

BOARD RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAFF

A clear understanding of responsibilities and relationships between and among the school committee and school personnel is essential for a smoothly running and efficient school system. It should be remembered that the School Committee, school administrators, teachers, and all others responsible for any phase of the work of the school system have a common and basic responsibility – the welfare of the children in the schools. This responsibility must guide all of the School Committee’s considerations and decisions.

RELATIONSHIPS

School Committee and Superintendent

The relationship of the School Committee and the superintendent can best be described as one of teamwork. They must function cooperatively as some of their functions are not readily separable. However, the primary functions are separable and should be clearly understood by each. The School Committee is the governing body of the school unit and has the responsibility for adopting policies and providing for the care and management of the schools.

The superintendent is the ex officio secretary of the School Committee and the chief administrative officer. The superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the school unit and for ensuring that their operations of the school unit conform to School Committee policies and applicable law. The School Committee recognizes this and wishes to make this clear to all staff members and all citizens.

All communications or reports to the School Committee, or to any committee of the School Committee from school principals, supervisors, teachers, or other employees shall be submitted through the superintendent.

School Committee and Principal

The school principal has no direct administrative relations with the School Committee. His/Her/Their* relations to the School Committee are through the superintendent, for the School Committee recognizes that the superintendent is the person to whom it must look for professional leadership within the schools. A spirit of cooperation and mutual helpfulness must prevail between the superintendent and the principal if the best results are to be realized. For instance, the principal and the superintendent must cooperate in the selection of school staff because the principal is in the best position to know the kind of person needed for a particular type of service in the school. However, the principal must make recommendations to the superintendent and not to the School Committee. At all times the principal must remember that all matters which require School Committee action must be presented to the School Committee by the superintendent.

School Committee and Teachers and Other School Employees

The relationship of the teacher to the School Committee is indirect. The teacher is directly responsible to the principal/assistant principal and through the principal/assistant principal to the superintendent, and then to the School Committee.



Other school employees, depending on their position, are directly responsible to the principal/assistant principal or to the supervisor to whom the employee reports, and through the principal or supervisor to the superintendent, and then to the School Committee.

Direct access between employees and the School Committee may be obtained through channels established for grievances or through applicable School Committee policies.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAFF

The School Committee will communicate regularly with school staff on matters of current interest and importance to the school community at such times and through such methods as the School Committee deems appropriate. Methods to consider might include periodic newsletters, postings, or notices on the school unit's website or social media, minutes of School Committee meetings, School Committee workshops, and/or opportunities for staff to serve as representatives on advisory committees to the School Committee.

Individuals, employees, and employee organizations are expected to utilize communication channels established through School Committee policies, administrative procedures, and collective bargaining agreements and not to circumvent the chain of command and their direct supervisors.

Communications with staff are the responsibility of the School Committee as a whole. Individual School Committee members should refrain from initiating communications or conversations with staff members on their own.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 1(28); 1001(221); 1051; 13201-13202
Other References: Policy BDDH – Public Participation in Board Meetings

ADOPTED: April 26, 2023
REVIEWED: April 5, 2023
REVISED: April 26, 2023

* *“They, them, their” will be utilized herein to reflect all personal pronouns for the referenced individual or parties.*

