

POLICY MAKING

Policy Development is a key responsibility of the Board. Policies constitute the will of the Board in determining how the Division will be operated. Policies provide effective direction and guidelines for the action of the Board, Superintendent, staff, students, electors, and other agencies. Policies also serve as sources of information and guidelines to all who may be interested in or connected with the operation of the Division. Adoption of new or revised board policies is solely the responsibility of the Board. The Board may delegate the drafting of new policy or revision of existing policy to a committee of the Board.

The Board or committee shall be guided in its approach to policy making by ensuring adherence to the requirements necessary to provide public education and compliance with the School Act and provincial legislation. Further, the Board believes that the development and review of policies are enhanced when the process allows for the meaningful involvement of staff and other interested groups and persons.

Board policies shall provide an appropriate balance between the responsibility of the Board or committee 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.

The Board or committee shall adhere to the following stages in its approach to policy making:

1. Planning

The Board or committee, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall assess the need for a policy, as a result of its own monitoring activities or on the suggestion of others, and identify the critical attributes of each policy to be developed.

2. Development

The Board or committee may develop the policy itself or could delegate the responsibility for development to the Superintendent. The process for the development and review of policies should allow for consultation with interested or impacted groups and individuals as appropriate to their circumstances. This consultation shall only occur after a draft version of the policy has been approved in principle by board motion.

3. Implementation

The Board is responsible for the implementation of policies governing its own processes. The Board and Superintendent share the responsibility for implementation of policies relating to the Board-Superintendent relationship. The Superintendent is responsible for the implementation of all other policies.

4. Evaluation

The Board or committee, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall evaluate each policy in a timely manner at a minimum every three years in order to determine whether or not it is meeting its intended purpose.

Specifically:

1. Responsibility for the drafting of policy proposals and revisions will rest with the Superintendent in consultation with the Board or designated committee. When appropriate, the Superintendent shall seek legal advice on the intent and the wording of the policy.
2. Ideas for policy are brought forward by individual trustees or administration or as a result of discussion with parents, community stakeholders, Teacher Board Liaison Committee (TBLC), Administrative Associations, School Councils, the School Boards' Associations or as a result of changes or updates in the system or provincially.
3. When the Board approves a policy in principle, the Board is putting an idea, a philosophy, or a specific policy out to stakeholder groups for input. The Board will provide an opportunity to interested stakeholders (teachers, support staff, administrators, school councils, or other groups affected by the policy) to offer suggestions to fine-tune, change, or delete the proposed policy as the case may be.

Once a policy is approved in principle, the Board is committed to sending it to whichever groups are affected by the policy. A minimum thirty (30) day time span is allowed to provide such groups an opportunity for feedback. The Board then again discusses the policy in open forum and may choose to amend, delete, or approve the policy in full.

4. Adoption of a policy statement shall be by board motion.
5. In the absence of existing policy, the Board may make decisions, by resolution, on matters affecting the administration, management, and operation of the Division.
6. The Board or committee may request that the Superintendent change an administrative procedure to a draft board policy, and will provide the rationale for same.
7. The Superintendent must develop administrative procedures as specified in policy (The Role of the Superintendent) and may develop such other procedures as deemed necessary for the effective operation of the Division; these must be in accordance with board policies.
8. 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.
9. All board policies shall be posted on the Division's website.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, School Act

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