

## **FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS**

The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. It follows that achievement of the school system's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Somerville School Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated.

In the school system's fiscal management, it is the committee's intent:

1. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and to guide expenditures so as to achieve the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. To establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for the students.
3. To use the best available techniques for budget development and management.
4. To provide timely and appropriate information to all staff with fiscal management responsibilities.
5. To establish maximum efficiency procedures for accounting, reporting, business, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

## **ANNUAL BUDGET**

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program of the school department, and it mirrors the goals, challenges and long range plans of the school system.

The budget requires that Somerville School Committee, the staff, and the community work in an orderly and cooperative manner to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school system.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local School Committee requirements. The operating budget for the school system will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer but he/she may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of his/her staff, as he/she deems appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

Adopted: January 18, 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34; 71:37 and 71:38N

## **BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES**

Preparation of the annual budget will be scheduled with attention to deadlines established by law and charter.

The School Committee will approve a budget timeline for the next fiscal year by December 15, annually.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

Amended: December 2017

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38N  
City Charter (See local reference)

## **BUDGET PLANNING**

In the City of Somerville, the first priority in the development of an annual school department budget shall be educational welfare of the children in our schools.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision-making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects this school system's goals and objectives.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the Somerville School Committee will strive to:

1. Engage in thorough advance planning, with broad-based staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.
3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The Superintendent in cooperation with the Director of Finance shall have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget timeline.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

**DISSEMINATION OF BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS/  
HEARINGS AND REVIEWS**

Following its approval of a tentative budget, the Somerville School Committee will annually publish a budget document to be made available to the public.

Members of the community shall be invited to attend a hearing at which the Somerville School Committee and the Superintendent shall explain the proposed budget and accept questions, comments, and suggestions from the audience.

In accordance with the law, notice of the hearing shall be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City at least seven days prior to the hearing. Other means shall also be used to inform all residents of the hearing and of their opportunity to appear and to speak for or against the whole or any part of the proposed budget.

Current Practice Codified 1978

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

LEGAL REG.: M.G.L. 71:38N

## **BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES**

Authority for adoption of the final school budget lies with the Board of Aldermen when it establishes the annual budget appropriations for the city.

The law requires every city annually to provide an amount of money sufficient for the support of the public school (as prescribed by the Education Reform Act of 1993), and sets up procedures for the budgetary deficiencies to be determined and rectified by the courts if a city does not approve sufficient funds for the school budget.

Statutory

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34

## **FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS**

The Somerville School Committee will encourage the administration to seek and secure all possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds that will enhance the educational opportunities for the children in our schools.

The Superintendent/designee will keep informed of all possible funds available to the school system under the various state and federal programs, and in what manner these funds can best be used in the school system.

The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for seeking out and coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects and for following School Committee policy and Massachusetts General Law regarding proposals and applications.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign all reports for these projects and will be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds received for such projects.

The Superintendent may delegate portions of these responsibilities to members of his/her staff as he/she deems appropriate.

Adopted:

Revised: January 18, 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:53A  
P.L. 874 Impact Aid  
Board of Education 603 CMR 32:00; 34:00

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES**

The Chairman of the Somerville School Committee and the Superintendent/designee will sign payrolls presented for approval.

Revised: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:52

**BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS**

Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The cost of the bond will be paid by the city.

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

## **FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING**

The Superintendent will be ultimately responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and to good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The Somerville School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Somerville School Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

Revised: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR 10:00

## **AUDITS**

An audit of the school department's accounts should be conducted annually. In addition, the Somerville School Committee may request a private audit of the school system's accounts at its discretion.

The Somerville School Committee will consider recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school department's assets.

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

## **PURCHASING**

The Somerville School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be centralized in the Superintendent's office of the school system.

The Superintendent or designee will serve as purchasing agent. He/she will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by the Superintendent or designee and designated Somerville School Committee members, with such exceptions as may be made by the latter for emergency purchases.

Revised: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B; 71:49A

## **PURCHASING AUTHORITY**

Authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is extended to the Superintendent/designee through the detailed listing of such items compiled as part of the budget-making process.

The purchase of items and services on such lists requires no further Somerville School Committee approval except when by law or Somerville School Committee policy the purchases or services must be put to bid.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30B

## **PURCHASING PROCEDURES**

All purchases of materials, services, supplies, equipment or maintenance will be requisitioned by appropriate administrator of department, school or program and purchased based on an authorized purchase order.

All purchasing will be consistent with state law and city charter, following rules of solicitation, including any monetary threshold for quotes or bids for goods and services.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: September 2004

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30B  
City Charter

## **BIDDING REQUIREMENTS**

Unless statutorily exempt, competitive bids will be sought for the purchase of all goods and services; construction and maintenance at monetary thresholds consistent with state law and city ordinance.

All bids will be advertised appropriately and efforts will be made to procure multiple bids. The process for submission and evaluation of bids will be consistent with the requirements of state procurement laws.

The bidder to whom an award is made will be required to enter into a written contract with the school system.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: September 2004

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B

## **VENDOR RELATIONS**

Representatives of firms doing or hoping to do business with the school system will be acknowledged and interviews granted or not, depending on the circumstances. Personnel charged with the purchasing function will not be required to put their time at the indiscriminate use of sales personnel, who will limit their visits to staff members designated by school officials.

Adopted: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

## **PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

All claims for payment from school department funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the Somerville School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Somerville School Committee will receive monthly lists of bills for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the Somerville School Committee and then forwarded to the city auditor for processing and subsequent payment by the city treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the Somerville School Committee.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school building administrators will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools.

Revised: January 1996

Reviewed: November 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:41; 41:52 41:56

## **PAYROLLS**

Payrolls are to be prepared in compliance with collective bargaining agreements, employment contracts and/or established wage schedules. Payrolls shall be signed by the Superintendent/designee and countersigned by the chairperson or vice chairperson of the Somerville School Committee. Payrolls shall be forwarded to the city auditor for approval and to city treasurer for processing.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

## **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

With prior authorization, personnel and school department officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent/designee.

When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Somerville School Committee. However, a monthly travel stipend, in an amount established by the Somerville School Committee, will be paid to employees authorized by the Somerville School Committee who are required to travel regularly within the school system on official business.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests will be as follows:

1. Travel by Somerville School Committee members must have prior approval of the Somerville School Committee.
2. Each individual request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school system.

Adopted: January 1996

Revised: September 2004

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 44:58

## **PAYMENT OF BILLS**

The Superintendent of Schools, or designee, shall approve all bill rolls for payment.

A majority of the Somerville School Committee members present, including the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, shall approve the schedule of bills.

Adopted: March 16, 1992

Revised: August 2009