

GREENFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2016

1. Call to Order: 3:30 p.m.  
Present: S. Hollins (SH, Chair), F. Wisniewski (FW), T. Farrell (TF).  
Also present: Superintendent Harper, Administrators Barber and Garand.
2. MOUs for School Resource Officer  
FW discussed the three different Memorandum of Understandings: one discussing juvenile justice alternatives between three agencies, one discussing SRO cost-sharing, and one discussing the role of the SRO while in Greenfield's schools. Regarding the newly-passed SRO law, SH offered to review this against the three MOUs and advise what is required to FW.
3. Policies Reviewed:  
From a printed agenda of policies to review, the subcommittee reviewed, discussed, and reached consensus on recommendations to the School Committee:
  - a. Policies for a consent agenda, were part of 1<sup>st</sup> Readings on 5/11/16 and have no changes. The policy subcommittee recommends approval for all with a single vote.
    - 1) BAA: Self-Evaluation of School Committee
    - 2) DA: Fiscal Management Goals
    - 3) DB: Budget
    - 4) DBJ: Budget Transfer Authority
  - b. Policies to be voted individually. These policies did have changes and had a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading On 5.11.2016.
    - 1) BEDB: Agenda Format
    - 2) BDG: School Attorney
    - 3) DBD: Budget Planning
    - 4) DBG: Budget Adoption
    - 5) DD: Funding Proposals and Applications
    - 6) DGA: Approval of School Budget Payroll
    - 7) DH: Bonded Employees and Officers
    - 8) DI: Fiscal Accounting and Reports
  - c. A regulation to be presented for 1<sup>st</sup> Reading
    - 1) DBG-R: Budget Adoption Procedures, Action on the Budget

The discussion of policies distributed for discussion will continue— remaining financial policies, negotiations policies, and a selection of other policies to consider, new and continuing.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Susan Hollins

Post Script: All public school financial operations—budget, accounting, transportation for charter schools, reimbursement, audit, records required, etc.—are subject to certain state laws, including MGL 69: 1B (authority of the State Board of Education) and CMR 10:00 (Board of Education regulations).

REFERENCE ATTACHMENT TO MINUTES

Pages 2 to 11

Policies for action at the June school committee meeting are listed in order.

- a. Policies for a consent agenda, were part of 1<sup>st</sup> Readings on 5/11/16 and have no changes. The policy subcommittee recommends approval for all with a single vote.
  - 1) BAA: Self-Evaluation of School Committee
  - 2) DA: Fiscal Management Goals
  - 3) DB: Budget
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**1) BAA: SELF EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE**

The School Committee will self-evaluate using a continuous improvement model based on the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) professional standards, on an annual basis.

The self-evaluation will take place prior to or immediately following the superintendent evaluation. The Committee may also decide to schedule the annual self-evaluation at another time if the majority votes to do so.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships will be the basis of the Committee's self-evaluation:

1. Communication with the Superintendent, Committee members, school personnel and the public
2. School Committee/Superintendent Relationships
3. School Committee member commitment to professional development,
4. School Committee member ethics and commitment to roles and responsibilities.
5. Policy development
6. Educational leadership
7. School Finance and Budget
8. School Committee and subcommittee meeting organization, administration, attendance and conduct of members and committee officers
9. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
10. Interagency and governmental relationships (DESE, auditors, Collaboratives, etc.)
11. Strategic planning and support of student achievement
12. School law and collective bargaining (Massachusetts general laws, Federal Law)

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results by affirming, adding and/or revising, as needed, its forward-moving goals and objectives.

The School Committee believes that self-evaluation is as important to the school district as is the superintendent evaluation. The Committee's performance will be improved if it fosters a culture of self-awareness and improvement both individually and collectively.

SOURCE: MASC Adopted: 4.27.05  
Policy subcommittee reviewed: 9.16.09 Adopted: 4.22.10  
Revised for first reading: 2.16.12 Second Reading and adoption 4.19.12  
Policy subcommittee reviewed 4.6.16; 1<sup>st</sup> reading 5.11.16;

2) **DA FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS**

*[Chair note: one line was reworded about money available and program needs.]*

The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. It follows that achievement of the school system's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated, **balancing advocacy, available resources, staffing, and programs**. ~~Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program.~~ Recognizing this, it is essential that the school system take specific action to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary and contribute to the educational program. This concept will be incorporated into Committee operations and into all aspects of school system management and operation.

In the school system's fiscal management, it is the Committee's intent:

1. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and to guide expenditures so as to achieve the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended,
2. To establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for the students,
3. To use the best available techniques for budget development and management,
4. To provide timely and appropriate information to all staff with fiscal management responsibilities,
5. To establish maximum efficiency procedures for accounting, reporting, business, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

SOURCE: MASC

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6.2016; 1<sup>st</sup> reading by sc: 5.11.2016

2<sup>nd</sup> review by subcommittee: 6.1.16; School comm.

