

POLICY RELATING TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

**USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BETWEEN AND AMONG
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text, or SMS messaging, internet web forums, and internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the School Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. Deliberation includes emails between or among a quorum of a public body on any public business within its jurisdiction.

School Committee members may use electronic messaging between and among members for housekeeping matters including the distribution of an agenda, scheduling information, and other procedural matters relating to the meeting. Deliberation does not include distribution of reports or documents so long as no members express an opinion.

Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss School Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, all members of the School Committee shall use District-provided email addresses when conducting School Committee-related business via email.

Legal References: M.G.L 4:7; 39:23A, 23B; 66:10

First Reading: 04/14/03

Second Reading: 04/28/03

Amendment First Reading: 09/14/09

Amendment Second Reading: 10/13/09

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