



Please copy and distribute to all board members, the superintendent and other appropriate staff.

Topics:

A. Making Civic Education a Higher Priority

B. Parent Involvement Packet Coming Soon

C. Policies Focus on Student Health

- Sun Safety
- Pandemic Flu
- Physical Education
- Head Lice

D. CSBA News

- Policy Services/GAMUT Online Workshops
- Conference Program for Executive Assistants
- Guide on High School Reform
- Advisory on After-School Programs

Customer satisfaction is our goal

If you have any comments, suggestions or questions about CSBA's sample policies and regulations or our various policy services, please contact Martin Gonzalez, assistant executive director, Governance and Policy Services, at (800) 266-3382 or mgonzalez@csba.org.

A. Making Civic Education a Higher Priority

The California-based Center for Civic Education describes the goal of education in civics and government as developing "informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of American constitutional democracy," which requires "the acquisition of a body of knowledge and of intellectual and participatory skills" and "development of certain dispositions or traits of character that enhance the individual's capacity to participate in the political process and contribute to the healthy functioning of the political system and improvement of society" (Campaign to Promote Education in Civics and Government, Rationale and Proposed Requirements, www.civiced.org).

These three essential components of civic education—civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions—are echoed in a set of voluntary, widely recognized National Standards for Civics and Government developed by the Center in 1994 with the participation of more than 3,000 individuals and groups.

In California, academic standards and guidelines for civics and government are included in the state's standards and curriculum framework for history/social science. Graduation requirements specify that every high school student must take three years of social studies, including a U.S. government course, to graduate.

So then, are our schools providing sufficient civic education?

The most recent national survey of civic education, conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress in 1998, found that about two-thirds of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 performed at or above the "basic" level of proficiency. But many educators and advocacy groups argue that civic education needs greater attention in our schools.

"There are gaps in young people's knowledge of fundamental democratic principles and processes. As a result,

many young Americans are not prepared to participate fully in our democracy now and when they become adults," writes the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, University of Maryland ("The Civic Mission of Schools," 2003, www.civicyouth.org).

Marshall Croddy, director of programs at the Constitutional Rights Foundation, expresses concern that social studies is no longer a priority in schools, in part because No Child Left Behind emphasizes accountability for language arts, math, and science (Commentary, Los Angeles Times, July 2, 2006). He believes our nation and state are paying a price for this neglect with low voter turnouts and disengagement from political institutions and community-based organizations.

To help districts increase their focus on civic education, CSBA has issued a new sample board policy, BP 6142.3—Civic Education, which addresses the purposes of civic education, integration into courses of study, recommended topics for instruction based on state and national standards, and legal requirements for providing education on the U.S. Constitution each year on Constitution and Citizenship Day.

As governance teams discuss these issues, they might also consider the following recommendations from the Center for Civic Education:

- Education in civics and government should not be incidental to the schooling of American youth but a central purpose of education essential to the well-being of American democracy.
- Civics/government is a subject on a level with other subjects. Like history and geography, it is an integrative and interdisciplinary subject.
- Civics and government should be taught explicitly and systematically from kindergarten through 12th grade, whether as separate units and courses or as a part of courses in other subjects.
- Effective instruction in civics and government requires attention to the content of the discipline as well as to the essential skills, principles, and values required for full participation in and reasoned commitment to our democratic system.

B. Parent Involvement Packet Coming Soon

CSBA is working with the California Department of Education to ensure that board policies comply with both a federal mandate for parent involvement policy for Title I schools and a state mandate for parent involvement policy applicable to non-Title I schools.

In August, CSBA expects to send districts its revised board policy and new administrative regulation BP/AR

6020—Parent Involvement. Parent involvement requirements for Title I schools are being moved from BP/AR 6171—Title I Programs into BP/AR 6020 to provide for easier use by districts that have both types of schools. As a result, BP/AR 6171—Title I Programs is also being revised and will be included in the August mailing.

In addition, to assist governance teams in the review and updating of their parent involvement policies, CSBA is issuing a Governance and Policy Services Brief on this topic. The brief will address the link between parent involvement and student achievement, characteristics of an effective parent involvement program, legal requirements, the policy development and adoption process, and useful resources. It will also include an extensive policy development worksheet to help guide discussion of this topic.

