

**SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**PURPOSE:**

This policy is established for the purpose of setting forth the School Committee's guidelines for the formation and maintenance of active support and involvement of parents, teachers, and members of the community in carrying out the mission of the community's educational programs.

**PHILOSOPHY:**

The School Committee recognizes its responsibility and accountability to the citizens of the community of North Kingstown and its obligations, under State Law and Regulation, to operate and carry out an educational program that appropriately serves the educational wants, needs, and expectations of parents, students, and staff.

To ensure adequate and appropriate involvement and contribution by all those rightfully involved, the School Committee sets forth the guidelines for the establishment and maintenance of active councils, cabinets, and committees as herewith specified.

**SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES (SAC):**

School Advisory Committees may be established at each school to provide parents, teachers, and community members with a forum to discuss and resolve local school issues and policies. Each school principal in the North Kingstown School Department is responsible for ensuring that if a School Advisory Committee is established, it functions according to this policy. The Superintendent will ensure that a process for establishing School Advisory Committees is followed. Administrative procedures related to this shall be formulated by the Superintendent for review and consent of the School Committee.

- a. Purpose: Any School Advisory Committees that are created in the North Kingstown Schools are to establish a process to provide parents and community members a forum in which to discuss policy issues, investigate alternatives, and make recommendations to the principal concerning all aspects of school operations within the control of the principal except for the assignment, evaluation, and discipline of school personnel. Policy issues are issues within the control of the local school which impact on the school as a whole or on significant groups of students in the school. Policy issues include resource allocation, curriculum improvement, facilities improvement, disciplinary procedures, administrative procedures, school climate, and community relations.

- b. Composition: Each School Advisory Committee established, should consist of eight (8) members who can be elected by the school community at large for a term of office of two (2) years, four (4) new members to be elected each year to allow consistency by utilizing a rotating schedule. Four (4) members should be parents of students who currently attend the school. Two (2) members should be teachers or non-supervisory staff members. One (1) member should be a parent of a student with special needs who currently attends the school and one member should be a resident of the school's attendance area who does not have a student enrolled in the school. The parent and community members should not be employees of the school department or their spouses. For secondary schools, one (1) student should be appointed to the Committee by the school principal. At least one (1) parent member of the Jamestown community should be a member of the high school advisory counsel. The school principal should be an ex-officio member of the Committee.
- c. Elections: In the fall of each school year, the School Advisory Committee should appoint a nomination committee which should solicit nominations for each category of positions. This committee should insure that the entire school community is aware of the nomination process. Every attempt will be made to provide more nominees than there are positions. The nomination committee should provide a brief biography and statement from each candidate. The School Advisory Committee should appoint an election committee which will conduct an election in the month of September. Elections will be by secret ballot by the residents of the attendance zone, the employees of the school, and the parents of any student enrolled in the school from another attendance zone. Each voter may vote for up to four parents, two school employees, and one community member who will appear in separate categories on the ballot. Student members should be selected from among students elected by the student body or a portion of the student body. The term of office for a School Advisory Committee member should be from October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.
- d. Officers: Each School Advisory Committee should elect, from among its membership, a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. The chairperson will be responsible for formulating the agenda for the meeting, assuring its distribution to members prior to the meeting, conducting the meeting, and ensuring that open lines of communication are maintained with the school principal and school community. The vice-chairperson will assume the duties of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson. The secretary will prepare minutes of the meetings and be responsible for the maintenance of all records of School Advisory Committee actions.
- e. Meetings: Each School Advisory Committee should meet at least five times during the school year. The agenda, date, time and place for meetings must be publicized at least one week in advance of the meeting. All meetings are open to the public and shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order (Revised).

- f. Procedures: Each School Advisory Committee should establish procedures for operations and communications within the school community. Every attempt should be made to seek community input into decisions and to reach consensus within the community for decisions. At the beginning of its term, each School Advisory Committee should conduct an assessment of the current status of school issues and determine its objectives for the year. These objectives should form the bulk of the Committee's work and efforts.

Prior to making a recommendation, the School Advisory Committee should ensure that the topic has been fully investigated and that the school community has had an opportunity to participate in defining the recommendation. Recommendations of the School Advisory Committee will be communicated to the school principal in writing for implementation and/or action. The school principal will have up to two weeks to respond to the Committee concerning the disposition of the recommendation. If the Committee is dissatisfied with the school principal's response, the recommendation may be referred to the Superintendent who will respond within two weeks. If the recommendation has not been satisfactorily resolved by the Superintendent, the School Advisory Committee may refer the recommendation to the School Committee who will be the final arbiter of the issue. Every attempt will be made by all parties to resolve the issue at the lowest possible point.

- g. End of Year Report: Prior to June 1st, each School Advisory Committee chairperson should prepare a report of the Committee's activities during the school year. This report will include a list of the members, meeting dates, issues resolved, issues pending, and suggestions for improvement of the process. The report will be submitted through the principal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will complete a consolidated report which will be submitted to the School Committee no later than July 1st.
- h. Vacancies: Should vacancies in the School Advisory Committee arise during the school year, they should be filled by the candidate(s) within the same category who were nominated but not elected. The individual receiving the highest number of votes in the category vacant should be given the first opportunity to fill the vacancy. Vacancies in the officer positions will be filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Committee.

First reading: 6/4/96

Adoption: 7/2/96

Revised: 8/25/04, 4/27/2010