

Youth Voice



Young Organizers United (Y.O.U.) believes youth voice is important and student representatives are needed on the Manchester Board of School Committee. In order for real change to occur it is necessary to have youth that are in the school advocating for their peers. No one knows what goes on in the schools better than the youth themselves.

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Manchester- Charter Section 4.02 School Committee

The School Committee shall be comprised of fourteen (14) members, one each from the twelve wards of the city and two from the city at-large. The school committee shall sit and act together as one body. The mayor shall be an ex-officio member with all the powers and privileges of the other committee members and shall be chairman of the committee.

Title XV Education Chapter 194 School Districts High Schools Section 194:23-f

194:23-f High School Students as School Board Member- The provisions of this section shall apply only to high schools located in a school district in which the school board has voted to have nonvoting student member pursuant to RSA 189:1-c.

I. In addition to the school board members authorized in RSA 671:4, a high school shall select, in accordance with directives of paragraph II and the provisions of RSA 189:1-c one or more students from among its members to be nonvoting members of the school board for the district in which the high school is located. A student member shall have all the rights of a regular school board member regarding school board business except the right vote.



Can the Board Vote Merely Vote to Add students to the School Committee?

For a number of reasons, we believe that the Board of School Committee could simply take a vote if it wanted to allow student members. The legislation that allows for student representation is enabling legislation. Ultimately, the Board of School Committee makes this decision.

History of Student Representation on the Board of School Committee

A group of Central High School students organized a statewide movement to permit local school districts to allow high school student representation on school boards. Both houses of the legislature passed the bill, and Gov. John Sununu signed it into law in 1983. Although many districts quickly invited students to sit as non-voting members of various school boards, the Manchester Board of School Committee has never seriously considered the possibility.

Rights of Student Representatives

Student representatives must be high school students. They are entitled to exercise all the powers of any member of school board with the exception of the right to vote, the right to participate in non-public sessions, and the right to have access to the records of non-public sessions.

Selection of student Representatives

The statute is silent regarding the method of choosing student representatives to the board. Research indicates that a number of options have been employed. These elections are often held in conjunction with elections for student council officers and class officers. Some student representatives are elected by members of the student council or by the executive board of the student council. The Nashua School Board has two student representatives. One student represents Nashua North, and the other represents Nashua South. Thus, the precedent that would allow up to four students to serve in Manchester has been set.