



BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Citizen Representative Primer

The Beverly Public School district encourages citizens to take an active interest in supporting our students and schools. Community members can take advantage of many opportunities to participate in our public schools, from support of individual school Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) and booster organizations, to visiting our schools and attending athletics events and fine arts performances. For individuals who are interested in serving a regular, significant role in developing policy and providing oversight of our public schools, please consider serving as a representative on one of our two standing committees.

The Beverly Public School Committee has two standing committees made up of school committee members, district staff and citizen representatives. The Standing Committee on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Life regularly reviews curriculum program information and student achievement data. The Standing Committee on Finance and Facilities reviews school related revenues and expenses, as well as the current and future state of district facilities. Each group develops policy and provides oversight with the help of two citizen representatives. The following is a brief summary of the responsibilities and expectations of our citizen representatives, for a more complete picture please contact any school committee member or the superintendent of schools.

Basic Information

Number of representatives: Four citizen representatives are appointed each term of service. Two citizens serve on the Standing Committee on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Life while two different representatives are appointed to the Standing Committee on Finance and Facilities.

Term of Service: Appointed citizen representatives serve for a two year term, coinciding with the terms of the elected representatives.

Qualifications: Citizen Representatives should be U.S. citizens of voting age who agree to the terms of service and expectations described in this primer.

Time Commitment: Each standing committee meets monthly during the academic year (i.e. no meetings during July and August). Meetings vary in duration, but usually run between one and three hours. The Finance and Facilities group may meet more often during the spring budget development season.

Preparation: A packet of relevant information is distributed to committee members prior to each standing committee meeting. Committee members are expected to review this material in detail and compile a list of questions, concerns and comments to present during discussion of the material at the standing committee meeting.

Expectations: All committee members, including citizen representatives, are expected to come to every meeting fully prepared and willing to discuss agenda items in a collegial and productive manner.

Application Process: Interested individuals should forward a letter of interest to the Superintendent of Schools. Letters should contain a brief summary of relevant education and experiences, as well as express interest in serving on a specific standing committee. Resumes and/or curriculum vitae are welcome.

Selection: Citizen Representatives are appointed by the School Committee President and are typically selected with the help of individual standing committee chairs.

Beverly Public Schools Standing Committees

The **Standing Committee on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Life** is comprised of three elected school committee members, the superintendent or a designee (typically, the assistant superintendent serves this role), a faculty member (typically an administrator), four student representatives (two high school students and two grade 8 students), and two citizen representatives. One of the elected school committee members serves as the committee chair and typically works with the assistant superintendent and other committee members to set the agenda for each meeting. This group takes a very big picture look on student achievement, curriculum development and student life issues. As a result, citizen representatives to this group are usually educators, involved parents, or community members with a strong interest in education and some sort of relevant experience.

The curriculum group regularly reviews the program of studies at all levels, student achievement data, changes to district curriculum, and district initiatives designed to improve school climate and student life. This group regularly develops, revises and approves policies that improves district education and student environment. Committee members also approve curriculum and textbook changes, new programs, and student handbooks.

The **Standing Committee on Finance and Facilities** is comprised of three elected school committee members, the superintendent of schools (or a designee), the district Director of Finance and Operations, and two citizen representatives. One of the elected school committee members serves as the committee chair and typically works with the Director of Finance and Operations and other committee members to set the agenda for each meeting. As the group is primarily concerned with budgets and buildings, citizen representatives typically have a background in finance, technology, operations management or the construction industry. That being said, any individual with an altogether different background but with a keen interest in finances and facilities should not be discouraged from applying to serve on this group.

The finance group reviews district revenues and expenses on a monthly basis. The group regularly reviews repair and maintenance work performed in district facilities by the municipal Department of Public Services. Finance committee members approve new positions, budget transfers, and policies relevant to facility and budget oversight. The finance group reviews proposals for all new district programs (i.e. creation of a new athletics team) that incur a cost and issues a recommendation to the full school committee.

Appendix

1. Excerpted from the Beverly Public School Committee policy on “School Committee Subcommittees and Standing Committees.”

Standing committee(s) membership may include private citizens (whose expertise and interest is welcome), as well as staff and faculty representatives. Citizen advisors are appointed by the president of the School Committee in consultation with the standing committee chairperson for a term of two years.

The right of appointed citizen members to vote is restricted to standing committee actions. Citizen members may serve up to two additional years on a specific standing committee. A current list of interested citizens shall be maintained by the Superintendent's office. Names shall be submitted by citizens interested in serving on committees or by School Committee members. The list will be made available to standing committee chairpersons as a basis for recommendation of individuals to the president of the School Committee for appointment. In the event that no citizen expresses an interest in joining a standing committee, additional names will be sought through the news media.

2. Spring 2016 Meeting Schedule – unless otherwise indicated (*), meetings are held at 7:00 pm at the McKeown School Conference Room (70 Balch Street, Beverly MA).
 - a. Curriculum, Instruction and Student Life Standing Committee
 - January 6, 2016
 - February 3, 2016
 - March 2, 2016
 - April 6, 2016
 - May 4, 2016
 - June 8, 2016
 - b. Finance and Facilities Standing Committee
 - January 20, 2016
 - *February 24, 2016 (6:30 pm at BHS Library)
 - March 16, 2016
 - *April 27, 2016 (6:30 pm at BHS Library)
 - May 18, 2016
 - June 22, 2016