NOTICE OF BOARD TRAINING/EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINIDOKA COUNTY JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT #331
RUPERT, MINIDOKA COUNTY, IDAHO

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an **Special Meeting** of the Board of Trustees of the Minidoka County Joint School District is posted for **Monday, September 22, 2025 at 5:00 PM at the District Service Center 310 10th Street**
Rupert, ID 83350 at which meeting the following business will be conducted:

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL:

Bonnie Heins, Chair
Rick Stimpson, Vice Chair
Russ Suchan, Trustee
Jeff Gibson, Trustee
Mary Andersen, Trustee

Dr. Kenneth Cox, Superintendent
Kerri Tibbitts, Board Clerk
Reed Cotten, School Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL
2. BOARD TRAINING - Jason Lloyd, ISBA 2
3. EXECUTIVE SESSION (5:00): Idaho Code 74-206 (1) (b) To consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent or public school student; (f) legal counsel
4. BUSINESS

A. Approval of Written Resolution #R 08-18-25 Passed August 18, 2025

5. ADJOURNMENT

#boldsubject#

** **Robert's Rules of Order will govern all meetings**
*** **Any person needing special accommodations to participate in the above-noticed meeting should contact the Minidoka County School District one (1) day prior to the meeting at 310 10th St., Rupert, Id. (208) 436-4727**

School District Policy Management Guide

This guide outlines best practices for managing school district policies through an effective workflow and committee structure. It provides a roadmap for establishing clear processes that ensure thorough review, stakeholder input, and efficient board approval. By following these guidelines, school districts can streamline policy development while maintaining high standards of governance.

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Establishing a Policy Management Workflow

An effective policy management system requires a well-defined workflow that ensures thorough review while preventing bottlenecks. The foundation of this system is a multi-stage review process that engages key stakeholders at appropriate points.

Policies originate from two sources: legislative action and within the school/district. Policies created by legislative action must be adopted by schools/districts. To guide schools/districts, the Idaho School Board Association (ISBA) provides regular guidelines and policy updates to its members, so that member schools/districts can stay in compliance with Idaho law. Policies developed within the school/district should originate with administrative committees or personnel directly affected by the policy area. These subject matter experts provide essential insights into practical implementation considerations that might not be apparent to those without direct experience in the field.



Legislative policy or Initial Draft Creation

Administrative committees or affected personnel draft or review policy



Board Policy Committee Review

Draft policies undergo detailed review by specialized committee



First Board Reading

Full board receives policy with Committee representative's summary



Second Reading and Vote

Final review and formal adoption (approximately 30 days after first reading)

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Administrative Policy Committee Structure

Large Districts

May establish standing committees with dedicated subject matter experts.

- Discipline committee
- Curriculum oversight
- Personnel policies
- Financial governance

Small Districts/Schools

May utilize ad hoc advisory groups assembled as needed.

- Superintendent-led
- Temporary formation
- Topic-specific focus
- Flexible membership

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Board Policy Committee Structure

The Board Policy Committee serves as the critical bridge between administrative expertise and full board governance. This committee should be deliberately structured to include diverse perspectives while maintaining manageable size and efficiency.

