



UNDERSTANDING YOUR BOARD'S POLICIES

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WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DISCUSS TODAY

- What policy is and isn't
- Purposes
- Language
- Development
- Review
- Anatomy

FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL BOARDS

From the AASB Board Standards Framework

Vision	Structure	Accountability	Advocacy	Conduct-Ethics
Creating a shared vision to enhance student achievement	Providing organizational structure to support the vision	Measuring and reporting district performance toward the vision	Championing the vision	Forthright conduct of the board toward the vision
What Boards Can Do	What Boards Can Do	What Boards Can Do	What Boards Can Do	What Boards Can Do
<p>Encourage Community Involvement in Establishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision Statement Mission Statement <p>Make Decisions Based on Vision and Mission Statements</p> <p>Develop a District philosophy</p>	<p>Develop District Plans</p> <p>Adopt, Review & Evaluate Policies</p> <p>Request Reports about the Curriculum</p> <p>Link the Budget to Student Achievement</p> <p>Support Staff Recruitment and Development</p> <p>Maintain Facilities</p>	<p>Perform an Annual Superintendent Evaluation</p> <p>Perform an Board Evaluation</p> <p>Ensure Staff Evaluations are Performed</p> <p>Review Assessment Data</p> <p>Request the Evaluation of Programs</p> <p>Request Timely Financial Reports & Audits</p> <p>Adopt, Review & Evaluate Policies</p>	<p>Recognize Student and Staff Achievements</p> <p>Promote Community Engagement</p> <p>Develop Partnerships</p> <p>Be a Student Advocate</p> <p>Participate in Grassroots Lobbying</p> <p>Support Parental Involvement</p>	<p>Respect Appropriate Roles</p> <p>Provide a Board Orientation</p> <p>Use Meetings Effectively Following State Law and district policies</p> <p>Conduct business in an ethical manner</p> <p>Work toward developing a team</p>

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN POLICY AND GOVERNANCE?

- The Board's purpose is to be accountable to the public and show that the school district works in the best interest of its students.
- Boards define their role through Board Bylaws and delegate through Policy.
- Policy makes clear the Board's direction and intention.

(OH - BY THE WAY, IT'S NOT)



WHAT IS POLICY?

- **Policies:** Written statements adopted by the Board that communicate the guidelines and limits within which the Superintendent and staff may take discretionary action (i.e., what is needed and why the need is important)
- **Administrative Regulations (AR):** Detailed instructions related to the policy (i.e., how to act, who should be involved, and when it should occur)
- **Exhibits (E):** Copies of forms that may be required to perform the policy (i.e., accident report)
- **Board Bylaws (BB):** The rules by which the Board governs itself
- **Alaska Statute (AS):** Laws enacted by the Legislature requiring action by the district through a policy

- **Alaska Administrative Code (AAC):** Instructions created by an Administrative Department to provide specifics required by an Alaska Statute
- **United States Code (USC):** Laws enacted by the U.S. Congress requiring action by the district through a policy
- **Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):** Instructions created by a department to provide specifics required by a U.S. Code
- *c.f.* – Abbreviation for the Latin “confer” or “compare;” used to refer the reader to other material to make a comparison with the topic being discussed

PURPOSES OF POLICY

- Providing **direction**
- **Complying** with laws
- Creating **stability**
- Defining responsibilities and ensuring **accountability**
- **Information**
- Protecting the district in case of a **legal challenge**

BOARD POLICY

- Provides the framework for the day-to-day operation of the district.
- Keeps decision-making situation-based and not person-based.
- Helps keep the Board focused on governance and Board business.

COMPONENTS OF A GOOD POLICY

- Includes all requirements
- Does not contain:
 - Any provision **outside** of the district's legal authority
 - Any language the district is **not capable** of implementing now

LANGUAGE OF POLICY

- Language establishes

- Why this is important
- What the Board wants/does not want
- **Who is responsible for implementation**
- Who is responsible for enforcement
- Any special evaluation requirements

- Terms are used consistently

- Acronyms are explained
- Policy is written as if the Board is speaking
- Language is as concise as possible
- **Shall** (mandatory) vs. **May** (permissive)

THE POLICY PROCESS



IDENTIFY THE NEED & DISCUSS



IDENTIFY THE NEED & DISCUSS



ANALYSIS DRAFT POLICY

- The superintendent or a committee of the Board gathers information, sample policies and identifies options once the issue has been identified.
- The superintendent provides the Board with a draft policy. This may include a legal review if necessary.

