



Newburyport Public Schools
School Committee Policies



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Newburyport Public Schools

School Committee Policies

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Ends Policies

Vision for Newburyport Public Schools

Newburyport Public Schools is part of a collaborative, interdependent community that includes students, teachers, administrators, parents, citizens of the city, community organizations and businesses. The public schools are the focal point for education in the community with a primary focus on educating the community's children.

The Newburyport community is guided by leaders who have a shared vision and shared values about the significance of education to the overall community. The shared vision and values are founded in the free flow of information among and between all stakeholders. They work collaboratively to advocate for and seek out the resources to provide for staffing, training, facilities, materials, and equipment that support excellence in instruction and enable students to achieve high standards and expectations.

High standards and expectations are consistently established for every aspect of students' learning. A well-qualified and highly effective teaching force provides instructional experiences that are personalized and challenging for students. All students are respected as individuals, with individual learning styles, who are continuously challenged and supported towards achieving their potential and maximizing their personal growth. Inquiring and reflective teachers share in the leadership of the schools. The school system regularly assesses, questions, and changes its functions and programs to ensure that desirable student learning outcomes are achieved.

All members of the school system are committed to continuous improvement, questioning the status quo, and seeking ongoing renewal of the organization. The school system embraces open dialogue and regularly seeks feedback regarding the effectiveness of its work and is responsive to all stakeholders. The school system is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive, making reasonable and appropriate accommodations for individual strengths and differences.

Students completing their education in Newburyport Public Schools have acquired and demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understandings that exemplify those needed to become productive, responsible, involved citizens of their community and the world. They have a practical understanding of themselves and the world around them. From that understanding they are able to identify their talents and cultivate an appreciation of the opportunity for personal achievement in their lives.



Ends Policies as Statements of Intent

The Ends Policies of the Newburyport School Committee are statements of the Committee's and the System's intent. They have been developed directly from careful Strategic Planning with extensive input from all stakeholders. The Committee's and the System's ability to implement these policies is contingent on the adequacy of available resources, including but not limited to financial resources.



Schools as the Focal Point of Education in the Community

The public schools are the focal point for education in the community with a primary focus on educating the community’s children.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Increase and enhance communication and interaction with all stakeholders to build shared understanding and trust
- Provide appropriate facilities and equipment to meet the educational and administrative requirements of the school system and the community.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Support the use of school facilities by the local community
2. Expand collaboration with volunteers, community groups, and others as appropriate
3. Provide educational leadership, guidance and support for all community children and their families, including those who do not directly participate in the Newburyport Public Schools.
4. Cultivate business and community partnerships and work to address mutual needs
5. Address facility and grounds for athletic and other extracurricular activities in short and long-term planning and implementation.

Revision	First Reading	Approval
Adopted		22Dec2003
Addition of policy to provide educational leadership to all Newburyport children and their families.	21May2007	18Jun2007



Leadership, Shared Values and Vision

The City of Newburyport is guided by community and school leaders who have a shared vision and shared values about the significance of education to the overall community. These shared vision and values are founded in the free flow of information among and between all stakeholders.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Increase and enhance communication and interaction with all stakeholders to build shared understanding and trust
- Encourage and support a strong leadership development component with staff at all levels that addresses the system's current and future needs
- Develop and promote a unified culture in the school system, where the school system's Vision, Mission, and Core Values are embodied at all levels
- Ensure that all recruitment, staff development, and evaluation strategies enhance the quality and continuity of staff to support educational and administrative goals
- Support the concepts of continuous improvement in professional development and practice.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Establish schools as a strong partner in city government seeking to engage in dialogue and community-building
2. Review and expand leadership development opportunities system-wide
3. Align the Vision, Mission, and Core Values of individual schools with those of the district
4. Recruit and hire the best staff to meet the needs of the schools
5. Support, train, and retain staff at all levels as appropriate
6. Assist all staff in understanding and implementing concepts of: Collective inquiry; Collaborative teams; Action orientation and experimentation; Results orientation; Continuous improvement cycle.



Collaborative Advocacy

Our Community and School leaders work collaboratively to advocate for and seek out the resources to provide for staffing, training, facilities, materials, and equipment that support excellence in instruction and enable students to achieve high standards and expectations.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Provide for adequate funding of educational and administrative programs
- Provide appropriate facilities and equipment to meet the educational and administrative requirements of the school system and the community
- Involve parents, families, residents, and organizations in the support of students.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Advocate for adequate funding of state and federally required programs, and equitable funding of all schools including Charter Schools
2. Provide the schools with a varied array of funding alternatives
3. Implement the Long-Term Elementary Building Needs Plan
4. Continue to provide parent education opportunities to assist in supporting their children and modeling healthy, positive behaviors
5. Work with outside social service agencies/providers to share resources and develop a network of contacts and organizations.



