

Agenda

I. Call to Order / WebEx Login

<https://woodbridgeps.webex.com/woodbridgeps/j.php?MTID=mb1544a763640c6bf1e4dd539a1ea6e47>

Meeting Number (access code): 2482 190 8498

Meeting Password: mvVM5pSaH33

This meeting is being conducted as a hybrid meeting consistent with Sections 149-153 of Connecticut Public Act 21-2. The public may attend in person at the location indicated above or electronically via WebEx with the link provided above.

II. Public Comment - *The Board welcomes public participation. We ask that speakers please limit their comments to three minutes. Please be aware that the Board will not respond to any comments made during the public comment period, except to clarify issues, but we will take into consideration your comments, and when appropriate, district administration will follow-up with you at a later point in time. Public Comments may be submitted electronically to mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org*

III. Policies for Discussion

- A. 9011 - Accountability; 9273 - Civility; 1316 - Conduct on School Property (Civility)
- B. 9121 - Chairperson
- C. 9122 - Vice Chairperson
- D. 9123 - Secretary
- E. 9124 - Clerk of the Board
- F. 9125 - Attorney
- G. 9130 - Committees
- H. 9150 - Consultants

IV. Public Comment - *The Board welcomes public participation. We ask that speakers please limit their comments to three minutes. Please be aware that the Board will not respond to any comments made during the public comment period, except to clarify issues, but we will take into consideration your comments, and when appropriate, district administration will follow-up with you at a later point in time. Public Comments may be submitted electronically to*

mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org

V. **Adjourn**

Existing bylaw, number 9011 adopted 10/17/2011, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Accountability

The public is accountable for:

1. Maintaining a vigorous interest in, concern for, and constructive criticism of the schools;
2. Electing the most able men and women available to represent them on the Board of Education;
3. Providing the resources necessary for the Board and staff to accomplish publicly endorsed goals and objectives of the school district.

The Board is accountable for:

1. Being responsive to the community's desires and concerns regarding the quality and performance of the school system;
2. Carrying out its mandate to plan, to make policy, and to lead in the identification of goals and objectives;
3. Requesting the resources necessary for the achievement of the goals and objectives through the budget process;
4. Evaluating the degree to which the goals and objectives are accomplished;
5. Selecting and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent is accountable for:

1. Providing creative professional leadership counsel and management in all aspects of the school district programs;
2. Being responsive to the Board of Education's desires and concerns regarding the quality and performance of the school district;
3. Effecting the policies, goals and objectives established by the Board of Education;
4. Providing fiscal leadership in the implementation of the budget process;
5. **Overseeing the selection** ~~Selecting~~ and ~~evaluation~~ **ing of** all professional staff.

The administration, the teachers and other employees are accountable for:

1. Achieving the goals and objectives related to their stated job responsibilities;
2. Being responsive to the Superintendent of School's desires and concerns regarding the quality and performance of their job responsibilities;
3. Maintaining communications with students, parents and the community regarding their stated job responsibilities;
4. Conforming to the policies established by the Board of Education.

Existing bylaw, number 9011 adopted 10/17/2011, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Accountability

The parents are accountable for:

1. Providing an atmosphere that supports the education of their child;
2. Maintaining close communication with the school.

The students are accountable for:

1. Diligently pursuing their own learning;
2. Following the rules of the school district.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Bylaws of the Board

Civility

Statement and Purpose

The Woodbridge Board of Education has, as the primary objective of this policy, the promotion of mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct in pursuing the interest and work of the Woodbridge School District. In the interest of presenting the Woodbridge Board of Education as a role model of respectful discourse, the Board encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile, aggressive, and non-inclusive communications or actions. Modeling a safe, civil environment is essential to high student and staff achievement, to the free exchange of ideas central to a quality educational process, and to the development of our youth as thoughtful participants in our democracy.

It is the intent of the Board to promote mutual respect, civility, orderly conduct, and constructive problem-solving in our interactions as a Board and with the community. It is not the intent of the Board to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. The intent of this policy is to maintain, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, harassment-free setting for the Board, the administration and staff, the students, and the community to engage with each other in the best interests of the District. The Board encourages positive communication and discourages disruptive, volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions.