BOARD REVIEW, PUBLIC INPUT

- The Board provides an opportunity for Board discussion and public comment. The policy may be adopted at the 2nd reading.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

- The Board and Superintendent should make clear their mutual understanding of the policy to ensure that any administrative regulation is aligned with the intention of the Board.

DISSEMINATE AND IMPLEMENT

- Distribution of policies and regulations to all schools and on the District's web site should happen immediately following adoption.
- The implementation of policy is the responsibility of the superintendent.

REVIEW

- The superintendent provides input to the board on the need to amend policies that occur outside the normal review process.
- These changes can be the result of new laws and regulations, or as the need arises in the district.

HOW POLICIES ARE REVIEWED

Policy review is **not policy monitoring**.
The Board's responsibility is to evaluate
the effectiveness of its policies, not
monitor their implementation.

Of course there's no reason for it,
it's just our policy



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POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

- **Board Bylaws** provide for the review process **BB 9311**
- Policies are addressed at Public Meetings and most often have two readings. The **public is encouraged** to comment.
- The **manual** review cycle is proscribed, and allows for the superintendent to provide input to the board on the need to amend policies that occur outside the normal review process. These changes can be the result of new laws and regulations, **or as the need arises in the district.**

HOW TO REVIEW/REVISE

Questions the Board Should Ask

– so you should have the answers –

- Does this policy contribute to **student achievement**?
- Is the **purpose** of the policy clear?
- Does the language **establish**:
 - Why this is important?
 - What the Board wants/does not want?
 - Who is responsible for implementation?
 - Who is responsible for ensuring enforcement?
 - Any special evaluation or accountability requirements?
- Are **terms used consistently**, clearly and defined as necessary?
- Is the language as **concise** as possible?

SCHOOL POLICY IN ALASKA

Series	Title
0000	Philosophy-Goals-Objectives and Comprehensive Plans
1000	Community
2000	Administration
3000	Business and Non-instructional Operations
4000	Personnel
5000	Students
6000	Instruction
7000	New Construction
8000	Advisory School Boards
9000	Bylaws of the Board

QUICK VIEW

- 51 of the 53 Districts Use Our Policy System
- Read the First Policy in Each Chapter
- Board Bylaws – Why you Should Care!



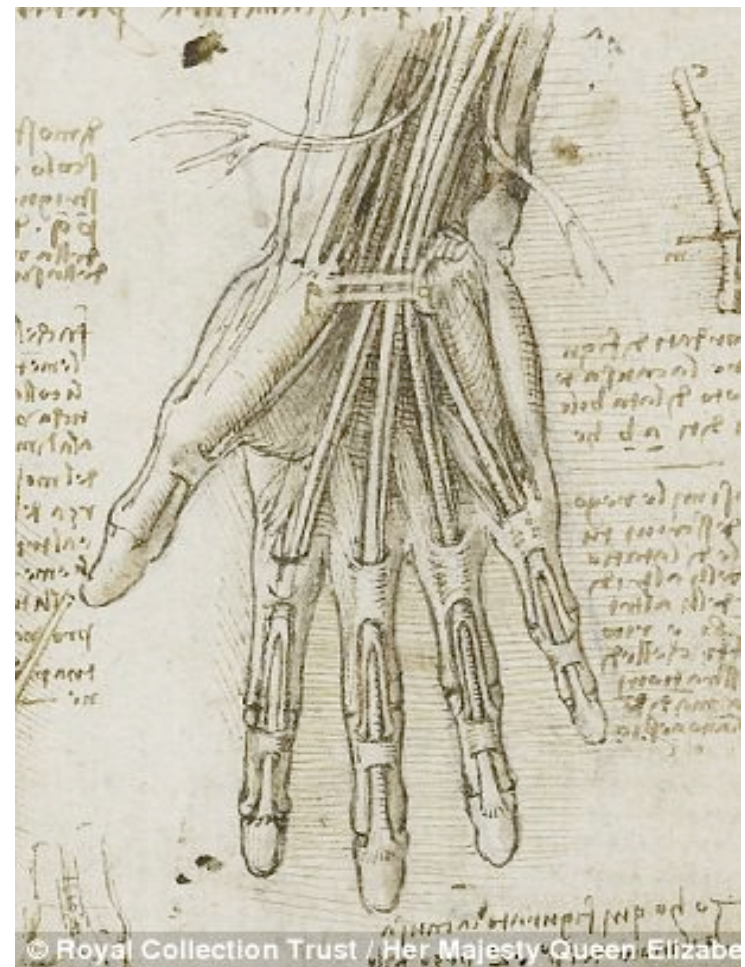
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NOTE: The AASB comprehensive index/table of contents provides a standard index system designed to accommodate future policies/regulations and at the same time provides a table of contents for this manual. **This manual contains only those Board policies (BP), administrative regulations (AR) and exhibits (E) specified in the right-hand column.**

