



Pembroke Public Schools
School Committee Policy Manual

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POLICY BA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The PSC's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The PSC and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all students. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The PSC'S primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The PSC is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The PSC must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Annually setting performance objectives for the PSC itself and evaluating their accomplishments
2. In conjunction with the superintendent, set performance objectives for the superintendent
3. Development of a budget

Adopted December 4, 2007



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POLICY BAA: EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will annually establish goals including clearly defined measures of success related to PSC procedures and relationships. At the end of the specified length of time the PSC will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of PSC operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. PSC – superintendent relationships
3. PSC member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. PSC meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the PSC
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the PSC has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail. At the same time, the PSC will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted. Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. The PSC believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

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POLICY BB: SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

State law provides that:

Every town at its annual meeting shall in every year when the term of office of any incumbent expires, and except when other provision is made by law, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:

The Town of Pembroke elects five members of the School Committee for terms of three years.

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) is the governing board of Pembroke's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected committee of town government, the PSC has autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [41:1](#) and [71:37](#) specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees

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POLICY BBA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and the right to determine policies, adopt a budget and employ a superintendent, business manager, and special education director to implement those policies and budget for the proper education of the students of the community.

The PSC takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. Legislative or policy making - The PSC is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a superintendent, who will implement its policies.
2. Appraisal - The PSC is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. Planning of financial needs - The PSC is responsible for adoption of a budget that will support the Pembroke school system in implementing the PSC's policies and achieving the PSC's goals.
4. Public Relations - The PSC is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. Educational planning and evaluation - The PSC is responsible for establishing educational goals that will guide the PSC and the Pembroke School District staff in working together for the continuing improvement of the educational program.

Adopted December 4, 2007



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POLICY BBAA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority:

Because all powers of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the PSC have authority only when acting as a committee legally in session. The PSC can not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member (including the chairperson) except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the PSC.

No member of the PSC, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The PSC will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters as required by law will be settled by an official vote of the PSC sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual PSC member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and PSC operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this PSC and school department;
2. To keep abreast of new laws and latest trends in education;
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives and programs of the town's public schools;
4. To work harmoniously with other PSC members;
5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release as required by law;
6. To vote and act in PSC impartially for the good of the town; making a decision only after all the facts have been presented and discussed.
7. To accept the will of the majority in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by and carry out all PSC decisions once they are made;
8. To represent the PSC and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support;
9. To refer questions to the proper school authorities within established guidelines;
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for PSC members.

(Cross Reference: BBF)

Replaces 1.1 section II-4,

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POLICY BBBA/BBBB: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the Pembroke School Committee (PSC), an individual must be a registered voter in the town from which he is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will present to the superintendent official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his official duties as a member of the PSC. From the town clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive and sign a receipt for a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

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POLICY BBBC: Resignation of a School Committee Member

An existing Pembroke School Committee (PSC) member who submits his/her resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates his/her duties at the time of his resignation unless he/she states in that resignation a specific time at which the resignation will take effect.

Should a PSC member no longer fulfill the residency requirement for holding a municipal office in Pembroke, he/she shall be deemed to have vacated his/her office.

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POLICY BBBE: UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) occurs for any reason, the Pembroke Board of Selectmen and the remaining members of the PSC share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the PSC will notify the selectmen that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. The PSC chairperson will coordinate a joint meeting with the Pembroke Board of Selectman to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a plurality of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected will fill the seat on the PSC until the next appropriate and available town election at which time an individual is elected to fill the remaining term.

Replaces 1.3 Resignation of School Committee Members during their term.

Adopted December 4, 2007



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POLICY BBF: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

(National School Boards Association - NSBA)

All Pembroke School Committee (PSC) members will sign a copy of the School Committee Member Code of Ethics within 30 days of being sworn into office.

Having accepted the challenge of service on the Pembroke School Committee, I accept the principles set forth in the National School Boards Association Code of Ethics to guide me in helping to make available a quality public education for all of the children in Pembroke who are eligible for public education.

