

Book	Policy Manual
Section	Policies & Legal Updates for LAT to preview, 35-1
Title	Vol. 35, No. 1 - November 2025 OVERVIEW
Code	01 - OVERVIEW
Status	

## **WISCONSIN LOCAL UPDATE OVERVIEW AND COMMENTS**

### **VOLUME 35 NUMBER 1**

### **NOVEMBER 2025**

All production-related materials and questions should be directed to the Coshocton Office at 632 Main Street, Coshocton, Ohio 43812 (phone 800-407-5815, fax 740-622-2557). Billing questions should be directed to the Stow Office at 3914 Clock Pointe Trail, Suite 103, Stow, Ohio 44224 (phone 330-926-0514, fax 330-926-0525).

Please make any revisions on the BoardDocs software using the instructions provided to you. You may direct questions related to content to your Neola Associate. Questions regarding the software should be directed to the BoardDocs help desk staff.

If a District chooses not to adopt a policy or administrative guideline, the District is still obligated to follow applicable Federal and State laws relating to that topic.

The proposed new, revised, and replacement policies, administrative guidelines, and forms included in this update have been thoroughly prepared and reviewed by Neola's legal counsel for statutory compliance. If you make revisions or substitute in their entirety policies or other materials of your own drafting, those materials should be reviewed by your legal counsel to verify compliance. Neola does not review District-specific edits to update materials or District-specific policies for statutory compliance.

If a policy or guideline is marked as a revision, the revisions have been marked in bold (to add material) and crossed out (to delete material). As you review a revised policy or guideline, you may accept one, many, or all of the revisions provided. If a policy or guideline is marked as a replacement, enough revisions have been made to justify a complete, clean replacement copy. As you review a replacement policy or guideline, you should also check the materials you have in your current policy or guideline to see if there is some specific wording you want to be included in the replacement policy. If so, a copy of any wording to be added and where it should be inserted should be forwarded with the replacement policy or guideline when it is returned to the Coshocton office for processing.

If the District authors language and adds it to a policy template or deletes content that is not marked as a choice in the policy template, then these actions will constitute District-specific edits.

Policies to be deleted from the policy manual require Board action to rescind the policy.

Your Neola Associate will contact you soon to schedule an appointment to review this update and ensure you are current on it and previous updates.

If you are not an administrative guidelines client, you did not receive those materials in this packet. Contact your Associate for more information about becoming an administrative guidelines client.

### **Processing Update Materials**

Revisions to your policies and administrative guidelines should be made using the BoardDocs software, following the instructions provided.

### **Using Header Box Options in BoardDocs**

Each policy and administrative guideline has multiple header boxes in BoardDocs that provide essential information in addition to the document's title and code number. (NOTE: All the header boxes are visible only when editing is turned on; in view mode, only the header boxes with content are shown.)

**Adopted:** The "Adopted" header box indicates when the policy or guideline was first adopted, and that date never changes as long as the policy or guideline is active.

**Last Revised:** Retaining the history of each policy and guideline is essential for legal and administrative reasons, so BoardDocs provides options for such retention. Immediately beneath the "Adopted" header box is the "Last Revised" header box that indicates the last time the policy or guideline was changed, and this box is updated by Neola Production each time a revision is submitted. Any revision dates between the initial adoption and the latest revision are usually located at the bottom of the document, just above the Neola copyright. (Again, these dates are updated by Neola Production with each submission and should correspond to Board meeting minutes, except for TC notations for technical corrections.)

**Last Reviewed:** A new "Last Reviewed" option now exists for indicating that you have reviewed the policy or guideline and have found it to be sufficient as presently written. Since no revision is being made in these situations, there is no record that the document was reviewed. A typical example would be a technical correction that isn't needed on your document, or a revision to an option that you do not have or want. In such cases, because the copyright has changed but not any content, you would want to show that your document is current as of the new copyright date even though it has the older copyright date from the previous version of the Neola template. Now you have the option to indicate that you have reviewed the document even though no revision was made by putting the review date in the new "Last Reviewed" header box. This is also a handy feature for those Boards that use a policy review regimen in addition to revisions made through the Neola Update process.

Any questions about how to use these BoardDocs header box features should be directed to your Neola Associate, or you may contact BoardDocs Support at 1-800-407-0141.

