

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 and communicate the Board's values, beliefs and expectations. 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 Board policies or revision of existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Board.

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 School 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.

The Board believes in the establishment and review of policy which reflects its values and perspectives.

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

Procedures

1. Planning

The Board, 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 may develop the policy itself or delegate the responsibility for its development to Superintendent.

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 the other policies.

4. Evaluation

The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall evaluate each policy in a timely manner in order to determine if it is meeting its intended purpose.

Specifically

1. Any trustee, employee, taxpayer, parent, student or School Council of the Division may make suggestions regarding the possible development of a policy or the need for policy revisions on any matter by presenting a proposal for a policy or revisions, in writing, to the Superintendent. The proposal shall contain a brief statement of purpose or rationale.
2. The Superintendent will inform the Board of the request for policy development/ revision. The Board will determine the action to be taken.
3. If necessary, the Superintendent or designate will draft amendments to an existing policy or a new policy as the case may be.
4. When appropriate, the Superintendent shall seek legal advice on the intent and the wording of the policy.
5. The policy draft is then brought by the Superintendent to the Policy Committee for review.
6. The Policy Committee will bring the policy draft with recommendations for the Board to consider.
7. After the Board has determined that a policy is necessary it will direct the Superintendent or designate to prepare a draft policy for its consideration. The Board acknowledges that in certain circumstances, stakeholders affected by a proposed policy may be involved in policy development.
8. Once a draft policy has been considered by the Board it may direct that the document be circulated to stakeholders with an invitation to study the draft and to suggest modifications.
9. The Superintendent or designate will receive feedback to the draft policy and will advise the Board if a further draft is necessary.
10. Once stakeholder comments have been taken into account, the policy will be recommended to the Board for final approval.
11. Only those policies which are adopted and recorded in the minutes constitute the official policies of the Board.
12. In the absence of existing policy, the Board may make decisions, by resolution, on matters affecting the administration, management and operation of the Division. Such decisions carry the weight of policy until such time as specific written policy is developed.
13. The Board may request the Superintendent to change an administrative procedure to a draft Board policy and will provide the rationale for same.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. The Superintendent must inform the Board of any substantive changes to administrative procedures.

17. 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.
18. The Policy Committee shall review its policies on a rotational basis and make recommendations to the Board.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 113 School Act