

# SOMERSWORTH

Category: Recommended

# BEA

Related Policies: BEDA, BEB, BEDB, BEDG,  
BEDC, BEDH, EH, and EH-R

## BOARD MEETINGS

*The School Board utilizes the following categories of meetings:*

Per RSA 91-A:2, a "meeting" means the convening of a quorum of the membership of a public body, as defined in RSA 91-A:1-a, VI, or the majority of the members of such public body if the rules of that body define "quorum" as more than a majority of its members, whether in person, by means of telephone or electronic communication, or in any other manner such that all participating members are able to communicate with each other contemporaneously, subject to the provisions set forth in RSA 91-A:2, III, for the purpose of discussing or acting upon a matter or matters over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

### I. Categories of Board Meetings

- 1. Regular Board Meetings** - *A recurring convening of the School Board as defined in RSA 91-A:2.*
- 2. Special Board Meetings** - *Held at the discretion of the Chair or Superintendent in accordance with RSA 91-A. Refer to policy BEB*
- 3. Emergency Board Meetings** - *Held at the discretion of the Chair or Superintendent in accordance with RSA 91-A:2 per the definition of emergency as "...a situation where an immediate action is imperative" as deemed by the Chair.*
- 4. Non – Public Sessions** – *Held at the discretion of the Chair or Superintendent in accordance with RSA 91-A:3. Refer to policy BEC*
- 5. Workshops** – *Held at the discretion of the School Board Chair for the purposes of sharing information and holding an informal discussion among board members ( and Superintendent when applicable). No voting or decision-making occurs at workshops.*
- 6. Retreats** – *Held at the discretion of the School Board Chair for the purposes of sharing information and holding an informal discussion among board members ( and Superintendent when applicable). No voting or decision-making occurs at retreats.*

### II. General Consideration for all Board Meetings

#### A. Quorum

A majority of the Board members shall constitute a quorum. Except in an emergency, a quorum of the Board shall be physically present at the location specified in the meeting notice as the location of the meeting (RSA 91-A:2, II(b)). Provisions for meeting a quorum are established in Board Policy BEDC.

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## BOARD MEETINGS

### B. Board Member Attendance

The School Board recognizes that the consistent attendance of Board Members at Board Meetings is essential for the efficient and effective operation of the Board's duties as well as fulfilling individual obligations as elected officials.

### C. Meeting Duration

School Board meetings will adjourn no later than 10:00 PM. Meetings may be extended by a vote of the Board.

### D. Meeting location

All public meetings will be held in-person at the location specified in the meeting notice. Use of an electronic platform will be authorized for use to hold an emergency meeting of the Board, if an in-person meeting is not practical.

Electronic meetings are also considered public meetings per RSA 91-A. The public will be provided with the relevant information to access any public meeting held using an electronic platform.

Non-public meetings will be held in person at the location specified by the School Board Chair.

## III. Considerations for Specific Meetings

### E. Regular Board Meetings

#### a. Frequency and Public Notice

The Board shall meet at least monthly. Unless otherwise altered by Board action, regular meetings of the Board shall be held in person at the City Hall Chambers.

All regular board meetings shall be open to the public and the press. Notice of all board meetings will be posted in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to post notice of meetings on the SAU website and at the SAU Office as established in Policy BEDA.

#### b. Agenda Preparation

The Superintendent will work with the School Board Chairperson to prepare all agendas for meetings of the Board as established in Policy BEDB.

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### **c. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of all meetings will be taken and provided in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A and Board Policy BEDG.

### **d. Remote Attendance**

When it is not reasonably practical for a member to attend in person, the member may attend via telephone, skype, or other electronic means. RSA 91-A:2, III. The following is required:

1. The reason it is not reasonably practical for the member to attend in person must be included in the minutes of the meeting.
2. The member participating electronically must identify anyone present at the location the member is participating from.
3. All votes taken during the meeting must be by taken by roll call vote.
4. The public attending the meeting and all members must be able to simultaneously hear or see communication between the member(s) participating remotely and those participating in person. No meeting shall be conducted by electronic mail or any other form of communication that does not permit the public to hear, read, or otherwise discern the meeting discussion contemporaneously at the meeting location specified in the meeting notice.
5. If a member is allowed to participate electronically from a remote location, there must be a quorum of the school board physically present at the location specified in the meeting notice. The member(s) participating electronically from a remote location will not count towards satisfying the quorum requirement.