High Standards for Students

High standards and expectations are consistently established for every aspect of students' learning.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Develop and promote a unified culture in the school system, where the school system's Vision, Mission, and Core Values are embodied at all levels
- Build and cultivate in the schools a climate of safety and respect for individuals and property in the learning environment, and provide an inviting and welcoming environment for the community as well as staff and students
- Ensure that all teaching and learning practices meet the high standards and expectations of the district, as well as state standards
- Ensure that each student's individual progress is assessed comprehensively, and this information is shared as appropriate with the student and parents.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Ensure that staff and students understand and actively strive to embody the Vision, Mission, and Core Values
2. Consistently enforce expectations for behavior of all who participate in the schools, both adults and students
3. Ensure that the core curriculum is consistent and well-sequenced, with benchmarks and built-in accountability for teachers and students
4. Balance administration of MCAS with other assessment approaches
5. Use technology as an effective tool.



High Standards for Teachers and Staff

A well-qualified and highly effective teaching force provides instructional experiences that are personalized and challenging for students.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Develop and promote a unified culture in the school system, where the school system's Vision, Mission, and Core Values are embodied at all levels
- Increase and enhance communication and interaction with all stakeholders to build shared understanding and trust
- Build and cultivate in the schools a climate of safety and respect for individuals and property in the learning environment, and provide an inviting and welcoming environment for the community as well as staff and students
- Ensure that all teaching and learning practices meet the high standards and expectations of the district, as well as state standards
- Design teaching and learning endeavors and approaches to challenge and support each student towards achieving their potential and maximizing their personal growth
- Support teachers in gaining common language and concepts by which to guide instruction
- Ensure that all recruitment, staff development, and evaluation strategies enhance the quality and continuity of staff to support educational and administrative goals.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Ensure that staff and students understand and actively strive to embody the Vision, Mission, and Core Values
2. Develop a plan for managing and improving communication between home and school
3. Identify factors that may isolate schools and staff from one another in order to promote a more unified culture in our school system
4. Consistently enforce expectations for behavior of all who participate in the schools, both adults and students
5. Ensure that the core curriculum is consistent and well-sequenced, with benchmarks and built-in accountability for teachers and students
6. Broaden and diversify learning experiences that reflect multiple intelligences and learning styles
7. Maintain the expectation of having a common language and concepts to guide instruction
8. Recognize exemplary service at all levels of the system
9. Use technology as an effective tool.



Commitment to Continuous Improvement

All members of the school system are committed to continuous improvement, questioning the status quo, and seeking ongoing renewal of the organization. Our goals in this regard are to:

- Strengthen the process of developing school and district improvement plans
- Continue to engage in, support, evaluate, and hold the system accountable to the strategic planning process
- Ensure that school system personnel and business management systems and policies are consistent with legal requirements and General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- Provide appropriate facilities and equipment to meet the educational and administrative requirements and needs of the schools
- Design teaching and learning endeavors and approaches to challenge and support each student towards achieving their potential and maximizing their personal growth
- Ensure that the structure and schedule of each school day meets and re-enforces the educational needs of the students and staff
- Ensure that all recruitment, staff development, and evaluation strategies enhance the quality and continuity of staff to support educational and administrative goals
- Support the concepts of continuous improvement in professional development and practice
- Ensure that the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social needs of students are addressed and coordinated to support their progress in learning
- Provide technology to support the educational and administrative requirements and needs of the schools.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Develop a unified approach for all schools to use when developing School Improvement Plans (SIP's)
2. Evaluate regularly the approach to the planning process, and progress of implementing the plan
3. Review current personnel, business management systems, and financial reporting practices and policies
4. Develop a prioritized maintenance plan for all schools, and update it annually
5. Regularly examine, expand or reconfigure existing programs, services, schedules and protocols to address the needs of students and staff
6. Strengthen the evaluation process for all levels of staff to make it more comprehensive



7. Assist all staff in understanding and implementing concepts of: Collective inquiry; Collaborative teams; Action orientation and experimentation; Results orientation; Continuous improvement cycle
8. Explore approaches and options to improve delivery of services from the Student Support Services Department
9. Effectively use technology as a tool.



Commitment to Open Dialog and Regular Feedback

The school system embraces open dialogue and regularly seeks feedback regarding the effectiveness of its work and is responsive to all stakeholders

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Increase and enhance communication and interaction with all stakeholders to build shared understanding and trust
- Continue to engage in, support, evaluate, and hold the system accountable to the Strategic Plan
- Ensure that school system personnel and business management systems and policies are consistent with legal requirements and General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- Ensure that the school system's budget process and related documents are accessible and understandable to all stakeholders
- Build and cultivate in the schools a climate of safety and respect for individuals and property in the learning environment, and provide an inviting and welcoming environment for the community as well as staff and students
- Involve parents, families, residents, and organizations in the support of students.

The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Develop a comprehensive communications plan to disseminate information about the schools to the general public, and to solicit feedback
2. Institutionalize the measurements of success included in the Strategic Plan and use them to involve stakeholders
3. Review the budget development and deliberation process and format annually
4. Examine how schools respect the roles and concerns of parents while balancing the professional approaches and experiences of staff
5. Improve communication between home and school regarding Special Education services.



Student Outcomes

Students completing their education in the Newburyport Public Schools have acquired and demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understandings that exemplify those needed to become productive, responsible, involved citizens of their community and the world. They have a practical understanding of themselves and the world around them. From that understanding they are able to identify their talents and cultivate an appreciation of the opportunity for personal achievement in their lives.