Carol Dickson of the Title I Policy and Partnerships Office of the CDE emphasizes that board policies and/or administrative regulations must do more than list the components required by law. Because the law requires districts to "describe the manner" in which they will carry out each component, the state's Categorical Program Monitoring process looks for specific strategies, activities, or descriptions of how the district will implement its parent involvement program. CSBA's updated AR 6020 will therefore include optional strategies for implementing each component. However, CSBA reminds districts that they should tailor these strategies to reflect their own strategies, which should be developed jointly with parents as required by law.

C. Policies Focus on Student Health

Sun Safety

"Skin cancer is considered epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Californians are at higher risk than the national average for melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer," reports Andrew Manthe, MPH, CHES, chief of the Skin Cancer Prevention Program at the California Department of Health Services. "Thus, prevention of skin cancer and other diseases caused by overexposure to ultraviolet radiation is an important health education issue for our schools.

"School-based skin cancer prevention campaigns are beginning to multiply across the United States. School nurses, PTA staff, concerned parents, and other individuals are spearheading sun-safety awareness programs."

Jeff Ashley, M.D., president of the California nonprofit organization Sun Safety for Kids, hopes that governance teams will provide strong leadership in actively promoting sun protection. At the same time, he cautions that a realistic approach is needed. "We want to 'block the sun, not the fun.' We don't want children to feel they

can't play outside. In fact, exercise is an important part of the campaign to reduce obesity and is essential to good health. But we do need to be conscientious when we send children outside."

Before January 2002, many district dress code policies prohibited students from wearing hats and other sun-protective clothing, usually in an effort to curtail the display of gang-related material. Then, SB 310 (Ch. 575, 2001) gave students the right to wear a hat and other sun-protective clothing when outdoors at school (Education Code 35183.5), while still giving schools discretion to prohibit specific gang-related or inappropriate apparel. SB 1632 (Ch. 266, 2002), introduced on behalf of the William S. Graham Foundation for Melanoma Research, added the right for students to carry and use sunscreen on campus without a physician's note.

Districts need to ensure that their policies comply with law, but there is much more that districts can do to promote sun safety. CSBA has issued sample board policy BP 5141.7—Sun Safety and a policy brief on "Sun Safety in Schools" to assist governance teams in addressing major policy issues recommended by health professionals, governmental agencies and others. The policy brief lists additional resources that may be helpful to districts in developing their policies.

"Don't depend on sunscreen alone to protect children and adults from skin cancer," Manthe advises. "Instead, put into practice a combination of sun-protective measures."

A comprehensive sun safety program should encourage the use of sunscreen, lip balm, hats, sunglasses, and other sun-protective clothing; provide shaded areas and shade structures on school campuses; include classroom instruction on the risks of overexposure to UV radiation and preventive measures; encourage staff to model sun protection measures; and modify the timing of outdoor activities as needed based on the level of UV exposure as indicated by the UV Index.

"One difficulty is that children, especially teenagers, think a suntan makes them look healthier or more attractive. They don't think about how their exposure to the sun, sunlamps or tanning beds will affect them in the future," says Dr. Ashley. "Changing children's attitudes and behaviors will require a comprehensive, societal approach. Schools are key players in this effort."

Pandemic Flu

Although none of the experts can state with any certainty whether there will be a pandemic flu outbreak in the near future, governments at all levels are preparing for an outbreak. Congress has appropriated \$3.8 billion to help the nation prepare for the avian influenza (commonly known as bird flu). Because the potential impact of bird flu on schools could be enormous, districts must adopt and implement policies designed to contain the spread of flu among students and create plans that anticipate potential emergencies in schools.

As reported in the March 2006 Governance and Policy Services News, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed a checklist to help districts develop plans for preparing and responding to an influenza pandemic.

In addition, CSBA has developed the following resources to help boards and staff with the district's planning efforts.

- **Avian Influenza Fact Sheet:** In April, CSBA issued a fact sheet discussing the potential impacts of avian influenza on district operations as well as a planning checklist with issues for board and staff consideration. The fact sheet is enclosed with this newsletter and also can be found on the CSBA Web site at www.csba.org/ps.
- **BP/AR 3516—Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan:** CSBA has revised its sample board policy and administrative regulation on the disaster preparedness plan to require that the district's plan address medical emergencies and quarantines, such as a pandemic flu outbreak, and to direct district staff to collaborate with the local health department in developing the district's plan.
- **BP/AR 5141.22—Infectious Diseases:** CSBA has revised its sample board policy and administrative regulation regarding infectious disease prevention for students. The revised policy directs the superintendent to work with the local health department to develop a comprehensive approach to disease prevention.

