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ABSTRACT

This is the 16th in a continuing series of kit-booklets issued to help school boards develop written policies in key subject areas. The material supports the contention that a set of well-defined policies on board policy development and administrative execution of policies reduces the likelihood of trouble and tends to eliminate instant, sloppy, contradictory, dictatorial, or illegal policymaking. This booklet provides samples of policies to encourage thinking in policy terms and to provide working papers to be edited, modified, or adapted to meet local requirements. Subject areas covered include a policy development system, policy drafting, policy adoption, policy dissemination, policy review, administrative rules review, administration in policy absence, suspension of policies, and policy implementation. (Author/JF)

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BOARD POLICIES on POLICY DEVELOPMENT

#72-39

EA 004 445



... a school board policy development kit
prepared by the Educational Policies Service
of the NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

ED 064784

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BOARD POLICIES ON POLICY DEVELOPMENT

EPS cat. no. 72-39

June, 1972

This is the 16th in a continuing series of kit-booklets issued to help school boards develop written policies in key subject areas. All policy samples and other policy resources reproduced herein have been selected from the files of the Policy Information Clearinghouse of the National School Boards Association's Educational Policies Service (EPS/NSBA) and coded to the EPS/NSBA policy codification system.

The intent in providing policy samples is to encourage thinking in policy terms; to provide "something to start with"--working papers to be edited, modified, or adapted to meet local requirements. Administrators of EPS/NSBA member organizations should file this booklet for continuing reference in their master copy of the Educational Policies Reference Manual.

These materials are disseminated for information only and do not necessarily reflect official viewpoints of the National School Boards Association.

Additional kits may be ordered from the National School Boards Association, State National Bank Plaza, Evanston, Illinois 60201 at the following rates: 1-3 kits @ \$2.00; 4-7 kits @ \$1.80; 8-10 kits @ \$1.60; 11 or more kits @ \$1.50. Postage and handling charge added unless payment accompanies order--and payment should accompany all orders under \$6.00 in value.

Write to the EPS/NSBA Clearinghouse (address below) for information about previously-published kits in this series.

EA 004 445

EPS/NSBA POLICY INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE
152 Cross Road Waterford, Conn. 06385
Tel. 203-442-0233

EPS Files: BD--Policy Development (full sequence)
CM--Policy Implementation (full sequence)

Written policies on policy development
help school boards operate more smoothly

The text for the morning's sermon is from Hesiod, the Latin poet: "It is best to do things systematically since we are only human, and disorder is our worst enemy."

School board members are only human. Unless they impose order and discipline on the way they arrive at policy decisions, they can and do get into trouble.

A set of well-defined policies on board policy development and administrative execution of policies reduces the likelihood of trouble and tends to eliminate such common malpractices as these:

- Instant policymaking. That happens when the school board makes a decision too hastily, without benefit of research, study, cool deliberation, due notice, or professional opinion.
- Dictatorial policymaking. That happens when the school board makes policy unilaterally, without seeking the counsel or advice of those who are to be affected--students, teachers, parents, community leaders, etc.
- Illegal policymaking. That happens when the board fails to consult its attorney on matters where case law is still being written.
- Sloppy policymaking. That happens when the board fails to assign the drafting of policy statements to a competent writer. The language used in policy statements should be clear and unmistakable in meaning.
- Contradictory policymaking. That happens when the board has no mechanism (such as a codification system) for the immediate retrieval of all past policy decisions which exist only as historical items buried in the book of minutes.

With a clear set of policies on policy development, a school board has a system for making decisions. And a system in no way restricts the board's decisionmaking authority. In fact, it liberates the board from the shackles of disorderly procedure. It enables the board to exercise more

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control, not less. Also, such policies clarify roles and relationships and build a better understanding among board members and also between the board and its staff and publics.

Provisions to Consider

Again, it is best to do things systematically. And the coded descriptors (policy titles) used in the EPS/NSBA policy classification system suggest a way "to do" policies on policy development and implementation systematically. Even though the sample policies included in this kit are coded to this system, it might be helpful to see the relevant descriptor sequences as they appear in the system's two Sections on school board operations and general school administration.