As a Member of the Pembroke School Committee, I will strive to improve public education, and to that end I will:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled PSC meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
2. Recognize that I should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held PSC meetings;
3. Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
4. Encourage the free expression of opinion by all PSC members, and seek systematic communications between the PSC and students, staff, and all elements of the community;
5. Work with other PSC members at PSC meetings to establish effective committee policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent;
6. Inform myself about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by my state and national school board associations;
7. Require a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
8. Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest as defined by law;
9. Take no private action that will compromise the PSC or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law; and
10. Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the Pembroke public schools.

Cross Reference: BIA New School Committee Orientation

Replaces 1.1 Code of Ethics
Adopted December 4, 2007

School Committee Member Signature _____ Date: _____



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POLICY BCD: SCHOOL COMMITTEE – SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will leave to the superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the PSC reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its superintendent. Further:

1. The superintendent will have the privilege of asking guidance from the PSC with respect to matters of operation whenever he/she wishes. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the PSC for advice and direction.
2. The superintendent will assist the PSC in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies and sound fiscal budgets, and will place before the PSC all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the PSC adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

Replaces 1.2 section III – A School Committee member in his relations with his school administration

Adopted December 4, 2007



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POICY BCE: SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) may authorize the establishment of special subcommittees for special assignments and to make recommendations for PSC action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the PSC;
2. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties by the PSC;
3. The subcommittee may make recommendations for PSC action, but it may not act for the PSC;
4. The superintendent or designee will be an ex-officio member of all PSC subcommittees;
5. A PSC subcommittee will be dissolved by the PSC upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the PSC at any time.

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POLICY BCG: SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) may retain the services provided by town counsel. However, because of the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, the PSC may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide additional legal services.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the PSC to advise the PSC and the superintendent of the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. Counsel will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with PSC policies, practices and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school 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 may be made by the PSC. The PSC chairman or the superintendent may also take such action if they deem it advisable.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific PSC approval or prior notice by the superintendent. However, when the superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required that will exceed the amount allocated by the certified budget, he/she will advise the PSC and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such services.

Replaces 1.4 Legal Counsel

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POLICY BD: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will transact all business at official meetings of the PSC. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

Regular meeting: the usual official legal action meeting held on the first and third Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise scheduled by the PSC. The meetings will be held at the North Pembroke Elementary School, 72 Pilgrim Rd unless notice is given to the Town Clerk of a change in location at least forty-eight (48) hours, including Saturdays and excluding Sundays and legal holidays prior to the time of such meeting.

Special meeting: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics. Special meetings of the PSC shall be held whenever called by the chairperson the PSC, upon request of the superintendent of schools or by any two members of the PSC. The notice of such special meeting shall state the special matters to be considered as well as the time and place of said meeting.

The superintendent of schools shall give to every member of the PSC, except in emergency situations, at least forty-eight (48) hours notice (including Saturdays and excluding Sundays and legal holidays) of each meeting; said notice may be transmitted by mail, email, telephone or direct contact to the PSC member. Notice shall be deemed as being given if the PSC member was present at the meeting when the date of the special meeting was established. Any meeting of the PSC shall be considered a legal meeting despite any informality in, or lack of, notice if all members of the PSC are present consistent with Massachusetts open meeting law.

Every meeting of the PSC, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with Massachusetts state law.

Replaces Policy 1.2, sections Regular Meeting and Special Meetings.

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) , at its first regular meeting following the town's annual elections, will elect from its membership a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

A majority of the members of the PSC (three) will constitute a quorum. The chairperson will open the meeting and turn the meeting over to the vice-chairperson who will preside over the meeting until a chairperson is elected. The election will proceed as follows:

1. Nominations for the office of chair will be made from the floor of the PSC. The chairperson will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
2. Upon election, the new chairperson will preside, calling for the election of a vice-chairperson and secretary, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the chairperson.
3. Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the PSC. The election will be conducted as described above.
4. Following election of officers, assignments to standing subcommittees will be made by consensus of the PSC.