Recommended Composition

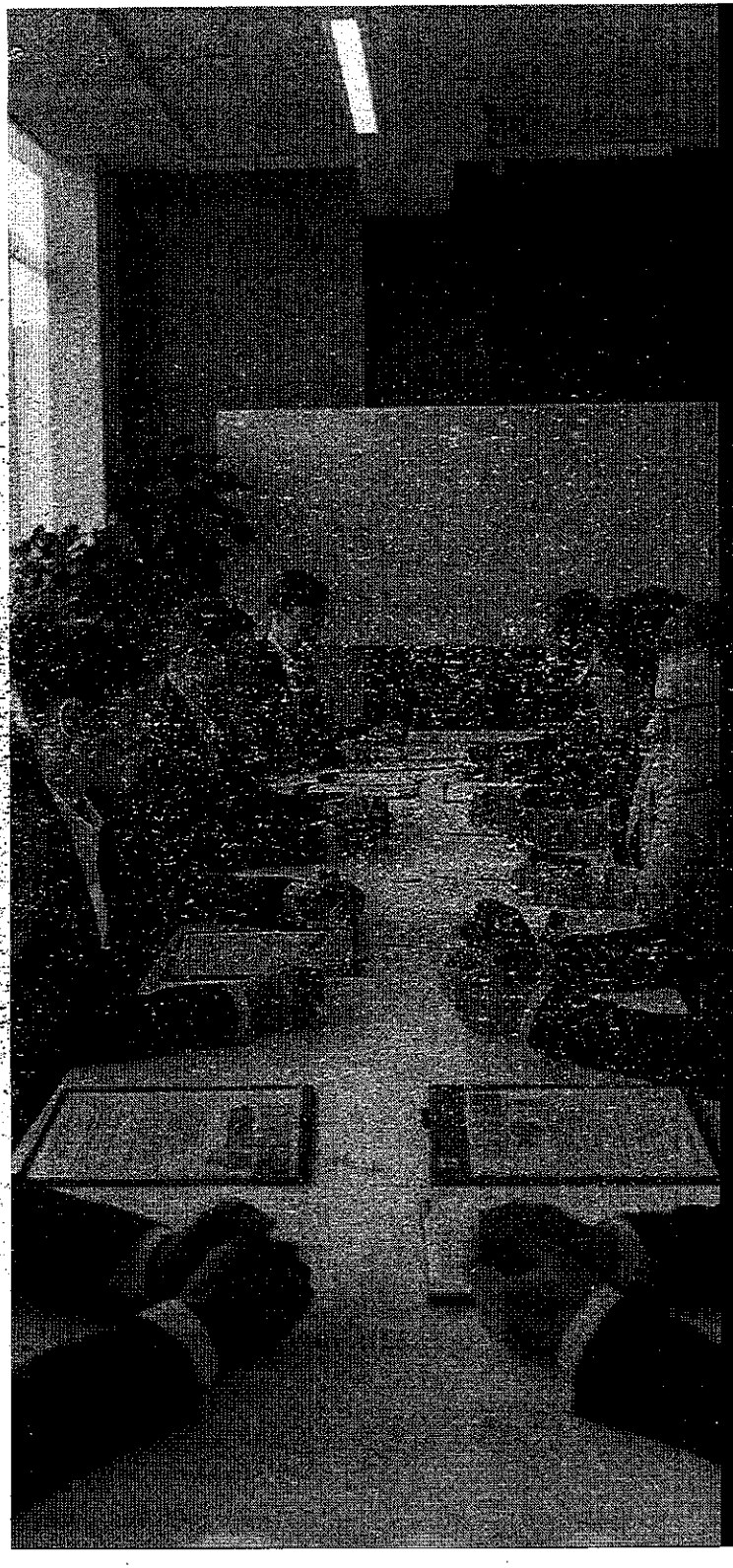
- One committed board member to serve as chair
- School representatives from various levels (elementary, middle, high school)
- Administrator with policy expertise
- Department representative relevant to policies under review

Key Responsibilities

- Review draft policies from administrative committees
- Ensure policy alignment with district vision and legal requirements
- Refine language for clarity and consistency
- Prepare concise summaries for board presentation
- Incorporate board feedback after first reading

The committee size should balance inclusive representation with operational efficiency, typically ranging from 3-7 members. Terms can be staggered to maintain institutional knowledge while allowing for fresh perspectives.

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Ensuring Committee Effectiveness

The effectiveness of your policy management process hinges on the quality of work produced by the Board Policy Committee. When the full board develops trust in this committee's thoroughness and judgment, the approval process becomes significantly more efficient.

Clear Committee Charter

Define specific responsibilities, authority limits, and reporting obligations to establish expectations

Member Expertise

Select committee members with relevant expertise and commitment to thorough policy analysis

Consistent Process

Develop standardized review procedures and documentation formats that demonstrate rigor

Transparent Communication

Regularly update the full board on committee work, including challenges and decision rationales

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Presenting Policies to the Board

The manner in which policies are presented to the full board significantly impacts the efficiency of the approval process. The Board Policy Committee representative should deliver concise, informative presentations that highlight key aspects while avoiding unnecessary detail.

Effective Presentation Elements

- Brief background on policy need or statutory requirement
- Summary of key provisions and changes from current policy
- Overview of stakeholder input considered
- Explanation of committee's recommendation rationale
- Identification of potential implementation challenges



Presentations should focus on substantive issues rather than minor language details. The goal is to provide board members with sufficient context to make informed decisions without overwhelming them with information already available in their board packets.

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Optimizing Board Meeting Efficiency

Prepare Board Members in Advance

Board meetings should focus on discussion and decision-making rather than information delivery. Distribute draft policies in board packets with sufficient lead time (minimum one week) to allow members to review thoroughly before meetings.

Focus on Substance Over Style

Avoid reading policies verbatim during board meetings. Board members should come prepared having reviewed the materials. Meeting time is better spent addressing questions and discussing substantive concerns.