From SECTION B--SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS

BD	Policy Development
BDA	Policy Development System
BDAA	Policy Draft Writer
BDS	Policy Drafting
BDBA	Attorney Involvement
BDBB	Staff Involvement
BDBC	Community Involvement
BDBD	Student Involvement
BDC	Policy Adoption
BDD	Policy Dissemination
BDE	Policy Review
BDF	Review of Administrative Rules (Also CMAD)
BDG	Administration in Policy Absence (Also CMB)
BDH	Suspension of Policies

From SECTION C--GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

CM	Policy Implementation
CMA	Administrative Rules
CMAA	Rules Drafting
CMAB	Rules Adoption
CMAC	Rules Dissemination
CMAD	Rules Review (Also BDF)
CMB	Administration in Policy Absence (Also BDG)

(In the EPS/NSBA system, "Also" means that a given policy with the same descriptor title but with a different code is to be filed elsewhere in the board's policy manual. For example, the policy on Administration in Policy Absence "belongs" in both Section B and in Section C.)

Aside from their value as filing references, these descriptors stand as important reminders of the kind of provisions needed in a set of policies on policy development and implementation.

° There should be a general statement on the board's authority and re-

sponsibility to establish policies for the district (BD).

- There should be formal recognition as to what system the board will follow in filing and coding its policies, whether that system is EPS or another (BDA).
- There should be a designation as to who is responsible for rendering draft policies into clear English and for maintaining the board's policy manual system (BDAA).
- There should be a specified procedure concerning the planning and re-researching of policy proposals for board action--and for determining how others may become involved in the preparation of such proposals (BDB and subcategories).
- There should be a very clear statement as to how policies are actually to be adopted by the board (BDC).
- There should be a board directive as to how its policies are to be communicated to staff, students, and public (BDD).
- There should be provisions specified for the ongoing review and evaluation of policies and, specifically, for updating the board's policy manual at least once a year (BDE).
- The board should specify how it wishes to review or at least be kept informed about the rules and regulations that the administration has devised for implementing policies (BDF).
- The board should recognize that it can never have a policy to cover every conceivable situation, and it should consequently anticipate, in writing, the occasional need for the administration to act in the absence of policy (BDG).
- The board should further anticipate that on rare and unusual occasions it may find it necessary to suspend its policies (BDH).
- Finally, the board should indicate, through policy, its interest in

WHAT IS A BOARD POLICY?

Policies are guidelines, adopted by the board, to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted and may include also why and how much. They should be broad enough to admit discretionary action by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

Rules are the detailed directions developed by the administration to put policy into practice. They tell how, by whom, where, and when things are to be done.

the development of effective administrative rules that are intended as detailed "implementers" of policy (CM and subcategories).

One Policy--or Nineteen?

A word about mechanics. In the above BD and CM lists, there is a total of 19 separate policy descriptors. It is conceivable that the board might want to develop one master policy on policy development that would include all the provisions suggested by the separate terms. The result, we feel, would be a statement that would be much too long and too detailed to be effective.

In policy writing, brevity--not verbiage--is the soul of effectiveness. It would be preferable to draft up to 19 separate policies--one for each descriptor or descriptor group (such as BDB and subcategories). The short policy is much easier to write than a long one--and it is easier to read and understand. Also, if the board files its policies in a looseleaf manual, it is a simple matter to revise "one-subject" policies than those that embrace many topics.

We hope that both in substance and in format the policies in this kit will suggest good ideas to you.

--William E. Dickinson, Director, EPS/NSBA

NSBA'S POLICY ON POLICY DEVELOPMENT

"School boards should adopt clearly defined written policies, based on a thorough understanding of the educational process. In formulating the policies they should consult individuals and groups affected by the policies, and, since changing conditions bring changing needs, should periodically review policies. They should recognize that while school boards are policymaking bodies, they properly delegate the execution of policy to employed professional administrators."--From the Statement of Beliefs and Policies of the National School Boards Association, 1968

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Board should adopt clearly defined written policies based on a thorough understanding of the educational process. In formulating policies, the Board should consult those individuals or groups to be affected by the policies; and, since changing conditions bring changing needs, should periodically review policies. The Board should recognize that while it is a policymaking body the execution of policy is properly delegated to employed professional administrators.

The Board may consult with those individuals and groups to be affected by policies but shall reserve to itself the function of providing guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority. These guides for discretionary action shall constitute policies governing the operation of the school system and shall be recorded in writing.

The formulation and adoption of written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the school system. The study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board shall exercise its control over the operation of the school system.

The formal adoption of policies shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board. Only those written statements so adopted and so recorded shall be regarded as official Board policy.

SOURCE: Unified School District No. 374, Sublette, Kans.
DATE: 5/4/70

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Board reserves the function of providing policies to guide the actions of those to whom it delegates authority. These policies shall be recorded in writing.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies shall constitute one method by which the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the school system.