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDB: SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Pembroke School Committee Chairperson

The chairperson of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) has the same powers as any other member of the PSC to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and the PSC. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the PSC
2. Consult with the superintendent in the planning of the PSC's agendas
3. Confer with the superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between PSC meetings
4. Call special meetings of the PSC as necessary
5. Be public spokesman for the PSC, representing the prevailing position of the PSC, at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others
6. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all PSC meetings
7. In collaboration with the superintendent, prepare the PSC annual report for submission to the annual town meeting

As presiding officer at all meetings of the PSC, the chair will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time
2. Announce the business to come before the PSC in its proper order
3. Enforce the PSC's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the PSC
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairperson of the PSC will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the PSC and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Duties of the Secretary

The secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all PSC meetings; will comply with state law and PSC policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDC: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the PSC has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by law:

1. The PSC will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will request a motion to go into executive session. The motion will state the purpose for the executive session and if there will be any public business conducted when the PSC reconvenes in public session.
3. A majority of the PSC members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which Executive Sessions may be convened.

The Committee may enter Executive Session only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, provided that the individual involved in such executive session has been notified in writing by the government body, at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session. Notification can be waived by agreement of the parties. The PSC shall hold an open meeting if the individual requests that the meeting be open. However, if executive session is held, such individual shall have the following rights:
 - a. To be present at such executive session during the discussions or consideration which involve the individual;
 - b. To have counsel or representative of his own choosing present and attending for the purpose of active participation in said executive session;
 - c. To speak on his own behalf
2. The discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the PSC, a school department employee or student, or other individual, provided that the individual who is the subject of such executive session has been notified in writing by the PSC at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session. Notification can be waived by agreement of the parties. The PSC shall hold an open meeting if the individual requests that the meeting be open. However, if executive session is held, such individual shall have the following rights:
 - a. to be present at such executive session during the discussions or consideration which involve the individual;
 - b. to have counsel or representative of his own choosing present and attending for the purpose of active participation in said executive session;
 - c. To speak on his own behalf
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining, including a grievance hearing may also be conducted with union or non-union personnel.



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4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the PSC or another party.
7. And to comply with the provisions of any general or specific law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. To consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee or subcommittee appointed by a governmental body if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect on obtaining qualified candidates. However, this shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee or subcommittee appointed by the governmental body, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.
9. To meet and confer with a mediator as defined in MGL 233 section 23C with respect to any litigation or decision on any public business within its jurisdiction involving another party, group or body, provided that:
 - a. any decision to participate in mediation shall be made in open meeting session and the parties, issues involved and purpose of the mediation shall be disclosed;
 - b. no action shall be taken by the PSC with respect to those issues which are the subject of the mediation without deliberation and approval for such action at an open meeting after such notice as may be required in MGL ch. 39 §23B.

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain confidential only so long as their publication may defeat the lawful purposes of the session. The PSC will review executive session minutes for possible declassification at least once a year. All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

Replaces 1.2 sections: Executive Sessions, Minutes of Executive Sessions

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDDA: NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours advance notice (including Saturdays but excluding Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the PSC. The only exception permitted is in the case of emergency, which the law defines as “a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action.” Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by Massachusetts General Law.

Replaces 1.2 section Notice section of regular meetings

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDDD: QUORUM/RULES OF ORDER/VOTING METHOD

Quorum - A majority of the membership of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC), that is three members, shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the only official action that the PSC may take is to adjourn the meeting to another time and/or date in the expectation of a quorum.

Rules of Order - Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the PSC's approved policies and regulations. In accordance with Robert's Rules, the PSC may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two thirds vote.

Voting Method - All votes, unless otherwise specified by PSC policy or required by law, will be taken by verbal yeas and nays. A roll call vote will be used when the vote is not unanimous and each vote will be so recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous, only that fact need be recorded. All actions will require a majority vote of the members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of the PSC require a larger majority. A member of the PSC may not vote on a matter which constitutes a conflict of interest.

