

South Kingstown School Committee Bylaws

Article 1 MISSION

The role of the South Kingstown School Committee is to govern the school system with integrity and vision to benefit our entire student population. Specifically, the committee, as its core mission, seeks to:

Provide leadership and oversight of community supported goals, policies, and resources to make certain the South Kingstown public schools deliver a high-quality education for all students.

Shared Values & Vision: (Based on the 8 Practices of Effective School Boards)

1. The SKSC will commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
2. The SKSC will develop, communicate, and make decisions based on shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.
3. The SKSC will be accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.
4. The SKSC will seek to develop a collaborative relationship with staff, the community, and also establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in developing and achieving district goals.
5. The SKSC is committed to being data savvy; to specifically embrace, monitor and secure data, even if/when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement in a transparent manner.
6. The SKSC will align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet shared district goals.
7. The SKSC will lead as a high-functioning team and collaborative team in order to develop and direct policy, as well as support the work of the superintendent, in order to effectively achieve the district's goals.
8. The SKSC will participate in regular team development and training, sometimes with the superintendent and other designated district employees, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.

ARTICLE 2 SCOPE of BY-LAWS

These bylaws set forth the responsibilities and authority of the Committee. The bylaws also set the standards of conduct expected from each member. Rhode Island General Laws ("RIGL") are cited where applicable. (<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/Statutes.html>)

ARTICLE 3 GENERAL POWERS and DUTIES

Under Rhode Island law, and the South Kingstown Home Rule Charter, the entire care, control, and management of the South Kingstown public schools is vested in the Committee. In addition to those specific duties enumerated elsewhere

in Title 16, the Committee has the following powers and duties:

1. To identify educational needs in the Community;
2. To develop education policies to meet the needs of the Community;
3. To provide for and assure the implementation of federal and state laws, the regulations of the Board of Education for the State of Rhode Island, and of local school policies, programs, and directives;
4. To provide for the evaluation of the performance of the school system;
5. To have responsibility for the care and control of the schools;
6. To have overall policy responsibility for the employment and discipline of school department personnel;
7. To approve a master plan defining goals and objectives of the school system. These goals and objectives shall be expressed in terms of what learners should know and be able to do as a result of their educational experience. The Committee shall periodically evaluate the efforts and results of education in light of these objectives;
8. To provide for the location, care, control, and management of school facilities and equipment;
9. To adopt a school budget to submit to the Town Council in consultation with the Superintendent;
10. To adopt any changes in the school budget during the course of the school year;
11. To approve expenditures in the absence of a budget, consistent with state law;
12. To employ a Superintendent and assign any compensation and other terms and conditions as the Committee and Superintendent shall agree, provided that in no event shall the term of employment of the Superintendent exceed three (3) years;
13. To establish minimum standards for personnel, to adopt personnel policies, and to approve a table of organization;
14. To establish standards for the evaluation of personnel;
15. To establish standards for conduct in the schools and for disciplinary actions;
16. To hear appeals from disciplinary actions;
17. To enter into contracts, including collective bargaining agreements;
18. To publish policy manuals which shall include all Committee policies;
19. To establish policies governing curriculum, courses of instruction and text books;
20. To provide for transportation services which meet or exceed standards of the Board of Regents for elementary and secondary education;
21. To make any reports to the Department of Education as are required by the Board of Regents for elementary and secondary education; and
22. To delegate, consistent with law, any responsibilities to the Superintendent as the Committee may deem appropriate.

23. To address the health and wellness of the students and employees;
24. To establish a sub-committee of the Committee to decrease obesity and address school health and wellness policies for students and employees consistent with § 16-21-28;
25. To undertake annually a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development as set forth and described in § 16-2-5.1.

ARTICLE 4 ORGANIZATION

Section 4.1 Organization Meeting and Election of Officers

The name of the school district is the South Kingstown School Department.

By December of each municipal election year, the Committee shall hold its organizational meeting when it shall elect its officers of Chair and Clerk -Vice Chair.