## **District-Specific Materials**

If the District chooses, during any step of the Update process, to incorporate District-specific material into a new policy or guideline that has been proposed or to insert District-specific material into a current policy or guideline for which revisions have been proposed in an update issued by Neola, then the District agrees to hold Neola harmless for those District-specific edits and acknowledges that Neola's warranty for legal challenges to that District-specific language in that policy or guideline will not be in effect. In addition, Neola retains ownership of the text from the original policy template that remains in a policy to which District-specific material has been added. District-specific materials include the following:

1. Materials from the District's existing materials that the District requests be incorporated during the drafting process;
2. New materials that the District develops in their entirety and exclusive of Neola;
3. Revisions or deletions that substantively depart from Neola's templates; and
4. Outdated material that a District did not keep current with Neola updates.

Further, Neola does not recommend the use or incorporation of District-specific materials. Neola will, at the request of the District, incorporate District-specific materials into the licensed materials, with the implicit understanding that the District bears all risks associated with the District's decision to request that such District-specific materials be incorporated. Neola reserves the right to but is not obligated to, advise the District to seek its own legal review of District-specific materials.

## **Notice Regarding Legal Accuracy**

Neola is vigilant in providing policy language to clients that has been vetted for legal accuracy by outside legal counsel. Should questions arise as to the legal compliance or accuracy of Neola materials, it is our expectation that Neola's counsel would have the opportunity to assist in the resolution of such a claim. Please notify the Neola corporate office if an issue arises in which such a review or assistance is necessary.

Policies in this update have been reviewed by Renning Lewis & Lacy, s.c. for consistency with Federal and State law.

## **BYLAWS AND POLICIES**

### **Bylaw 0100 - DEFINITIONS (Revised)**

This policy establishes a comprehensive list of terms and their specific meanings for use throughout the district's bylaws and policies. Its importance lies in ensuring consistency and clarity across all district governance and operational documents, preventing ambiguity that could lead to misinterpretation or legal issues.

This policy now includes the definition of School Support Organizations (SSO) which is a topic of several policy and administrative guideline revisions in a recent special update. The SSO change is recommended, but not required. It also includes "gaming devices" as part of the definition of Personal Communications Devices (PCD) due to a recent change in statutory language relative to student use of PCDs in schools. The "gaming device" addition to the definition of PCD is a statutory definition and is required.

### **Bylaw 0142.7 - ORIENTATION (Revised)**

This policy outlines the importance of preparing each Board member for their duties to ensure the effective functioning of the Board, encouraging new members to understand Board functions, district operations, and procedures. It is important because it ensures that all Board members are well-informed and equipped to make sound decisions for the District.

The policy revisions provide new optional topics for onboarding new Board members, and revisions are not required.

### **Bylaw 0144.5 - BOARD MEMBER BEHAVIOR, COMMUNICATIONS, AND CODE OF CONDUCT (Revised)**

This policy outlines the expected ethical, professional, and responsible conduct for all Board members, covering their behavior, communications, and interactions with staff. It is important because it establishes the standards of integrity and professionalism necessary for effective governance, protects the district's legal standing, and ensures a focus on the welfare of students.

The revisions to the policy update include communicating that individual Board members, other than the Board President, do not have the authority to act on complaints or investigations. It is important because it establishes a clear chain of command and ensures that all complaints are handled through the proper channels, maintaining consistency and fairness in the process. The revisions are recommended, but not required.

### **Policy 1210 - BOARD - DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIP (Revised)**

This policy defines the relationship between the Board and the District Administrator, emphasizing the Board's role in establishing policies and the District Administrator's responsibility in administering them. It is important for ensuring clear lines of authority and efficient operation of the school district, with the District Administrator serving as the primary professional advisor to the Board.

The policy revisions focus on including the District Administrator's authority to delegate duties to staff members, who are then accountable to the Administrator for their performance. In turn, the Board holds the District Administrator accountable for the overall administration of the District, including their actions and personal behavior. These revisions are recommended, but not required.

### **Policy 1230.01 - DEVELOPMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES (Revised)**

This policy delegates to the District Administrator the responsibility for designing and implementing administrative guidelines for the District's operation, ensuring they are consistent with Board policies. It is important for establishing clear operational procedures and ensuring that the District's daily functions align with the Board's strategic vision.

There are new optional clauses regarding the District Administrator consulting with stakeholders and the publication of administrative guidelines and handbooks on the District website for transparency. The policy revisions provide new optional topics, and revisions are not required.

### **Policy 1240 - EVALUATION OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR (Revised)**

This policy emphasizes the importance of periodically evaluating the District Administrator's performance to assist both the Board and the Administrator in their responsibilities and ensure effective leadership. It is crucial for making informed decisions regarding contract renewal, salary, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and establishing objectives to advance the District's goals.