3) **DB BUDGET**

*[Chair Note: No change recommended. Just a notation of 2016 review.]*

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program of the school department, and it mirrors the problems and difficulties that confront the school system. The budget then is more than just a financial instrument and requires on the part of the Committee, the staff, and the community orderly and cooperative effort to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school system.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local School Committee requirements. The operating budget for the school system will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer but he/she may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of his/her staff, as he/she deems appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34; ~~71:37~~; **71:37A**; and 71:38N  
**603 CMR 10:00**,  
Subcommittee discussion; no revision: 4.6.2016; 1<sup>st</sup> reading by sc: 5.11.2016  
Review by subcommittee: 6.1.16;

GML Chapter 71

Section 34. Every city and town shall annually provide an amount of money sufficient for the support of the public schools as required by this chapter,...

The vote of the legislative body of a city or town shall establish the total appropriation for the support of the public schools, but may not limit the authority of the school committee to determine expenditures within the total appropriation.

Section 37A. School committees of cities and towns and regional district school committees may accept grants or gifts for educational purposes from federal, state, county and municipal governments or agencies thereof, charitable foundations and private corporations and disburse the same for such purposes. Any amounts so received by a school committee of a city or town shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city or town and held as a separate account, and expended by said school committee without further appropriation,

Section 38N

The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall hold a public hearing on its proposed annual budget....

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#### 4) **DBJ: BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY**

In keeping with the need for periodic reconciliation of the school department's budget, the School Committee will consider requests for transfers of funds as they are recommended by the Superintendent.

The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and expedite financial record keeping for the school system. All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be returned to the town.

SOURCE: MASC

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6 & 27.2016  
Subcommittee review. 6.1.2016

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b. Policies to be voted individually. These policies have changes. 1<sup>st</sup> Reading 5.11.16

- 1) BEDB: Agenda Format
- 2) BDG: School Attorney
- 3) DBD: Budget Planning
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## 1. BEDB: AGENDA FORMAT

*[Chair's note: Discussion. Chairperson and superintendent must work together on agenda even though the school committee's meeting is its business meeting. The superintendent knows items the school committee must address in a timely manner. The discussion also was about posting—when, where, what, location on website. The 3-day advance notice guidelines is changed to 48 hours.]*

The Superintendent, conferring with the Chairperson of the School Committee, will arrange ~~the order of~~ items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business. Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee. The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members ~~three days~~ **forty-eight hours (two days)** prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting. Agendas will be posted and made available to the ~~press~~ **media**.

Subcommittee review: 4.6.16; School Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> reading: 5.11.16; 2<sup>nd</sup> Subcom 6.1.16

SOURCE: MASC

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## 2. BDG SCHOOL ATTORNEY

*[Chair note: Discussion was whether or not in 2016 school committees only need and only use one attorney? what of specialized areas of law? What of 2<sup>nd</sup> opinions? As written, the supt can only contact an attorney on behalf of the school committee's needs or with school committee approval. Current policy has no provision for reviewing attorney services, now added, at the time when budget is being reviewed. Two current legal references were reviewed, and added.]*

The complexity of school department operations ~~often~~ requires **routine and** specialized legal services. **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 ~~town~~ **city** counsel. The Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide ~~additional~~ legal services. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek ~~his/her~~ services **from one or more attorneys** to counsel and represent the school system at various times. ~~However, because~~

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. **He/she Attorneys working with the School Committee and Superintendent** will attend meetings upon request **of the chairperson or by majority vote of the Committee** and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies **pertinent to issues at hand**, and with requirements of ~~the school~~ **and general** law to enable ~~him/her to offer the~~ 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.**

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.**

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: Chapter 71, S 37E and Chapter 71, S 37F

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6.2016; 1<sup>st</sup> reading by school Committee: 5.11.2016

Subcommittee review, 6.1.16

*Chapter 71, Section 37E*

*The school committee of a city or town may employ legal counsel in connection with collective bargaining with employee organizations for school employees, and may expend money therefor from the funds appropriated by said city or town for school purposes provided, however, that no such money shall be expended in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars without the prior approval of the mayor, the city manager in a city having Plan D or Plan E form of government, or the board of selectmen. Said legal counsel shall not be subject to the provisions of section nine A of chapter thirty or the provisions of chapter thirty-one.*

*Chapter 71, Section 37F.*

*The school committee of a city or town may employ legal counsel for the general purposes of the committee and may expend money therefor from the funds appropriated by said city or town for school purposes. Said legal counsel shall not be subject to the provisions of section nine A of chapter thirty or the provisions of chapter thirty-one.*

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### **3. DBD: BUDGET PLANNING**

*[Chair note: Revision is to mention coordinating with city budget calendar, now that Greenfield is a city with a budget calendar.]*

The major portion of income for the operation of the public schools is derived from local property taxes, and the School Committee will attempt to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision-making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects this school system's goals and objectives.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the School Committee will strive to:

1. Engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.
3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management. The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of **the school department budget calendar in coordination with the city's budget calendar**, and adherence to a **the school department and city** budget calendars.

