

Board Policy



Bob Whicker; Director,
Consortium for Digital Learning/ Policy Service



Association of Alaska School Boards
Advocates for Alaska's Youth

What does it mean to Govern?

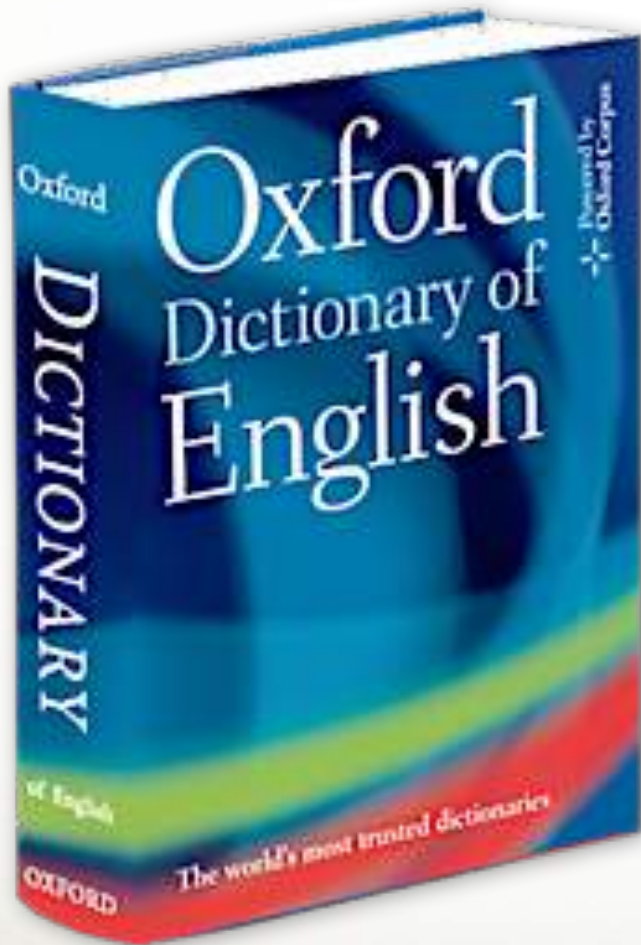


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Link the Definition to Your Practice

Governance (noun)

1. **Manner of Government – Representative democracy**
2. **State of Governing a Place – the way the rules, norms and actions are structured, sustained, regulated and held accountable.**
3. **Authority – Delegated to the Board by the Legislature**





So, for a
school board,
What does
it mean to
Govern?



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Taking the Lead in

- Determining the District's Strategic Direction
- Monitoring Performance
- Initiating and Managing Innovation