Students will develop and demonstrate:

- ❖ Proficiency in a diverse collection of writing, reading and communication techniques
- ❖ Their abilities to identify, define and analyze in order to solve problems and make decisions
- ❖ Skills, knowledge and understanding of the behaviors and habits necessary for a healthy lifestyle
- ❖ The ability to recognize and use appropriate learning and information resources
- ❖ The knowledge, skills and experiences to participate in and contribute to the community, the United States and the world.

Our goals in this regard are to:

- Allow for and encourage differences between and among schools, while ensuring that all students have access to comparable resources and opportunities
- Provide appropriate facilities and equipment to meet the educational and administrative requirements and needs of the schools
- Build and cultivate in the schools a climate of safety and respect for individuals and property in the learning environment, and provide an inviting and welcoming environment for the community as well as staff and students
- Design teaching and learning endeavors and approaches to challenge and support each student towards achieving their potential and maximizing their personal growth
- Ensure that each student's individual progress is assessed comprehensively, and this information is shared as appropriate with the student and parents
- Ensure that the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social needs of students are addressed and coordinated to support their progress in learning
- Provide technology to support the educational and administrative requirements and needs of the schools.



The strategies the school system will pursue to reach these goals, and the intended ends are to:

1. Ensure the consistency and compatibility of programs from one school to another at the same level, and between levels
2. Address ADA and other accessibility and safety requirements in short and long-term planning and implementation
3. Encourage diverse extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities
4. Maintain established student/teacher ratios and class size guidelines
5. Broaden and diversify learning experiences that reflect multiple intelligences and learning styles
6. Balance administration of MCAS with other assessment approaches
7. Explore approaches and options to improve delivery of services from the Student Support Services Department
8. Assess transition practices and services within the district (school-to-school, grade-to-grade), and make changes as needed to ensure a smooth flow of support and information to students and parents
9. Effectively use technology as a tool.

Revision	First Reading	Approval
Adopted		22Dec2003
Revision to remove specific grade model	2Apr2007	5Apr2007



Governance Policies

School Committee Purpose

The purpose of the Newburyport School Committee, on behalf of the students, staff, parents and taxpayers of Newburyport, is to ensure that:

1. Students receive the best possible education which prepares them to be productive and responsible members of society
2. The resources entrusted to the School System by the taxpayers are applied for maximum impact for students and are expended reasonably, responsibly and in an accountable manner
3. The School System and the Committee are in conformance with applicable law
4. It act as, and reflects, the community's voice in the direction of our schools.



School Committee Job Description

The job of the School Committee is to represent the community in determining and demanding appropriate performance of the Schools. Accordingly

1. The School Committee will direct, control, and inspire the School System through careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the Committee's values and perspectives about ends to be achieved and means to be avoided. The Committee's major policy focus will be on intended long-term benefits for students, not on the administrative or programmatic means of obtaining those outcomes and will be defined in the following areas:
 - Ends Policies: Educational outcomes, effects, benefits and identification of the recipients as well as the relative worth of those outcomes and effects for recipients
 - Executive Limitations: The constraints on the Superintendent which establish the bounds of prudence and ethics within which all executive activity and decisions must take place
 - Governance Process: How the Committee conceives, carries out and monitors its own work
 - Committee-Superintendent Linkage: How power is delegated and its proper use monitored, including the superintendent's role, authority and accountability
2. The School Committee will hire and enter into a written contract with the superintendent and assure her/his performance consistent with the Ends and Executive Limitations policies.
3. The School Committee will employ an Assistant Superintendent of Schools whose responsibilities will include those of the Superintendent in the event of the temporary absence, for any reason, of the Superintendent.
4. The School Committee shall negotiate contracts with bargaining units which represent employees of the school system
5. The School Committee will annually adopt the operating budget for the School System, consistent with the Ends policies defined and adopted for that year
6. The School Committee may employ legal council for both general purposes of the committee and in connection with collective bargaining. Contact with legal council should be initiated by the School Committee's Chair, Vice-chair or the Superintendent.
7. The School committee may, through authorized representatives, determine under what conditions athletic and other student organizations may compete with similar organizations.
8. The School Committee will be the link between the community and the Schools



School Committee Accountability

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. The School Committee will hold itself accountable in all aspects of its Governance Role and will do so by:

1. Reviewing all policies, and compliance with accountability provisions contained within those policies, on an annual basis. Accountability provisions will be contained in each of the following policy areas and will, where appropriate, include community input;
 - Ends Policies – addressing educational program performance, outcomes and resource utilization
 - Executive Limitations – addressing specific areas of compliance with legal, financial and ethical parameters established by the School Committee
 - Committee/Superintendent Linkage – addressing the evaluation process and results for the superintendent including linkage to Ends and Executive Limitations policies
2. Conducting an annual self-evaluation, focused primarily on Governance Process
3. Seeking structured stakeholder feedback on its performance



Community Relations

The School Committee is the link between the Newburyport School System and the citizens of the City and endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential.

1. The School Committee, and its Communications Subcommittee, will keep citizens informed in a variety of ways, understanding the value of two-way communication.
2. The Committee may solicit counsel of citizens through advisory committees
3. Complete information regarding School Committee business will be made available to the media.
4. The Committee will advance the cause of “good schools” and communicate these causes to both the public and local representatives.
5. The School Committee recognizes the importance of cooperative endeavors with other organizations.