SOURCE: MASC

City Charter (#4)

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6.2016; 1<sup>st</sup> reading by sc: 5.11.2016

Subcommittee review: 6.1.16

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#### **4. DBG: BUDGET ADOPTION**

*[Chair note: Revisions correct this short policy to reflect that Greenfield is now a city and there is no town meeting to decide budget. The accompanying regulation (regulations do not have to be voted unless the sc wants to vote it for a specific reason—like a fee schedule) needs a complete redo since charter and law are fully different from what is written in the current regulation.]*

Authority for adoption of the final school budget lies with the ~~citizens who comprise, and who are entitled to vote at, the town meeting.~~ The school budget is presented as part of ~~the total town budget for action at the annual town meeting.~~ **the city council, as established by law and charter.**

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.

~~71:34 Town Charter, (See local reference)~~

MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N

City Charter

Subcommittee discussion and revision: 4.6.2016

Subcommittee review: 6.1.16...for 1<sup>st</sup> reading in June

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## 5. DD FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS

*[Chair note: Revision identifies a few issues and concerns the school committee would like considered. This policy does not clarify any threshold for when grants come to the school committee for approval.]*

The School Committee will encourage the administration to seek and secure all possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds, **as applicable**, that will enhance the educational opportunities for the ~~children~~ students in our schools. **In considering proposals and grants, the school committee encourages administration to be mindful of:**

- **sustainability,**
- **needs, goals, and interests of the school system,**
- **amount of the funding versus cost of set-up and management, and**
- **opportunities the grant provides, including opportunity for leadership.**

The Superintendent will keep informed of all possible funds available to the school system under the various state and federal programs, and in what manner these funds can best be used in the school system.

The Superintendent will be responsible for seeking out and coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign all reports for these projects and will be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds received for such projects.

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:53A P.L. 874 Impact Aid

~~Board of Education 603 CMR 32:0\*~~

**603 CMR 10:00 <http://www.mass.gov/courts/docs/lawlib/600-699cmr/603cmr10.pdf>**

Section 53A. **An officer or department** of any city or town, or of any regional school or other district, **may accept grants or gifts of funds from the federal government and from a charitable foundation, a private corporation, or an individual, or from the commonwealth, a county or municipality or an agency thereof, and** in the case of any grant or gift given for educational purposes **may expend said funds for the purposes of such grant or gift with the approval of the school committee,** and in the case of any other grant or gift may expend such funds for the purposes of such grant or gift in cities having a Plan D or Plan E form of government with the approval of the city manager and city council, in all other cities with the approval of the mayor and city council, in towns with the approval of the board of selectmen, and in districts with the approval of the prudential committee, if any, otherwise the commissioners. Notwithstanding the provisions of section fifty-three, **any amounts so received** by an officer or department of a city, town or district **shall be deposited with the treasurer** of such city, town or district **and held as a separate account and may be expended** as aforesaid by such officer or department receiving the grant or gift **without further appropriation.** If the express written terms or conditions of the grant agreement so stipulate, interest on the grant funds may remain with and become a part of the grant account and may be expended as part

of the grant by such officer or department receiving the grant or gift without further appropriation. Any grant, subvention or subsidy for educational purposes received by an officer or department of a city, town or school district from the federal government may be expended by the school committee of such city, town or district without including the purpose of such expenditure in, or applying such amount to, the annual or any supplemental budget or appropriation request of such committee; provided, however, that this sentence shall not apply to amounts so received to which section twenty-six C of chapter seventy-one of the General Laws, and chapter six hundred and twenty-one of the acts of nineteen hundred and fifty-three, as amended, and chapter six hundred and sixty-four of the acts of nineteen hundred and fifty-eight, as amended, apply; and, provided further, that notwithstanding the foregoing provision, this sentence shall apply to amounts so received as grants under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (Public Law 89?10). After receipt of a written commitment from the federal government approving a grant for educational purposes and in anticipation of receipt of such funds from the federal government, the treasurer, upon the request of the school committee, shall pay from the General Fund of such municipality compensation for services rendered and goods supplied to such federal grant programs, such payments to be made no later than ten days after the rendition of such services or the supplying of such goods; provided, however, that the provisions of such federal grant would allow the treasurer to reimburse the General Fund for the amounts so advanced.

