

## School committee operating protocols

The Marblehead school committee values and views as our top priority the academic, social and emotional success of all students in our district. We agree to thoughtfully seek and support solutions that will provide the greatest benefit to students.

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### Who we represent

1. We represent the educational and developmental needs and interests of all students in the district. We place their interests above all others in the decisions we make.
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### How we govern

1. We acknowledge that a school committee meeting is a meeting of the school committee that is held in public – not a public meeting.
2. We shall conduct business through a set agenda that should be connected to district goals. Emerging items shall be addressed in subsequent meetings through planned agenda items unless it is determined by the school committee chairperson that it would be detrimental to delay the issue until a subsequent meeting.
3. Requests to add items to an agenda by members shall be made to the superintendent or the school committee chairperson in accordance with the law.
4. We shall strive to make each meeting effective and efficient giving each member an equal opportunity to express their views and opinions and to relay their input in a concise and topic-focused manner. All remarks must be directed through the chair. Remarks must be courteous in language and deportment.

5. We shall make decisions after considering data, the superintendent's recommendations, proposals, and suggestions. We will engage in open-minded, respectful debate, vote our convictions, avoid bias, and uphold and support the decision of the majority of the committee once a decision is made. We will explain the reasons for our votes.
6. We shall exhibit professional conduct and behavior.
7. We shall attend meetings well-prepared to discuss issues on the agenda and to participate in efficient decision-making.
8. When we are in committee we will remain in our committee member role throughout the meeting.
9. We shall ensure that we do not breach the open meeting laws by deliberating outside of duly convened meetings of the committee.
10. The school committee welcomes respectful, thoughtful input from the public in shaping committee decisions. Public input at meetings may be made on items on the agenda, or otherwise at the discretion of the chairperson.
11. We acknowledge the importance of subcommittees, and the superintendent agrees to utilize them to focus on a specific topic in-depth and to prepare for presentation, deliberation and possible action by the full school committee. We will agree on the appropriate school committee participation on subcommittees.
12. School committee members will maintain privileged information and respect the confidentiality of executive session.

13. Our actions shall be consistent with the core values of the district, and be consistent with our vision of a high class organization.
  14. School committee meetings will be guided by the open meeting law and roberts rules of order.
  15. The superintendent of schools and such staff as are needed to advise the committee shall be seated at the committee table.
  16. School committee members will familiarize themselves with and uphold all district policies. Specifically policies relating to governance (bhc, bbaa, bia, bhe, bca, bdd).
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#### How we treat each other

1. We shall debate the issues keeping an open mind to other member's opinions and/or positions.
  2. We shall work to build trust between and among school committee members, the superintendent and the administration by treating everyone with dignity and respect, even in times of disagreement.
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#### How we communicate

1. It is the school committee's responsibility to set a positive tone for the district.
2. The superintendent and the school committee recognize the importance of proactive communication. If school committee members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the superintendent well in advance of a meeting. They agree that there will be no surprises.
3. We shall channel requests for information through the superintendent rather than directly to district staff or

town officials. Town officials shall channel requests for information through the superintendent for consideration by the school committee.

4. We shall provide full disclosure of information and not withhold information from other members.
5. We shall advocate for the public schools and public education as ambassadors of the school system by promoting support for public education and spreading the news of our success. We shall always strive to project a positive image.
6. We recognize the chairperson, or her/his designee, as the official spokesperson of the school committee, including, but not limited to, legal counsel and official media requests.
7. The superintendent and the school committee recognize the importance of working collaboratively with the community to improve our schools and we shall actively seek ways to enlist community support for our efforts.
8. School committee members acknowledge the importance of working collaboratively with town officials, but recognize when they attend meetings of other committees and boards they speak and act as individuals not for the committee as a whole and will disclose as such.
9. We will adhere to the masc social media guidelines.

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#### How we will improve

1. All new school committee members will attend the masc orientation session as soon as practicable, but within one year of being elected.

2. All members will be open to continued personal growth through participating in training opportunities in order to advance the work of our public schools.
  3. We shall review and revise operating protocols annually through an annual workshop.
  4. We shall develop and maintain a district new member orientation program.
  5. We shall develop annual school committee performance objectives, or goals, and appraise progress through regular self-evaluation.
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What are our limits of authority?

1. We shall exercise leadership in vision, planning, policy, budgeting, evaluation of the superintendent of schools, and advocacy of the district, consistent with the law and district policies.
2. It is the superintendent's responsibility to oversee personnel issues and to manage the Day-to-day operations of the district. It is the school committee's responsibility to evaluate the superintendent's effectiveness in these matters.
3. We shall recognize that authority rests only with the majority decision of the school committee and we shall not make any independent commitments or take any independent actions that may compromise the school committee as a whole.
4. We shall follow the chain of command (teacher, principal, superintendent) and direct others to do the same.
5. Complaints and concerns regarding personnel will be directed to the superintendent.

6. We shall not use our positions for personal or partisan gain.
  7. We shall 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 committee members with his/her response. It is not the role of the school committee to resolve issues.
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What happens when things go wrong?

1. We shall work together to clarify and restate discussions in order to strive for full understanding.
2. We recognize the importance of honoring our agreed upon operating protocols and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.
3. We shall maintain fidelity to these commitments and will be held accountable by our fellow school committee members should any of us fail to live up to these commitments. If a school committee member or superintendent violates any of the operating protocols, he/she will be referred to the chairperson or in the case of the chairperson to the vice chairperson.