Replaces 1.2 section "Quorum"

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLKCY BDDH: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In order to provide for full and open communications between the general public and the Pembroke School Committee (PSC), the PSC authorizes several avenues for the exchange of information, ideas, and opinions. All of the following operate within the framework of the PSC's scheduled meetings:

1. Written correspondence may be directed to the PSC via email schoolcommittee@pembrokepublicschools.org or via USPS c/o Pembroke Public Schools, 72 Pilgrim Road, Pembroke, MA 02359
2. At each regular meeting of the PSC there will be a period of up to 15 minutes set aside for public comment on items of school business, whether or not such items are on the agenda. Any member of the public who wishes to participate in this comment period must sign in with the PSC secretary in the meeting room during the ten-minute period immediately preceding the scheduled meeting time. Each person will indicate his/her name, address, and topic(s) to be commented upon. Only those persons who have signed in will be allowed to provide comments. Each participant will be permitted to speak on his/her identified topics for up to two minutes. The chairperson may terminate a comment at any time if he/she determines that the comment is not appropriate for public session. The chairperson may extend the time for public comment and public participation if he/she deems appropriate to conduct PSC business.
3. A citizen who wishes to have an item placed on the agenda will present the request in writing to the superintendent. To be considered, the request must be received ten (10) calendar days before the PSC meeting.
4. Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between citizens and the PSC. It is a citizen's opportunity to express his/her opinion on issues of PSC business. The PSC and/or administrator's may not be prepared to directly respond to citizen questions posed in this forum but the chairperson may request that citizens put the question in writing to the appropriate person or body so that the matter is given the proper consideration.

Complaints Relative to Students and Employees of the Employees:

No individual, or group of individuals, shall present orally or discuss at any meeting of the PSC complaints against individual members of the public schools until such time as charges or complaints shall have been presented to the chairperson of the PSC in writing and signed by the person or persons making the complaint.

THE OPEN MEETING LAW PROVIDES THAT CITIZENS MAY WITNESS PUBLIC BUSINESS BEING TRANSACTED, BUT DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK AT THE MEETING.



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The chairman will have authority to regulate and limit public participation within the provisions of this policy. The PSC may determine to limit or alter this authority by majority vote. However, by law, "no person shall address a public meeting of a governmental body without permission of the presiding officer at such meeting, and all persons shall, at the request of such presiding officer, be silent."

From time to time, the PSC may schedule a public hearing on any matter of concern to the community.

All meetings of the PSC will be presided over by the chairperson with the purpose of conducting the business of the PSC in a responsible and expeditious manner.

Cross Reference: BDC and BLG

Replaces 1.2 section Qualifications for Public Attendance, Public Right to Address the Committee, complaints relative to students and employees

Adopted April 8, 2008



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POLICY BDE: SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING PUBLIC HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as it deems advisable, the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media;
2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing as appropriate;
3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The chairperson of the PSC will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing of the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

Generally, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the PSC, or by others for the PSC; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the chairperson, and all remarks must be addressed to the chairperson and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the chairperson will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to comment a second time.

Cross Reference: BDDH

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BDF: Advisory Committee to the School Committee

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) that are not governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory committees may be created by the PSC to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity.
2. If an advisory committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to that committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the PSC, appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the PSC upon recommendation of the superintendent.
5. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve;
 - b. The assignment the PSC wished the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities;
 - c. The resources the PSC will provide;
 - d. The approximate dates on which the PSC wishes to receive major reports;
 - e. Members of the appointed advisory committee will be advised of and expected to comply with all applicable PSC policies;
 - f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press;
 - g. Requirements of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law
6. Recommendations of advisory committees will be based upon research and fact.
7. The PSC possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the PSC.

The PSC will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any advisory committee.

Replaces 1100 Advisory Committees to the School Committee – change is addition of “g”

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BEDB: AGENDA FORMAT

The superintendent, conferring with the chairman of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will arrange the order of items on meeting agendas so that the PSC 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 PSC 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 PSC, schedules of teachers or to expedite PSC business.