DO

- Highlight significant changes from existing policy
- Explain legal or regulatory requirements driving changes
- Address questions about implementation implications
- Focus on policy impact and alignment with district goals

DON'T

- Read policy text verbatim during meetings
- Engage in detailed wordsmithing during full board meetings
- Reopen fundamental issues already resolved in committee
- Allow discussion to drift into implementation details

CONSIDER

- Using visual aids to highlight key policy elements
- Creating a standardized policy summary template
- Tracking policy changes with document comparison tools
- Providing opportunity for clarifying questions

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Managing Policy Revisions

Even thoroughly vetted policies may require revisions after board review. Establishing a clear process for managing these changes helps maintain momentum while ensuring all concerns are properly addressed.

Avoid On-the-Spot Wordsmithing

Board meetings are rarely the appropriate venue for detailed language adjustments. When substantive concerns arise during board discussion, the recommended approach is to refer the policy back to the Board Policy Committee rather than attempting to rewrite it during the meeting.

Document Concerns

Record specific board member concerns and suggested changes with clear documentation

Committee Reconsideration

Return policy to committee for thoughtful revision addressing identified issues

Targeted Revision

Focus revision only on identified concerns rather than reopening entire policy

Expedited Return

Fast-track revised policy for next board meeting to maintain momentum

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Committee Meeting Cadence and Workflow

Consistent, regular meetings of the Board Policy Committee are essential for maintaining policy currency and preventing backlogs. Monthly meetings provide sufficient frequency to address ongoing policy needs while allowing adequate preparation time between sessions.

Meeting Structure

- Utilize online document management software so that the group can work on shared documents before meeting.
- Must run Board Policy Committee as open meeting (follow open meeting law).

Annual Planning

- Maintain a policy review calendar
- Schedule reviews based on regulatory changes
- Prioritize policies with identified issues
- Balance workload across the year
- Allow flexibility for urgent policy needs

Committee efficiency increases when members come prepared with pre-reading completed. Distribute materials at least three days before meetings, and consider using collaborative tools that allow asynchronous input between meetings. Maintain detailed minutes to track decisions and ensure accountability for assigned tasks.

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Navigating "Lightning Rod" Policies

Some policies inevitably generate strong emotional responses from stakeholders. These "lightning rod" issues—like dress codes or academic calendars—require special handling.

Identify Sensitive Policies

Recognize policies that historically trigger strong community reactions or affect daily school life significantly.

Form Dedicated Committees

Create stand-alone committees with representatives from all stakeholder groups specifically for these policies.

Ensure Broad Representation

Include teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members to capture diverse perspectives.

Establish Clear Process

Define committee timeline, decision-making procedures, and methods for incorporating public input.

Present United Recommendations

Bring thoroughly vetted proposals to the board with evidence of inclusive development process.

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Understanding School District Governance and Policy

A guide for Idaho public school board members and district administrators on effective governance, policy development, and strategic leadership in educational settings.

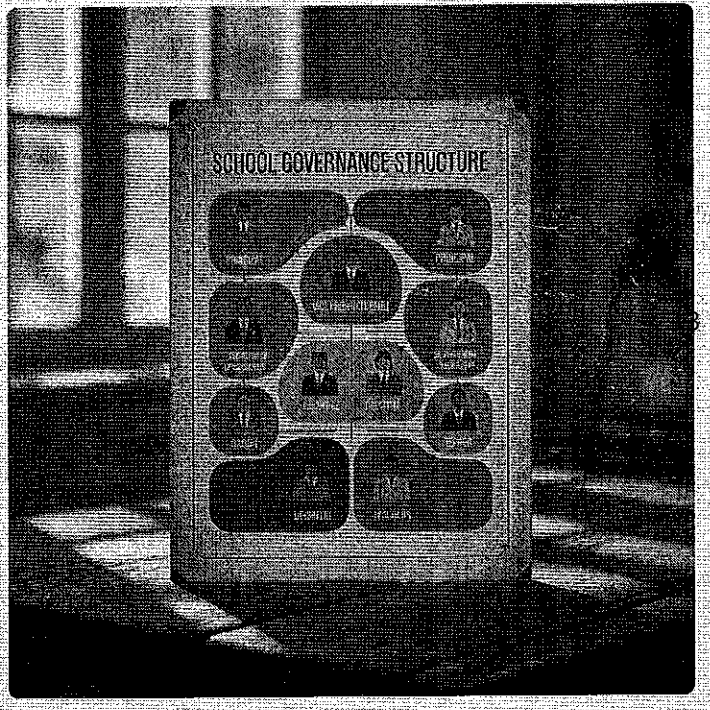
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What is Governance?

