

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:

...Three, five, six, seven or nine members of the School Committee for terms of three years...

The School Committee is the governing board of the town's public school system. Although its functions as a duly elected Committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, 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.

Mansfield Town Charter provides that:

There shall be a school committee consisting of five members elected by the voters of the town for three-year overlapping terms such that the term of office of at least one member but not more than two expires each year. If on the same ballot there are two or more seats vacant with varying terms of office, the longest terms of office shall accrue to the candidates receiving the highest number of votes, in succession.

A vacancy shall be filled until the next annual election by a majority vote of a joint meeting of the remainder of the School Committee and Board of Selectmen. At the next Annual Municipal Election the remainder of the unexpired term shall be filled by election.

The School Committee shall be the chief policy-making body for the School Department and shall appoint a Superintendent of Schools to be its chief executive officer. The school committee shall exercise all the powers and duties of school committees under the General Laws.

Established by state law and town charter

REVISED: October 7, 2014

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
Mansfield Town Charter

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties