

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Section B: School Committee Governance and Operations

File: BCD

The School Committee will:

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. Provide continuing education opportunities and support to each other.
4. Conduct its business through a set agenda. Emerging items will be addressed in subsequent meetings through agenda items, with the exception of items that are time sensitive or require urgent attention.
5. Provide full disclosure. Each member will provide input, encouragement, express concerns and positions rather than withhold information from other members. When a school committee member feels that there has not been full disclosure, an objective process for revisiting the issue will be used.
6. Maintain an open environment where each member is empowered to freely express opinions, concerns, and ideas. School committee members will engage in active listening to clarify and restate discussions in order to strive for full understanding.
7. Keep an open mind and accept that they can change their opinions by recognizing that they are not locked into their initial stated positions.
8. Make decisions on information and not on personalities. School committee members will act with the best information available at the time considering data, the superintendent's recommendations, proposals, and suggestions. School committee members will strive to make the best decisions at the time, without waiting for the perfect decision.
9. Debate the issues, not one another. The school committee will engage in critical and creative thinking, expecting all school committee members to freely offer differing points of view as part of the discussion, prior to making a school committee decision.
10. Not take unilateral action. A committee member's authority is derived through the majority of the school committee acting as a whole during an open public meeting.
11. Attend meetings well prepared to discuss issues on the agenda, and will be prepared to make decisions, striving for efficient decision making
12. Strive to have no surprises for the committee or superintendent. Surprises will be the exception. All members will provide and receive the same information in a timely manner.
13. Reach decisions by consensus, and individual members will publicly abide by those decisions.
14. Follow the chain of command and direct others to do the same. Personnel complaints and concerns will be directed to the superintendent.
15. Review and revise operating principles, as needed, as part of the school committee's self-evaluation.

References:

SOURCE: Newburyport School Committee

Version Control

Action	Date
First Reading	7/22/2016
Second Reading	9/6/2016
Adopted	9/6/2016