### **e. Public Participation**

The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public as established by Policy BEDH. The Board agenda will always allow suitable time for public comment as established in Policy BEDB.

### **f. Public Access to Information**

Draft minutes of all public meetings, clearly marked as drafts, will be made available for public inspection no later than five (5) business days after each public session as established in Policy BEDG.

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### **BOARD MEETINGS**

The Superintendent is designated as the custodian of all “District Records” as defined by the state’s Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A:1-a as established in Policy EH. School Board meeting minutes are considered District Records.

Any member of the public who would like to request access to “District Records” can make requests through the SAU Office through procedures established in Policy EH-R.

#### **F. Special Board Meetings**

##### **a. Frequency and Public Notice -**

Special board meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson or upon the written request of at least 40% of the School Board as established in Policy BEB.

All special board meetings shall be open to the public and the press. Notice of all board meetings will be posted in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to post notice of meetings on the SAU website and at the SAU Office as established in Policy BEDA.

##### **b. Agenda Preparation**

The Superintendent will work with the School Board Chairperson to prepare all agendas for meetings of the Board as established in Policy BEDB.

##### **c. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of all meetings will be taken and provided in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A and Board Policy BEDG.

##### **d. Remote Attendance**

When it is not reasonably practical for a member to attend in person, the member may attend via telephone, skype, or other electronic means. RSA 91-A:2, III. The following is required:

1. The reason it is not reasonably practical for the member to attend in person must be included in the minutes of the meeting.
2. The member participating electronically must identify anyone present at the location the member is participating from.

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## BOARD MEETINGS

3. All votes taken during the meeting must be by taken by roll call vote.
4. The public attending the meeting and all members must be able to simultaneously hear or see communication between the member(s) participating remotely and those participating in person. No meeting shall be conducted by electronic mail or any other form of communication that does not permit the public to hear, read, or otherwise discern the meeting discussion contemporaneously at the meeting location specified in the meeting notice.
5. If a member is allowed to participate electronically from a remote location, there must be a quorum of the school board physically present at the location specified in the meeting notice. The member(s) participating electronically from a remote location will not count towards satisfying the quorum requirement.

### **e. Public Participation**

The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public as established by Policy BEDH. The Board agenda will always allow suitable time for public comment as established in Policy BEDB.

### **f. Public Access to Information**

Draft minutes of all public meetings, clearly marked as drafts, will be made available for public inspection no later than five (5) business days after each public session as established in Policy BEDG.

The Superintendent is designated as the custodian of all “District Records” as defined by the state’s Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A:1-a as established in Policy EH. School Board meeting minutes are considered District Records.

Any member of the public who would like to request access to “District Records” can make requests through the SAU Office through procedures established in Policy EH-R.

## **G. Emergency Board Meetings**

### **a. Frequency and Public Notice -**

Emergency board meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson, Superintendent or upon the written request of at least 40% of the School Board as established in Policy BEB. Emergency meetings may be called in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:2 and Policy BEB. Notices of the time and place of emergency meetings shall be posted as soon as is practicable and do not require 24 hour advanced notice.

## **BOARD MEETINGS**

### **b. Agenda Preparation**

The Superintendent will work with the School Board Chairperson to prepare all agendas for meetings of the Board as established in Policy BEDB.

### **c. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of all meetings will be taken and provided in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A and Board Policy BEDG.

