

FRANKLIN CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION AND ITS MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

COMMON PROCEDURES FOR POLICY MAINTENANCE (A1, A2, A3)

The Role of Policy

It is the intent of the Board to outline direction and goals for the successful, consistent, and efficient operation of the Franklin Central Supervisory Union and its member school districts through the development and adoption of policies in accordance with Vermont state law as outlined in 16 V.S.A. §563(1).

Background

Policy development is the Board's most important responsibility. Policies of the district will be in compliance with Vermont law and federal statutes as well as state and federal regulations. These policies will also reflect and be consistent with educational objectives, procedures, and practices which are generally accepted in the public education field.

Definitions

Policies describe the direction the Board, with input from its community, has outlined for the school district. They provide a guide for action by the administration.

Policies should serve, also, to inform and guide all people interested in or connected with the school district.

Policies chart a course of action. They outline what is wanted; they may include why and how much, and should always indicate the person responsible for implementing the policy. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a course of action for the administration to follow in meeting most situations; narrow enough to give clear guidance.

Procedures (also referred to as rules or regulations) are the specific directions that indicate exactly how school personnel and others will carry out the policies adopted by the School Board. Procedures should be developed by school administrators and may be reviewed by the Board. They may change more frequently than the underlying policy and do not require adoption by the Board.

Policy Development and Adoption

Policy Initiation

Any person residing in or employed by the school district may suggest policies by providing a statement of need in writing to the Superintendent or Board Clerk. Such suggestions will be considered by the Board and administrators to determine whether a policy is warranted to assure consistent and equitable school operations.

Policy Development

The Board, acting as a whole or through a policy committee, will seek appropriate public comment and administrative guidance as it considers proposals for policy development or revision. Comment and information will be sought in the following areas:

1. The specific need for the policy.
2. The fiscal consequences of the proposed policy.
3. The effect of proposed policy on administrators, students, teaching staff, and the community.
4. Samples of similar policies of other boards.

5. Applicable provisions of state and federal law.
6. The anticipated costs and benefits of implementing, enforcing, and evaluating the proposed policy.

Warnings

Policies will be adopted by the Board only after appropriate public notice and opportunity for public comment as outlined in state law.

Policy Dissemination, Administration, and Review

Policy

It is the policy of the Franklin Central Supervisory Union and its member school districts to disseminate its policies broadly to all community members, to administer them fairly, and to assure that there is regular periodic review of the District's policies.

Dissemination

When policies are adopted, the Superintendent will publish and make them available to the public, students, and school personnel.

A copy of the district policy manual will be available during the normal working day in the office and/or library of each school within the district. The student handbook will include board policies related to student activities and conduct. The teacher handbook will include board policies related to teachers' responsibilities. The Superintendent will develop other appropriate methods to familiarize and educate the school and general community about the district's policies.

Administration

Policies will be administered through procedures and directives of the Superintendent and members of the management team.

It will be the responsibility of employees and students to know and follow board policy.

Policy Review

All policies will be reviewed periodically and, if necessary or appropriate, revised or repealed in response to changing legislation or other altered circumstances.

FCSU Policy Development

1. **Recognizing the Need**: The need for policy development may be required by state, federal, or local mandates; or may come from needs determined by the Superintendent and/or Administration; or may come from any member school and its community members.
2. **Policy Committee**: At least one representative from each of the member school district Boards participates in a standing committee. The members are charged with developing common policies for the FCSU and its member school districts. Policy development may occur by modifying policy models from the state, Vermont Department of Education, the Vermont School Boards Association, or they may originate from collective knowledge, research, and input from affected groups or individuals. When necessary, the committee may seek input from legal counsel.

3. Informing the Boards: Once a policy is drafted by the Policy Committee, the policy is made available on the website to each board member for reading in advance of the next Policy Committee Meeting. Questions are posed to the school board’s Policy Committee representative, the Policy Committee Chairperson, or Superintendent/Designee prior to the Policy Committee Meeting.
4. Committee Work: The Policy Committee at its discretion reviews comments and amends the draft policy as appropriate/necessary.
5. Board Presentation: The policy is presented at the Board meeting as a “First Reading.” If there is no opposition, the Superintendent requests the Board to “Warn for Adoption” at the next scheduled Board meeting. If there is opposition, the policy is discussed and either moved ahead or remanded to the Policy Committee for follow-up action.
6. Board Warning or Action: The policy is presented at a second Board meeting and either adopted by vote and it becomes policy or, after discussion occurs, it is returned to the Policy Committee with specific requested changes or for rework.
7. Policy Adoption: The policy is distributed to schools and Board members; once it has been adopted by all school districts and the FCSU, it is posted to the website. Each recipient is responsible for maintaining their Policy Manuals with current policies. The Administration will develop companion procedures when necessary and appropriate.
8. Other Action: If the Policy Committee finds that a policy needs minor changes, it may be presented for Action at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If a policy has major changes, it will be introduced as another “First Reading.” Policies are reviewed and updated, as needed, every three-to-five years.

Attachment: Policy Development Process Flowchart

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Legal Reference(s): | 16 V.S.A. §563 (1) (Powers of school boards) 1 V.S.A. §316 (Access to records) |
| Cross Reference VSBA Policy Codes | Policy Development (A1) Policy Adoption (A2) Policy Dissemination, Administration and Review (A3) |

On-Line Resource: <http://www.vtvsba.org/>

Approved by FCSU Policy Committee on 06.20.2011