

# POLICY 101 WEBINAR

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# Introductions

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# Webinar Logistics

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- **PowerPoint presentation**
- **Question box to ask questions. Questions are always welcome!**
- **Evaluation form when you exit the webinar**
- **E-mail follow-up to each participant with summary information, video, and PowerPoint slides**
- **Archives at [VTVSBA.org](http://VTVSBA.org) and on the VSBA Youtube channel**

# Poll 1

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- Are you a school board member from a Supervisory Union or a Supervisory District?

# Who is Responsible for Policy?

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- 16 V.S.A. Section 563(1):
- “The school board shall determine the educational policies of the school district . . .

# What is Policy?

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- Board policy describes **what** should be done.
- Board policy should be a fairly **broad statement of intent**.
- The administrative details should be left to the people most qualified to carry out the board's intent: the school administration.

# Why is Policy a Priority?

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- Provide direction to the board and administrators.
- Allow the board to articulate school district goals.
- Describe the board's expectations.
- An essential component of a risk management program.

# What are Procedures?

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- Procedures implement board policies
- Procedures provide tools such as process and forms
- Not every policy requires a procedure
- The administration develops procedures
- The board does not adopt procedures but it may approve or disapprove procedures proposed for the conduct and management of public schools in the district.





# When is Policy Needed?

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- Required policies
- Recommended policies
- Policies to consider
- <http://www.vtvsba.org/model-policy-manual>

## Required Policies





### A. BOARD OPERATIONS

Code	Policy	Updated
A1	<a href="#">Conflict of Interest</a>	06/26/15

## Recommended Polices

Code	Policy	Updated
A20 	<a href="#">Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation &amp; Distribution</a>	09/18/14
A21 	<a href="#">Public Participation at Board Meetings</a>	03/25/09
A22	<a href="#">Notice of Non-Discrimination</a>	04/02/12
A23 	<a href="#">Community Engagement and Vision</a>	11/03/16
A24 	<a href="#">Board/Superintendent Relations</a>	11/03/16

## Polices to Consider

Code	Policy	Update
A30 	<a href="#">Role and Adoption of School Board Policies</a>	09/18/13
A31 	<a href="#">Board Member Education . . .</a>	03/25/09
A32 	<a href="#">Board Goal Setting and Evaluation</a>	03/26/09
A33 	<a href="#">School Visits by Board Members</a>	03/25/09
A34	<a href="#">Board Relations with School Personnel</a>	03/25/09

### B. PERSONNEL

Code	Policy	Updated
B1	<a href="#">Substitute Teachers</a>	01/26/16
B2	<a href="#">Volunteers and Work Study</a>	12/03/15

Code	Policy	Updated
B20	<a href="#">Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks</a>	8/10/11

Code	Policy	Updated
B30	<a href="#">Staffing and Job Descriptions</a>	03/29/09

# Required Policies

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- A state or federal law or regulation states, or a regulatory agency advises, that a school district must have a policy governing its activities in a certain area.
- Examples: Firearms Policy  
Class Size Policy  
Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements Policy

# Recommended Policies

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- VSBA recommends policies when:
  - They will lend predictability and consistency to a board operational practice; or
  - They will enable the board to give direction to administrators in areas where the law may be unclear, or where operational parameters should be established.

# Recommended Policies

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- Recommended policies should:
  - Indicate the objectives the board wishes to achieve
  - Assign responsibility for achieving those objectives
  - Establish accountability systems to determine if the objectives are met

Examples: Public Participation At Board Meetings Policy  
Board/Superintendent Relations Policy  
Community Use Of School Facilities Policy





# Process for Developing Policy

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- Create a committee of the SU/SD board
- Ask administrative team to research legal requirements, analyze different approaches and draft language
- Determine whether administration's proposal will accomplish the board's goals
- Seek legal review of any areas of concern
- Present model language to board for possible adoption



# Legal Requirements for Adopting

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- 16 VSA Section 563(1): policies shall be adopted:
  - At a regular or special board meeting
  - After 10 days notice to the public, stating the **substance of the proposed policy**
    - *Unless* your board has a policy on policy adoption that outlines a different process

# Legal Requirements for Adopting

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- 16 V.S.A. Section 563(1):
- Board policies shall be:
  - Of general application to the district
  - In writing
  - Codified
  - Available to the public



# SU-Wide Policy Adoption

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Some SU policies are required by law

- Example: 16 V.S.A. Section 261a sets forth the duties of the SU Board, including (12) “Adopt supervisory union-wide truancy policies consistent with the model protocols developed by the Secretary.”
- Link to VSBA Student Attendance Policy:  
<http://199.73.12.194/NPolicies/c7.html>

# Value of Uniform Policies

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- 16 VSA Section 563(1) provides that individual school districts are responsible for adopting education policies.
- This means each district within an SU must go through the policy adoption process, even if all districts adopt the same policies.
- Uniformity across all districts in an SU is not always possible. Variability is more likely to exist if there are operating and non-operating districts within the same SU.

# Benefits of Uniform Policies

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- Uniform SU policies have the following benefits:
  - Create efficiency and accuracy
    - Efficient use of central office resources
    - Reduce liability stemming from different policies for each member district
  - Shared responsibilities/uniform expectations
    - Special education, transportation
    - Procedures created by superintendent
  - Partnerships and best practice
    - SU policy discussions lead to innovative SU-wide practice

# Case Study #1: Consistency Across Districts

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A reading coach who spends half time in two different school districts calls to complain that the principal of school #1 will not allow her to smoke an e-cigarette on her break in the employee parking lot, even though the principal at school #2 allows the practice.

Link to tobacco prohibition policy:

<http://199.73.12.194/NPolicies/b7.htmlco>

## Case Study #2: Consistency At Board Meetings

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The school board chair does not have any guidance on how to handle public comment. She handles it differently based on the topic and/or the members of the public who are present. One night a large crowd shows up at the board meeting expecting to be able to weigh in throughout the evening.

Link to public participation policy:

<http://199.73.12.194/NPolicies/a21.html>



# Monitoring Policy

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- Create a cycle for review at the SU/SD level
  - All policies reviewed for accuracy every 3 years
- Pay close attention to polices required by law
  - Have legislative changes or court decisions changed the requirements?
- Conduct an audit to determine the next steps the board should take

# Poll 2 Multiple Choice

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- When is the last time your district's policy manual was updated?
  - (a) within one year
  - (b) 2-3 years ago
  - (c) more than 3 years ago
  - (d) don't know

# VSBA's Model Policies

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- Are drafted by in house counsel and reviewed by VSBIT attorneys, for risk management purposes
- Are reviewed by other entities such as the AOE and VASBO, depending on content
- Are reviewed every 2 years
- Required policies were reviewed in past 18 months
- Remaining policies will be reviewed in next 6 months

# Vermont Education Policy Service

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- *Vermont School Boards Association's Education Policy Service* provides:
  - Model Policies
  - Policy Review
  - Policy Development
  - Specialized Services
  - Five Year Review
  
- Contact Sue Ceglowski at 223-3580 for details.

# Poll 3 Multiple Choice

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- Which policy does your board rely on most frequently?
  - (a) Public Participation at Board Meetings
  - (b) Conflict of Interest
  - (c) Public Complaints About Personnel
  - (d) Class Size
  - (e) Other



# Thank You

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- Thank you for attending the Policy 101 webinar
- We will end with a question on the next slide
- If questions arise after the webinar please contact:  
Sue Ceglowski, Director of Legal and Policy Services  
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## Poll 4

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What do you think is missing from the VSBA Policy Manual?

Please answer in the question box. Thank you.