### **d. Remote Attendance**

When it is not reasonably practical for a member to attend in person, the member may attend via telephone, skype, or other electronic means. RSA 91-A:2, III. The following is required:

1. The reason it is not reasonably practical for the member to attend in person must be included in the minutes of the meeting.
2. The member participating electronically must identify anyone present at the location the member is participating from.
3. All votes taken during the meeting must be by taken by roll call vote.
4. The public attending the meeting and all members must be able to simultaneously hear or see communication between the member(s) participating remotely and those participating in person. No meeting shall be conducted by electronic mail or any other form of communication that does not permit the public to hear, read, or otherwise discern the meeting discussion contemporaneously at the meeting location specified in the meeting notice.
5. Member(s) may be allowed to participate electronically from a remote location even if there is not a quorum of the school board physically present at the location specified in the meeting notice. Member(s) participating electronically from a remote location will ~~not~~ count towards satisfying the quorum requirement.
6. When the quorum requirement is satisfied in part by one or more members participating electronically from a remote location, the facts requiring immediate action before a physical quorum can be gathered shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

### **e. Public Participation**

The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public as established by Policy BEDH. The Board agenda will always allow suitable time for public comment as established in Policy BEDB.

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### **f. Public Access to Information**

Draft minutes of all public meetings, clearly marked as drafts, will be made available for public inspection no later than five (5) business days after each public session as established in Policy BEDG.

The Superintendent is designated as the custodian of all “District Records” as defined by the state’s Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A:1-a as established in Policy EH. School Board meeting minutes are considered District Records.

Any member of the public who would like to request access to “District Records” can make requests through the SAU Office through procedures established in Policy EH-R.

## **H. Non - public Sessions**

### **a. Frequency and Public Notice -**

Non - public sessions shall be held at the call of the Chairperson. Per RSA 91-A:3, nonpublic sessions are held to discuss matters of personnel and/or matters which, if discussed publicly, could have adverse effects on a party or parties.

### **b. Agenda Preparation**

The Superintendent may work with the School Board Chairperson to prepare agendas for non-public sessions of the Board as established in Policy BEDB.

### **c. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of all sessions will be taken and provided in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A and Board Policy BEDG.

### **d. Remote Attendance**

When it is not reasonably practical for a member to attend in person, the member may attend via telephone, skype, or other electronic means. RSA 91-A:2, III. The following is required:

1. The reason it is not reasonably practical for the member to attend in person must be included in the minutes of the meeting.
2. The member participating electronically must identify anyone present at the location the member is participating from.

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3. All votes taken during the meeting must be by taken by roll call vote.
4. Member(s) may be allowed to participate electronically from a remote location even if there is not a quorum of the school board physically present at the location specified in the meeting notice. Member(s) participating electronically from a remote location will count towards satisfying the quorum requirement.
5. When the quorum requirement is satisfied in part by one or more members participating electronically from a remote location, the facts requiring immediate action before a physical quorum can be gathered shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

#### **e. Public Participation**

The public is excluded from attending or participating in non-public sessions.

#### **f. Public Access to Information**

Unless by recorded vote a majority of the board members vote to seal the minutes, minutes of all non - public sessions will be made available for public inspection no later than five (5) business days after each public session as established in Policy BEDG.

The Superintendent is designated as the custodian of all “District Records” as defined by the state’s Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A:1-a as established in Policy EH. School Board meeting minutes are considered District Records.

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### **I. Workshops and Retreats**

#### **a. Frequency and Public Notice -**

Workshops and retreats shall be held at the call of the Chairperson or Superintendent.

#### **b. Agenda Preparation**

The Superintendent will work with the School Board Chairperson to prepare all agendas for meetings of the Board as established in Policy BEDB.



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### **c. Meeting Minutes**

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6. When the quorum requirement is satisfied in part by one or more members participating electronically from a remote location, the facts requiring immediate action before a physical quorum can be gathered shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

### **e. Public Participation**

The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public as established by Policy BEDH. The Board agenda will always allow suitable time for public comment as established in Policy BEDB.

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### *Legal References:*

*RSA 91-A, Access to Public Records and Meetings*

*N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 303.01(f), Substantive Duties of School Boards*

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