

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION AND REVIEW

*Category: Recommended*

*Related Policies: BDF*

The development and adoption of policies that govern the Mascoma Valley Regional 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 Workgroup Responsibilities and Meetings. The Board's Policy Workgroup with the advice and counsel of the Superintendent, is responsible for recommending policies and policy actions to the full Board and/or subcommittees for its consideration, including adopting new policies, revising existing policies and deleting obsolete policies.
- B. Review of Existing Manual. The Policy Workgroup shall review existing policies on a continual basis during the school year. They shall form recommendations that will then be sent to the full School Board for input and approval.
- 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 Workgroup, in care of the Superintendent.
  2. The Superintendent or designee is responsible for notifying the Board and the Policy Workgroup of all policy updates and revisions provided by the New Hampshire School Boards Association. The Policy Workgroup will review such updates and make recommendations deemed appropriate under this policy.
  3. The Policy Workgroup, with the assistance of the Superintendent, will review and research policy suggestions and prepare draft policies, as appropriate. The Policy Workgroup may delegate research and initial drafting to other Board standing committees, to District staff or others at the discretion of the Policy Workgroup and the Superintendent. (E.g., a policy concerning computer use may first be delegated to the Technology Committee.) 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 Workgroup before submission to the full Board.
  4. The Superintendent, should seek counsel of the School Board's attorney or the New Hampshire School Boards Association when there may be a question of legality or proper legal procedure in the substance of any proposed or current board policy.

5. The Policy Workgroup may also seek input from other affected persons and/or groups as appropriate.
  6. The Policy Workgroup will provide reports to the full board as needed. The reports will include the Policy Workgroup'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 Workgroup reports should also include any information requested by the full board, and any other information deemed appropriate by the Policy Workgroup,
- 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 Workgroup 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 aloud at the meeting, although either a majority of the Board or the Chair may determine that actual reading is appropriate).
  3. The Board will allow opportunity for public comment on policy proposals per Board policy BEDH during public comment.
  4. Any changes agreed upon or requested by the board during the first reading shall be made by a School Board Member 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. 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.
  8. Approved policies become effective immediately unless the motion to approve the policy, or the policy itself, includes a specific implementation date.
- E. Suspension of Policy Process.
1. The Board may adopt, amend, or repeal written policies at any meeting by a majority vote of Board members in attendance, provided that public notice of the proposed action was given at least one week prior and that each Board member was notified of the proposed action. For purposes of notification, a meeting agenda delivered to each Board member is deemed sufficient if it identifies the policy to be acted upon.
  2. On matters of unusual or unexpected urgency, the Board may waive the second meeting limitation and take immediate action to adopt a new policy or revise an existing policy.
- F. Policy Dissemination, Records and Manual Updates.
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 on the District's website with a hard copy, in the Superintendent's Office.