

103 Board of Education - Policy Development

Revised: September 25, 2001

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Policy

The Board believes that the establishment and monitoring of policy is one of its major functions. The Board further believes that its policies are detailed expressions of intent and must be based upon the Board's own statements of mission, mandate and core values.

Board policies are statements of intent adopted by the Board in order to take actions consistent with the School Act and its regulations, ministerial orders, other legislation, and Board philosophy and values. It is important that the Board make formal public statements of intent in order that the Board can be held accountable by the community.

Policies guide the actions of the Superintendent, define in specific terms the administrative procedures required for implementation of the policies and acts on the Board's behalf in monitoring the implementation of policies and administrative procedures.

The Board shall formulate and adopt administrative procedures when so required by law, and may do so when the Superintendent recommends that the Board take such action.

The process of policy development shall include open and authentic communication between the Board and its students, staff, parents and other members of the community.

Administrative Procedures

Criteria for Exemplary Policy

The following are considered the criteria for exemplary Board policies:

- Policies are consistent with the Board's statements of mission, mandate and core values
- Policies are developed in response to a real need and are the result of a comprehensive consultative process
- Policies are clearly written and are easily understood by those who reference them
- Policies are precise enough to give guidance, but broad enough to allow appropriate discretionary action
- Policies are current and up-to-date
- Policies are readily available and accessible to anyone who wishes to reference them
- Policies are deemed to be effective after regular review

Establishing Priorities for Policy Development

The Board should address the following questions when considering the development of new policy:

- Is a policy required by legislation or regulation?
- Is the development of policy the appropriate response to an issue or set of circumstances?
- Is there a health or safety issue?
- Is there a program need?
- Is there an operational need?
- Is there an equity issue?
- Is there a community issue?
- Is there a governance issue?
- Are there financial implications?

- Is the issue important enough to warrant a policy statement?
- What are the implications of continuing with the status quo?
- What is the practicality or feasibility of developing a particular policy?

Process for Policy Development

The Board identifies an issue requiring policy development. The Superintendent names an administrator to coordinate the development of the policy. The coordinating administrator forms a working group to develop draft policy for recommendation to the Board. The working group consults with others as needed and develops a draft policy statement with accompanying rationale. The draft policy is presented to the Board for consideration.

Consultative Process

Upon receiving the draft proposed policy and prior to adopting the policy, the Board should undertake a consultative process based upon the following principles:

- Consultation should involve all parties who can contribute to and/or are affected by the proposed policy
- Consultation should be characterized by openness, trust, integrity and mutual respect for the points of view of all participants
- Participants in a consultation process should be given clear mandates
- Appropriate resources should be provided to enable participants to contribute fully to the consultation
- The timelines for consultation should be clear so that participants can plan their involvement
- Consultation should be scheduled to allow full participation
- Consultation should not be used to affirm decisions already made
- Participants should be informed of the results of the consultation

Process for Policy Implementation

Following Board adoption of a policy, the Superintendent assumes responsibility for implementing the policy. The process of implementation will include the development of written administrative procedures, communication with affected groups, determination of any immediate actions required by the policy, and the establishment of long-term plans.

A program of regular evaluation of the effectiveness of policies shall be undertaken by the Superintendent who will report findings to the Board from time-to-time.