Governance is the system of rules, practices, and processes by which a school district is directed and controlled. It encompasses the mechanisms through which boards and administrators are held accountable to students, families, and the broader community.

In public education, governance involves making decisions that affect thousands of students, managing taxpayer resources, and ensuring educational excellence. It requires balancing multiple stakeholder interests while maintaining focus on student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Effective governance creates the framework within which all district operations function, from classroom instruction to budget management.



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Governance vs. Administration

While often intertwined, governance and administration fulfill distinct yet complementary roles within a school district. Understanding this separation is crucial for effective leadership and operational efficiency.

Governance: The Board's Role

The school board, in its governance capacity, is responsible for setting the district's strategic direction, ensuring oversight, and maintaining accountability to the community.

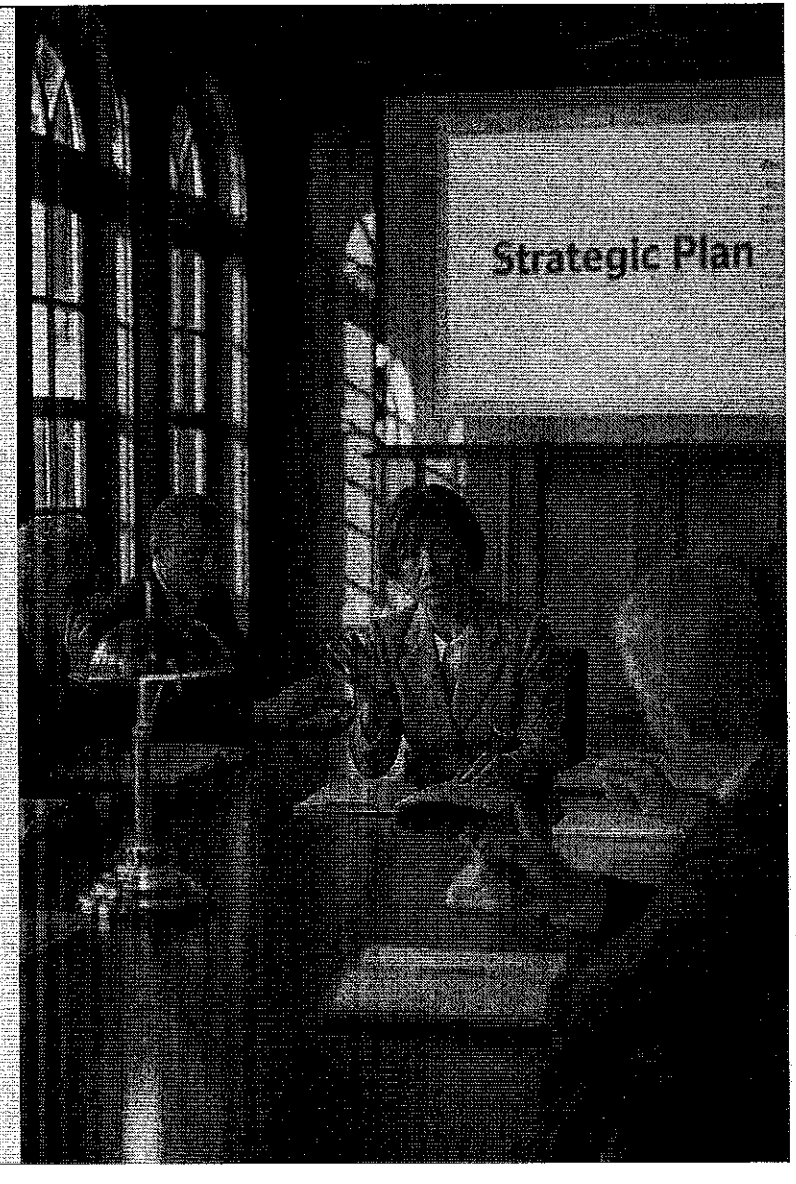
- **Direct:** Establish vision, mission, and long-term strategic goals.
- **Oversee:** Monitor district performance, approve policies, and ensure legal compliance.
- **Accountable:** Represent community interests and uphold public trust.

Administration: The Operational Team's Role

The administration, led by the superintendent, focuses on the daily execution and management of the district, translating board policies into actionable plans.

- **Implement:** Execute approved policies, programs, and budgets.
- **Manage:** Oversee daily operations, staff, student services, and resources.
- **Advise:** Provide information, analysis, and recommendations to the board.