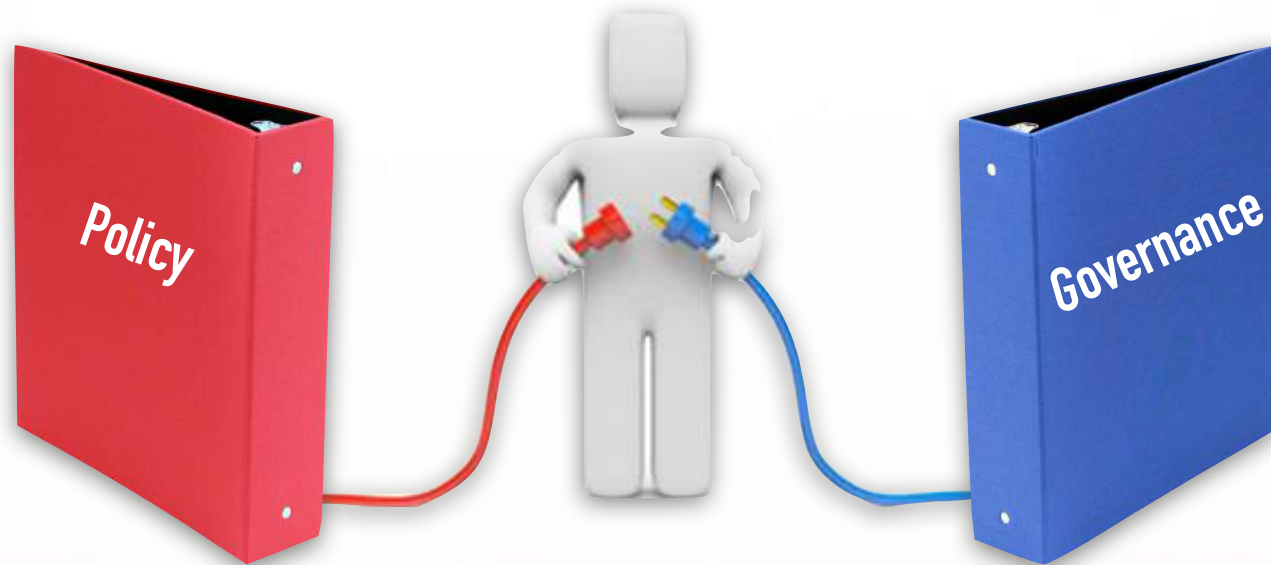


Taking the Lead means

- Developing Policies
- Securing Resources
- Making Decisions
- Monitoring Effectiveness



What's the connection between Policy and Governance?



How is that connection made
on a school board?

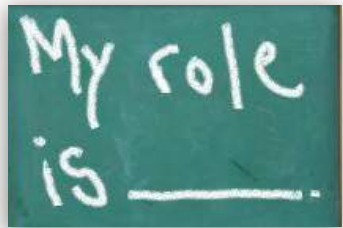


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What's the connection between Policy and Governance?



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



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.



Governance

“The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it or to the district which it governs, and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it or upon the district which it governs.”

- **Governance Functions**
- **Executive Functions**
- **Judicial Functions**





Governance Functions

The Board shall consider and approve or disapprove matters submitted to it by the Superintendent and the public and is committed to **establishing policies to govern district activities.**

The Board shall **prescribe bylaws for its own governance** with law or with the rules prescribed by the State Board of Education.

ref. BB 9000



Executive Functions



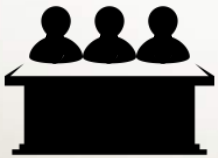
The **Superintendent** shall serve as the chief executive officer of the Board.



The **Board delegates** to the Superintendent the authority to carry out Board decisions and to make and carry out any decisions which it delegates.



The **Superintendent** shall be fully responsible for the proper use of this authority.



The **Board retains ultimate responsibility** for the performance of any powers or duties delegated.

ref. BB 9000





Judicial Functions

The Board believes that **positive personnel and public relations** rely upon the ability to hear and resolve grievances, complaints and criticisms.

The Board, convened, shall serve as a **body of appeal** for grievances, complaints and criticisms in accordance with Board policies and negotiated employee agreements.

ref. BB 9000



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The Board Leadership Role in Governance

- Good governance is executed through **policy**: having discussion and revisions on agendas.
- Ensuring the Board has clearly **defined** its intent regarding the policy.
- Keeping the Board **focused** on policy issues
- Being the policy **expert** in the district