	CODE
0. Concepts and Roles	5000
A. Goals and Objectives	5010
B. Role of Parents/Guardians	5020
1. Noncustodial Parents	5021
C. School Discipline and Safety	5030
D. Student Nutrition and Physical Activity	5040
1. Elementary and Secondary	5100
A. Attendance	5110
1. Admission	5111
a. District Residency	5111.1
b. Part-Time Enrollment.....	5111.2
2. Attendance and Exceptions.....	5112
a. Exemptions from Attendance.....	5112.1
b. Exclusions from Attendance	5112.2
c. Student Leave of Absence.....	5112.3
d. Part-time Employment	5112.4
e. Open/Closed Campus	5112.5
f. Education for Homeless Children and Youths.....	5112.6
3. Absences and Excuses (includes truancy).....	5113
a. Work Permits.....	5113.1
4. Attendance Records; Registers	5114

ANATOMY OF A POLICY



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ANATOMY OF A POLICY

- Title or Chapter:** Where to find what you are looking for in the manual.

- Not all items in the table of contents have a policy, not all policies have an Administrative Regulation.

- Notes:** Provides background about the policy

- Why this is important**

- What the Board wants/does not want**

- Who is responsible**

- Cross references to other policies in the manual**

- Legal basis for the policy in Federal or Alaska Statutes, Regulations.**

- The most recent date of revision**

- Adoption Date:** The date the Board adopted the entire policy manual.

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES BP 5113

The School Board believes that regular attendance plays a key role in the success a student achieves in school. The Board recognizes its responsibility under the law to ensure that students attend school regularly. Parents/guardians of children aged 7 to 16 are obligated to send their children to public school except as allowed by law. The Board shall abide by all state attendance laws and may use any legal means to correct the problems of excessive absence or truancy.

(cf. 5112.1 - Exemptions from Attendance)

(cf. 5112.2 - Exclusions from Attendance)

Excused Absences

The Superintendent or designee may excuse student absences for health reasons, family emergencies or other reasons the Superintendent or designee determines constitute good cause.

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES BP 5113

A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

The Superintendent or designee shall report to the Board any apparent violations of compulsory attendance laws. The Board shall investigate such reports and any public complaints of violations of state compulsory attendance laws.

Legal Reference:

ALASKA STATUTES

- 14.03.070 School age
- 14.17.080 Student count estimates
- 14.17.160 Student counting periods
- 14.30.010 When attendance compulsory
- 14.30.020 Violations
- 14.30.030 Prevention and reduction of truancy

ALASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

- 4 AAC 09.005-4 AAC 09.105 State aid

Revised 9/97

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

- There are no policies.
- There are no current policies.
- No one knows which policies to follow.
- No one is following the policies we have.
- An organization demands we adopt their policies.
- We get audited by.....

QUESTIONS ?

- Does your Board think in terms of policy?
- Do you regularly schedule policies for review?
- Do you look to policy before making decisions?
- Do you know what policy has to do with governance?