School Committee Operations

The School Committee, through its operations, will reinforce and support its commitment to Governance Process Policies as adopted. The School Committee will focus, in its operations, on encouraging diverse viewpoints, reinforcing the clear distinction of School Committee and Superintendent roles, and collective rather than individual decision making. Accordingly:

1. The School Committee shall adopt a set of rules annually at its Organizational Meeting, with such rules being documented in the Rules and Regulations of the Newburyport School Committee.
2. The School Committee, and its individual members, shall adopt annually, at its Organizational Meeting, and be held accountable to the then current Code of Ethics of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.
3. The School Committee will conduct its meetings using Roberts Rules of Order, as most recently revised except that open discussion will be allowed at the discretion of the Committee
4. The School Committee shall have as an ex-officio member without voting rights a student representative duly elected to the district's Student Advisory Council (SAC) to advise the School Committee on matters of direct concern to students.
5. The School Committee encourages public attendance at and participation in its meetings and will designate time in each agenda for public comment.
6. Minutes of all School Committee and Subcommittee meetings will be kept including
 - A statement of the meeting's purpose
 - Names of members present, absent and annotated as to arrival and departure times if during the meeting
 - A complete record of official actions taken
 - Notation of formal adjournment

Minutes will be approved by the School Committee and become part of the permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of all public meetings, as well those of Executive Sessions which have become declassified, shall be in the possession of the Superintendent and will be made available to the public upon request.



School Committee Officers and Their Roles

To ensure the integrity of the School Committee's Governance Processes and Policies the School Committee shall elect annually at its Organizational Meeting:

Vice Chairperson – who's role is to

- Preside, at the will of the Chair, at all public and Executive Session Meetings
- Develop, for the Committee's approval, all Meeting Agendas, ensuring that discussion content is limited to those issues which, according to Committee policy, clearly belong to the Committee, not with the Superintendent
- Ensure that the School Committee behaves consistent with its rules, and those legitimately imposed by outside organizations
- Represent the Committee to outside parties in announcing Committee-stated positions

The Chairperson, who by law and City Charter is the Mayor, and Vice Chairperson have no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Committee within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas. Only the School Committee has the authority to supervise the Superintendent through its Ends, Executive Limitations and Committee-Superintendent Linkage policies.

Clerk – who's role and duties are to keep appropriate records of all proceeding of the School Committee and other duties as may be assigned by the Committee.

The Chair shall appoint members of three subcommittees of the School Committee as follows:

Finance Subcommittee
Policy Subcommittee
Communications Subcommittee

The Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of each subcommittee. The roles of subcommittees in general and of each of the specific subcommittees may be found in the *Subcommittees of the School Committee* policy in this section



School Committee Policy Formulation and Adoption

School Committee Policies in each of the four policy areas will be formulated by the Policy Subcommittee with direction and input from the School Committee or, as designated by the Committee, by

- The superintendent
- Other expert sources (legal counsel, School Committee Association, etc.)

Adoption of new policies, or modification of existing policies, shall be the sole responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3's) of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting. Except under emergency conditions, proposed policies will be presented in two meetings, the first one of which is for information, discussion and redrafting purposes. The second meeting for discussion, adoption or rejection.

Adopted policies shall be effective on the date set forth by the Committee at the time of adoption.

The School Committee endorses any and all School System Guidelines and Procedures, set by the Superintendent which are in accordance with and advance the implementation of School Committee policies.

Revision	First Reading	Approval
Adopted		22Dec2003
Revision to require an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3's) of the School Committee to add or modify a policy. Also removed the word "full" from references to the School Committee.	21May2007	18Jun2007



Subcommittees of the School Committee

In all of its decision making the School Committee acts as a whole. In order to assist the Committee as a whole the School Committee has three standing subcommittees. The specific role of each of the standing subcommittees is set forth below.

At the beginning of each calendar year each subcommittees will develop a work plan and priorities for the year to be brought to the full school committee for approval.

Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Conduct a continuing review of the policy manual and recommends areas for change, amendment, deletion or creation of policies
- Develop policy drafts for review and approval by the full Committee
- Assure the consistency of all policies with the School Committee's approved governance model
- Coordinate an annual review, by the full Committee, of the governance model

Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee has the following roles and responsibilities:

Budget

- Work with the Superintendent to annually understand the school system's revenue outlook and strategy and represent that to the full Committee
- Develop, in conjunction with the Communications Subcommittee, and recommend to the full Committee a process for engaging both internal and external community in providing input to budget priorities and feedback as the budget is developed.
- Make recommendations to the full Committee for backup and reference materials necessary to make informed decisions about allocation of resources

Finance

- Work with the Superintendent to determine appropriate financial reports, formats, and frequencies
- Review financial reports for the purpose of assisting the full Committee in the School Committee's oversight of the school district's budget



- Review all Superintendent recommended transfers between line items of the budget and refer them to the full Committee for action

