

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff, Students**

#### **Board-Staff Communications**

The Hamden Board of Education recognizes the need to maintain open communication between itself and the staff. Essentially, communications with staff deal with three general areas -- administration, policy and philosophy. While the Board recognizes the necessity for board-staff communications, it also recognizes that administrative matters must be dealt with through its chief administrator. Hence, the basic line of communication for administrative matters shall be through the Superintendent or designee.

#### **1. Staff Communications to the Board**

All formal reports to the Board or any Board committee from administrators, supervisors, teachers or other staff members shall be submitted through the Superintendent. This necessary procedure shall not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided that the Superintendent shall have been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Board's policy on complaints and grievances. (cf. 4135.4 and 4234.4 re Complaints/Grievances)

Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe and participate first hand the Board's deliberations on problems of staff concern. Furthermore, other appropriate communications, verbal or written, between staff and individual board members are acceptable.

#### **2. Board Communication to Staff**

All official communications, policies and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent, and the Superintendent will employ all such media as are appropriate to keep staff fully informed of the Board's problems, concerns and actions. (cf. 9020 - Public Statements)

#### **3. Visits to Schools**

Individual Board members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will make arrangements for visitations through the administrators of the various schools. Such visits shall be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Each Board member should be mindful of the purpose of his/her visit and conduct himself/herself appropriately.

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff, Students** (continued)

Board members who visit schools to conduct Board business will do so only under Board authorization with the full knowledge of the Superintendent and appropriate staff.

#### **4. Social Interaction**

Staff and Board members share an interest in the schools and in education generally, and it is to be expected that when they meet at social affairs and other functions, they will informally discuss such matters as educational trends, issues, innovations, and general school district problems. Individual Board members have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board or vested with special authority by Board action. Board of Education members are expected to avoid discussion of:

- A. Matters that may be the subject of an executive session;
- B. Information and data contained in personnel records protected by the privacy act;
- C. Contested issues that may require final resolution by the Board.

(cf. 1250 - Visits to the Schools)

(cf. 2220 - Representative and Deliberative Groups re staff involvement in decision making)

(cf. 5145 - Civil and Legal rights & Responsibilities)

(cf. 9133 - Special/Advisory Committee re staff advisory committee and student advisory committee)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-220 Duties of boards of education.