The Woodbridge Board of Education intends to foster a culture and practice of civility in all school and school-related settings, communications, and operations. Informed debate, healthy dialogue, disagreements, and informed public opinion are to be expected and are accepted forms of interaction in a democratic society. Common norms and protocols for civil discourse and action and compliance with public meeting laws are to be expected.

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to be in conflict with the ability of the school community to have opportunities and avenues available to express concerns and complaints about any facet of school operations or to limit an individual's ability to exercise his or her right to freedom of expression. The expectation is that this is done in a way that does not violate anyone else's rights.

The Woodbridge Board of Education seeks to promote a work environment that is safe, productive, and encouraging of the free flow of ideas without fear or intimidation, and to provide all students with appropriate role models for respectful problem solving. The Board seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

Expectations and Procedures

Expectations of the Board of Education

The Woodbridge Board of Education and all others serving in an official District capacity, including but not limited to members of the Board of Education, District representatives, administrative representatives, community representatives, and all Committee members, are expected to treat everyone, including but not limited to fellow members, students, parents, faculty and administration, and members of the public, with courtesy, civility, respect, and inclusion.

The Woodbridge Board of Education welcomes constructive, informed, civil engagement with all members of the District.

Expectations of Interactions with the Board of Education

Community and District members engaging with the Board or any of its Committees are expected to treat each other with courtesy, civility, and respect. This expectation applies to in-person interactions as well as electronic, remote, or virtual interactions.

Uncivil and disruptive behaviors are not limited to, but include: disrupting or threatening to disrupt school or district operations; loud, intimidating, or offensive language; verbal or physical intimidation or bullying; harassment of District members through repeated communications, including but not limited to phone calls, e-mails, texts, social media blasts, or confrontations; threatening the health or safety of Board members, staff, or students; willfully causing property damage; disrupting the work of the Board; or any behavior that interferes with the operation of the District, its administrative offices, its school, or Board functions.

Process for Addressing Concerns of Incivility

The Board of Education reserves the right to censor incivility through:

- Use of parliamentary procedure to conduct the work of the Board on agenda topics, enter into recess, or enter into adjournment.
- Asking the disrupting party to leave the premises or meeting.
- Reaching out to law enforcement for any party refusing to leave or causing an unsafe environment.
- Consistent with State statute, terminating the electronic meeting attendance of a disrupting party until such time as the party complies with the expectations of this policy.

Policy adopted: December 20, 2021

WOODBIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Community Relations

Relations Between Public and School Personnel

Conduct on School Property

The Board of Education (Board) expects mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among all individuals on school property or at school events. District staff will treat parents and other members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. The Board is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school/district grounds.

This policy promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among Board members, district employees, parents and the public. It is not intended to deprive any individual of his/her right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free environment for students and staff. Volatile, hostile or aggressive actions and words cannot be tolerated, and individuals who engage in these activities may face legal penalties.

In the interest of presenting Board members and District employees as positive role models to the students as well as to the community, the Board encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile or aggressive actions. The Board seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

Staff may not always be immediately available to speak with families. The best way to ensure communication can occur with administration or staff is to schedule an appointment. Staff and administration have a practice of attempting to return calls/emails within 24 hours.

Based upon the above, the Board expects that no person on school property or at a school event shall:

1. Injure, threaten, harass or intimidate a staff member, Board member or any other person;
2. Curse and use obscenities;
3. Disrupt or threaten to disrupt school or office operations;
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property;
5. Damage or deface District property;
6. Violate any Connecticut law or town/city ordinance;
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products;
8. Consume, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, or possess dangerous instruments or weapons;
9. Impede, delay, or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of the District's educational program or any other activity occurring on school property;
10. Enter upon any portion of the school premises at any time for purposes other than those which are lawful and authorized by the Board;
11. Operate a motor vehicle in a risky manner or in violation of an authorized District employee's directive; or
12. Violate other District policies or regulations or an authorized District employee's directive.