At the organizational meeting, the acting Chair or designated Town Clerk shall accept nominations of committee members for the role of Chair and Clerk-Vice Chair. Committee members are permitted to nominate multiple candidates (members may self-nominate). A roll call vote for each nominee will be taken after all nominations are submitted. Nominated members will be appointed based on majority vote from committee members after all nominees have been considered and votes have been counted. In the event of a tie for the role of Chair, the committee will take another vote. In the event of a tie for the role of Clerk, the elected Chair will make the appointment.

Section 4.2 Filling Vacancies

If the office of Chair becomes vacant, the Clerk-Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair until a new Chair is elected at a special election.

If the Clerk-Vice Chair is unable to serve, the Chair shall appoint a Clerk-Vice Chair until a new Clerk-Vice Chair is elected at a special election, which shall occur within thirty days of the vacancy occurring.

4.3 Removal of Elected Officers

The Chair and Clerk-Vice Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Committee and may be removed from office by a majority vote of the full Committee.

Section 4.4 Appointments

At the Organizational Meeting or the next scheduled meeting, the Chair shall accept nominations of committee members for each Sub-Committee and any liaison roles. Committee members are permitted to nominate multiple candidates (members may self-nominate). A roll call vote for each nominee will be taken and nominated members will be appointed based on majority vote from committee members. In the event of a tie, the Chair will make the appointment.

Liaisons are expected to provide regular reports to the full Committee about their assigned organizations to share knowledge and communicate with the community. During scheduled reviews, liaisons can be appointed to other groups/committees of interest with majority support of the committee.

Section 4.5 Sub-Committees

The Committee may establish subcommittees to assist in the completion of its business. The Chair shall call for nominations (members may self-nominate) of up to three members of the Committee to each sub-committee. In the event of multiple members seeking limited roles on specific committees, a roll call vote for each nominee will be taken and nominated members will be appointed based on majority vote from committee members. In the event of a tie, the Chair will make the appointment.

Available positions for community members on all SKSD committees will be properly advertised for a minimum of two weeks and the posting shall include the core responsibilities of service, the committee mission, an application (link), and the method of selection (rubric).

Community members will be evaluated based on the provided rubric, and appointed on the recommendation of the Committee (a majority vote), approved by a majority vote of the full SC, and serve until the Committee's next organizational meeting or until the Committee declares the seat vacant, whichever comes first.

All sub-committees shall post and conduct their meetings in accordance with RIGL 42-46. Sub-committees will be charged by the full Committee for a specific purpose such as fact-finding, studying issues and/or making recommendations to the full Committee. All sub-committee meetings should strive to have minutes made available on the SKSD website in a timely manner.

Other Committee members may attend sub-committee meetings as community members and are not considered voting members of the sub-committee.

Section 4.6 Changes to Bylaws

Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by any Committee member during the biennial review as well as at the annual summer meeting. The review process shall start in January of every election year with formal adoption to be completed by September of the same year. All revisions or additions shall be approved by the Committee after two readings.

ARTICLE 5 DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Section 5.1 Chair and Clerk-Vice Chair

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee and seek to engage Committee members to take ownership for the work of the Committee.

The duties of the Chair shall include the following:

- Prepare meeting agendas with input from the Superintendent and Clerk-Vice Chair
- Maintain order in meetings and facilitate discussion relevant to the issue
- Unless otherwise restricted by these bylaws or other Committee established regulations, the Chair shall have the authority to recommend approval for members to sub-committees.
- Retains the right to engage in discussions, offer solutions, questions, entertain and propose motions and to vote on all matters before the Committee
- Serve as an authorized signatory to all legal documents
- The Chair may call for a special meeting of the Committee
- Serve as the spokesperson for official Committee positions
- Oversee the Superintendent's evaluation process

The duties of the Clerk - Vice Chair shall include the following:

- Perform the duties of the Chair when the Chair is absent
- Serve as an authorized signatory to all legal documents
- Participate in the preparation of meeting agendas with the Chair and Superintendent
- Oversee the Committee annual self-assessment

Section 5.3 Individual Members

Committee members have legal authority to act only during meetings convened in accordance with these bylaws and Rhode Island law. Members fulfill their obligations by participating in meetings. Participation is through discussion, with deliberation, debate and voting to follow.

