

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

Responsibilities of Local School Committees

Local school committees exemplify American principles of representative democracy. Ultimately accountable to their publics, local school committees act as community decision-making agencies for the public schools. Moreover, on behalf of local public schools, school committees represent their communities to local, state and national agencies.

In the strong conviction that the American system of public school education will best meet the needs of the citizenry if all local school committees throughout the United States recognize and meet their full legal, civic, social, economic, moral and ethical responsibilities, the Association* believes that:

1. Standards of Local School Committee Operations. School Committees should function as non-partisan, broadly representative, corporate bodies. Each member of a school committee should let his/her consideration for the entire district take precedence over partisanship and special interest-political, racial, religious, geographic, economic, social, civic, or other.
2. Written Policy: Adoption and Execution. School committees should adopt clearly defined written policies based on a thorough understanding of the educational process. In formulating the policies, they should consult individuals and groups affected by the policies, and properly delegate execution of those policies to employed professional administrators.
3. Open School Committee Meetings and Public Information. School committees should conduct school district business in open session, except as otherwise provided by law, and endeavor by every possible means to inform the public concerning the schools.
4. Citizen Group Involvement. School committees should encourage citizen participation that increases the public's communication and identification with its schools. To this end, school committees should develop policies that will support the concept of citizen advisory bodies and establish clear guidelines that define the task, composition, operation, duration, reporting and evaluation of such bodies.
5. Training and Research. School committees should seek to improve their own capabilities and procedures and should encourage training, scholarly research and experimental efforts which offer promise of improving school committee capabilities and procedures.

*Source: "Beliefs and Policies of the National School Boards Association" as adopted by the NSBA Delegate Assembly, 1973 and amended 1978.