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Westerly Public Schools School Committee Advisory Committees

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The Westerly School Committee encourages the participation of citizens in three types of advisory committees; however, the legal responsibility for decision making in all matters of policy and operation rests solely with the Committee.

- Westerly School Committee appointed advisory committees, both district wide and at the school level, will function within organizational frameworks approved by the Committee. Only the Committee will have the authority to dissolve advisory committees it has created.
- School and district level advisory committees that are required under federal and state programs will be formed, and will function, in accordance with the requirements pertaining to each specific program; the Committee will grant to those bodies the advisory responsibilities relevant to the program or project. Advisory committees of this type are as follows, but not necessarily limited to: Title I, Special Education, Limited English Programs and the Professional Development Investment Fund advisory committees.
- Community groups that are neither appointed by the Committee nor formed as required under federal or state programs are encouraged to offer suggestions to the Committee in order to assist it in making decisions. The final responsibility for all decisions, however, rests with the Committee.

The Committee may appoint ad hoc advisory committees to counsel it as one means of discerning the needs and desires of the school district and its residents. The primary purpose of all advisory committees is to contribute to the educational program by conducting studies, identifying problems, and developing recommendations that will enhance the effectiveness of the decision making process. The ultimate authority to make decisions will continue to reside in the powers and duties of the Committee as imposed by law.

Such advisory committees will be formed by the Committee at such times and for such specific purposes as the Committee deems necessary. They will function until their assigned goal has been accomplished, and then will be dissolved. Generally, citizens' advisory committees will be assigned to investigate educational programs/issues which may need development, change, or reorganization and areas of community involvement in district affairs.

The establishment and functioning of citizens advisory committees will be subject to the following requirements:

- The Westerly School Committee will create the advisory committee and issue its assignment. This will be fully outlined to the committee when it is assigned.

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- All committees will be temporary. They will be created to serve only during the school year of appointment or until completion of their assignment, whichever is shorter. Continuing the committee for all or part of the subsequent school year is at the discretion of the Committee.
- Advisory committee members will be appointed by the Westerly School Committee. Vacancies will be filled by the Committee upon the advice of the advisory committee, or otherwise. Persons appointed will be residents concerned with public education who are able to give the efforts, time, and talent needed for the advisory committee's assignment.
- The Committee may appoint the chairperson, or it may appoint an advisory committee member to serve as chairperson until the committee selects a chairperson from its membership. The committee will appoint a member as necessary.
- Meetings will be announced to all advisory committee members and Committee members and the general public through the Office of the Superintendent following Rhode Island Open Meeting requirements. Members of the Committee, and the Superintendent or a designee may attend committee meetings.
- Minutes of advisory committee meetings will be promptly distributed to members, Committee members, and the Superintendent and will be available to the public at the Superintendent's office.
- Joint meetings of the School Committee and the advisory committee will be held at the request of the School Committee.
- To ensure smooth and orderly procedures, the chairperson of the advisory committee will maintain liaison with the School Committee through the Superintendent's office.
- At the conclusion of its assignment, the advisory committee will submit a written report to the School Committee. At this time a joint meeting may be called to discuss the report and the committee's recommendations.
- Through the public records of the School Committee and other appropriate means, the public will be informed on the organization, purpose, and membership of advisory committees and of each committee's final recommendations.
- The School Committee may appoint one of its members to provide liaison with each of its committees. A School Committee member serving in such capacity shall meet or communicate with the advisory committee as deemed appropriate or as they request.
- The Superintendent shall appoint a member of the staff to serve as a channel of communication between the Superintendent's office and all advisory committees. The person serving in this capacity shall meet or communicate with the advisory committee as he/she deems proper or as the advisory committee may request, keeping informed as to activities, providing for the use of resources,

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and advising in the preparation of reports. Staff liaison personnel to citizens' advisory committees shall report directly to the Superintendent.

Reference: Titles 16-2-9, 16-2-11 and 16-7.1-10, and Section 1, Article X, Part 2 of the Rhode Island Special Education Regulations.

Adopted: June 21, 2006
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