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The Pillars of Good Governance

Transparency

Open decision-making, public information access, and clear communication build trust and accountability.

Accountability

Clear responsibilities, measurable outcomes, and regular evaluation ensure leaders are answerable for performance.

Participation

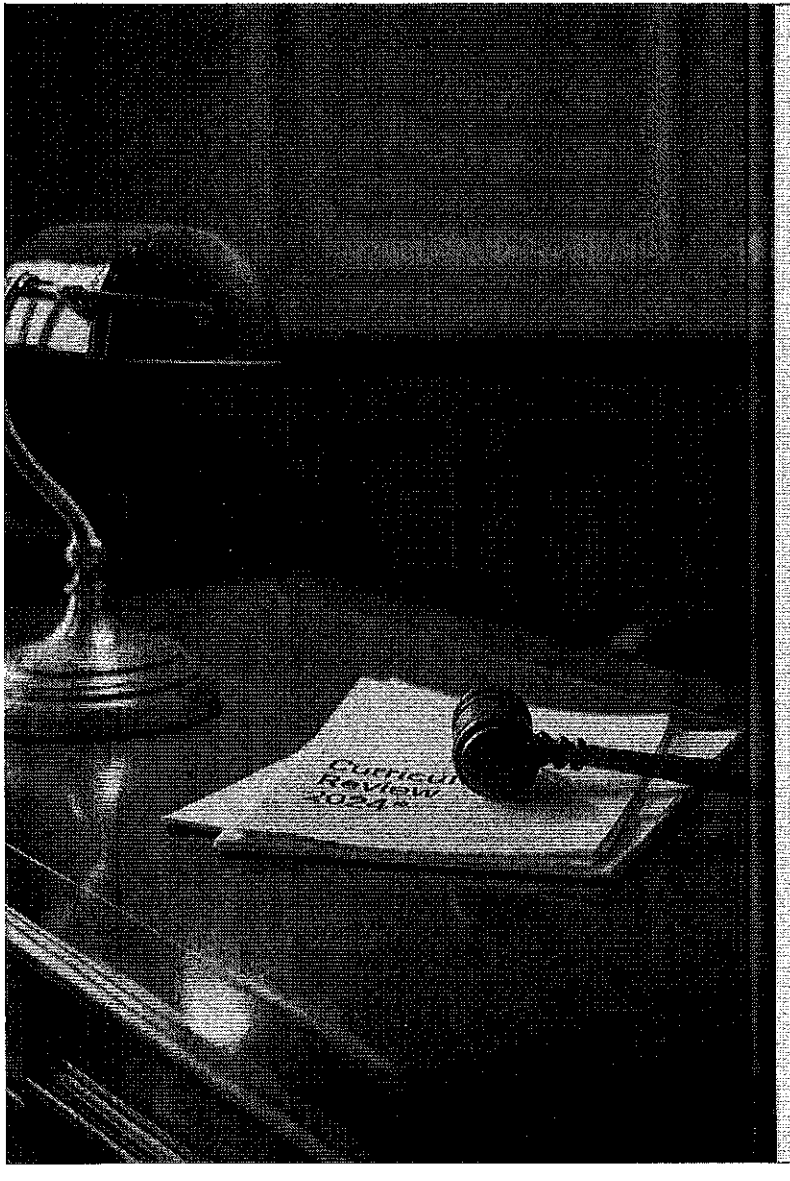
Engaging community members, staff, and students strengthens decision-making and fosters buy-in.

Ethical Leadership

Integrity, fairness, and adherence to ethical standards maintain public confidence and support.

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What is Policy?

A policy is a formal statement adopted by the school board that establishes the district's official stance on key issues, guiding consistent decision-making and shaping district operations. It translates the board's vision into actionable directives for daily guidance.

Formal & Official

Policies are official, documented decisions with the full authority of the school board.

