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:52

CROSS REF.: DKC, Expense Reimbursements

Revised: October 26, 2004

SOURCE: Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The Arlington School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause.

To this end:

1. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.
2. The Committee will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups in developing an annual, as well as a long-range, legislative program. One of the major objectives of the Committee's legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.
3. The Committee will annually designate a person ~ who may or may not be a member of the Committee — to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the Committee's behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts Legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the Legislature or Congress, the Committee's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the School Committee.

The Chair shall designate said legislative representative annually, by April 30. At least twice each year, the Chair shall place on the agenda of a full Committee meeting a review of the legislative program.

Revised and Approved by School Committee: May 13, 2008

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Arlington School Committee recognizes the advantages to the Committee, its members and the Town of Arlington of maintaining contact with other school committees in this geographical area, in the Commonwealth and in the nation.

Regional

The Committee shall encourage its members to participate in the activities of Division II of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

State

The Committee shall maintain membership in the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, support its activities, and encourage its members to participate in the statewide activities of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

Revised: September 14, 2004

SOURCE: MASC/Arlington