In formulating policies, the Board shall adopt general principles and statements of intent. The Superintendent and his professional staff shall take action therewith. Application of such policies to individual problems and tasks is an administrative function to be performed by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall, in turn, when necessary, or when directed by the governing Board, prepare written regulations to insure the implementation of Board policy.

The Superintendent, in cooperation with staff and the Board, shall recommend policies for adoption and recommend revision of existing policies. Policies and/or revisions may be proposed by any member of the Board, by any lay group or organization, or by any citizen.

Specific policy proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing policies shall be submitted to all members of the Board in writing prior to a regular scheduled Board meeting. No policy or amendment or revision shall be adopted unless it has been discussed at a meeting prior to adoption.

It shall be the duty of the Board to reappraise its policies periodically in view of the changing needs of the community and schools.

SOURCE: Newport-Mesa Unified School District, Newport, Calif.
DATE: Revised 3/7/67

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

It is the intent of the Roxbury Township Board to develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guidelines and goals for the successful and efficient functioning of the Roxbury Township Public Schools.

The Board considers policy development its chief function, along with providing the wherewithal such as personnel, buildings, materials, and equipment for the successful administration, application, and execution of its policies.

The Board accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by the School Board to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting a number of problems; narrow enough to give clear guidance. Policies are guides for action by the administration, who then sets the rules and regulations to provide specific directions to school district personnel.

It is the Board's intention that its policies serve as sources of information and guidance for all people who are interested in, or connected with, the Roxbury Public Schools.

The policies of the Roxbury Township Board are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of New Jersey laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and all other regulatory agencies within our local, county, state, and federal levels of government. The policies are also framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of those educational objectives, procedures, and practices which are broadly accepted by leaders and authorities in the public education field.

Changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives will require revisions, deletions, and additions to the policies of present and future Boards. The Board will welcome suggestions for ongoing policy development.

SOURCE: Roxbury Township Public Schools, Succasunna, N.J.
DATE: 5/11/70

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Board shall reserve to itself the function of providing guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority. These guides, hereafter called "policies," are statements which set forth the purpose and describe in general terms the organization, operation, and programs of the school system. They create a framework within which the Superintendent and the staff can discharge their assigned duties with positive directions.

These policies, relating to the functions of this school are established by the Board under the authority granted it by the statutes of the State of Illinois. The formal adoption of policies shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and incorporated in the policy manual. Only those written statements so adopted and so recorded shall be regarded as official Board policy.

Board policies and decisions shall be official and legally binding. The Board will establish such policies as are prescribed by law for the conduct and administration of the schools and such other policies as may seem advisable. Execution of policy through the detailed steps and procedures of school administration is the job of the Superintendent and the staff.

When any enactment of the State of Illinois or of the United States of America is in conflict with the provisions of the policies adopted by the Board, Community High School District 218, County of Cook, State of Illinois, the state or federal statute shall take precedence over any provision of the District policy.

SOURCE: Community High School District 218, Worth, Ill.
DATE: 9/14/70

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Board policy is defined as statements of governing principles which are the chief instruments by which a Board exercises control over the school system. Policy statements determine the limits of administrative discretion. By means of the policies adopted, a Board explains values, purposes, and ends to be sought. Often the Superintendent offers recommendations and develops policy proposals. However, in order to be in effect, a policy must be voted by the Board.

The Board, as the controlling body of the public schools, is charged with the responsibility of establishing policies for the schools and maintaining the best possible education conditions for Norwalk. The primary function of the Board is the determination of general policies for and the exercise of general supervision of the public schools. The details and administration thereof shall be carried out by its Superintendent and professional staff.

The Board shall concern itself primarily with broad questions of policy rather than with administrative details. The Superintendent shall utilize the best judgment of the professional staff in formulating a sound educational program, shall recommend policies for adoption to the Board, and shall administer policies enacted by the Board. The adopted policies shall represent a combination of the lay judgment of the members of the Board and the professional judgment of the Superintendent and his staff, adopted officially as Board policy. Having determined its policies, the Board shall stand squarely behind these employees whose work it is to put the policies into practice.

SOURCE: Norwalk Public Schools, Norwalk, Conn.
DATE: 4/11/66

POLICY DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The Board adopts the policy development codification and dissemination system of the National School Boards Association (EPS/NSBA).

