

7 Exercising Effective Governance: The School Board's Role as Policymaker

Checklist: Policy Development Guiding Questions

General considerations for all policies:

- Is the policy ethical? Does it align with the Board's values, vision and mission?
- Does the document employ gender neutral and inclusive language?
- Are key terms in the policy adequately defined?
- Is the policy written in a manner that can be understood by a wide audience?
- Is terminology consistent in the draft policy and across related policies?
- What resources (time, personnel, etc.) will be needed to develop, implement and/or monitor this policy?
- Does the draft policy follow the board policy template?

Planning Stages

- Is a policy required or is the issue better resolved through other means such as improved communication, an educational campaign, or a memorandum?
- Are the resources, knowledge and expertise available to develop a policy on this issue?
- Will there be any training or professional development requirements associated with the development, implementation or monitoring of this policy? If so, how will they be addressed?
- Is there an existing policy with the same or a similar intent?
- Have policies from other Board of Education been examined for comparison?
- Have plans been made on how the policy will be implemented and who will be responsible for implementing it?
- Have plans been made on how the policy will be communicated to the school district, community, constituents and any applicable external organizations?



Drafting and Reviewing the Policy

- Is the purpose of the policy clearly established in the document?
- Have related policies and procedures and other documents (e.g., Multi-Year Strategic Plan) been reviewed to ensure the draft policy aligns with them?
- If there are pre-existing policies that are interrelated or overlap, are appropriate references included to related policies and is it clear when each policy will apply?
- Does the policy accurately reflect current practice?
- Has applicable legislation (e.g. *Education Act*) been identified and reviewed to ensure that the draft policy is in accordance?
- Is it clear to whom and what the policy applies?
- Have all procedures been separated from the policy?
- Have all references in the draft policy been verified as accurate and current?

Consultations

- Have experts in the subject area been consulted?
- Have all staff, community members, and stakeholders been identified who may be impacted by the terms of the draft policy?
- Have stakeholders been consulted and had an opportunity to provide input and feedback on the draft policy?
- Have consultations been considered and appropriate revisions made to the draft policy?

Policy Approval

- Has the draft policy been presented to the board for approval?
- If changes were determined to be necessary, have they been made?
- If changes were required and have been made, has the policy been resubmitted to the board for approval?
- Has the Board Policy Handbook been revised to include the new policy?

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