Expectations for member conduct, both individually and collectively, are consistent with RIGL § 16-2-9.1, the code of basic management principles, ethical standards and other provisions of state law, including but not limited to:

1. Formulate written policy for the administration of schools, to be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary.
2. Exercise legislative, policy making, planning, and appraising functions, and delegate administrative functions.

3. Recognize critical responsibility for selecting the Superintendent, defining their role, and evaluating their performance.
4. Accept and encourage a variety of opinions from and communicate with the community.
5. Make public relevant information to promote communication and understanding between the Department and the community.
6. Act on matters only after reviewing pertinent information and the Superintendent's recommendations.
7. Conduct meetings with planned and published agendas.
8. Encourage and promote professional development of Department staff.
9. Establish and maintain procedural steps for resolving complaints and criticisms of Department affairs.
10. Act only through public meetings.
11. Recognize that the first and foremost concern must be the educational welfare of the students.
12. Work with other Committee members to establish effective Committee policies.
13. Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using Committee positions for personal gain.
14. Attend all regularly scheduled Committee meetings, and become informed on issues to be considered.
15. Regularly participate in professional development opportunities. Members are expected to obtain a minimum of 6 professional development hours annually.

The Committee may convene a duly posted meeting, under the provisions of RIGL §§ 42-46-2 (a) and 42-46-5

(a) (1), to sanction a member who does not comply with the individual limits, responsibilities and ethical standards set forth in this article.

Section 5.4 Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Committee members are expected to understand and comply with the language and spirit of the Rhode Island Code of Ethics in Government Act and disclose in writing to both the ethics commission and the Committee chair any personal interests or ties prior to acting or voting on any matter before the Committee. Committee members are also required to disclose to the Committee itself any actual or potential conflict of interest prior to discussion of the matter by the Committee.

Pursuant to the state Code of Ethics, a Committee member has an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties or employment in the public interest and of his or her responsibilities as prescribed in the laws of this state, if he or she has reason to believe or expect that he or she or any person within his or her family or any business associate, or any business by which the person is employed or which the person represents will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his or her official activity.

Committee members must at all times be aware of any official acts or decisions that can reasonably be expected to directly result in an economic benefit to the Committee member, his or her spouse, any dependent children, business associates, or business interests. Specific attention should be paid to items involving personnel, purchasing, or votes requiring expenditure of funds. Committee members are expected to recuse themselves from all real or potential conflicts, as required under law.

Committee members are expected to avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using the Committee position for personal gain. Information acquired by the Committee member in the course of his or her official duties is, therefore, to be treated as confidential and is not to be used for personal gain, pecuniary or otherwise, or to benefit family members, business associates, or personal business interests. If the Committee member is in doubt about a possible conflict, an advisory opinion may be requested from the Ethics Commission. For a full enumeration of prohibited activities, Committee members should consult RIGL § 36-14-5.

Section 5.5 Remuneration

Each Committee member shall receive a stipend set as follows: 5 members at \$2,000 each, the Vice-Chair at \$2,500, and the Chair at \$3,000 per year.

Members of the Committee are not reimbursed for additional expenditures incurred except for the beginning of the school year, a total of approximately \$8,000 (annual amount to be approved in the budget) will be available for professional development. Each reimbursement shall be approved by the Committee in accordance with the Committee's professional development plan.

ARTICLE 6 MEETINGS

The Committee meets publicly in open session, as required by law, and in executive session, as permitted by law. Committee meetings consist of discussion among its members and administrative staff or invited individuals. Meetings provide the vehicle for all Committee decision-making. All meetings must be held in compliance with RIGL § 42-46-1 et seq. (<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE42/42-46/42-46-2.HTM>).

The Committee, in accordance with RIGL § 42-46-6, recognizes and welcomes its responsibility to receive input from the public. At the same time, responsiveness to community input must be balanced with the Committee's responsibility to fulfill its mission and to ensure the integrity of its meetings so they are both orderly and efficient. This requires an understanding that Committee meetings are meetings held before the public but are not meetings with the public.

