

School Committee Meeting

September 26, 2015

Superintendent's Conference
Room

MASC District Governance
Workshop #2

Open Session 8:00 A.M.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2015-09-26

Time: 8:00 AM

Building: School - Memorial High

Location: Superintendent Conference Room

Address: 82 Oakland Road

Purpose: School Committee Workshop

Meeting Called By: Linda Engelson on behalf of the Chair

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

AGENDA

I Call to Order

II Recommended Procedure

A. Public Input (I)

B. Continued Business

MASC District Governance Workshop

III Future Business

I Informational A Action Item

All times are approximate and may change.

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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Reading, MA 01867
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Craig Martin
Assistant Superintendent
for Learning and Teaching

Martha J. Sybert
Director of Finance & Operations

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: September 23, 2015

TOPIC: MASC District Governance Workshop #2

At our last retreat, Mrs. Borawski agreed to organize the input from our first session into a draft operating protocol for the Committee's consideration. I'm attaching a draft of that document for your review. During the process of creating the draft protocol document, many of the comments address improving the Public Input portion of our SC meetings. We have a School Policy (BEDH) that governs public input. I have also attached a proposed revised policy BEDH (Public Participation at School Committee Meetings) developed by Mrs. Borawski for your consideration.

In addition, I am attaching a copy of a draft School Committee brochure for your review.

Please review these documents and come to our retreat on the 26th ready to discuss. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mrs. Borawski.

Reading Public Schools **School Committee Operating Protocols**

As members of the Reading School Committee, we accept the high honor and trust that has been placed in us to ensure that Reading students receive the best education possible. To that end, we hereby commit to the following in the conduct of our business.

Role

The School Committee will work towards continuous improvement in teaching and learning by:

- clearly defining success in district goal setting
- assuring accountability in the Superintendent evaluation process
- developing policies that support our vision
- advocating for the interests, needs, and achievement of all students in our district

School Committee members understand that only the School Committee as a whole has authority; individual members may not act unilaterally. While debate and principled dissent are encouraged, all School Committee members are expected to support and uphold the decision of the majority once a vote is taken.

The School Committee recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with town officials to improve our schools and will actively seek ways to enlist their support for our efforts.

Conduct

School Committee members are expected to be familiar with and adhere to School Committee Policy BCA, School Committee Member Ethics.

Agendas

School Committee meetings are business meetings held in public, not public meetings. We will strive to hold efficient, effective meetings by:

- Creating a yearly agenda based on district goals, with the understanding that the agenda will evolve as each year progresses
- Beginning meetings with a reading of the Reading Public Schools Mission Statement to focus all our discussions and deliberations
- Conducting business through a set agenda with suggested times per item
- Planning meetings to not extend beyond 2 ½ hours
- Expecting that presentations will be 20 minutes or less, unless presenters get permission for extended time from chair or his/her designee in advance
- Soliciting committee input on future agenda items at each meeting
- Respectfully soliciting public input, per School Committee Policy BEDH

Meetings

School Committee members are expected to:

- Arrive well-prepared and ready to speak to agenda items
- Follow Roberts Rules of Order

Reading Public Schools **School Committee Operating Protocols**

- Speak only when acknowledged by the chair; not engage in side conversations
- Report to the Committee on any meetings or events attended as an appointed liaison/representative of the School Committee. Reports should be brief and focus on information that directly impacts Reading schools, staff, families, and students.
- Keep comments succinct and on topic
- Encourage critical thinking and thoughtful debate
- Listen actively and keep an open mind
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Respect staff and fellow committee members at all times
- Turn off all technology during meeting, unless using a small, unobtrusive screen for agenda and packet

Decision-Making

School Committee members will arrive at decisions based on:

- The needs, interests, and achievement of all students in the district
- Data, research, public input, financial impacts, Superintendent's recommendation, and recognized best practices.

Information Requests

School Committee members are encouraged to request information they feel they need in order to carry out their responsibilities. Requests should be made to the Superintendent, Chair and Vice Chair well before meetings, to allow time for research. The Superintendent will ensure that all information is distributed equally and consistently to all School Committee members in a timely manner.

Under no circumstances should a Committee member ask staff members for information or action without going through the Superintendent, Chair, and Vice Chair.

Communication

In order to promote consistency of communication, only the School Committee Chair and/or his/her designee shall have the authority to speak for the School Committee to other public bodies, the media, or individuals who reach out to the body as a whole.

When School Committee members attend meetings of other committees or boards as School Committee liaisons or as individuals, they will speak as individuals and not for the Committee, except when reporting on a decision of the majority of the School Committee.

All email communication conducted as a School Committee member should be done to and from an official Reading Public Schools email address, so that email records can be legally collected and stored. Any email received in the capacity of a School Committee member should be forwarded to the Superintendent, Chair, and Vice Chair for response. School Committee members are expected to be familiar with School Committee Policy BHE, Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members.