Guiding Principles

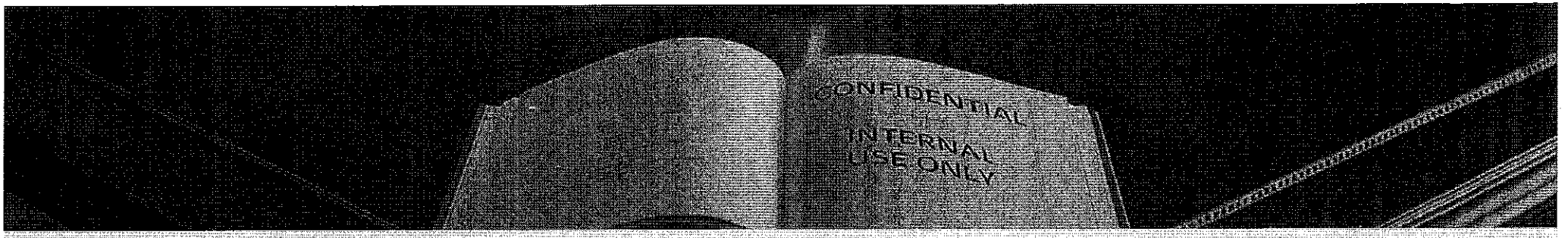
They provide the governing principles that shape district operations and decision-making.

Long-lasting

Policies remain in effect until formally revised or rescinded by the board, unlike informal agreements.

> "Effective policy provides the roadmap for educational excellence and organizational success."

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Policy vs. Procedure: Understanding the Distinction

Policy

- **What** the district will do
- Board-adopted statements
- Broad principles and positions
- Long-term and stable
- Sets expectations and boundaries

Example: "The district shall provide a safe learning environment for all students."

Procedure

- **How** the policy will be implemented
- Administrative regulations
- Specific steps and processes
- Can be updated as needed
- Details the implementation method

Example: "Emergency drills will be conducted monthly, with specific protocols for fire, lockdown, and severe weather."

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The Core Purposes of Educational Policy



Provide Direction

Policies establish clear expectations and priorities, ensuring all district personnel understand the organization's goals and values.

Ensure Legal Compliance

Policies help districts meet federal, state, and local legal requirements while protecting the organization from potential liability.

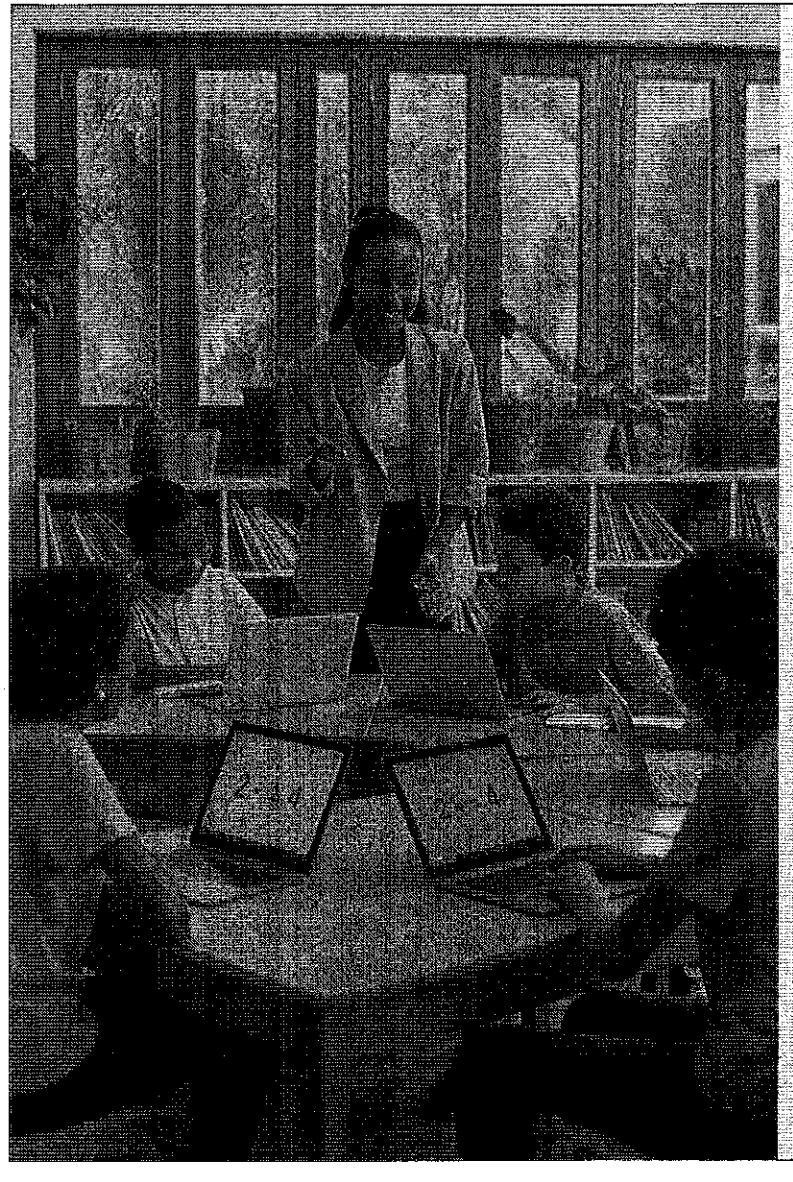
Promote Consistency

Standardized policies ensure fair and equitable treatment across schools and departments within the district.

