

DRAFT

Statement of Intent:

We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a working meeting of the School Committee that is held in public, not a public meeting. The below norms will ensure that committee meetings are effective and efficient.

How we communicate:

- The School Committee will remain respectful and professional while deliberating issues collaboratively. The School Committee will focus on issues rather than individuals.
- The School Committee and Superintendent recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree there will be no surprises. If members of the School Committee or the Superintendent has questions or concerns, they agree to contact each other well in advance of the meeting to facilitate informed and reflective conversation.
- School Committee members agree to refer important questions they receive from members of the school community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will investigate and provide ALL members with the information needed to respond to an issue.
- It is our responsibility to set the tone for the entire school system, and we will make every effort to promote a positive image for our school system. We will operate transparently and respectfully, maintain confidentiality, and respect the Open Meeting laws.
- School committee members will channel requests for information, reports and data through the Superintendent and the School Committee Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.
- The Superintendent and School Committee recognize the importance of working collaboratively with City officials to improve our schools, and we will actively seek ways to enlist their support in our efforts.

How we govern:

- The School Committee will strive to reach decisions by consensus.
- Members should bring their best intentions and an open mind to each meeting to seek creative solutions to the issues before them.
- The School Committee as a whole is a policy making body and members are elected to represent the entire Cambridge community. The powers of the School Committee are

granted to the committee of the whole when a quorum exists, and not to individual members.

- School Committee members agree to thoughtfully seek and support solutions that will provide the greatest benefit to students. Once the School Committee has taken action, Committee members will support the official position of the School Committee.
- We acknowledge the importance of subcommittees, and we agree to treat subcommittee membership and participation with the same gravity and weight as the Committee as a whole. We agree to utilize them to focus on a specific topic in-depth and prepare for presentation, deliberation, and possible action by the full School Committee. The subcommittee will not usurp the authority of the Committee of the whole.*

How we improve:

- The School Committee is committed to implementing an ongoing norm monitoring process and an annual self-assessment.
- School Committee members and the Superintendent recognize the importance of joint professional growth and development, and they agree to participate in experiences designed to deepen knowledge and strengthen working relationships to advance the work of the Cambridge Public Schools.
- The annual Superintendent evaluation is the responsibility of the School Committee of the whole and will represent the composite of all members feedback.
- We recognize the importance of honoring our agreed-upon norms and beliefs, and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.

We gratefully acknowledge the Taunton School Committee and their work on norms, which helped us formulate ours. We are thankful for their full approval for us to use their norms within our framework.