All Committee meetings shall be posted and conducted in accordance with applicable sections of the state's open meetings act, RIGL Title 42, Chapter 46. Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, all meetings will be conducted in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order (revised).

Section 6.1 Quorum

A majority of the entire Committee shall constitute a quorum. In the event that the Chair determines that a quorum will not be present, the Chair shall have the responsibility to postpone the meeting.

Section 6.2 Posting of Meetings

The Superintendent shall be responsible for posting all Committee meetings in accordance with RIGL § 42-46-6 and these bylaws. Written notice of dates, times and places of regularly scheduled meetings shall be provided at the beginning of each calendar year on the Department's website, to public members upon request and electronically transmitted to the R. I. Secretary of State. Every regular meeting agenda shall be posted on the Department website, Secretary of State website, the Department's web-based management system, at the town hall and at the district administrative building.

Section 6.3 Adjournment

Meetings shall be adjourned upon a motion when seconded and approved by the members present.

Section 6.4 Types of Meetings

Section 6.4.1 Regular Meetings

The regular business meeting of the Committee shall generally be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the high school cafeteria or a location determined by the School Committee.

Section 6.4.2 Work Sessions

Work sessions shall generally be scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of the month and shall be posted and advertised in the

same manner as regular meetings.

Work sessions shall be held to provide Committee members with opportunities for discussion, knowledge sharing and planning without formal action requiring a vote. Schools may be asked to serve as host sites for a work session.

Business items may be included on the agenda as needed to allow the Committee to conduct district business. The posting shall include the workshop topics for discussion, any business items, and only those topics shall be discussed in accordance with RIGL § 42-46

Section 6.4.3 Special Meetings

A special meeting shall be called whenever the Chair considers such a meeting necessary or at the request of three members. The notice shall state the special matter or matters to be considered, and be posted in the manner that regular meetings are posted. At such meetings only, the business for which the meeting was called will be in order. All special meetings will be posted and advertised.

Section 6.4.4 Public Hearings

The Committee may convene a meeting to conduct a public hearing to solicit opinions and information from the community on a specific topic. All Committee public hearings will be posted as would a regular meeting, in accordance with law.

Section 6.4.5 Executive Sessions

An Executive Session (closed meeting) may be called by the Chair provided that such is listed on the posted agenda for one or more of the following purposes in compliance with state law:

1. Any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons provided that such person or persons affected shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held at an open meeting.

Failure to provide such notification shall render any action taken against the person or persons affected null and void. Before going into a closed meeting pursuant to this subsection, the Committee shall state for the record that any persons to be discussed have been so notified and this statement shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

2. Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

3. Discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices.

4. Any investigative proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct, either civil or criminal.

5. Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public.

6. Any discussions related to or concerning a prospective business or industry locating in the state of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public.

7. A matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest. Public funds shall include any investment plan or matter related thereto, including but not limited to state lottery plans for new promotions.

8. Any executive sessions exclusively for the purposes (a) of conducting student disciplinary hearings or (b) of reviewing other matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records, provided, however, that any affected student shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that he or she may require that the discussion be held in an open meeting;

Failure to provide such notification shall render any action taken against the student or students affected null and void. Before going into a closed meeting pursuant to this subsection, the public body shall state for the record that any

students to be discussed have been so notified and this statement shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting:

9. Any hearings on, or discussions of, a grievance filed pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

The motion shall include the reason (s) to hold the Executive Session and the Chair shall cite the applicable subsection of RIGL 42-46-5 (<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE 42/42-46/42-46.5.HTM>) which authorizes the exception to open session.

There shall be a majority vote by members to convene in Executive Session and the vote of each member shall be recorded in the open meeting minutes. All discussions shall be considered confidential, except when the Committee as a whole has agreed to publication of the matters discussed. Any action taken at this meeting will be reported in open session, subject to certain exceptions. All executive sessions will be posted and advertised. Final action shall be taken only in open meeting (Town Charter).

Section 6.4.6 Emergency Meetings

The Chair may call an emergency meeting on less than 48 hours' notice to address an unexpected occurrence that requires immediate action to protect the public.