Communication Subcommittee

The Communications Subcommittee has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Develop and implement tools and procedures to ensure community input to the School Committee on issues affecting the schools
- Develop and implement tools and procedures to inform the community on vision, mission, goals, objectives and operations of the Newburyport Public Schools
- Develop and implement tools and procedures to increase awareness in the community about the achievements of and challenges to the Newburyport Public Schools
- Work with other subcommittees of the School Committee to assist them in communications with the public related to their roles and responsibilities
- Bring back all recommendations to the full Committee for review and approval



Cost of Governance

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the School Committee will invest in its governance capacity. Accordingly

1. The School Committee encourages its members to participate in all appropriate forms of conferences and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most likely to benefit, either directly or indirectly, the School System.
2. The School Committee will designate which of its members are most appropriate to participate in any conference, workshop or meeting which has a cost.
3. School Committee members will be reimbursed for legitimate and reasonable expenses incurred while attending conferences, workshops, or meetings.



Executive Limitations Policies

Global Policy Statement

The Superintendent shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance, which is unlawful, unethical, or falls outside best practices of the discipline or the exercise of good judgment.



School System Operations

The School Committee depends on the Superintendent of Schools to manage the operations of the Newburyport Public Schools in an efficient and effective manner using recognized best practices or current research in school system management and operations developed by professional associations or academic institutions. Additionally, the Superintendent is encouraged to pilot innovative programs in achieving the goal of educational excellence. To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to:

- Use collaborative decision-making, in the management of the Newburyport Public Schools
- Employ principles of site based management including, but not limited to:
 - The encouragement of responsiveness from those who are closest to students and parents
 - Problem solving driven by those familiar with the service being provided
 - The development, at each site, of organizational structures and procedures that allow for appropriate, meaningful participation in decision-making
- Encourage public participation in appropriate aspects of decision-making
- Protect, or cause to be protected, the privacy and confidentiality, consistent with applicable law, of all students, faculty and staff of the school district
- Manage the school system consistent with all federal and state laws of non-discrimination in regards to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability
- Promote a school system and working environment free of harassment based upon the categories listed above
- Ensure that the school system is an equal opportunity employer.



Conduct of the School Community

The Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that all students and staff are informed that they are responsible for:

- Providing a positive and healthy environment for others by maintaining order, self-discipline, and consideration for the rights and properties of others. Each student shall take responsibility for his or her own conduct
- Respecting others as human beings and fellow citizens of the school community
- Respecting the personal property of others and refrain from causing intentional damage or unnecessary wear and tear to books, facilities, school materials, school buildings and furnishings, and personal property of others
- Respecting the educational process and learning environment of others by refraining from intentional or habitual tardiness, unexcused absences, or any activities, which diminish the rights of others and the opportunity for others to receive a quality education
- All facilities and equipment are to be used in a manner consistent with the educational purposes for which they are intended.



Promoting a Diverse School Community

An integral role of the schools is to prepare students to be productive members of an increasingly diverse society. The schools should present students with an understanding and respect for diversity, as well as a spirit of tolerance, acceptance and inclusion. To this end, the superintendent shall not fail to ensure that:

- All school activities have an educational or secular purpose and have a primary effect which neither advances nor inhibits religion
- An atmosphere of academic freedom is maintained for student learning
- Materials are provided to students that reflect the ideas and beliefs of diverse religious, racial, social, political, socioeconomic, historical, and ethnic groups and their contributions to American and world heritage and culture.



Protection of Children

The School Committee declares its intention to promote the protection of the health and well being of each child in the school system. To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to implement protocols and procedures which protect children in areas including, but not limited to:

- Statutory mandated reporters of any injured child
- The duty to inform all members of the school community about hazing and to report any incidents of hazing
- The requirement to file reports on injured children
- State regulations regarding the use of physical restraint on students
- The protection civil rights
- Harassment of any member of the school community.



School Safety

The School Committee is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment in every school building. This commitment extends to all school-sponsored activities, including but not limited to transportation and field trips. The Committee supports this commitment through the allocation of sufficient resources for appropriate personnel, materials and training. The superintendent shall use these resources for these purposes and will not fail to:

- Enable all staff to create an educational environment that makes students feel safe and secure
- Continuously assess safety and security procedures with a formal report given to the School Committee not less than once every three years
- Ensure that the practice of safety is a facet of the instructional program
- Make certain that staff members are informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, emergency planning, public health and occupational safety
- Ensure that parents are informed of any incident or condition that seriously threatens the health or safety of their children.
- Ensure that student travel sponsored by the school system that is planned to occur between the hours of midnight and 6:00 AM or that will include an overnight stay follows District Guidelines and Procedures related to safety of transportation and accommodations.

Revision	First Reading	Approval
Adopted		22Dec2003
Addition of overnight student travel	4Oct2004	18Oct2004



Staff Relations

A good working relationship with all school staff is necessary for the well being of a positive school community. To that end, the superintendent shall not fail to:

- Establish clear lines of direct authority for all personnel based on best practices of site-based management
- Categorize and compensate staff consistent with negotiated contracts.
- Set and communicate the rates of pay and benefits for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements
- Ensure that all temporary summer work positions be posted in each school building and advertised in the local newspaper. All candidates will be considered on the basis of merits, qualifications and the needs of the school system.
- Ensure that the best qualified candidates be retained for positions and filled in accordance with the law and applicable regulations
- Make certain that when the best qualified applicant is related to an employee of the school system, the name of that applicant is brought to the attention of the School Committee
- Develop and maintain systems for the evaluation of all staff
- Maintain and update appropriate personnel records
- Establish clear guidelines for staff concerning the avoidance of conflicts of interest of any kind.