Any member of the PSC wishing to bring up for discussion, items of an emergency nature not appearing on the agenda shall, prior to the start of the meeting, make his/her wishes known to the chairperson in writing with supporting material as may be deemed necessary. The chairperson shall make the member's request known to the PSC at which time the PSC shall determine, by vote, its desires regarding the placement of the item on the agenda for that meeting.

Any matter may be placed on the agenda for consideration by the PSC by a PSC member, or any employee of the school department subject to the following:

Such request shall be in writing and shall be received by the superintendent at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting, except in emergencies. The request shall be accompanied by full written rationale for the request.

Exception to above shall be the prerogative of the chairperson.

The superintendent of schools shall place and carry on the agenda all unfinished business of the PSC, by vote, disposes of agenda items.

Replaces 1.2 Discussion of New Business/Procedure for submitting agenda items

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BEDH: PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In order to provide for full and open communications between the general public and the Pembroke School Committee (PSC), the PSC authorizes several avenues for the exchange of information, ideas, and opinions. All of the following operate within the framework of the PSC's scheduled meetings:

1. Written correspondence may be directed to the PSC via email schoolcommittee@pembrokek12.org or via USPS c/o Pembroke Public Schools, 72 Pilgrim Road, Pembroke, MA 02359
2. At each regular meeting of the PSC there will be a period of up to 15 minutes set aside for public comment on items of school business. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items listed on the School Committee Agenda.
3. Any member of the public who wishes to participate in this comment period must sign in with the PSC secretary in the meeting room during the ten-minute period immediately preceding the scheduled meeting time. Each person will indicate his/her name, address, and topic(s) to be commented upon. Only those persons who have signed in will be allowed to provide comments. Each participant will be permitted to speak on his/her identified topics for up to two minutes. The chairperson may terminate a comment at any time if he/she determines that the comment is not appropriate for public session. The chairperson may extend the time for public comment and public participation if he/she deems appropriate to conduct PSC business.
4. A citizen who wishes to have an item placed on the agenda will present the request in writing to the superintendent. To be considered, the request must be received ten (10) calendar days before the PSC meeting.
5. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in a 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.
6. Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between citizens and the PSC. It is a citizen's opportunity to express his/her opinion on issues of PSC business. The PSC and/or administrator's may not be prepared to directly respond to citizen questions posed in this forum but the chairperson may request that citizens put the question in writing to the appropriate person or body so that the matter is given the proper consideration.



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7. Written comments longer than three(3) minutes may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee member's review and consideration at an appropriate time.

THE OPEN MEETING LAW PROVIDES THAT CITIZENS MAY WITNESS PUBLIC BUSINESS BEING TRANSACTED BUT DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK AT THE MEETING.

The chairman will have authority to regulate and limit public participation within the provisions of this policy. The PSC may determine to limit or alter this authority by majority vote. However, by law, "no person shall address a public meeting of a governmental body without permission of the presiding officer at such meeting, and all persons shall, at the request of such presiding officer, be silent."

From time to time, the PSC may schedule a public hearing on any matter of concern to the community.

All meetings of the PSC will be presided over by the chairperson with the purpose of conducting the business of the PSC in a responsible and expeditious manner.

Cross Reference: BDC and BLG

Replaces 1.2 section Qualifications for Public Attendance, Public Right to Address the Committee, complaints relative to students and employees

First Reading: July 16, 2019

Second Reading and Adopted: August 20, 2019



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POLICY BG: SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority. The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the PSC will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the PSC will exercise its control over school operations.

The PSC accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance. The policies of the PSC are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGB: POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is the responsibility of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC). Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the PSC when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

The policy subcommittee is charged with reviewing, researching and recommending all policies and policy revisions to be considered by the PSC. Individual PSC members, other standing committees, the superintendent, or other interested parties should submit policy suggestions, along with any pertinent supporting documentation to the policy subcommittee.