Alternate language to consider:

Standards for a peaceful, safe, respectful school environment:

A. Expected behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
2. Moderate tone and volume of voice
3. Active and respectful listening
4. Respectful acknowledgement of cultural differences
5. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
6. Appropriate and courteous use of telephone, public address systems, electronic devices and any other verbal communication device
7. Appropriate and courteous written communication, including notes, letters, email and text messages

B. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Rude, insulting or demeaning language and/or actions, **either in person, by email/text, voice/phone or other written or verbal communication.**
2. Persistently unreasonable demands
3. Intrusive and/or interruptive behavior
4. Displays of temper
5. Harassment and intimidation
6. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior
7. **Posting disparaging remarks on social media**

C. Incidents of uncivil behavior should be resolved cooperatively with the individual(s) most directly involved. **Following the protocol and chain of command to air concerns is expected. Start with teacher, then building administration then District Office then Board of Education if concerns are not addressed and/or resolved.**

Optional Language:

Any individual who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school or office operations; threatens the health and safety of students or staff; willfully causes property damage; uses loud or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction; or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on District property, will be directed to leave the premises by a member of the administrative staff or his/her designee.

If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demanding, loud, insulting and/or demeaning manner, the staff member to whom the remarks are directed will calmly and politely admonish the speaker to communicate civilly. If the abusing party does not take corrective action, the District employee will terminate the meeting or conversation.

(cf. [1110.1](#) - Parent Involvement)

(cf. [1120](#) - Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings)

(cf. [1250](#) - Visits to Schools)

(cf. [1251](#) - Loitering or Causing Disturbances)

(cf. [1310](#) - Relations Between the Public and School Personnel)

(cf. [1312](#) - Public Complaints)

(cf. [1330](#) - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. [1700](#) - Otherwise Lawful Possession of Firearms on School Property)

(cf. 6145.71 - Use of Alcohol by Adults)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[1-225](#) Meetings of the government agents to be public.

[1-232](#) Conduct of the meeting

[10-221](#) Boards of education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures.

[10-238](#) Petition for hearing by board of education.

[10-239](#) Use of school facilities for other purposes.

[53a-185](#) Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor.

Policy adopted:

Existing bylaw, number 9121 adopted 6/20/22, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Chairperson

A Chairperson of the Woodbridge Board of Education shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Board biannually at the organizational meeting of the Board. There is no restriction on the number of terms a Board member may serve as Chairperson.

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board, appoint committees, sign financial and other records of the Board, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law, State Department of Education regulations, or the action of the Board.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson shall:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Board's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters which may occur between Board meetings.
4. Appoint members to committees in accordance with Bylaws 9132 and 9133.
5. Call special meetings of the Board as necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Board at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Board, the Chairperson shall:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of the 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 it is not clear to every member.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Board.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries, referring questions of legality to the Board attorney.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.
9. Declare the meeting adjourned.

Bylaws of the Board

Chairperson (continued)

The Chairperson shall have the right, as other Board members have, to offer resolutions, discuss questions, and to vote.

The Chairperson of the Board may be removed as Chairperson by the affirmative vote of six (6) members taken at a duly constituted meeting for which the matter appeared as an agenda item.

(cf. 9121 - Bylaws of the Board of Education Officers)

(cf. 9132 - Standing Committees)

(cf. 9133 - Special Committees)

(cf. 9324 - Meeting Conduct and Parliamentary Procedure)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-218 Officers. Meetings.

10-224 Duties of the Secretary.

10-225 Salaries of Secretary and Attendance Officers.

Existing bylaw, number 9122 adopted 7/18/22, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Vice-Chairperson

A Vice-Chairperson of the Woodbridge Board of Education shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Board bi-annually at the organizational meeting of the Board.

In the absence or inability of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside at Board meetings and shall perform such other duties of the Chairperson as necessary.

(cf. 9321 Time, Place and Notification of Meetings)
(cf. 9324 Meeting Conduct and Parliamentary Procedure)
(cf. 9121 Chairperson)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-218 Officers. Meetings.

10-224 Duties of the Secretary.

10-225 Salaries of Secretary and Attendance Officers.

Existing bylaw, number 9123 adopted 6/20/22, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Secretary of the Board

A Secretary of the Board of Education shall be selected by a majority of the members of the Board bi-annually at the organizational meeting of the Board.

In the absence of the Clerk of the Board, the Secretary shall record and maintain a record of all meetings and proceedings of the Board.

In the absence of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary shall preside at Board meetings and perform such other duties as necessary.