Reasonable effort shall be made to notify all members of the Committee. In accordance with RIGL § 42-46-6 (c), the holding of such meetings shall be approved by a majority vote of the members at the time and place that the Committee assembles to meet, provided there is a quorum present. The vote of each member and the reason for holding the meeting in less than 48 hours shall be recorded in the minutes. As soon as practical, the meeting notice and agenda shall be posted in the manner that regular meetings are posted and shall be electronically filed with the secretary of state.

Section 6.4.7 Sub-Committee Meetings

Sub-committee meetings may be held to conduct the work charged to them by the full Committee. All such meetings shall be posted.

Section 6.5 Minutes

The Committee shall keep written minutes of its meetings. The purpose of minutes is to record what gets done at meetings not what gets said per Robert's Rules of Order. In accordance with § RIGL 42-46-7, minutes shall include but not be limited to:

- The type of meeting, time and place, members present, approval of the minutes of any preceding meeting(s).
- A record of all actions taken to include motion, names of the members making the motion and seconding it; and a record of the vote, with the vote of each member recorded.
- A record of all business that comes before the Committee through reports of the superintendent.
- A record that an executive session was held and the reason for the session.
- The record of adjournment.
- Committee members may request to have their reasons for particular votes recorded in the minutes "for the record."
- Committee members may request substantive discussion points likely to inform future decision-making and/or concepts that require follow-up by staff be included in the minutes "for the record."

The Committee delegates to the Superintendent, as its chief administrative officer, the duty of keeping records of all meetings in accordance with RIGL § 42-46-7.

Article 7 AGENDA

Section 7.1 Agenda Development

The Chair and the Clerk-Vice Chair, with input from the Superintendent, shall prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Committee. The agenda shall specify all items to be discussed. In developing the agenda, determinations of what items to include, including those requested by members of the Committee, shall be based on the following criteria:

- Items requiring action by the Committee (per RIGL or another requirement)
- Data updates requested by the Committee to support Committee goals and decision making
- Items reflected in the Committee's strategic planning calendar (annual calendar to be developed at the SKSC meeting)
- Information updates brought to the Committee by the Superintendent as needed
- Resolution of issues that could not be resolved through other appropriate District channels

Section 7.2 Agenda

The order of business at regular meetings may include:

- Call to Order
- Delegations
- Superintendent's Report
- Consent Agenda
- Community Comments
- Committee Business (to include Sub-Committee Reports)
- Comments from Committee Members /Future Agenda Items
- Adjournment

The order of business for any meeting may be altered with the consent of the members present. Under provisions of RIGL § 42-46, items may be added to a published agenda up to 48 hours before the meeting.

In accordance with the Open Meeting Act, RIGL § 42-46, the Committee is prohibited from discussing items that are not listed on the published agenda. It is the responsibility of the Chair to focus discussion on posted agenda topics, clarify issues, keep discussion relevant, and maintain reasonable time limitations.

- Each agenda item shall include a reference to related policies, if applicable.
- Any action item shall include a resolution which may be accepted, rejected or amended by the Committee.
- Data updates shall include a narrative interpretation and context as well as providing reference to the Committee's goals.

Section 7.2.1 Delegations and Presentations

Delegations shall appear before the Committee to recognize and commend faculty and staff and highlight accomplishments/interests of the District.

Section 7.2.2 Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent's Report shall provide district news and informational updates. Reports should be limited to 30 minutes, with all content provided to the SC members 48 hours in advance for review. If the 48-hour time period is not possible, the Superintendent shall alert all members of the SC via text and email that new documents have been attached

in BoardDocs. If additional presentation time is needed, time can be extended with a supported motion of the SC.

Section 7.2.3 Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda shall consist of routine items which require action by the Committee and may include: ·

Committee Minutes

· Personnel Actions

· Bid Awards

· Expenditures Greater Than (\$10,000) or current policy

· Field Trips

· Exchange Students

· Home Schooling

· Other Routine Business

Members may ask for clarification of items on the consent agenda, or they may ask to have an item removed from the consent agenda for discussion at a later part of the meeting. Approval of the Consent Agenda shall be fully equivalent to approval of each item within the Consent Agenda as if they had been acted upon individually.

