POLICIES, POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION AND REVIEW

The development and adoption of policies that govern the School District is one of the School Board's most important functions. Board policies establish the goals, direction and structure of the district under the authority of applicable statutes and regulations. In addition to policies required by state and federal laws and regulations, the Board adopts policies to provide direction to the Superintendent and other administrators in the management of the district, to guide the education program, and to provide clear expectations for school staff, students and parents.

Board policies are intended to provide the framework for district operations and the educational system. In general, the operational details as to how policies will be implemented are contained in administrative procedures developed by the administration. However, the Board may adopt administrative procedures concerning its own operations, or when an issue is of sufficient legal importance to warrant a Board-level procedure.

A. Policy Committee. This policy establishes a Joint Policy Committee for SAU #21. The committee shall be comprised of one (1) representative from each member Board. The Superintendent shall serve as a non-voting member of the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee, with the advice and counsel of the Superintendent, is responsible for recommending policies and policy actions to the full Board for its consideration, including adopting new policies, revising existing policies and deleting obsolete policies.

B. Review of Existing Manual. The Policy Committee shall establish a schedule for reviewing existing Board policies, and forming recommendations regarding the same for the Board.

C. Procedures for Policy Development and Review.

1. Individual Board members, Board standing or special committees, the Superintendent or other interested persons may submit policy suggestions, concerns, and/or drafts to the Policy Committee, in care of the Superintendent.

2. The Superintendent or designee is responsible for notifying the Board and the Policy Committee of all policy updates and revisions provided by the New Hampshire School Boards Association. The Policy Committee will review such updates and make recommendations deemed appropriate under this policy.

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3. The Policy Committee, with the assistance of the Superintendent, will review and research policy suggestions and prepare draft policies, as appropriate. The Policy Committee may delegate research and initial drafting to SAU staff or others at the discretion of the Policy Committee and the Superintendent. If a policy is referred to a committee, staff, professional or other person for initial review/drafting, the policy shall be reviewed by the Policy Committee before submission to the full Board.
4. The Superintendent, whether upon request of the Policy Committee or not, shall seek counsel of the School Attorney when there may be a question of legality or proper legal procedure in the substance of any proposed or current board policy.
5. As appropriate to the particular topic, the Policy Committee may also seek input from other affected persons and/or groups.
6. The Policy Committee will provide written reports to the member boards at least quarterly for consideration at regular board meetings. The reports will include the Policy Committee's recommendations for new policies (including full text of policies/revisions to be considered for action by the Board), as well as recommendations for repeal of existing policies. Policy Committee reports shall also include any information requested by the full board, and may include any other information deemed appropriate by the Policy Committee, such as (a) information regarding third party policy requests or suggestions, and (b) requests for further guidance from the Board with respect to such any policy related matters.

D. Board Actions Required to Approve, Revise or Repeal Policies. Any final action regarding the approval of a new policy, or revision or repeal of an existing policy, requires a majority vote of a quorum of the board at a public meeting.

1. Policy Committee reports shall be placed on the agenda of a regular Board meeting and will be made part of the agenda package for that meeting.
2. All new policies, and/or revisions to existing board policies are subject to a "first reading" by the full board to occur at a regular board meeting. (There is no requirement that proposed policies/revisions be read at the meeting, although either a majority of the Board or the Chair may determine that actual reading is appropriate).

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3. The Board will allow opportunity for public comment on policy proposals.
4. Any changes agreed upon or requested by the board during the first reading shall be made by the Policy Committee prior to the second reading.
5. At the next Board meeting (or a later meeting if so agreed by the Board), the policy shall be placed on the agenda for a second (or additional) reading, and action. Amendments may be made and acted upon at that meeting, or may be referred for further revision, etc..
6. Prior to final approval by the Board, each policy will be titled, dated, and coded consistent with the classification system used by the New Hampshire School Boards Association.
7. In appropriate circumstances, (e.g., emergencies or other instances calling for prompt action), the Board may waive any of the above provisions, and take immediate action to adopt a new policy or revise an existing policy. All such actions, however, shall be subject to the provisions of RSA 91-A, and any other applicable laws or regulations.
8. Board action regarding the adoption, revision or repeal of policies will be included in the minutes of the meeting at which the official action is taken.
9. Approved policies become effective immediately unless the motion to approve the policy, or the policy itself, includes a specific implementation date.

E. Policy Dissemination and Post Board Action Procedures.

1. All Board policies, and any written administrative rules and regulations implementing such policies constitute governmental records and are subject to the provisions of RSA 91-A.
2. Notice of new, revised and deleted policies should be provided to affected groups (i.e., school staff, students, parents) and posted on the district website and by other such appropriate means determined by the Superintendent.
3. The Superintendent shall retain as government records copies of all policies deleted from the Board policy manual.
4. An up-to-date policy manual shall be maintained in the Superintendent's Office and on the district website.

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