Support Decision-Making

Well-crafted policies provide administrators with clear guidelines for making consistent, defensible decisions.

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Key Benefits of Strong Policy Framework

Prioritizing District Goals

Policies can help the Board to translate their vision for the district into concrete steps to make it a reality.

Operational Efficiency

Well-defined policies streamline decision-making processes, reduce confusion, and eliminate the need to reinvent solutions for recurring situations.

Aiding in Legal Compliance

Policy can aid the district in understanding and complying with legal requirements.

Community Trust

Transparent, well-communicated policies build public confidence by showing the district operates with clear standards and accountability measures.

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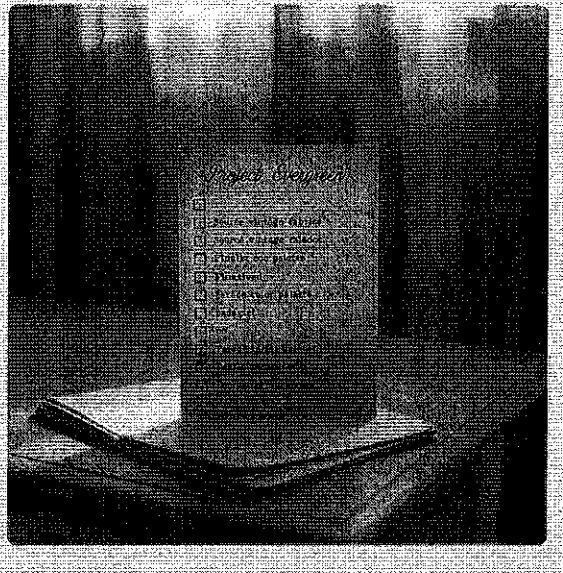
Evaluating Policies: A Practical Activity

What makes a good policy?



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Characteristics of Effective Educational Policy



Clear and Specific

Uses precise language that eliminates ambiguity and provides concrete guidance for implementation.

Legally Compliant

Aligns with federal, state, and local laws while addressing Idaho-specific requirements and regulations.

Practical and Feasible

Can be realistically implemented with available resources and within existing organizational capacity.

Regularly Reviewed

Subject to periodic evaluation and updating to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

Stakeholder-Informed

Developed with input from teachers, parents, community members, and other relevant parties.

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Policy Responsibility Matrix

01

School Board

Adopts, revises, and repeals all district policies. Sets the vision and ensures policies align with community values and legal requirements.

02

Superintendent or designee

Recommends policy changes to the board, develops corresponding procedures, and ensures district-wide policy implementation and compliance.

03

District Administration

Creates detailed procedures and administrative procedures that support policy implementation across departments and schools.

04

Building Principals

Implements policies at the school level, communicates expectations to staff, and ensures compliance with district policies and procedures.

05

All Staff Members

Follow established policies in their daily work, report policy-related concerns, and participate in policy implementation and evaluation processes.

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School District Policy Management Best Practices

Systematic Development & Adoption

Policies should be thoroughly researched, involve diverse stakeholders, and follow a clear, formal approval process by the board.

Clear Communication & Training

Ensure all policies are clearly communicated to staff, parents, and the community, with comprehensive training provided for effective implementation.

Consistent Implementation

Promote uniform application of policies across all schools and departments to ensure fairness, equity, and operational consistency.

