

SECTION C

GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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ADMINISTRATION GOALS

It is the intent of the School Committee that the district employs qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and to require the Superintendent to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business. In order to engage in this process in an orderly and effective fashion, each individual and group will be given particular, clear-cut responsibilities. Channels will be established so that the recommendations and decisions of each group can be heard and reviewed by the chief administrative officer concerned, and, where appropriate, by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The organization and administration of the schools will balance responsibility with commensurate authority, subject to the reserved legal powers of the School Committee. This means that a staff member, when assigned a responsibility or a position, will be given the authority to make the decisions necessary to perform the assigned tasks.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and fix his/her compensation. The Superintendent shall act in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 59, and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine. S/he shall also prepare such reports as may be required by the State Department of Education and shall submit materials for the Committee's annual report to the (Mayor) Selectmen in sufficient time for printing in the annual report.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:59, 72:3

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the election of a candidate or upon reelection of the incumbent Superintendent, will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent, which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:41; 71:42

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Clarify for the Superintendent his/her role in the school district as seen by the School Committee.
2. Clarify for all Committee members the role of the Superintendent in light of his/her job description and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities as agreed upon by the Committee and the Superintendent.
3. Develop harmonious working relationships between the School Committee and Superintendent.
4. Provide administrative leadership of excellence for the school system.

The School Committee will periodically develop with the Superintendent a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school district. The Superintendent's performance will be reviewed in accordance with these specified goals. Additional objectives will be established at intervals agreed upon with the Superintendent.

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

The School Committee expects the Superintendent to establish clear understandings on the part of all personnel of the working relationships in the school district.

Personnel will be expected to refer matters to the appropriate administrator. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes. But all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility; when the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as s/he deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and regulations and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity all councils, cabinets, and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee and authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition, and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets, and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at his/her discretion. However, the School Committee wishes to be kept informed of the establishment and dissolution of these groups as well as their membership and their purpose.

Expenses incurred by such groups for consultative services, materials, and any investigative travel will be paid by the school district, but only within budgetary allotments and when approved in advance by the Superintendent.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through regulations, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the regulations developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all school employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and regulations and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.

DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school district will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school district will be governed.

In the development of regulations, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the regulations, including staff members, students, parents, and the public. S/he must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student and community organizations. S/he will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of regulations and in presenting regulations for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, s/he may issue regulations without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of regulations be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations 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 regulations developed by the Superintendent for the school district prior to their issuance, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve regulations 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 regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Before issuance, regulations will be properly titled and coded as appropriate to subject and in conformance with the codification system selected by the Committee. Those officially approved by the Committee will be so marked; all others appearing in the manual will be considered approved provided they are in accordance with the accompanying Committee policy.

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 Department of 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.

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

REGULATIONS DISSEMINATION

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the regulations developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school district are appropriately coded and included as regulations in the School Committee's policy manual.

A regulation concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the regulation.

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The law directs that in each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. Handbooks shall also be available in grades K-8. The school councils shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of all handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the region or one of its schools be of a quality that reflects credit on the school district. Therefore, the Committee expects handbooks requiring approval to be approved prior to publication by the Committee and/or the Superintendent.

Committee approval will be necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee-approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval; however, all handbooks published will be made available to the Committee for informational purposes.

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

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, or a controlled substance may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.
- (b) Any student who assaults any employee of the school district may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.
- (c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either (a) or (b) above shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing, provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing the principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.
- (d) Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent.
- (e) When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion.

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

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act. The Superintendent's decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

School building administrators will be required to keep such records and make reports as the Superintendent may direct or require.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent's reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school district.

Because statistical information often has a time value, each administrator will give careful consideration to all procedures related to reports, accounting, and general business matters that are required for the administration of the school program and will make accurate and prompt return on scheduled dates of all statistical and other information required.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the varied activities of the school district and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent and presented to the School Committee. Upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing parents and citizens, the Commissioner of Education, and others of the programs and conditions of the region's public schools.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 72:4