Section 7.2.4 Business Meeting Community Comment Protocol

Each regular business meeting of the Committee shall include a public comment period of up to 30 minutes. The purpose of community comments is to provide an opportunity for members of the public to make a statement regarding agenda items or matters of general policy for which the Committee has responsibility or jurisdiction.

During regular business meetings, members of the public shall be invited to address the Committee during Comments from the Community given the following protocol:

- Speakers shall introduce themselves including full name and affiliated location (SK or another town, etc.)
- Speakers shall limit individual comments to 3 minutes
- Speaker comments shall be brief and focused on the agenda issue(s)
- Speakers are encouraged to write down their thoughts before approaching the Committee
- Community comments is not a time to engage in a question and answer dialogue
- Groups/organizations are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson
- Individuals are welcome to submit and/or add comments in writing and/or e-mail
- Individuals may address the Committee once during community comments

At the Committee's discretion, a time clock shall be available to cue a member of the public on their speaking time.

At the Committee's discretion, the comment period may be extended beyond 30 minutes or continued at a latter portion of the meeting.

The Chair and Committee members, at the request of the Chairs, may respond to matters proposed by a member of the public, for informational purposes only, when appropriate. Community members may be directed to provide contact information for follow up regarding a specific question.

At the completion of community comment, Committee members will have the opportunity to publicly request agenda items, based on the input of the community, for scheduling at future meetings.

Additional public comments may be elicited by the Chair prior to action on any item.

Section 7.2.5 Committee Business

Each regular meeting of the Committee shall include a period for Committee Business. Committee business shall include but not be limited to:

- Items requiring action by the Committee
- Data updates requested by the Committee to support Committee goals
- Planning and monitoring activities of the Committee

Section 7.2.6 Comments from Committee Members

Comments from Committee members provide an opportunity for Committee members to recognize accomplishments of members of the school community, bring forward announcements of interest to the school community, assess meeting expectations and process, and request information to bring back to the Committee for future discussion. Comments should be limited to 3 minutes per School Committee member.

Section 7.2.7 Adjournment

ARTICLE 8 SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of professional development is to ensure that Committee members develop and improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance their leadership role in the district.

Section 8.1 Expectations

All members of the Committee are expected to engage in continuous professional development to provide the greatest service to the community. Professional development shall include:

- Orientation Sessions
- Team Building
- Annual School Committee Retreat
- Continuing Education in RIASC and NSBA
- Chair Leadership
- Committee Self-Evaluation

Section 8.2 Professional Development Opportunities

Section 8.2.1 Orientation

Access to orientation sessions shall be available within the first 30 days of service for all newly elected members. The initial orientation shall include:

- Overview of District Goals and Priorities
- Overview of Committee By-laws and Policies
- Overview of RIGL and Legal Obligations, including:
 - Title 16 Education Code
 - Title 42, Chapter 46 Open Meetings Act
 - Title 36, Chapter 14 Rhode Island Code of Ethics in Government Act

- Overview of Parliamentary Procedures

Just-in-time training shall be provided as needs are identified during the first year and subsequent years of service.

Section 8.2.2 School Committee Annual Retreat

In May of each year, the Committee shall determine the date, or dates, of its annual retreat for all members and the superintendent. The annual retreat work session shall include team building, shared goal setting as well as the development and review of the Committee strategic planning calendar.

A mid-year check-in on status of goals and the strategic planning calendar shall be scheduled during the following March to adjust or modify as needed.

Section 8.2.3 Continuing Education

Professional development for members shall be provided through an array of continuing education opportunities such as:

- District Work Sessions
- Regional, State, and National Training Sessions
- College/University or Online Courses
- Coaching and Mentoring Opportunities

Committee members are required to annually undertake a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development as set forth and described in RIGL Title 16-2-9.

At the end of June each year, each School Committee member will complete a report detailing the Professional Development completed for the preceding year.