SOURCE: Various school districts

POLICY DRAFT WRITER

The Superintendent (or his designate) shall be responsible for recasting group consensus about policy recommendations into acceptable written form for further deliberation and/or action by the Board.

SOURCE: Unified School District No. 374, Sublette, Kans.
DATE: 5/4/70

POLICY DRAFTING

Adoption of new policies, or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Board.

The District Superintendent shall report to the Board from time to time on the policies in operation and shall propose such changes as he deems necessary.

Proposals for new policies, or changes to existing policies, may be initiated in writing by any Board member, student, or patron of the Byram Hills Schools, or by any employee of the Board. The policy proposals shall be referred to the District Superintendent for detailed study prior to consideration by the Board.

SOURCE: Byram Hills Central Schools, Armonk, N.Y.
DATE: 7/6/71

ATTORNEY INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Superintendent, as the policy draft writer for the Board, shall seek the counsel of the school attorney when, in his opinion or the Board's, there may be a question of legality or proper legal procedure in the development of a proposed school board policy.

SOURCE: Unified School District No. 374, Sublette, Kans.
DATE: 5/4/70

STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

It shall be the policy of the Board to encourage employee participation in policymaking for the school district. The Superintendent is authorized to establish such committees as necessary to recommend policies for the proper functioning of the district.

All professional personnel shall be encouraged to assist in the formulation of recommended educational policy for the district through their representatives on the District Steering Committee. Recommendations of this committee which relate to the overall school program shall be submitted, after affirmative vote of the committee, to the Superintendent for Board action.

SOURCE: Regional High School District 5, Woodbridge, Conn.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A lay policy advisory committee shall be appointed by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board to serve at the Board's discretion as a general study group to concern itself with basic areas of system-wide policy which will be assigned to the committee for study from time to time.

The committee shall be made up of 12 members who shall be persons representative of the county as a whole and persons who have demonstrated an interest in and a concern for public education in Mecklenburg County. Members shall serve on an annual basis.

Once established, the committee shall:

1. Meet periodically to consider policy areas in need of clarification, revision, or expansion as assigned by the Board.
2. Select its own chairman and vice-chairman.
3. Call upon various interested groups and individuals for advice and information as needed.
4. Have a member of the Board and a member of the administrative staff of the school system as liaison with the committee, the Board member to represent the Board and the staff member to serve as secretary to the committee.

SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, N.C.
DATE: 1/11/66; Amended 6/13/67

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Most students desire a stronger voice in the decisions which affect them, and their efforts are welcomed by the School Committee.

The School Committee views student participation in school affairs as an extension of the educational process. This district will encourage students to participate through planned programs and procedures in the government of the school and in curriculum evaluation.

As citizens, students have the right to acquire an education appropriate to their interests and potential, and they have the responsibility to assist in developing regulations for student conduct which provide for an educational climate conducive to the accomplishment of worthwhile educational goals and objectives.

By participating more actively, students can be a resource to the improvement of schools and to desirable communication.

SOURCE: Gardner Public Schools, Gardner, Mass.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

To carry out the foregoing policy, the Gardner Public Schools shall evolve a program for meaningful participation of students in school affairs which will give attention to the following areas:

I. Communication

Schools shall establish some organized ways in which faculty, students, and administrators discuss substantive school issues.

II. School Government

Student government shall be so organized as to provide constructive participation of students in those school matters for which they can reasonably be expected to assume responsibility.

III. Student Newspapers

An editorial policy for any school newspaper shall be established cooperatively by students, faculty, and administration.

IV. Discipline and Control

Schools shall publish and clarify all school rules and establish procedures for evaluating and modifying the rules with the aid of students and provide some mechanism for the hearing of student grievances.

V. Curriculum and Instruction

Each school shall provide opportunities for student participation in curriculum evaluation and instructional planning.

The school administrators will be expected to report to the Superintendent from time to time their progress in carrying out the intent of the policy.

SOURCE: Gardner Public Schools, Gardner, Mass.

POLICY ADOPTION

Policies recommended to the School Committee shall not be adopted until a meeting subsequent to their introduction. The time lapse will permit further study by Committee members and reaction from concerned parties. Temporary approval of a policy may be granted by the School Committee to meet emergency conditions or special events which would take place before formal adoption could be enacted.

The policies may be amended by the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Committee at any meeting provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been sent or delivered to each member of the Committee at least seven days prior to the meeting and that the proposal is included in the agenda for the meeting.