Physical Education

Districts are reminded that state law (Education Code 51210, 51222, 51223) requires schools to provide at least 200 minutes of physical education every 10 days for students in grades 1-6 and at least 400 minutes every 10 days for students in grades 7-12. Based on a sampling of 73 districts reviewed by the CDE over two years, the California Center for Public Health Advocacy concluded that more than half of the school districts in the state failed to comply with these requirements.

CSBA's sample administrative regulation AR 6142.7—Physical Education and many districts' regulations contain the legal requirements. The challenge is finding enough time in the school day to satisfy all the legal requirements for core instructional subjects as well as physical education. In addition, some activities typically conducted by schools are not considered appropriate physical education activities under the state guidelines.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell acknowledges that state standards for physical education are high (San Francisco Chronicle, June 8, 2006). But with the state and federal emphasis on promoting student health and reducing obesity, physical education is a key component. O'Connell says schools simply must find the time and emphasizes that academic

subjects and physical education are not mutually exclusive: "If you have students who come to the school in good physical shape, they'll do better academically."

Head Lice

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Health Services, and the California School Nurses Organization have updated their recommendations and issued position statements reflecting the management of head lice. Based on an analysis of scientific and medical evidence, it is the position of these groups that children with nits (not active, adult lice) are not contagious. Therefore, in order to minimize the disruption of the educational process, the groups now recommend that students with nits be allowed to remain in school and that students with active, adult lice be referred to their parents for treatment.

CSBA has revised its sample board policy BP 5141.33—Head Lice for consistency with these updated recommendations. Please see the Management Resources in BP 5141.33 for citations to the research.

D. CSBA News

Policy Services/GAMUT Online Workshops

CSBA is offering a free workshop to explain CSBA's variety of policy services and the policy development process. The workshop will include a discussion of the contents of the CSBA policy update packet (paper and electronic), what makes up a CSBA sample policy, and how to use the sample policies. It also provides an opportunity to share information with other districts. Upcoming workshops are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

- Aug. 21, 1:30 p.m.—Sonoma County Office of Education, Santa Rosa
- Sept. 22, 1:30 p.m.—Shasta County Office of Education, Redding

For further information, contact Dianna Parker, Director, Governance Technology, at 800-266-3382 or dparker@csba.org. To register, go to CSBA's Web site at www.csba.org and click on the Events Calendar.

Conference Program for Executive Assistants

CSBA will be hosting a one-day program for executive assistants at its 2006 Annual Education Conference in San Francisco. District and county office executive assistants are invited to join the conference on Thursday, Nov. 30.

The special program will include a two-hour training on "Effective Time Management: Exclusive Training for Executive Assistants," featuring Steve Steinhart from Steinhart & Associates, a premiere time management coaching group. There will also be two time slots for a choice of breakout sessions.

Participants will be able to attend the motivational general session with Erik Wahl called "The Art of Vision for Educators," which will reinforce the message that art is an integral part of every student's learning experience.

The one-day registration fee of \$250 includes a continental breakfast, a networking luncheon, and materials. For further information or to register, see CSBA's Web site at www.csba.org/aec.

Guide on High School Reform

In 2005, CSBA convened a High School Reform Task Force, composed of school board members and superintendents from throughout the state, to examine high school education in California and develop reform strategies that would be useful for school governance teams.

CSBA will soon be releasing a comprehensive report, *Governance Matters: The School Board Guide to Reinvigorating High Schools*, based on the work of the task force. The guide will address effective use of data, student engagement, curricular pathways, students with special needs (including English learners and special education students), alternative education, and governance. The guide uses case studies and key questions to help boards begin a meaningful discussion on raising achievement for all high school students in their districts.

Advisory on After-School Programs

The 2006-07 fiscal year will mark the beginning of a major expansion in before- and after-school programs in California in accordance with the terms of Proposition 49 (2002). The CDE expects grant applications for 2006 to be made available in August or September, so interested districts are encouraged to begin planning immediately.

CSBA is issuing an advisory which will present background information about Proposition 49 and proposed legislation (SB 638, Torlakson) that may make some changes to the funding mechanisms. It will also describe fiscal and programmatic requirements of the After School Education and Safety (ASES) program and additional policy considerations for boards.

Programmatic requirements are also addressed in CSBA's sample policy and administrative regulation BP/AR 5148.2—Before/After School Programs (3/06).

Look for the advisory to come to CSBA's Web site at www.csba.org.