

POLICY RELATING TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATION

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies an understanding of the functions of a school committee under Massachusetts General Law and the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics. The oath of office binds an individual member to adhere to state laws as they apply to school committees.

The Wachusett Regional School District code of ethics delineates an additional four areas of responsibility of individual members: (1) responsibility toward the community; (2) responsibility toward the school administration; and (3) relationships with Committee members; (4) speaking or acting for the Committee.

1. The Member's Responsibilities Toward the Community

- The School Committee Member's primary responsibility is to advocate the best interests of all District students, supported by a sense of fiscal responsibilities.
- The Member shall represent the Wachusett Regional District School Committee in the community and explain or clarify District policies and decisions on appropriate occasions.
- The Member shall avoid making personal decisions that cause conflict of interest for him/her; the Member shall render unselfish service with no intention of benefiting personally from School Committee decisions or activities.
- The member shall not discourage, in any manner, any member of the community or any staff member of the WRSD from speaking at any Public Hearing of a WRSDC meeting to matters under School Committee purview.

2. The Member's Responsibilities Toward the School Administration

- The School Committee shall develop policies that direct and support the Administration.
- The School Committee Member shall respect the administrative chain of command.

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS (continued)

- The Superintendent shall be given full responsibility for performing the professional duties assigned to that office.

3. Relationships with Other School Committee Members

- All actions of a School Committee meeting are binding and a Member cannot bind the Committee outside the public forum of the Committee.
- Solicitation of votes on matters that will come before the School Committee shall be done in public session with the exception of executive session matters.
- Pertinent information on school problems shall be shared with the Superintendent.
- Decision shall be made only after the facts have been presented and discussed.
- Matters of executive session shall be maintained in confidence until such time as minutes are released to the public.
- All discussions of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee shall be conducted in public sessions except for those situations requiring executive session under M.G.L.

4. Speaking or Acting for the Committee

- School Committee members shall not represent themselves as conducting official School Committee business when they are not authorized to do so by the School Committee or the Chair.
- If a member of the School Committee believes that an agency should be contacted in regard to a particular matter of business, this matter shall be directed to the Chair and he/she will create a correspondence on official District stationery or be brought forward at a regularly scheduled meeting of the School Committee.

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- The School Committee, by vote or consensus, may agree to contact or question an outside agency on a particular matter of business. The Chair of the Committee, or someone he/she shall designate, will communicate with that office on official District stationery, posing the inquiry to the official in charge of that office. This letter, together with official written response, shall be made available to all members of the School Committee.
- Nothing herein shall be construed as to restrict the legal rights of the individual members as private citizens.

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