

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

Tips for Effective Policy Development

- Policy development and implementation are among the most critical responsibilities of the Board of Trustees. It is through effective policies that the Board provides direction and stability to, and the framework for, the operation of the school system.
- Policy statements reflect the basic philosophy and values established for the system, and constitute basic principles for decision-making and action by administrative personnel.
- Through statements of policy, the Board of Trustees exercises its legislative authority and controls the operation of the school system by establishing the limits within which the activities of professional staff may occur.
- Effective policies eliminate inconsistency in Board and administrative action and minimize the need for higher authorities to deal repeatedly with like matters.
- The value and importance of policies demand a consistent and comprehensive process of policy development. Therefore the Board of Trustees approves the development of policies in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this policy.

A sound, effective policy:

- Is consistent with the board's mission statement and system goals
- Is specific in its intent and purpose and effective in achieving its intended purpose
- Is relevant to the current and future operation of the system
- Suggests executive action and may grant executive discretionary authority Is free from ambiguities and uncertainties and is written in clear, concise inclusive language



- Is sufficiently broad in scope to allow administrators to be guided in their decisions or related problems and to accommodate individual circumstances and changing needs
- conforms to current legislation (e.g. Education Act, Ministry Memoranda) and aligned with existing Board policies
- Is developed through an appropriate consultation process
- Readily available and accessible to all on the board web-site
- Current and up to date; and
- Successful in achieving the intended purpose.

ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM: The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, Policy #201, *Policy Development/ Revision* and the Avon-Maitland District School Board, Board Policy No. 12, *Policy Making*