

School Committee Legal Status

Recognizing that “a general diffusion of the advantages of education [is] essential to the preservation of rights and liberties of the people,” the Constitution of the State of Maine declares that the Legislature has the duty to require communities to provide for the support and maintenance of public schools in order to further this objective. Maine law establishes a State Department of Education to supervise a coordinated system of public education, a Commissioner to enforce regulatory requirements and to provide technical assistance and educational leadership, and a State Board of Education to act as a body with certain policymaking, administrative and advisory functions, but places the responsibility for control and management of public schools with locally elected School Committees, School Boards or Boards of Directors. Thus, the Auburn School Committee derives its legal authority from the State’s Constitution, state statutes, regulations of the State Board of Education, and the Charter of the City of Auburn, as well as Federal laws and regulations.

By custom and tradition, local School Committees have responsibilities to the local citizenry they serve and which elect them to office. Recognizing this parallel concept of authority and responsibility, the School Committee becomes a policy-making body for the school district serving within the framework provided by law and responding to the will of the local citizenry.

Composition of the School Committee

As established by the Charter of the City of Auburn, the School Committee consists of the Mayor, or a City Councilor selected by the Mayor, and seven (7) other members. Five (5) members are elected, one (1) from each ward in the City and from its registered voters. Two (2) members are elected at large from the registered voters of the City. Each School Committee member serves a term of two (2) years except that a vacancy before the expiration of a member’s term shall be filled in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Charter.

The School Committee is authorized by the Charter of the City of Auburn to appoint by rule non-voting student representatives to the School Committee.

Legal Reference:	Maine Const., art. VIII 20-A MRSA §§ 1001, 2301 Charter of the City of Auburn §§ 4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Adopted:	March 20, 1991
Revised:	February 24, 1993; November 16, 1994, February 6, 2008