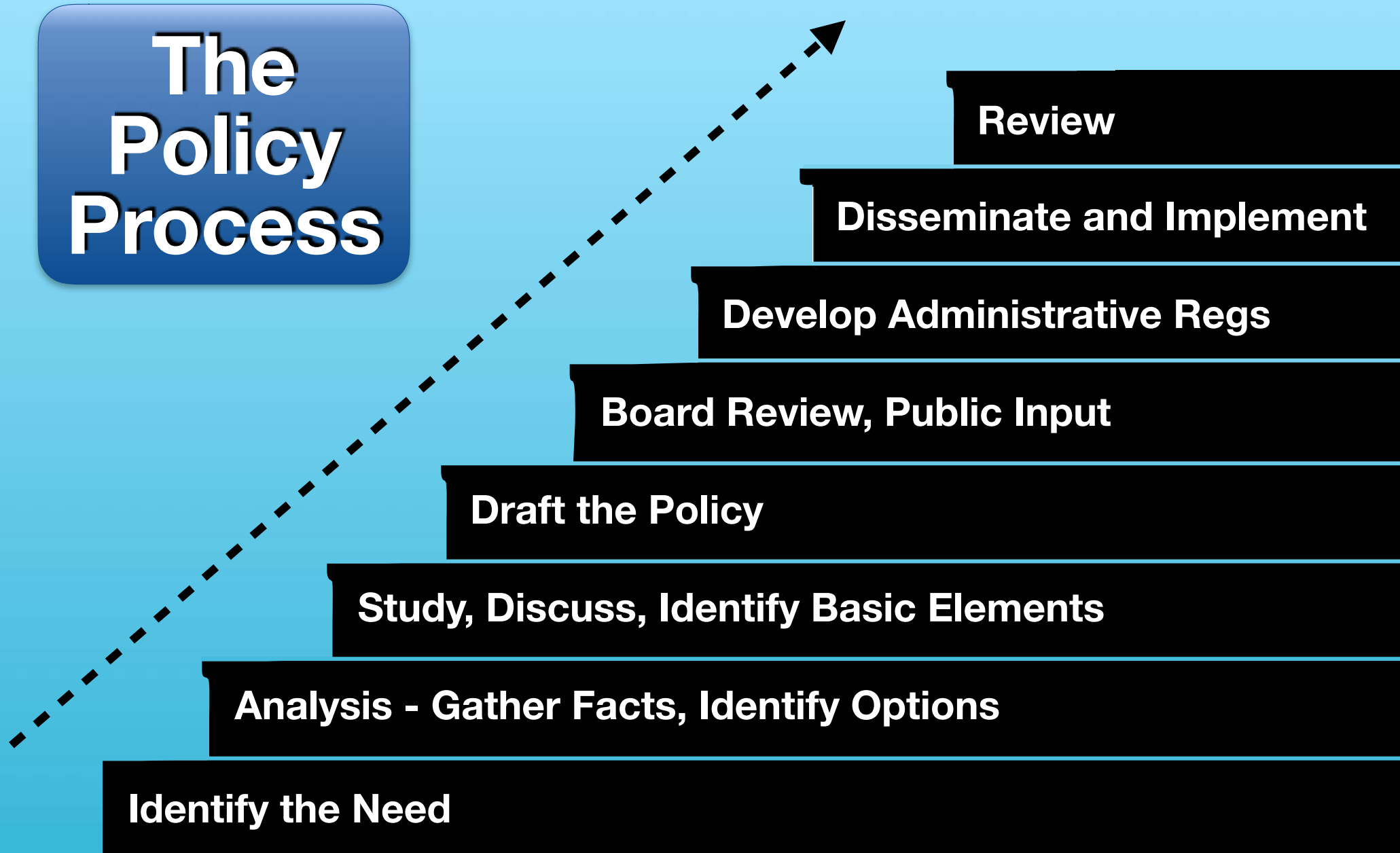


Boards Lead Through Policy

- **Understand** the policy process
- **Schedule** policy review on a regular basis
- **Review** policy prior to acting on major agenda items
- **Be familiar with** the first policy in each of the different Titles
- **Ask** the right questions



The Policy Process





Governance and Policy

Asking the Right Questions

The Board should lead the policy discussion:

- 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?





Governance and Policy

Asking the Right Questions

The Board should lead the policy discussion:

- Are **terms used consistently**, clearly and defined as necessary?
- Is the language as **concise** as possible?



EXAMPLE

Students BP 4131 Staff Development



- **Why is this important?**
- **What does the Board Want?**
- **Who is responsible?**
- **Does it request Evaluation or other accountability requirements?**



EXAMPLE

Students BP 4131 Staff Development



Why is this important?

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.



EXAMPLE

Students BP 4131 Staff Development



What does the Board want?

The School Board recognizes that a competent well-trained staff is essential to carrying out its goals. Staff development is a necessary, continuous and systematic effort to improve district educational programs by involving all employees in activities that improve their skills and broaden their perceptions.



EXAMPLE

Students BP 4131 Staff Development



What does the Board want?

In order to respond directly to the needs of our students, staff development activities may address teacher qualifications, content areas, methodology, interpersonal relations between students and faculty, student growth and development, and staff communication, problem solving and decision making.



EXAMPLE

Students BP 4131 Staff Development



Who is Responsible?

The **Superintendent** is responsible for ensuring that **all training required by law is provided** in a timely fashion to appropriate staff.





Any Special Evaluation or Accountability Requirements?

The Superintendent or designee should provide staff with professional development that may include opportunities such as:

- Release time and leaves of absence for travel and study.
- Visits to other classrooms and other schools.
- Conferences involving outside personnel from the district, county, state, region or nation.
- Membership in committees drawing personnel from various sources.
- Training classes and workshops offered by the district.
- Further training in institutions of higher learning, including credit.
- Courses conducted in or near the district instead of on the college campus, whenever possible.
- Access to professional literature on education issues.





Governance and Policy

Asking the Right Questions

- Is this a **shall or may**?
- Does the District have the **authority** to implement?
- Is this something the District is **capable** of implementing?
- Is there a **fiscal impact**, and if so, what?
- Are there specific **reports** that will be provided to the Board? If so, how will these be included in the Board's annual calendar?



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?

