

The Public Schools of Brookline

Brookline School Committee Roles and Norms

For the purpose of effective governance and enhancing teamwork among members of the School Committee and between members of the administration, the Brookline School Committee adopts the following operating principles:

The School Committee will:

- Represent the needs and interests of **all** students in the District and place their interests above all others in the decisions we make.
- Exercise leadership in vision, planning, policy making, budget, communication, and advocacy on behalf of the students and District and evaluate the effectiveness of the Superintendent.
- Recognize that it is the Superintendent's responsibility to manage the day-to-day operations of the District and to oversee personnel issues.
- Conduct business through a set agenda. Emerging items will be addressed in subsequent meetings through agenda items.
- Base our decisions upon available facts, vote our convictions, avoid bias, and uphold and support the decisions of the majority of the School Committee once a decision is made.
- Acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a meeting that is held in public, not a public meeting, and make every effort to ensure that the Committee meetings are effective and efficient. We welcome community members to attend our meetings and participate during public comment.

Expectations of Individual School Committee Members:

- Maintain an open environment where each member is empowered to freely express opinions, concerns, and ideas. Keep an open mind and accept that members can change their opinions.
- We will respect staff and fellow board members at all times. Treat everyone with dignity and respect, even in times of disagreement.
- Refer any important questions or concerns received from members of the community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, not any School Committee member, has the authority to investigate. The Superintendent shall provide their response to Committee members. It is not the role of the School Committee or any of its members to resolve issues.
- Strives to make decisions that are about policies and vision decisions and avoids operational/management decision-making
- Maintain confidentiality of Executive Sessions

Communication:

- The School Committee and Superintendent recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree there will be no surprises. If members of the School Committee or the Superintendent have questions or concerns, they agree to contact each other well in advance of the meeting to facilitate informed and reflective conversation.

- School Committee members agree to refer important questions they receive from members of the school community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will investigate and provide ALL members with the information needed to respond to an issue.
- Although, we encourage and value fluid communication between school committee members and central administration staff, where appropriate we recommend that School committee members channel requests for information, reports and data through the Superintendent and/or the Sub-Committee Chairs rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.
- It is our responsibility to set the tone for the entire school system, and we will make every effort to promote a positive image for our school system. We will operate transparently and respectfully, maintain confidentiality, and respect the Open Meeting laws.