To permit time for study of new policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the PSC in the following sequence.

1. First reading of proposed policy or policies: recommendation of the superintendent; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; PSC discussion and directions for any redrafting. A formal vote shall be held to acknowledge the first reading of the policy.
2. At a subsequent meeting, at least two weeks and no more than eight weeks, after the first reading, the policy shall be placed on the agenda for a second reading and action. Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence. If a main motion to approve the policy is not passed at such a meeting by a majority vote of the PSC, the process for that policy is ended, unless further consideration of the policy is tabled to a specific date.

The PSC may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective immediately unless a different date is set by the PSC. Policies that are deleted will be recalled. A delay may be necessary in some instances to ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that all PSC policy manuals are kept up-to-date by recalling them annually for review.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGC: IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY AND REGULATIONS

It is the responsibility of the superintendent of Pembroke Public Schools to implement all formal Pembroke School Committee (PSC) policy. The PSC may periodically request reports regarding the implementation of specific policies.

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGD: SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS

It is expected that the superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations implementing policies of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC). Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the PSC.

The PSC may review the regulations developed by the superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the district, but it will direct the superintendent to revise or veto such regulations only when, in the PSC's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the PSC.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the Department of Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed annually by the PSC.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGE: POLICY DISSEMINATION

The superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the Pembroke public school system, to members of the PSC and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating. The PSC's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the superintendent's office and the public library. The principal of each school will maintain a copy of the policy manual.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGF: SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of Pembroke School Committee (PSC) policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a four-fifths vote of PSC members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BGG: POLICY REVIEW AND EVALUATION/MANUAL ACCURACY CHECK

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for Pembroke School Committee (PSC) action and administrative decisions, the PSC will review its policies on a regular basis.

The PSC will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school district staff, students, and the community for providing feedback regarding the effect of the policies it has adopted. The superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the PSC's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reasons appear to need revision. The PSC directs the superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and PSC review.

Cross Reference: BGB

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BHC: SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the district staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the superintendent.

District Staff Communications to the PSC

All communications or reports to the PSC or any of its subcommittees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the superintendent.

PSC Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the superintendent. The superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the PSC's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Official visits by PSC members will be conducted only with PSC authorization.

The Education Reform Act of 1993 dictates that not all issues can be brought before the PSC. In some instances, the authority rests with the superintendent, while in others, the PSC is the final arbiter. Please consult with central office to determine the appropriate approach. In general, while matters of discipline and instruction are the purview of the superintendent, matters of policy and philosophy are the purview of the PSC.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BHE: USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, Pembroke School Committee (PSC) members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

Individuals PSC members can use electronic messaging to distribute materials, correspondence, agendas or reports so that committee members can prepare individually for upcoming meetings. Electronic messaging may not be used to discuss PSC matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the PSC Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the PSC. These copies shall be retained in the central office in a similar fashion as any other PSC records. PSC members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [39:23A](#), [23B](#); [66:10](#)

OTHER REFERENCES:

<http://www.mass.gov/Cago/docs/Government/openmtgguide.pdf>

School Department Records Disposal Schedule 20-84 – The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Secretary of the Commonwealth.

First Reading: December 17, 2008

ADOPTED: February 10, 2009



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POLICY BIA: NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) and superintendent will assist each newly elected member to understand the PSC's functions, policies and procedures. In discussions with new members, the chairperson and/or superintendent will clarify procedures that involve:

1. How a community member (parent, teacher, student, etc.) may make a request of the PSC; appropriate responses/actions of an individual PSC member when a request is presented directly to him or her;
2. How PSC members may make arrangement to visit schools, and the protocol associated with such visits;
3. How the PSC members, assigned certain tasks or investigating certain problems, may request information or services of the school staff;
4. How the PSC receives and examines complaints relating to personnel;
5. How and why executive sessions may be held; what is considered privileged information.

Each newly elected member will be given a copy of the PSC's policy manual, and selected materials on PSC, including the Massachusetts Association of School Committees' handbook for members and the General Laws of Education Relating to School Committees.

