



February 2013

Fact Sheet

Effective Policymaking

1. Identification of the need for a new policy or the revision of an existing policy

The governance team must assess whether a new policy on a certain topic is necessary or a current policy needs to be revised. The need for a new or revised policy can arise from many different situations, including a recommendation from CSBA based on a change in law or a new educational trend, a new district vision statement, an incident that has arisen in the district, or a change in the governance team.

2. Discussion of the policy issues

In order to ensure that the policy will be effective, the governance team must gain an understanding of the issue and hold discussions in order to provide some initial direction to staff.

- What are the community's expectations on this policy issue?
- How will the policy contribute to improved student learning?
- How does the policy align with the goals, beliefs, and priorities of the district?
- What is the fiscal impact?
- What data does staff need to provide so that the board can fully understand the issue?
- What is staff's recommendation?
- Who else needs to be involved and how (e.g., community forum, staff workshop, other stakeholders)?

3. Development of the draft policy by staff

The superintendent, committee, and/or other appropriate designees will review the draft policy received from CSBA and modify it to reflect district circumstances. If no CSBA draft exists, staff shall develop a draft. A legal review may need to be conducted before submitting the draft policy to the board. If the policy is noncontroversial or not related to student learning (e.g., in response to a minor change in law), the district may skip Steps 1-2 above. The board should ensure that the policy sets clear goals and expectations.

4. Adoption of the policy by the board

The board should discuss the proposed policy and conduct a first reading (and second reading if necessary) at a board meeting before formal adoption.

5. Implementation of the policy

- a. Development of administrative regulations and implementation plan

As necessary, the superintendent or his/her designee should develop administrative regulations and an implementation plan that describe how the policy will be implemented, including specific actions, roles and responsibilities of staff, timelines, and/or other necessary provisions.

- b. Communication and dissemination of the policy and regulation

The superintendent should ensure that staff, parents/guardians, students, and other stakeholders are notified about the policy and regulations.

- c. Oversight and support of the implementation of the policy

It is the responsibility of the superintendent and appropriate staff to ensure that policies and regulations are implemented and enforced. The board also has a responsibility to support implementation by adhering to its own policies and by making other decisions (e.g., budget, curriculum, collective bargaining decisions) that facilitate implementation.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

Critical policies should be regularly evaluated based on timelines and measures agreed on by the board and superintendent at the time the policy is adopted. Is the policy effective in achieving its intended purpose and the goals and expectations set by the board? If not, the implementation of the policy or the policy itself should be revised as necessary. The policy also should be periodically reviewed and revised for consistency with law and changing district needs.