

## SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The complexity of school department operations requires **routine and** specialized legal services **and in today's complex world of public schooling it is essential to have competent legal counsel.** The School Committee may use the services provided by the **city** council. The Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide legal services. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek services **from one or more attorneys** to counsel and represent the school system at various times.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/**her**. **Attorneys working with the School Committee and Superintendent** will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies **pertinent to issues at hand**, and with requirements of school **and general** law to enable necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee. **The Superintendent can contact the School's attorney for routine matters. Requests for legal services go through the chairperson; school committee members do not contact the attorney directly without authorization.**

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, he/she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

**Legal services will be reviewed when the annual budget is reviewed.**

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6.2016

1<sup>st</sup> reading by school committee: 5.11.2016

Subcommittee discussion in May 2016

7.13.2016 Voted by School Committee with note that subcommittee would work on final revision

Source MASC

Legal Ref: Chapter 71, S 37E and Chapter 71, S 37F.

71, S37E limits funds for collective bargaining legal counsel to \$25,000 without approval of the mayor.

71, S37F affirms that school committees "may employ legal counsel for the general purposes of the committee..."