SOURCE: Wellesley Public Schools, Wellesley, Mass. (abridged)
DATE: 6/15/70

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Board and the administrative rules and regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Board, and to selected persons in the community.

SOURCE: Special School District #1, Minneapolis, Minn.
DATE: 4/25/67

POLICY REVIEW

The process of appraisal of existing written policies shall be continuous and items may be included on the agenda at any time at the suggestions of individual board members or the administration.

SOURCE: Parkrose School District #3, Portland, Ore.
DATE: 1961

* * * * *

The Board shall periodically review school board policies and the policy development system and shall consider reports, both formal and informal, of community members and staff members as it revises policy.

SOURCE: Unified School District No. 374, Sublette, Kans. (abridged)
DATE: 5/4/70

* * * * *

The School Committee shall study the ways in which policies have been carried out by the school staff and shall evaluate their impact on the school system. Through communications with school staff and community members, the Committee shall develop an information base from which to review the appropriateness and effectiveness not only of recent policies but of long-standing policies which may have outlived their relevance.

SOURCE: Wellesley Public Schools, Wellesley, Mass.
DATE: 6/15/70

REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate those administrative rules necessary to implement Board policy, and shall review such rules periodically to determine their effectiveness in carrying out policies.

The Board shall retain the prerogative to review any and all administrative rules and may suggest or direct that certain rules be added, modified, or deleted.

SOURCE: Byram Hills Central Schools, Armonk, N.Y.
DATE: 7/6/71

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

In cases where action must be taken within the school system where the Board has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent shall have the power to act.

His decisions, however, shall be subject to review by action of the Board at its regular meeting. It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to inform the Board promptly of such action and of the need for policy.

SOURCE: Baltimore County Public Schools, Towson, Md.
DATE: 9/18/68

LEGAL REF.: Ann. Code of the Pub. Gen. Laws of Md. Art. 77-Pub. Ed. #55.
Control and supervision of system

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of Board policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of Board members present at a regular or special meeting.

SOURCE: School District 4, Addison, Ill.
DATE: 1971

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The professional school administrator carries out in good faith all policies duly adopted by the local Board and the regulations of state authorities and renders professional service to the best of his ability.

The following examples illustrate but do not limit applications of this policy:

- A. Adoption of policies not in conformity with the administrator's recommendations or beliefs is not just cause for refusal by the administrator to support and execute them.
- B. It is improper for an administrator to refuse to work at his optimum level.
- C. A school administrator has an obligation to support publicly the school board and the instructional staff if either is unjustly accused. He should not permit himself to become involved publicly in personal criticism of board or staff members. He should be at liberty, however, to discuss differences of opinion on professional matters.
- D. If a situation develops whereby an administrator feels that to retain his position would necessitate that he violate what he and other members of the profession consider to be ethical conduct he should inform the board of the untenable position. In the event of his imminent dismissal the superintendent should request adequate reasons and if they are not forthcoming or if the situation is not resolved to his professional satisfaction he should report to the public.

SOURCE: Code of Ethics of the American Association of School Administrators
DATE: 1966

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

The Superintendent shall develop rules and procedures for implementing school board policy. These rules and detailed arrangements shall constitute the school district's administrative regulations.

The Superintendent shall evaluate recommendations offered by employees, students, the community, and other interested groups when establishing administrative regulations.

The Board reserves the right to review and veto any administrative regulations should it, in the Board's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the Board.

SOURCE: Fargo Public Schools, Fargo, N.D.
DATE: 3/28/72

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES DRAFTING

The School Committee shall delegate to the Superintendent the function of specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the schools will be operated. These rules and these detailed arrangements shall constitute the administrative regulations governing the schools. The Committee itself shall formulate and adopt administrative regulations only when specific state laws, strong community attitudes, or probable staff reaction requires the Committee to do so.

SOURCE: Barrington Public Schools, Barrington, R.I.
DATE: 3/13/58

LEGAL REFS.: General Laws, 1938, Chapter 178; (General Laws, 1923, Ch. 70) #4
Volume 3 - 16-2-9
General Laws, 1938, Chapter 178; (General Laws, 1923, Ch. 70) #10
Volume 3 - 16-2-11

RULES DISSEMINATION

For the purpose of keeping staff informed, an administrative handbook detailing the operating procedures for the Wayne County Intermediate School District shall be developed, with copies provided to all staff. Developing and maintaining the currency of said handbook shall be an administrative responsibility.

SOURCE: Wayne County Intermediate School District, Detroit, Mich.
DATE: 1964