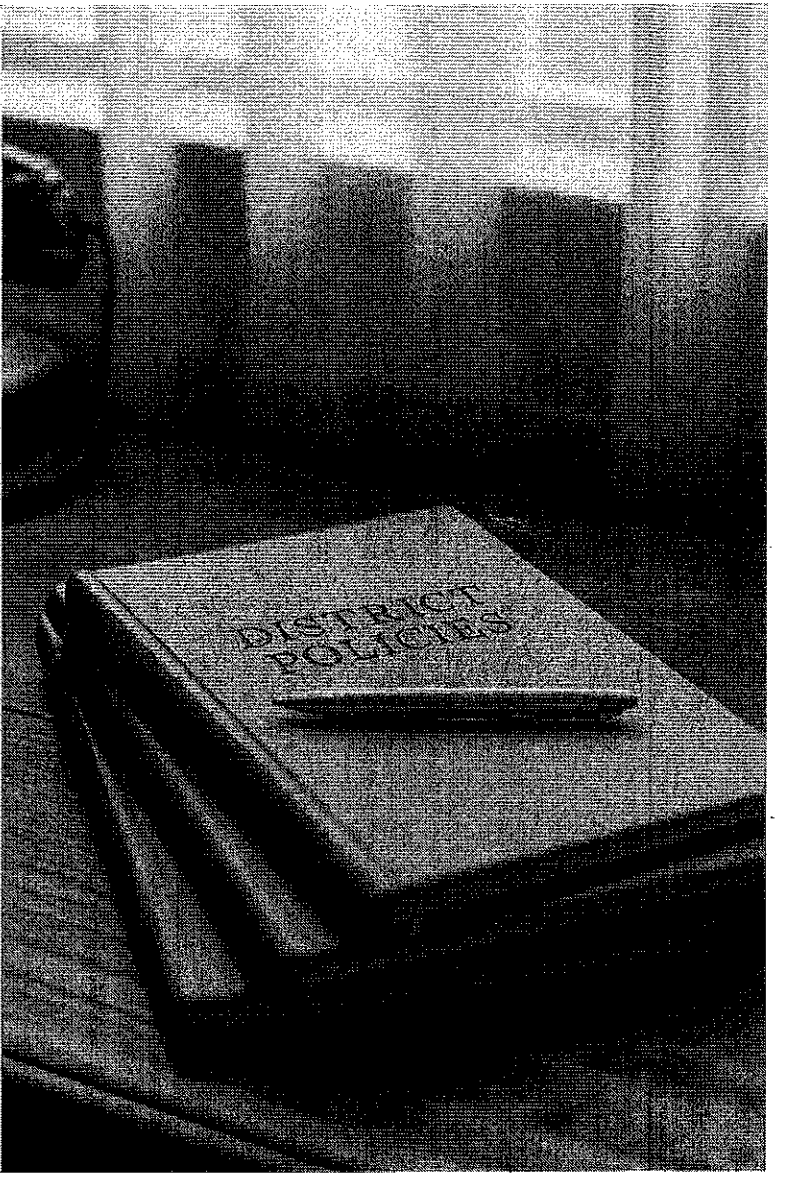
Regular Review & Updates

Establish a routine schedule for periodic review and revision to keep policies current, legally compliant, and aligned with district goals.

Centralized Accessibility

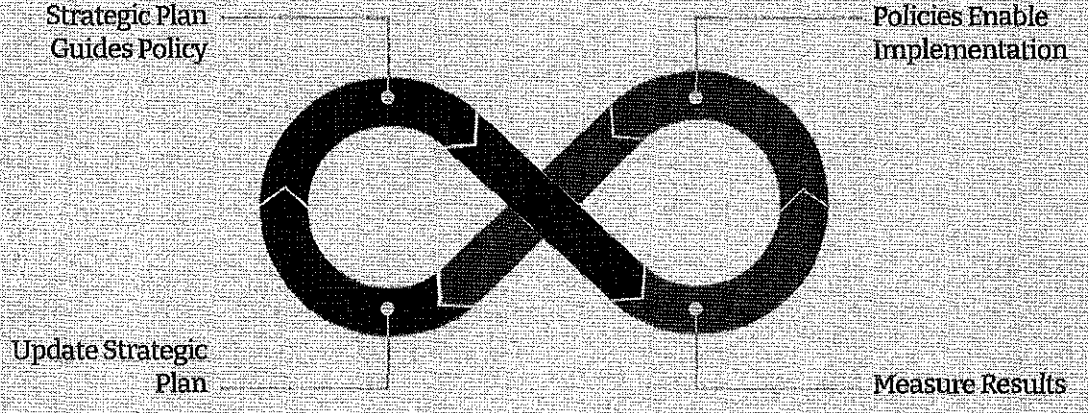
Maintain an easily accessible, organized repository of all current policies for quick reference by staff, students, and the public.

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Aligning Policy with Strategic Planning



Strategic Integration

Effective policies serve as the bridge between the district's strategic vision and daily operations. They translate long-term goals into actionable guidelines that advance the district's mission.

Regular policy review should align with strategic plan cycles, ensuring policies support current priorities and eliminate barriers to achievement.

Continuous Improvement

Policy effectiveness should be measured against strategic outcomes. Data-driven policy review creates opportunities for refinement and ensures resources are deployed efficiently.

Strong governance integrates policy development with strategic planning, creating a coherent framework for sustainable educational excellence.

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