

The School Board's Role in: Policy Review, Development and Oversight

**Kathleen Asher, Esq. Senior Manager,
Legal, Labor Relations and Policy**

Gina Cuciti, Manager, Policy



Role of the Board

- Governance through policy is an **essential role of school boards**.
- The board ensures that the district and schools are run well by the administrators hired for that purpose. This is done by:
 - The development of clear policies that state the educational goals of the district
 - Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of board policy



Definition Review

- Policy
- Bylaw
- Regulation (procedures, guidelines)
- Mandated
- Monitored
- Critical other
- Discretionary



Relationship between the Board and the Superintendent in Policy Development

- Policy coordinator (CSA)
- Collaboration between the board and administration
- Regulations



Relationship between Individual Board Members in Policy Development

- Consensus
- Individual agenda vs. board agenda
- The agenda and the role of the president



Policy Review

- Review vs. Revision
- Compliance with law
- Mandated and monitored policies
- Discretionary policies – board's position
- Monitoring and evaluating
- Policy repeal



Policy Development and Revision

Policy Wheel



Define the Need

- Compliance and monitoring
- Public or community issue
 - *Identifying fads*
 - *Being reactive*
- District need identified by school staff or the superintendent



Get the Facts

- Superintendent reports and input
- Experts
- Required district committees or teams
- Key staff resources and input
- Public input
 - *Involving staff and community members helping buy in*
- Empirical data (i.e. SSDS)
- Other school districts – NJSBA policy resources



Composing Policy Language

- Policy revision vs. new policy
- Policy samples
- NJSBA models and samples
- Other district policies
- Policy vendors – must be customized by the district
- Federal, State, Local and private organizations



Discuss and Adopt

- Role of the Policy Committee in preparing the board presentation:
 - *Recommendations*
 - *How the recommendations were reached*
- Board comments and revisions
- One or two readings?



Dissemination

- For effective implementation staff, students and/or the community need to be aware of policy changes:
 - *Hand out the policy*
 - *Post in newsletters and on the website*
 - *No surprises – keep the key players in the loop before implementation*
- Can require in the policy that it be distributed and the means of distribution



Implementation

- Expectations: benchmarks and deadlines
- A paved road: collaboration and buy in
- Assigning staff responsibilities



Oversee

- Superintendent reports
- Staff, committee and team reports
- Community feedback
- Data



Back to the beginning

- Policy is never finished
- Must be reviewed and updated on a continuing basis



Your NJSBA Policy Resources

- Policy consultation
- Critical Policy Reference Manual
CPRM
- Policy Update List
- Job Description Manual
- Policy Clearinghouse
- School Leader and School Board Notes
- Web Updates
- **www.njsba.org**



Questions



Contact Information

- Gina Cuciti gcuciti@njsba.org
- Kathleen Asher kasher@njsba.org