Responsiveness

Communications between the Newburyport Public Schools and the community at large is a critical factor in its ongoing efforts to provide a quality education for all children in Newburyport. To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that:

- All school personnel respond to communications, suggestions, comments and complaints from parents and the public in a timely and courteous manner.



School Attendance and School Records

Massachusetts General Law establishes the Board of Education as the agent that determines mandatory and permissible school attendance ages, and charges the School Committee with ensuring that all children of compulsory school age of 6 attend school regularly until they reach the age of 16.

The Superintendent of Schools therefore, shall not fail to ensure that:

- All children who have reached the age of 5 before September 1st of a given calendar year may enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year
- A child transferring into the Newburyport Public School from another school system may be placed in the same grade in this system
- Students seeking admission to school for the first time present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age as required by the state and proof of residency
- Complete school records are maintained for all students and are required for all students transferring into the district
- Clear criteria are established for the admission of residents of Newburyport over the age of 18 who have not received a high school diploma
- Attendance requirements are waived if a child is being instructed at home in an approved manner.



School Attendance Areas, Student Assignment and Admission of Non-Resident Students

The School Committee is committed to the concept of neighborhood schools at the elementary level, to the use of long-range planning in establishing school attendance areas and the use of non-resident student enrollments to balance class sizes. In implementing these commitments, the Superintendent shall not fail to

- Bring any proposed changes in school attendance areas to the School Committee for its approval. Such proposed changes must take into consideration the Committee's desire for stability in boundaries, and commitment to neighborhood schools at the elementary level and balanced enrollments across all schools
- Establish clear guidelines and policies, which permit, to the extent reasonable and appropriate, choice by parents of attendance of students at a school outside their designated attendance area
- Recommend annually to the School Committee for its approval numbers of students, building and class placements for the enrollment of out-of-district students and to select those students consistent with applicable State law.



Student Health Services

The primary responsibility for the overall health of the school child lies with the parent. It is expected that children will not be sent to school if they show signs of illness or have other conditions which would require acute medical care. The schools are responsible for the welfare of school children during the school day, including the emergency handling of sudden illness and accidental injury.

The Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that:

- School personnel understand that they are legally responsible for the general welfare of school children during the school day
- School personnel are responsible for emergency care during the school day and a written plan for such care has been developed
- Confidentiality will be maintained concerning all health records
- All students diagnosed with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are able to attend regular classes and procedures related to this syndrome are maintained within the Districts Health Service Procedures
- Health service procedures and plans are maintained and updated.



Relations with Parents

A critical and beneficial factor in helping students obtain success is the relationship between parents and the Newburyport Public Schools. Accordingly, the Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that:

- Parents are encouraged to participate in their school councils and other appropriate committees
- Opportunities are presented to parents to help them understand school operations, educational objectives, and their role in the governmental process
- Parents are informed of their children's development and the criteria for its measurement
- Formal parent organizations are present at each school.



Financial Management - Overall

The School Committee recognizes the importance of sound fiscal management of the School System. This importance arises out of the public trust given the system by the taxpayers of the City as well as the system's obligation to provide the best possible education to the students of the City, given the financial resources available. The School Committee depends on the Superintendent, as its chief executive, to manage and administer the financial affairs of the school system.

To these ends, the Superintendent shall not fail to carry out the following activities consistent with School Committee policies:

- Develop, deliver and administer a budget for the school system
- Bring budget transfers across budget line items to the School Committee for its approval
- Manage all funds, grants and student fees, fines and charges
- Procure and purchase materials and services necessary to operate the school system.



Financial Management – School System Budget Development and Adoption

The official budget for the Newburyport Public Schools shall consist of two line items for each school site and for the central office. One line item shall include all salary and salary-related expenses (benefits, professional development, tuition reimbursement, etc.) for the site or central office. The second line item shall include all other expenses of the site or central office.

The Superintendent is responsible for developing and delivering the budget to the School Committee. In meeting these responsibilities, the Superintendent shall not fail to:

- Establish annually, in conjunction with the Finance Subcommittee, a timetable for the budget process
- Bring to the School Committee for its consideration the best estimates of revenue from all sources
- Bring to the School Committee, as part of the budget process, class size guideline recommendations
- Work with the Finance Subcommittee to make recommendations about the necessary back-up materials to enable the full School Committee to make informed budget decisions
- Deliver to the School Committee, for its adoption, a budget, which best meets the needs of students and is consistent with School Committee Ends Policies and Goals.



