

How We Govern

1. We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a meeting of the School Committee that is held in public – not a public meeting, and we will make every effort to ensure that Committee meetings are effective and efficient.
2. School Committee members agree to thoughtfully seek and support solutions that will provide the greatest benefit to students. Once the School Committee has taken action, Committee members will support the official position of the School Committee.
3. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to oversee the hiring, evaluation and handling of personnel issues; it is the responsibility of the School Committee to evaluate the Superintendent's effectiveness in these matters.
4. We acknowledge the historic importance of subcommittees, and the School Committee and Superintendent agree to utilize them to focus on a specific topic in-depth and to prepare for presentation, deliberation and possible action by the full School Committee.
5. If it is determined that a subcommittee could benefit from increased participation of School Committee members, it will be posted as a Committee of the Whole meeting followed by the name of the subcommittee. The chair of the given subcommittee will chair the Committee of the Whole meeting if the topic for discussion pertains only to his/her subcommittee.
6. School Committee members agree to recognize and respect that their authority exists when a quorum of the Committee meets and not as individual Committee members.

How We Communicate

1. It is our responsibility to set the tone for the entire school system, and we will make every effort to promote a positive image for our school system. The Superintendent will be visible in the community we will operate transparently and respectfully, maintain confidentiality, and respect the Open Meeting laws.
2. The Superintendent and the School Committee recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree that there will be no surprises. If School Committee members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the Superintendent well in advance of a meeting.
3. We agree that discussion will be limited to the agenda, and items will not be added to the agenda unless it is determined by the Superintendent and the School Committee Chairperson that it would be detrimental to delay the issue until a subsequent meeting.
4. The Superintendent will share an annual planning calendar with School Committee members. If a member wishes to add an item to a future agenda, he or she should make a request to the Superintendent or the School Committee Chairperson. In turn, they will consult other members, as well as the annual planning calendar to gauge interest and alignment.

5. School Committee members agree to refer important questions and concerns they receive from members of the school community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will investigate and provide all Committee members with the information needed to respond to an issue.
6. School Committee members will channel requests for information, reports and data through the Superintendent and the School Committee Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.
7. The Superintendent intends to seek comprehensive solutions to problems and will create clear structures for decision-making. In the spirit of continuous improvement, these structures may be revisited at any time.
8. The Superintendent and School Committee recognize the importance of working collaboratively with City officials to improve our schools, and we will actively seek ways to enlist their support in our efforts.

How We Improve

1. School Committee members and the Superintendent recognize the importance of professional growth and development, and they agree to participate in experiences designed to further their knowledge and understanding and to advance the work of the Taunton Public Schools.
2. In addition, School Committee members will participate in formal training organized by the Superintendent and the School Committee Chairperson and conducted by organizations such as the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and/or Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS).
3. All new School Committee members will participate in an orientation session, and if desired, a School Committee mentor will be assigned.
4. The Superintendent and the School Committee agree to set aside time on an annual basis for self-evaluation and to review our progress toward adhering to agreed upon norms and beliefs.
5. We recognize the importance of honoring our agreed upon norms and beliefs, and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.