This policy revision includes new options to allow the Board to make decisions regarding the District Administrator's contract renewal, determine their salary and performance-based incentives, and assess progress towards District strategic goals. The policy revisions provide new optional topics, and revisions are not required.

### **Policy 2131.01 - READING INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS AND KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT (Revised)**

This policy outlines the Board's program of reading goals for students from kindergarten to 12th grade and mandates the employment of a certified reading specialist to develop and coordinate a comprehensive reading curriculum. It is important for promoting student reading skills through assessments and interventions, ensuring that students at risk of reading difficulty receive necessary support.

The policy now includes the interventions required by law under Act 20 for each qualifying student. The District Administrator must create, provide, and monitor a personal reading plan with interventions, share it with parents, and notify them of progress after 10 weeks. Revisions in this policy are required, based on information provided by state statute and the Department of Public Instruction.

### **Policy 2261.01 - PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN TITLE I PROGRAMS (Revised)**

This policy outlines the requirements for parent and family engagement in Title I programs, ensuring meaningful consultation and involvement of parents in their children's education. This is crucial for improving academic quality, addressing barriers to participation, and fostering a strong partnership between schools and families.

The policy revision is provided to clarify the distinction between the Policy and the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, which is the plan developed by the District. The use of the term Policy to describe the plan can create confusion as to what the annual requirement is. Federal law requires that the district conduct an "annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy". The Board policy uses the term "plan" to assist in distinguishing between the Board policy and the engagement plan developed per the Board Policy. Adoption of these policy revisions are recommended, but not required.

### **Policy 2431 - INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS (Revised)**

This policy recognizes the value of interscholastic athletics, emphasizing maximum student participation, good sportsmanship, team play, and fair competition over winning. It is important for providing students with opportunities to develop athletic abilities and fostering school loyalty and community interest.

The policy revisions include adopting Name, Image, Likeness (NIL) compensation standards set by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA), criteria that meet or exceed the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) standards, and directing the District Administrator to provide interscholastic athletics in accordance with WIAA rules.

It is recommended to improve options and enhance clarity.

### **Policy 4140 - TERMINATION AND RESIGNATION (Revised)**

This policy establishes clear, official procedures for ending the employment relationship, whether through termination by the employer or resignation by the employee. It defines who has the authority to act (Board or District Administrator) on employee terminations.

Unlike administrators and teachers, there is no statutory requirement that the Board terminate support staff. For maximum flexibility and expedience in managing vacancies, Neola's counsel recommends the Board delegate support staff termination authority to the District Administrator. Districts are encouraged to review their current termination authority for support staff.

### **Policy 5112 - ENTRANCE AGE (Revised)**

This policy establishes student entrance age requirements consistent with Wisconsin Law and sound educational practice, ensuring equitable treatment for all. Its importance lies in providing clear guidelines for student enrollment in kindergarten and first grade, promoting consistency and fairness.

The policy revision includes clarification on days (school days) and includes a new section on age verification and its adoption is recommended.

### **Policy 5135 - STUDENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS AND CARDS (New)**

This new policy mandates that if students are issued an identification card, the student also receives a unique identification number, distinct from their social security number.

The policy is important because it ensures student privacy by avoiding social security numbers and provides a critical resource for student well-being by including required contact information for suicide prevention and crisis support services on identification cards. Items in this new policy are required by law, but not to have in policy. This policy is recommended, but not required.

### **Policy 5136 - PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES (Revised)**

This policy regulates the use of student personal communication devices (PCDs) to protect the students, staff, and the learning environment from disruption. It establishes clear rules to prevent academic dishonesty, safeguard the privacy of individuals, and address harmful behaviors like cyberbullying and harassment. Ultimately, the policy is intended to establish a safe and focused educational setting by managing when and how these devices are used on school property.

This policy revision is a result of 2025 Wisconsin Act 42, requiring each school board to adopt, by July 1, 2026, (and submit a copy of this policy to the Department no later than October 1, 2026) a policy generally prohibiting students from using wireless communication devices during instructional time. Each school board must define such a device as any portable wireless device capable of voice, messaging, or data communication, including cell phones, tablets, laptops, and gaming devices. The policy must allow exceptions for emergencies, health management, individualized education programs or 504 plans, and teacher-approved educational uses. School boards may also include additional exceptions if they determine they benefit student education or well-being. Finally, the policy acknowledges that WI Stat. 120.12(29)(e) allows school boards to adopt policies more restrictive than 2025 Wisconsin Act 42.

