

P1601 SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

A School Advisory Council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the Principal, teachers, parents/legal guardians, community members and, at the secondary level, students, required to be established pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, s.59C. School Council Members.

The Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school District.

School Advisory Councils can support and inform a school's administration while providing an opportunity for increased community involvement and investment in student success. As the School Advisory Council represents the building's community, every effort shall be made to ensure that the Council represents the population it serves. To that end, membership for each School Advisory Council will consist of:

1. School Principal, who shall co-chair the School Advisory Council. (The second co-chair will be selected by the council members, and it shall be encouraged that the second co-chair shall not be a staff person in the building.)
2. Parents/legal guardians of students attending the school, who shall be selected by the parents/legal guardians of students attending such school by means of an election held by the recognized parent-teacher organization under the direction of the Principal. Said parents/legal guardians shall have parity with professional personnel on the School Advisory Council.
3. Teachers selected by the teachers in the school.
4. Other persons or community members who are not also parents/legal guardians of currently enrolled students or teachers at the school, drawn from such groups or entities as municipal government, business and labor organizations, institutions of higher education, human services agencies or other interested groups.
5. Student member for schools containing grades nine to twelve.

School Advisory Councils Responsibilities:

School Advisory Councils are to assist the Principal in:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards.
2. Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school.

3. Reviewing the annual school building budget.
4. Formulating a school improvement plan.
5. Annually reviewing and making recommendations regarding revising the student Handbook.
6. Reviewing the annual building student activity account information.

The School Advisory Council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to M.G.L 150E of the General Laws (Collective Bargaining). School Advisory Councils must follow the requirements of the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. 39:23A; 39:23B; and 39:23C.

School Committee Authority over School Advisory Councils:

1. Set district wide performance standards and educational policies that building level school improvement plans must take into account.
2. Review and approve building level school improvement plans.
3. Approve a representative process for the election of parent/legal guardian and teacher members of the council.

The School Committee reserves the right/option to develop guidelines that:

1. Define the council's review process for the Council's School Improvement Plan.
2. Set goals for diversity on the Council.

The School Committee shall approve the Council's School Improvement Plan. As a reviewing and approving authority, the School Committee has the discretion to set its own schedule and timelines for the submission and review of the improvement plans. The School Committee may approve or disapprove parts of the Council's School Improvement Plan. The School Committee has the final authority to approve improvement plans. Plans must be submitted to the School Committee for review and approval every year; the School Committee must review said plans within thirty days of receipt of said plan; otherwise, the plan shall be deemed approved. School Improvement Plans must be submitted annually.

Massachusetts General Law References:

- M.G.L. 39:23A – Definitions
- M.G.L. 39:23B – Open Meetings; Notice; Records; Enforcement
- M.G.L. 39:23C – Participation by Public
- M.G.L. 71:59C – School Councils
- M.G.L. 150E – Labor Relations; Public Employees (Collective Bargaining)

Westford Public Schools Policy References:

P2305 - School Improvement Plans Plans

P3401 - Student Activity Accounts

MASC Reference: BDFA

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Policy Reviewed:

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WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Westford, Massachusetts 01886