\*Need to check citation

Policy Subcom 1<sup>st</sup> review: 5.4.16; Submitted to sc for 1<sup>st</sup> reading. 5.11.16

Policy Subcom 2<sup>nd</sup> review: 6.1.2016

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## 6. DGA APPROVAL OF SCHOOL BUDGET PAYROLL

### ~~DGA APPROVAL OF SCHOOL BUDGET PAYROLL AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES~~

*[Chair note: Current state financial guidelines require payroll warrants to have signature of superintendent (assuring accuracy) and one school committee member assigned by the school committee (approving release of school system funding). By law, there can be no hold-up of employee pay. The question came up who signs for accuracy in the superintendent's absence? There are guideline for covering the mayor's absence, the chairperson's absence, but not the supt's absence. Decision was this would be a different policy.]*

**With respect to payrolls, the school committee will designate one of its members to sign payroll warrants. The Superintendent will also sign payroll warrants to swear they are true. The Chairperson of the School Committee will sign payrolls presented for approval.**

The ~~town~~ city treasurer, who also serves as the school department treasurer, signs all payroll checks drawn against school department funds. No other signature is valid.

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REF.: ~~M.G.L. 41:52~~ M.G.L. Chapter 4, S.6, Cl. Fifth; M.G.L. 41: 41  
MGL Chapter 41: Section 41

Section 41. **No treasurer** or other fiscal officer of any town or city shall pay any salary or compensation to any person in the service or employment of the town or city unless the payroll, bill or account for such salary or compensation shall be sworn to by the head of the department or the person immediately responsible for the appointment, employment, promotion, or transfer of the persons named therein, or, in the case of the absence or disability of the head of the department or of such person, then by a person designated by the head of the department and approved by the board of selectmen in towns, and by the mayor in cities, or by the city manager in cities operating under a Plan D or Plan E charter. Except as otherwise provided in a collective bargaining agreement, the treasurer or other fiscal officer may pay the payroll to an employee on a biweekly or semimonthly basis. A commission, committee or board of trustees in a city or town, including a city council, board of aldermen or common council in a city, may for purposes of this section designate any one of its members to make oath to a payroll, bill or account for salary or compensation of its members or employees. This provision shall not limit the responsibility of each member of any such body in the event of a noncompliance with this section.

Related to who should sign for Superintendent in Superintendent's absence?

*GAAP Principles for Internal Control Procedures*, by Denise Sullivan,

*The Financial Accounting Standards Board's generally accepted accounting principles, or GAAP, set the accounting standards a United States company must follow. Internal controls are designed to prevent fraud and clerical errors that may compromise the accuracy of a company's financial statements. ... Segregation of Duties: Separating duties among different employees reduces the opportunity for any one person to commit fraud. It also creates double-check procedures to cut down on clerical errors*

Policy Subcom 1<sup>st</sup> review: 5.4.16; Submitted to sc for 1<sup>st</sup> reading. 5.11.16

Policy Subcom 2<sup>nd</sup> Review: 6.1.16

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## 7. DH BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

*[Chair note: Reworded to conform to city status with a city bond. Question: How does the city know who, in the school department, handles money and so should be bonded? Revision states that from time to time the school department provides this info when requested by city.]*

**The city procures and pays for a blanket bond. Any position within the school department that is** Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket **the city** bond.

**When requested, by the mayor or city treasurer, the superintendent will advise the city which positions in the school district are receiving, handling, and dispensing funds.**

~~The town will pay the cost of the bond.~~

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL

REFS.: ~~M.G.L. 40:5~~ [SH: MGL 40:5 seems to have nothing to do with cities.]

Section 5. A town may at any town meeting appropriate money for the exercise of any of its corporate powers; provided, however, that a town shall not appropriate or expend money for any purpose, on any terms, or under any conditions inconsistent with any applicable provision of any general or special law.

Policy Subcom 1<sup>st</sup> review: 5.4.16

Submitted to sc for 1<sup>st</sup> reading. 5.11.16

Policy Subcom 2<sup>nd</sup> review: 6.1.16

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## 8. DI FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

*[Chair note: Revision corrects for the school department's use of city accounting software and city/school agreement on the types of separation of funds (more current wording but no change, really). Revision structures two elements of financial reports to the school committee—current balance & year-to-date expenditures. Prior wording said only 4 reports/year. Revision is “no less than” 4 reports/year.]*

The Superintendent ~~will be ultimately~~ **is** responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

**Unless otherwise determined by the school committee,** the accounting system used will **be the accounting system used by the city,** ~~conform with state requirements and with good accounting practices,~~ providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, **special** funds, and ~~special monies grants.~~

The School Committee will receive **no less than** quarterly financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department, **e.g. year-to-date expenditures and balances.**

Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented, ~~as found desirable~~ **as requested or deemed informative by the Superintendent.**

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR 10:00  
Policy Subcom 1<sup>st</sup> review: 5.4.16 Submitted to sc for 1<sup>st</sup> reading. 5.11.16  
Policy Subcom 2<sup>nd</sup> review: 6.1.16