

SCHOOL COUNCILS

File: BDFA

The Purpose of School councils is to assist principals in:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
2. Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
3. Reviewing the annual school building budget
4. Formulating a school improvement plan

For the high school the council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect for the following school year

The school council "shall assist [the principal] in the review of the annual school budget." This language refers to the school building budget, not to the district budget.

At each school there shall be a School Council composed in accordance with MGL 71:59C, and elected as required therein. The School Committee encourages schools to hold School Council elections in September of each year no later than October 15th as this will assist the School Committee in its budget planning process. ~~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 Committee encourages at least six School Council meetings per year. (MGL 268A)

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 MGL 71:59C.

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 MGL 39:23A through C, 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 Chapter 150E, 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. 39:23A-C; 71:59C; 268A

Approved by Arlington School Committee, January 12, 2012