Financial Management – Budget Practices and Implementation

The School Committee views ongoing budget management and implementation as a critical part of sound financial management. The School Committee's role in budget management and implementation is one of oversight and accountability to the public. The Superintendent, as the chief executive, is responsible for implementing and managing the adopted budget. As part of meeting these responsibilities, the Superintendent shall not fail to:

- Bring all transfers of budgeted funds between line items of the official school budget to the School Committee for its approval
- Prepare and distribute financial reports which show budgeted, expended and encumbered funds, for both salary and non-salary expenses, at the site and program levels. Such reports are to be delivered on a quarterly basis, and at other times designated by the School Committee
- Notify the School Committee of any budgetary freezes implemented by the Superintendent.
- Gain annual approval of the School Committee for appropriation of a total figure for administrative salaries for the upcoming budget year.
- Bring administrative contracts to the School Committee for their review upon completion of contract negotiations and signing of contracts.



Financial Management – Special Revenue Funds Management

The School Committee recognizes and endorses the Superintendent 's pursuit of funds, outside those appropriated, to support school programs and activities. Such funds enhance the school program and educational experience for students. Proper and accountable management of these funds is essential and is the responsibility of the Superintendent. In meeting these responsibilities, the Superintendent shall not fail to:

- Put all such funds on deposit with the City Treasurer
- Establish all appropriate and required accounts and accounting for such funds
- Report to the School Committee at least annually on receipts to and expenditures from these funds and accounts
- Bring to the School Committee, for its approval, all new student fees, fines and charges or changes in existing student fees, fines and charges.



Financial Management – Purchasing

The School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended. To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to:

- Develop and administer purchasing programs in keeping with legal requirements, using local vendors when possible, and within the adopted School Committee budget
- Explore opportunities for cooperative purchasing arrangements within the City's schools, with other City departments, and other school systems
- Establish the identity of the Chief Procurement Officer of the School System.



Fund Raising, Gift Solicitation, Advertising and Donations

The School Committee acknowledges the need for the district, individual schools and organizations within schools to augment budgeted resources with additional funds from a variety of sources and fund raising efforts. The superintendent shall not fail to establish and monitor compliance with guidelines for:

- Student participation in fundraising activities which reinforce the voluntary nature of that participation, do not explicitly endorse individual products and ensures student safety throughout the fund raising process
- Distribution of information or solicitations from charitable organizations to and through students and their families
- Collection of contributions in individual classrooms
- Limited advertising in school buildings, on school property and in school publications that ensure compensation to the district or school is maximized
- Donations of materials, equipment and services to the school system.



School Facilities

The Superintendent shall be responsible for both the safety and adequacy of all school buildings and grounds. The superintendent shall also be accountable for the general management of the system's facilities. The School Committee clearly acknowledges that the superintendent is limited by the parameters of funding for these purposes. To that end, the superintendent shall not fail to:

- Give correction of unsafe conditions high priority when making repairs as necessary
- Ensure adequate personnel to maintain an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning
- Communicate both the long and short-term needs of the system's buildings and grounds to the school committee
- Restrict the use of school facilities on Sunday mornings
- Make recommendations to the School Committee, for its approval, the names of school buildings
- Prepare a list for School Committee approval that identifies rooms, equipment, portions of facilities, or athletic facilities that may be named by the Newburyport Education Foundation (NEF) based on guidelines acceptable to the committee.



Relations With Other Organizations

Cooperation with other schools and with local, state and regional agencies and organizations is essential to the overall health of the school community. Therefore the Superintendent shall not fail to work with these organizations and agencies to:

- Seek solutions to educational problems of common concern
- Advocate aggressively for the availability of high quality support services for all students in need of them
- Equalize educational opportunities for all children
- Acquire federal and state grants
- Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision-making.



Legal Requirements

The School Committee expects that the Newburyport Public Schools, under the direction of the Superintendent, will comply with all applicable Federal and State laws and that the Superintendent will take action to identify and promptly correct any non-compliance.

To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to present to the School Committee annually, for its approval, the following items ensuring their consistency and compliance with the required law and any applicable School Committee Policy:

Item	Statutory, Policy or Regulatory Reference
School Year/School Calendar/School Day	M.G.L. 69:1G; BOE Directive
Approval of Grant and Gift Expenditures	M.G.L. 44:53A; 71:37A
Appointment of certain personnel as required by statute	M.G.L. 76:1; 76:2; 76:4; 76:20
Fee schedules for use of School facilities	M.G.L. 40:30; 71:71
Contracts as required by statute	M.G.L. 40:4
Student Transportation Policy	M.G.L. 71:7A; 71:68; 71B:5



Retirement of Facilities

Consideration should be given to closing schools in the school system when the declining enrollment and/or fiscal restraints reach a point at which continued operation of all buildings would result in detrimental effects on a part of all of the system’s educational program, and would result in adverse effects on financial management of the system.

The Superintendent will develop criteria governing the selection of which school or schools will be closed. The word “school” or “schools” will include all school property, including undeveloped land, storage facilities, etc. To that end, the Superintendent shall not fail to include the following categories in determining such criteria:

- Student, Staff and Community
- Physical Facilities
- Financial Factors

While considering the criteria, The School Committee realizes that no school may be closed and surrendered to the city without the affirmative vote of a majority of the school committee, and only after a public hearing has been held, and the parents of the students involved have been notified by mail by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at least two weeks prior to the date of the public hearing of the proposed closing.