(cf. 9324 - Meeting Conduct and Parliamentary Procedure)

(cf. 9121 - Bylaws of the Board of Education Officers)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-218 Officers. Meetings.

10-224 Duties of the Secretary.

10-225 Salaries of Secretary and Attendance Officers.

Existing bylaw, number 9124 adopted 10/17/11, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Clerk of the Board

The Woodbridge Board of Education shall be staffed by an individual who will serve as Clerk of the Board.

The Clerk of the Board shall be responsible for accurate records of the proceedings of the Board; and for the preservation of reports of committees and communications addressed to the Board; reports of the Chairperson and reports of the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-218 Officers.

10-224 Duties of secretary.

10-225 Salaries of secretary and attendance officers.

Sample bylaw to consider.

Bylaws of the Board

Attorney

The attorney of the _____ Board of Education shall be the legal advisor of the Board and its officers in questions related to their official duties. The Board of Education may appoint, either on a full-time or retainer basis, an attorney or attorneys to serve as school attorney. The primary function of the attorney is to provide professional legal counsel and representation for the Board and Superintendent.

Alternate language: The Board recognizes that the increasing complexity for school district operations frequently requires procurement of professional legal services. Therefore, the Board shall designate an attorney and/or law firm to provide such services on an ongoing basis. The school attorney(s) shall be admitted to practice law in Connecticut. The Board reserves the right to obtain legal services outside of its designated attorney/law firm as deemed appropriate.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the District shall normally be made by the Superintendent or Board Chairperson in accordance with Board policy and when an obvious need exists. Such services may also be obtained as a consequence of a formal vote of the Board.

Alternate language: To ensure the prudent and cost-effective use of legal services, the District will limit and designate the persons with the authority to request services or advice from contracted legal counsel. [The persons authorized to confer with and/or seek the legal advice of the Board attorney include the Superintendent or his/her designee, Business Manager, Special Education Director, and Chairperson of the Board.] The Board may authorize a specific member to confer with legal counsel on its behalf. Legal counsel will not be used unnecessarily to make management decisions or to obtain readily available information such as district policies.

The attorney shall:

1. Represent the Board of Education in legal proceedings.
2. Give his/her written opinion on all legal questions referred to him/her by the _____ Board of Education or the Superintendent.
3. Attend _____ Board of Education meetings, conferences and other meetings as requested by the Board, Superintendent, Board Chairperson or Board committee.
4. Fulfill such other legal duties as the _____ Board of Education may assign.

Bylaws of the Board

Attorney (continued)

Alternate language:

Legal services required by the District may include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing general legal advice to the Board and/or administration;
2. Assisting with labor negotiations;
3. Assisting with personnel matters;
4. Assisting with expulsions and other disciplinary matters;
5. Conduct and/or assist with pending or actual litigation involving the District;
6. Other specialized legal services; and
7. Attendance at Board meetings or other activities as appropriate.

The performance of the school attorney(s) shall be subject to annual evaluation by the _____ Board of Education and the Superintendent. Such evaluation shall include the areas of efficiency and adequacy of advice; results obtained for the District; reasonableness of fees; and responsiveness to and interactions with the Board, administration, and community.

The Board retains the right to terminate the service of any attorney.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

rev 1/11

A sample bylaw to consider.

Bylaws of the Board

Committees

In order to expedite smooth functioning, the Board authorizes the establishment of such standing and/or temporary committees as it finds necessary to study operations in specific areas and to make recommendations for Board policy and action.

The following procedures will govern the appointment and function of such committees:

1. Standing committees and their chairpersons shall be appointed biennially by the Board Chairperson at the first regular meeting following the organizational meeting. The Board has authorized the following standing committees: curriculum, finance, personnel, planning, public information, policy, transportation, liaison, legislative;
2. The Board Chairperson shall be an ex officio member of all standing committees;
3. The Chairperson of the Board of Education shall appoint temporary and special committees as may be deemed necessary or advisable by the Board of Education, and the Chairperson shall be an ex officio member of each committee; and
4. The duties of the committee shall be outlined at the time of appointment, and the committee shall be considered dissolved when its final report has been made to the Board of Education.

