

Policy 10

POLICY MAKING

One of the primary responsibilities of the Board is to establish Board policies in regard to its operation, and fix responsibility for the execution and implementation of policy.

Written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board exercises its leadership in the operation of the Division. They also communicate the Board's values, beliefs and expectations.

In formulating policy, careful analysis of the subject will be undertaken, alternatives will be considered and relevant stakeholders shall be consulted.

The Board shall be guided in its approach to policy making by ensuring adherence to the requirements necessary to provide public education and compliance with the Education Act, and provincial as well as federal legislation.

Board policies shall provide an appropriate balance between the responsibility of the Board to develop the broad guidelines to guide the Division and the opportunity for the Superintendent to exercise professional judgment in the administration of the Division.

Specifically

1. Policy Development

- 1.1 The adoption of new policies and the amendment or revision of existing policies are the responsibilities of the Board.
- 1.2 The Board delegates to the Superintendent, in consultation with the Board's standing committees, the analysis of policy needs, the consideration of alternatives, and the initial drafting of policy proposals and amendments.
 - 1.2.1 When appropriate, the Superintendent shall seek legal advice on the intent and wording of the policy.
- 1.3 Policy needs may be indicated by any individual, or group.
- 1.4 In instances where a policy proposal received is at the same time an item being negotiated, the policy item will not normally be acted upon by the Board until the bargaining is completed. This provision does not limit the Board's prerogative of approving a proposed policy for implementation on an interim basis prior to completion of negotiations.
- 1.5 The Superintendent shall provide the Board with a clear policy proposal to fulfill a recognized policy need.
- 1.6 Following first reading of a policy, it shall be circulated to concerned individuals and groups for comment and input.

- 1.7 All policy decisions shall be made only by the Board. Formal adoption of policies shall be recorded in the minutes of the regular meetings of the Board, and a copy of the policy appended to the official minutes.
- 1.8 Specific policies may delegate the formulation of administrative procedures to the Superintendent if the policy specifically establishes the delegation.
- 1.9 All policies will be organized and maintained in a Board Policy Handbook and, in each case, the date of the Board approval or amendment will be shown.
- 1.10 Policies will be reviewed annually and revised, if necessary, to meet changing needs. Policy development is a continuous process.
- 1.11 All policies shall be written, clearly defined and based on the Board's philosophy and goals, showing a thorough understanding and appreciation of local needs.

2. Policy Adoption

The following procedures shall be followed for the adoption of new policies or revisions to existing ones.

- 2.1 The Superintendent or standing committee shall submit proposed new policy or revisions to existing policy to the Board for its consideration, in accordance with the process outlined above.
- 2.2 The policy proposal or proposed revision shall be introduced on the Board's agenda for the first time as first reading.
 - 2.2.1 If first reading is approved by the Board, the policy proposal shall be circulated to School Councils and other appropriate interest groups as soon as possible, advising them of the date scheduled for further consideration by the Board, and inviting comments and suggestions regarding the proposal.
- 2.3 At a subsequent meeting the Board shall consider the policy proposal for second reading.
 - 2.3.1 Comments received may be considered, and the proposal is open for discussion and amendment.
 - 2.3.2 The Board may hear direct input on the policy prior to second reading.
 - 2.3.3 If second reading is approved by the Board, the proposal, including any revisions which have been approved at this stage, will again be circulated to School Councils and other appropriate interest groups, as soon as possible for further review and comment.
- 2.4 At a subsequent meeting, the policy is again open for discussion and amendment. The policy in its original or amended form may be given third reading, and final approval.
- 2.5 Amendments to policy that do not substantially change the policy shall be described as technical amendments and shall be given one reading, followed by discussion and a vote on the amendment.
 - 2.5.1 If passed, this shall constitute an amendment to policy.
- 2.6 A policy being considered for first reading may also be adopted as interim policy if in the opinion of the Board this course of action is the most appropriate. Interim policy

will be required to be circulated and given two (2) additional readings as set out in this process.

3. Policy Dissemination

- 3.1 Policies are passed at regular or special meetings of the Board.
- 3.2 Electronic copies of all policies passed shall be distributed to all staff and to those that have expressed an interest in the policy.
- 3.3 The Principal or section head is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that appropriate policy is conveyed and interpreted to their staff, or other interested parties.
- 3.4 The Principal or section head also has the responsibility of ensuring that electronic copies of all policies in their school or department are:
 - 3.4.1 Easily accessible to all staff members.
 - 3.4.2 Kept up to date with regard to the most recent additions and/or deletions.
- 3.5 All persons making use of policies are reminded that the electronic copies available on the Division website are the most current version of any Board policies.

4. Policy Review and Evaluation

- 4.1 The Superintendent shall ensure that the Board Policy Handbook is reviewed on an annual basis, to identify areas of policy that:
 - 4.1.1 Need revision in the light of current goals, objectives and practices of the system.
 - 4.1.2 Need to be developed.
 - 4.1.3 Need to be amended or updated.
 - 4.1.4 Can be deleted.

5. Emergency Procedures

- 5.1 On matters of unusual urgency, the Board may waive the consultation period and take immediate action to adopt new policies or revise existing ones. Such action requires two thirds majority consent of the Board.
- 5.2 The operation of any section or sections of Board policies duly established may be temporarily suspended by a two thirds majority vote of Board members present at a regular or special meeting.
- 5.3 In instances or on matters where no Board policy exists, the Superintendent or person designated to act in the Superintendent's absence is authorized to act in accordance with best established practice, subject to ratification by the Board. In so doing, the Superintendent shall use as a guide the following criteria:
 - 5.3.1 The position is in keeping with the Board's educational philosophy;
 - 5.3.2 The position best meets the legal requirements of a practice appropriate to the given situation; and/or
 - 5.3.3 The position appears to be most appropriate for the Division.

- 5.4 Whenever possible, the Superintendent shall seek authorization by the telephone from a majority of trustees, prior to the implementation of the interim policy.
- 5.5 Where immediate action is required, the Superintendent shall request ratification of an action that involves the application of an interim policy at the next regular meeting of the Board.

6. Administrative Procedures

- 6.1 The Board may request the Superintendent to change an administrative procedure to a draft Board policy and will provide the rationale for same.
- 6.2 The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures as specified in Policy 11 – Board Delegation of Authority and may develop such other procedures as deemed necessary for the effective operation of the Division. These must be in accordance with Board policies.
- 6.3 The Board may also delete a policy and subsequently delegate the Superintendent authority over this area. The Superintendent may choose to then develop an administrative procedure relative to this matter.
- 6.4 The Superintendent must inform the Board of any substantive changes to administrative procedures.
- 6.5 The Superintendent shall arrange for all Board policies and administrative procedures and subsequent revisions to be posted on the Division’s website, in a timely manner, for staff and public access.

Legal Reference: Section 52, 53, 222 Education Act

Reviewed: JAN 2018/NOV 2018/NOV 2019