### **Policy 5411 - THIRD GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION: AT-RISK STUDENTS (Revised)**

This policy governs the promotion of students from 3rd grade to 4th grade, ensuring decisions are based on a thorough and equitable process that considers individual student reading needs. It is important for providing clear guidelines and support for students who have not completed their personal reading plans, aiming to make promotion decisions that are in the student's best interest.

The policy revision includes an appeal process and timelines for appealing the decision to the District Administrator. If the school representatives recommend retention but the student's parent/caregivers do not consent to retention, it is best practice (although not required by statute) for the student to be promoted to 4th grade regardless of any other facts, circumstances, or analysis. The appeal process, while an option, is not required.

### **Policy 5514 - USE OF PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION DEVICES (Replacement)**

This new policy is relevant because it expands the scope of the previous bicycle rule to address a wider variety of modern personal transportation devices like scooters, skateboards, and hoverboards, whether they're manual or motorized. It establishes clear guidelines for their use on school property, focusing on safety, liability, and the privilege of operation. Crucially, the policy disclaims Board responsibility for damage, theft, or accidents, shifting the full risk and liability to the students and their parents. It is recommended but not required.

### **Policy 5515 - STUDENT USE AND PARKING OF MOTOR VEHICLES (Revised)**

This policy outlines the conditions under which students may use motor vehicles to travel to and from school, emphasizing their responsibility for property care, safety, and courtesy. It is important for establishing clear guidelines for student drivers, ensuring safety, and promoting responsible behavior on school grounds.

Revisions to this policy include students only being permitted to bring vehicles they own or have express permission to operate onto District property; unauthorized vehicles are a violation; law enforcement may be contacted; students may not enter a vehicle without consent; and school officials can search vehicles on District property in accordance with policy. The Board may also permit the use of snowmobiles and Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs) by legally qualified individuals in designated areas for travel to and from school. This revision is recommended but not required.

### **Policy 5895 - STUDENT EMPLOYMENT (Rescind)**

This policy is being rescinded. Teenagers in Wisconsin need a work permit if they are under 16 and are not working in agriculture or domestic service. Schools are no longer authorized to provide students with work permits. Parents or guardians must apply for the permit online through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) website.

### **Policy 6152.01 - WAIVER OF SCHOOL FEES OR FINES (Revised)**

This policy provides that school fees and fines do not prevent financially struggling students from accessing their education and required materials, consistent with the requirement that such charges cannot be barriers to the educational program. It establishes clear eligibility standards, including for low-income and homeless students, and outlines a necessary procedure for requesting and appealing fee waivers. By formalizing this process, the policy upholds equity by preventing discrimination against students whose families are unable to pay.

The policy revisions make optional the language for fee eligibility standards and the resolution of disputes, as well as a defined list and options for fees to be waived. It is recommended to improve options, reflect practice, and enhance clarity.

### **Policy 6320 - PURCHASING (Revised)**

This policy outlines the procedures for the procurement of all supplies, materials, equipment, and services using District funds, emphasizing compliance with relevant laws and ethical standards. Its importance lies in ensuring fair and open competition, responsible financial management, and preventing conflicts of interest in all purchasing transactions.

The key policy revisions include reorganization of content as well as clarification on single vendor bids and the timeline for bid delivery to the District. This revision is recommended but not required.

### **Policy 7540.02 - Digital Content and Accessibility (Replacement)**

This policy provides digital equity and legal compliance by mandating that all District web content and mobile apps adhere to accessibility standards like WCAG 2.1, Level AA. This adherence provides individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to access information, programs, and services, preventing discrimination as required by Section 504 and the ADA. Furthermore, the policy maintains the professional and educational integrity of the District's digital presence, controlling content for appropriateness, security, and alignment with the District's mission.

This replacement policy now reflects the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) final rule provisions under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requiring state and local government entities — including public schools — to make web content and mobile applications accessible to individuals with disabilities. There are statutory timelines relative to the technical standards compliance that are addressed in the notes of the policy template. Adoption is recommended for a legally compliant guideline.

### **Policy 7540.08 - ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) (Replacement)**

This policy update/revision is designed to be legally compliant by referencing and building upon existing Federal laws, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA); Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and State laws, Public Records Law WI 19.31 - S19.37;

Personally Identifiable Information WI 19.62 - S19.80; Pupil Records Law Section WI 118.125; Access to Personal Internet Account Information Section WI 995.55, as well as school board policies related to privacy, civil rights, and academic integrity. It takes an active, risk-mitigating approach to integrating AI into education while prioritizing ethical use and legal adherence.

This policy replaces the current template due to significant expansion and increased language required for legal compliance.