Revision	First Reading	Approval
Adopted		22Dec2003
Facility retirement requires the approval of a majority of the School Committee	2Apr2007	5Apr2007



Superintendent Relationship Policies

Global Relationship Policy

Only decisions of the Committee acting as a body are binding on the Superintendent.

The Superintendent is the School Committee's sole link to operational achievement and conduct of the School System, so that all authority and accountability within the School System, as far as the Committee is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Superintendent.

Accordingly, the School Committee will:

- Instruct the Superintendent through written policies that prescribe the organizational Ends to be achieved and describe the organizational situations and actions to be avoided, allowing the Superintendent to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies
- Evaluate the Superintendent based on the School System's performance as described by the District Improvement Plan, the Executive Limitations Policies and the Superintendent's support of the School Committee in achievement of the Committee's annual goals.



School Committee Member Obligations

From time-to-time individual School Committee members may receive, from members of the Community or other individuals, information relevant to the effective operations of the Schools. In such circumstances members will provide the information to the Superintendent.

Individual School Committee members may receive complaints from individuals in the Community. Under such circumstances, the member will refer the individual with the complaint to the proper channel. If the proper channel is not clear, the member will refer the individual to the Superintendent.

Individual members may visit school facilities. Members will make arrangements for such visits with the Superintendent, who will schedule the visit at a time mutually convenient to the member and the building principal. Such visits will be regarded as informal expression of interest in school affairs and not as inspections or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes.

All formal communications between School System staff and the School Committee or individual members shall be through the Superintendent.



Authority of the Superintendent

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to manage the School System in accordance with the written policies adopted by the School Committee. The School Committee will endorse any and all School System Guidelines and Procedures developed by the Superintendent that are in accordance with and advance the implementation of School Committee policies. The Superintendent may use any reasonable interpretation of these policies in order to perform their duties.

Additionally the Superintendent shall:

- Inform the School Committee if a School Committee Policy has been violated either from necessity or inadvertently
- Annually present to the School Committee for adoption, the School System District Improvement Plan (DIP), which shall be drawn from the Committee's Ends Policies and the System's Strategic Plan
- Share with the School Committee a mid-year evaluation of the District's performance against the DIP
- At any time prior to March 1st ask for School Committee approval of any needed adjustments to the DIP due to extenuating circumstances
- Present a final report on performance against the DIP to the School Committee no later than August 31st of the subsequent school year
- Support the School Committee in the accomplishment of the Committee's Annual Goals and negotiations of union contracts
- Access legal council, hired by the School Committee, to meet the System's needs.



Superintendent Evaluation Policy

Systematic and rigorous monitoring of the Superintendent’s annual job performance will be solely against the expectations of the Superintendent in relationship to:

- System accomplishment of the School Committee policies on Ends;
- System operations within the boundaries established in the School Committee policies on Executive Limitations, and;
- The Superintendent’s support of the School Committee in accomplishing the Committee’s annual goals.

The Evaluation Process and Document

- Upon adoption of the District Improvement Plan and Annual School Committee Goals, the Policy Subcommittee will prepare and present to the full Committee and the Superintendent, for their mutual approval, the Evaluation Matrix which shall consist of:
 - The Actions from the District Improvement Plan
 - List of the components from the Executive Limitations Policies
 - The School Committee Goals and statement of how, if at all, the Superintendent will support the Committee in achieving each of these goals
 - An area for numerical rating for each action or Policy Requirement
 - An area for narrative comments by Committee members for each action or Policy Requirement
- The numerical rating system shall consist of the following 4 point scale:

4	Exceeds expectations of action or policy requirement
3	Meets expectations of action or policy requirement
2	Partially meets expectations of action or policy requirement, some work needed to fully meet expectation
1	Little or no progress toward meeting expectations of action or policy requirement

Any rating of 2 or below must be accompanied with narrative comments addressing the deficiency or area for improvement.

Ratings by individual members will be made in whole numbers only. Medians may be reported to one decimal place.



School Committee Superintendent Relationship Policies

- At the time of the Mid-Year review of the System's performance against the DIP, the School Committee shall consider modifications to the Plan which may be requested by the Superintendent. Upon approval of any requested modifications, the Policy Subcommittee shall make the necessary changes to the approved Evaluation Matrix.
- In April of each year the Superintendent will submit to the Policy Subcommittee a Self-Evaluation document, including the Evaluation Matrix, for use by the full Committee during completion of the individual Evaluations. Because the Evaluation process is conducted prior to the completion of the school year covered by the DIP, this self evaluation may include statements about expected results.
- In April of each year the Policy Subcommittee shall distribute both the Evaluation Matrix and the Superintendent's Self Evaluation to the full Committee for its use in completing the evaluation
- The Vice Chair of the School Committee shall compile the results of the Evaluation in a way which protects the anonymity of the individual member's responses and consisting of
 - The median of the submitted numerical ratings for each action
 - The average of the medians for all actions for a given strategy
 - All notations written in the Comment section of the matrix, verbatim
- The Superintendent shall have an opportunity to provide a written response to the compiled Evaluation Matrix. This response will be attached to the evaluation before it is released to the public.
- A signed copy of the Summary Evaluation Matrix will be placed in the Superintendent's personnel file.
- The Evaluation process will be completed by May 31 of each year.



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