Continuing education shall also be scheduled in conjunction with the regular business meeting. Committee members are encouraged to attend regional, state, and national workshops, conventions, and conferences. Any discussion of public business shall be merely incidental to the convention or workshop.

Section 8.3 Chair Leadership

The Committee Chair and Clerk-Vice Chair shall engage in continuing education specifically related to the leadership duties of the Committee.

Section 8.4 Recognition and Commendation

The Committee shall annually recognize its members and the superintendent for engagement in leadership training. Special commendation shall be provided to members who design and/or lead training for local, regional, state, and/or national professional development.

ARTICLE 9 POLICY PROCESS

Among the powers and duties of Committees is the responsibility to develop education policies to meet the needs of the community. The goal of such policy is to ensure that each learner receives an education of the highest quality in a positive environment with caring, dedicated, and effective teaching and administrative staff.

Policies are principles adopted by the Committee to chart a course of action. Written policy is the means by which the Committee informs the community of these principles.

Adopted policies serve as a guide for the administration and help to promote common understanding and uniformity in the basic procedures and operations for all district personnel. Within the context of current law, the School Department shall be guided by the adopted, written policies that are available and accessible online to staff members, parents, students, and community residents.

Effective policies:

- Clarify the operation of the school system
- Create understanding and good will
- Give clear and coherent direction
- Facilitate control and efficiency

Section 9.1 Policy Development and Analysis

A new policy or policy amendment may be proposed by Committee members or the superintendent. All policy development shall require an analysis that includes:

- Clear identification of the problem, issue, or need for new policy or policy amendment
- Relevant data to support new policy or policy amendment as appropriate
- Information and input from multiple sources within the school district and community at-large
- Statement of financial implications (if appropriate)
- Alignment with district's stated philosophy, mission, and goals
- Coherence with state and federal law, local and district policies and regulations
- Public comment shall be invited on all new policy and policy amendments via oral, written, and electronic formats.

Section 9.2 Policy Review

A policy review shall be considered with the introduction of new programs and/or revisions to established programs. All new and revised policies shall include a monitoring schedule and evaluation criteria as appropriate for policy review.

Section 9.3 Policy Adoption

A new policy or a policy amendment shall be considered at two separate meetings before adoption. Official Committee action may be taken at the second meeting.

Unless otherwise specified, a new policy or policy amendment will be effective upon the date of adoption by the Committee and will supersede all previous policies in that area. Unless otherwise specified, the repeal of a policy will be effective on the date the Committee takes such action.

The Committee shall make exceptions to the above requirements when the immediate adoption, amendment or repeal of a policy is in the best interest of the district.

The Committee shall suspend its rules by a vote of four members and bring up a proposal for immediate action.

Section 9.4 Policy Distribution

All policies shall be accessible online for district staff and all members of the public. A hard copy record of all policies shall be maintained in the superintendent's office.

ARTICLE 10 ACCOUNTABILITY

The Committee shall provide oversight of the district to guarantee the integrity of management processes and systems informed by three key questions:

1. How well are students in the school system doing?
2. How well is the school district supporting learning and achievement?
3. How well is the school district managed?

The Committee shall hold itself accountable to engage in effective governance practices.

A. Annual Practices

- Superintendent Evaluation
- Committee Self-Assessment
- Retreat Planning

B. Biennial Practices

- New Committee Member Orientation
- Committee Bylaw Review

Adopted: September 13, 2005

Updated: November 2006

Updated: September 23, 2008

Updated: September 4, 2012

Updated: October 14, 2014

Updated: May 10, 2016

Updated: October 11, 2022

Relevant Laws

R.I. Gen. Laws § 36-14-1 et seq. – The Rhode Island Code of Ethics in Government Act

R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-1 et seq. – The Rhode Island Open Meetings Act

R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-2-1 et seq. – Rhode Island Education Laws concerning Committees and Superintendents R.I.

Gen. Laws § 16-2-9 – General Powers and Duties of School Committees

R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-2-9.1 – Code of Basic Management Principles and Ethical School Standards.

South Kingstown Home Rule Charter § 4810 et seq. – Public Schools and the School Committee