

North Wasco Policy Protocol - DRAFT

Purpose

This protocol supplements the Board Operating Agreement by establishing a clear process for proposing, developing, adopting and reviewing board policy.

It is intended to:

- Clarify the respective roles of the board and administration.
- Prevent surprises to board members, the superintendent and staff.
- Provide an appropriate pathway for policy ideas and concerns.
- Match the level of research and engagement to the significance of the proposed policy.
- Maintain a current and usable policy manual.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT ROLES

The Board

The board governs through policy and acts as a body.

The board:

- Identifies policy priorities, desired outcomes and governing boundaries.
- Authorizes significant policy-development work.
- Considers staff recommendations, evidence and community perspectives.
- Provides collective direction for drafting and revision.
- Adopts, amends, reaffirms or repeals policy.
- Monitors the effect of significant policy.

Individual board members may identify concerns, suggest desired outcomes and request that an issue be considered through the established process. They do not direct staff, initiate policy work independently or present self-developed policy for immediate board action.

Board members bring forward the **issue, its significance and the outcome they hope the board will consider**, rather than a finished policy proposal.

The Superintendent and Staff

The superintendent serves as the board's principal policy adviser and directs the development and implementation of policy.

The superintendent and staff:

- Identify policies requiring adoption, revision, repeal or review.
- Advise whether an issue is best addressed through policy, administrative regulation, procedure or another district process.
- Research applicable law, existing policy, district practice and relevant data.
- Prepare and revise policy language based on collective board direction.
- Identify significant legal, financial, operational, personnel, labor and equity implications.
- Recommend a course of action.
- Implement adopted policy and report on results as appropriate.

OSBA Policy Services and legal counsel may provide model language, technical assistance and legal review.

HOW POLICY PROPOSALS ENTER THE PROCESS

Policy work may originate from:

- Changes in law or administrative rule.
- OSBA policy updates.
- Legal advice, audits or regulatory findings.
- District goals, data or program evaluation.
- Superintendent or staff recommendations.
- Board member concerns or proposals.
- Student, family, employee or community input.
- Experience implementing existing policy.
- A significant event or identified systemwide problem.

Policy proposals are referred to the board chair and superintendent for initial screening.

They consider:

- Does existing policy already address the issue?
- Is this a policy matter, an administrative matter or an individual complaint?
- Is additional staff, OSBA or legal review needed?
- Should the proposal follow the routine or transformational pathway?
- Does the full board need to authorize further work?

Following screening, the matter may be addressed through an existing process, scheduled for board discussion or advanced through the appropriate policy pathway.

Receipt of a proposal does not obligate the board to develop or adopt policy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

Routine Policy Pathway

The routine pathway is used for legally required changes, OSBA-recommended updates, technical corrections, clarification of existing direction, repeal of obsolete policy and other changes that do not materially alter district services, rights, responsibilities or resources.

1. Staff Review and Drafting

Staff reviews the proposed change and prepares the draft policy, supporting explanation and recommendation.

2. First Reading

The board receives the proposal, asks questions, identifies areas of local discretion and provides collective direction.

3. Revision

Staff revises the proposal in response to board direction and obtains additional OSBA or legal review when needed.

4. Subsequent Reading and Action

The board reviews the revised proposal and adopts, amends, returns or rejects it. Additional readings may be used when significant questions remain.

5. Implementation and Board Oversight

Staff updates the policy manual, related regulations and procedures, and communicates the change. The board receives follow-up information when the change warrants oversight.

Transformational or Engaged Policy Pathway

The engaged pathway is used when a proposal would establish significant new direction; materially affect services, access, rights, responsibilities or resources; address a strategic or persistent systemwide issue; or substantially change how the district serves children and families.

1. Board Framing and Authorization

The board establishes the context for the work by identifying the issue, desired outcome, affected groups, guiding principles and proposed scope. The board then determines whether to authorize policy development.

2. Development and Engagement Plan

The superintendent proposes a plan for research, staff responsibility, legal and OSBA review, community engagement, board decision points and timeline.

3. Research and Board Direction

Staff gathers relevant evidence and stakeholder perspectives. The board reviews what has been learned and provides collective direction regarding the policy outcome, governing boundaries and significant choices.

4. Drafting and Readings

Staff prepares policy language based on board direction. The board reviews the draft, considers implications and engagement findings, and provides revision direction through as many readings as needed.

5. Adoption, Implementation and Monitoring

The board adopts the policy when it understands the intended outcome, requirements and implementation implications. The superintendent implements the policy, and the board establishes appropriate follow-up to review implementation and impact.

PERIODIC POLICY REVIEW

The board and superintendent will maintain a regular policy-review cycle.

Each policy should be reviewed at least once every **five years**, or sooner when:

- Law or OSBA guidance changes.
- District programs, goals or structures change.
- Implementation reveals confusion, conflict or unintended consequences.
- Data or community input indicates that review is needed.
- The policy has become obsolete or conflicts with another policy.

Review may result in reaffirming, revising, replacing or repealing the policy.

The board and superintendent will periodically review this protocol and revise it as needed.