File: BEDH

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. School Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
~~Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.~~

The School Committee desires citizens of the district to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public -on issues that affect the school district and are within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities. Therefore, the Committee has set aside a period of time at each School Committee meeting to hear from the public~~would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.~~

Public Comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between or among citizens and the School Committee. Rather, it is intended to offer citizens an opportunity to express their opinion on issues of School Committee business. While the Committee and/or administration will not typically respond to citizen comments or questions posed at Public Comment, the Chair, as presiding officer of the meeting, may answer or request an answer to a question if he/she deems it expeditious. Further, should the Chair believe that an issue or question falls outside the purview of the School Committee, he/she may request that citizens direct it to the appropriate person or body so that the matter is given proper consideration.

~~In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to insure the ability of the Committee to conduct the district's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted. The following process will govern Public Comment and participation at School Committee meetings:~~

- ~~1. The School Committee will have a 15-minute Public Comment section at each School Committee meeting, which shall generally follow the opening of the meeting. Any extension of time shall be determined by the Chair.~~
- ~~2. A sign-up sheet will be available as people enter the meeting, and people will speak in the order they sign up, unless more than one person wishes to speak on a single topic, in which case the Chair may call them together.~~
- ~~3. Any person wishing to speak must identify him or herself by name and address, and specific interest for wishing to speak. The Chair will favor, in no particular order, those speakers who are Reading residents, or, in appropriate circumstances, a Town of Reading employee, parent, or guardian of a Reading Public School student, or Reading Public School student.~~
- ~~4. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.~~
- ~~5. Comments longer than 3 minutes may be presented in writing to the Committee before or after the meeting for Committee members to review and consideration at an appropriate time.~~
- ~~4.6. Votes by the School Committee will not be taken during Public Comment. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The length of the public participation segment shall be 15 minutes and any extension of time shall be determined by the Chair.~~

~~2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.~~

~~3.7. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items not listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening.~~

~~4.8. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chair may terminate that individual's privilege of address.~~

~~5.9. All remarks will be addressed through to the Chair of the meeting. Responses to concerns will be made only by the Superintendent or Chair of the meeting, or other members at the Chairs discretion.~~

~~10. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.~~

~~11. On those issues that can be resolved by directing citizens to the appropriate staff, the Superintendent or Chair will advise citizens of appropriate steps to take.~~

~~6.~~

~~7. Comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented in writing to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members review and consideration at an appropriate time.~~

~~Adopted by the Reading School Committee on March 26, 2007~~
Participation Regarding Docketed Items

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In addition to the Public Comment section at each meeting, the public is invited to remain for the whole meeting and may be invited to speak on any docketed issue, at the discretion of the Chair. Should the Chair invite comments on docketed items, he/she will request that citizens in attendance who wish to speak signify as such by raising their hand



SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The Superintendent is appointed by the Committee and acts as its executive in administering their policies in the operation of the school. He is available to the Committee as a professional resource, and his recommendations normally preceded committee actions. The Associate Superintendent also participates in school committee discussions.

The Reading Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national

2015-2016 School Committee Members

Charles Robinson, Chair	Charles.robinson
Jeanne Borawski, Vice Chair	Jeanne.borawski
Julie Joyce	Julianne.joyce
Gary Nihan	Gary.nihan
Linda Snow Dockser	Linda.dockser
Elaine Webb	Elaine.webb
John Doherty, Superintendent of Schools	John.doherty

All email addresses include
@reading.k12.ma.us

82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
781 944-5800

Reading School Committee



Overview, Procedures and Responsibilities

*Instilling a joy of learning
and inspiring the innovative
leaders of tomorrow*



Reading School Committee

Your School Committee consists of six members who are elected for 3-year terms. Two positions are “up” for election each spring when the Town selects its officers for the next year. The six members elect a Chairman and Vice-chairman each year with the new Chairman taking the reins of office after the town elections each year.

School Committee Meetings

The Reading School Committee meeting follows an agenda planned by the Chairman and the Superintendent in consultation with the members of the School Committee. Copies of the agenda are available on the day of the meeting at the Office of the Superintendent and on the school district’s website www.reading.k12.ma.us. Extra copies are available for visitors to the meeting.

Public Input

Early in the agenda, the School Committee will listen to citizens who wish to make a brief statement to the School Committee, express a viewpoint or ask a question about the schools. Citizens wishing to address the Committee should raise their hand, wait to be recognized by the Chair, and then approach **the microphone**, identify themselves and state the issue they wish to address.

Open Session

The agenda will continue with routine matters, personnel, old business, new business, information and proposals and approval of minutes.

Executive Session

The School Committee may, under the Open Meeting Laws of the Commonwealth, go into executive session to discuss a limited range of matters about finances and personnel. The Reading School Committee will usually conduct executive sessions at the end of its regular meetings

Board Action

No one person acts in the name of the Committee. The Committee acts as a single unit. When an item of business comes before the Committee in the form of a motion, it requires a majority (4) vote of the Committee before action is taken. The Committee has complete control over local school matters subject only to the limitations imposed by State Law, regulations of the Department of Education and, of course, the will of local residents as expressed in elections.

The areas of Committee action include:

- Policy determination
- Budget making
- Approval of courses
- Planning schools services
- Evaluating programs
- Negotiating under the collective bargaining law

To discharge its varied and necessary responsibilities, the Committee often calls upon the resources available in the community and among the professional staff of the school department.