No committee shall have power other than to recommend to the Board of Education unless specially authorized. No committee, or member of a committee, is authorized to make any contract or enter into any agreement which involves the expenditure of money, unless such contract or agreement is authorized by the Board whether in regular or special meeting.

All committees of the Board of Education shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by statute.

All committees shall keep minutes of business conducted at meetings. The minutes will be kept on file in the Superintendent's office and available at all times to Board of Education members.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-200 through 1-241 Freedom of Information Act
 1-200 Definitions
 1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

Existing bylaw, number 9150 adopted 10/17/11, appropriate as written.

Bylaws of the Board

Board Consultants

The Woodbridge Board of Education will from time to time engage the services of qualified professional consultants to provide new insights and ideas for dealing with especially difficult problems and/or to provide special services which present staff is unable to provide. The kinds of assistance sought from consultants may include, but will not necessarily be limited to the following:

1. Conducting fact-finding studies, surveys, and research;
2. Providing counsel or services requiring special expertise;
3. Assisting the Board in developing policy and program recommendations.

Before engaging a consultant, the Board may require submission of a written proposal which can be incorporated into a contract or purchase order if it satisfies the wishes of the Board. Proposals will detail:

1. The specific objectives to be accomplished by the consultant;
2. The specific tasks to be performed;
3. The procedures to be used in carrying out the tasks;
4. The target dates for completion of tasks;
5. The method to be used to report results to the Board and/or to deliver any product" (e.g., long-range plans, codified policy manual, etc.) to the Board; and
6. Costs.

MINUTES OF THE WBOE POLICY COMMITTEE

Superintendent's Conference Room

April 1, 2024

WebEx <https://woodbridgeps.webex.com/woodbridgeps/j.php?MTID=m42fb6ccb8f81c7a1d08e0808c03d8ea4>

Meeting Number (access code): 2486 411 5152

Meeting Password: 67kXbZpHKg6

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Williamson called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM.

IN ATTENDANCE: Erin Williamson, Chair (in person), Lynn Piascyk (in person), Steven Lawrence (remote); Brooke Hopkins (remote), Board of Education Members; Vonda Tencza, Superintendent; and Teresa Ramia, WEA Liaison.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

The Committee reviewed Policies

- ❖ 9000-Role of Board and Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)
- ❖ 9005-Statement of Integrity
- ❖ 9010-Limits of authority
- ❖ 9011-Accountability
- ❖ 9012-Legal Responsibilities of Boards of Education
- ❖ 9020-Public Statements
- ❖ 9020.1 Advocacy
- ❖ 9030-Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff and Students
- ❖ 9040-Board Related Responsibilities
- ❖ 9110-Number of Members, Terms of Office, Election of Members
- ❖ 9120-Officers and Auxiliary Personnel

Changes were made as follows:

- Policy 9005 – Number (12) was deleted as it was a duplication of the language in Number (3).
- Policy 9011 – under Superintendent (5) was modified to “*overseeing the selection*”. This policy will be placed on hold for review at the next meeting until further information is obtained from the WEA pertaining to modification of the language under “Parents” as there is no policy pertaining to code of conduct for parents.
- Policy 9012 – Number (4) was modified to add “*amend*” after *consider* and before *and*. Since BRS is owned by the Town and the WBOE does not control the building (8) was deleted. It suggested to move (12) to the last item.
- Policy 9020 – It was questioned whether the BOE disseminates information about decisions made at all BOE meetings. We communicate about certain topics not sure it is something that is done in a formalized way. In the second paragraph, second sentence “*as needed*” was added after information and the word “*all*” deleted at the end of the same sentence.
- Policy 9020.1 – in the 4th paragraph, first sentence “*are*” was added after members, “*and*” was added after legislators and the last sentence deleted in its entirety. In the 5th paragraph, (,) was added after organizations and “*CABE*” was deleted. Beginning with “Coalition” all following text was deleted.
- Policy 9030 – in the title “*Democrat*” was changed to “*Democratic*”. Under (1) 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence “*in*” was added after *first-hand*.

Policies forwarded to the WBOE for 30-day review at the April 23, 2024 meeting: 9000, 9005, 9010, 9012, 9020, 9020.1, 9030, 9040, 9110, 9120.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Meeting Adjourned: 5:12 PM