The superintendent will review the PSC code of ethics with the new member. This code of ethics will be signed by the newly elected/appointed PSC member within 30 days of being sworn into municipal office. The superintendent will maintain a file of signed code of ethics sheets in the central office.

To help members develop understanding of school programs and operations, the superintendent shall request members of the professional staff to appear before the PSC from time to time to present and discuss local programs and new developments in workshops. New members will be encouraged to attend meetings or workshops specifically designed for new School Committee members.

Information will be provided relative to MGL Ch 71 §36A, which requires professional development for School Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings will be reimbursed in accordance with established policy.

Cross Reference: BHC, BIBA, BID

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BIAA: COMMITTEE CANDIDATE ORIENTATION

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) considers it important that a new member be knowledgeable about school governance and operations, and – insofar as possible, prepared to discuss and cast informed votes on matters before the PSC – from the time that he/she is sworn into office.

All candidates shall be urged to attend, and be welcomed at, public meetings of the PSC during the period of their candidacy. All public information about the school system shall be made easily available to them upon request. To the extent that time permits, this invitation will be extended to candidates for the Pembroke Board of Selectmen.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BIBA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions.

However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the PSC establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance.

1. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the PSC will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting and which topics should be given priority for study.
2. Reimbursement to PSC members for their travel expenses will accord with the travel expense policy for staff members.
3. When a conference, convention or workshop is not attended by the full PSC, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BID: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

Pembroke School Committee (PSC) members will receive no compensation for their services. However, upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the PSC, members may be reimbursed from school funds. Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior PSC approval.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BJ: SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC), as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting education. If the PSC is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause. To this end:

1. The PSC will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.
2. The PSC will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups in developing an annual, as well as long-range, legislative program. One of the major objectives of the PSC's legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.
3. The PSC will annually designate a person – who may or may not be a member of the PSC – to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the PSC's behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the legislature or Congress, the PSC's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the PSC.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BK: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional School Committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups. It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the superintendent and PSC find to be of benefit to members and personnel. The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the PSC and the district staff.

Adopted: April 15, 2008



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POLICY BLA: Polling School Committee Members

The Pembroke School Committee (PSC) is opposed to the polling of its membership. In an emergency situation, the chairperson shall be contacted. However, the chairperson shall only give guidance to the school administration and is not empowered to bind the PSC to any course of action. If, in the chairperson's opinion, an emergency meeting is necessary, an emergency meeting shall be called in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws. This policy does not prohibit providing information to PSC Members as long as no actions are approved by the PSC as a result of information received.

Cross Reference: BD, BDC, BDDA

Recoded – previously 1.6 slight changes

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BLB: News Releases

The superintendent shall be the press liaison person for coordinating the release of information concerning the school district and actions of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC), with the exception of athletic events releases, which shall be handled by the athletic director, or in the absence of an athletic director, the designee of the superintendent.

The chairperson shall be the only spokesperson for the PSC.

The uses of many communications media for keeping the public continuously informed concerning the school, costs, curriculum changes, expansion, special events and other items of public interest is encouraged.

The PSC supports the publication of a periodic newsletter by the school district.

Recoded – previously 1.7 no changes

Adopted April 15, 2008 POLICY BLC: Taping and Video Recording of Meetings

The taping and/or taking of videos must not interfere with the normal progress of any meeting and equipment used in such operations must be set up well in advance of the start of such meeting. The placement of such equipment is subject to the approval and control of the chairperson of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC).

Recoded 1.8 No changes

Adopted April 15, 2008



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POLICY BLDA: GIFTS TO STUDENTS

The acceptance of trophies, prizes or awards from persons or organizations not connected with the schools will not be permitted unless said person or organization conforms to the policies of the Pembroke School Committee (PSC) and the corresponding administrative regulations providing for awards for distinguished success in any school activity.

Recoded 1.11 No changes

Adopted April 15, 2008