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1001
General Policy Statement

The organization, management, and control of this school district is vested in its board of education ("board"). To guide the board and school district operations, and to assist it and its designees in carrying out duties, the board will establish, maintain, and amend a set of policies.

Written board policies serve the following purposes:

1. Formally articulating the board's goals and long-term objectives.
2. Providing district administrators and staff with guidance in making decisions that affect students, employees and patrons of the district.
3. Informing the public of the manner that the board and district will conduct its business and its relationships with staff, pupils, parents and patrons.

To avoid unnecessary rigidity, these policies are stated in general terms. With the exception of statutory requirements or instances when the specific application of a policy is essential to the long-term welfare of the district, these policies are intended to provide administrators with the flexibility to apply them to a wide range of situations.

The policies are not the only guidelines for district operations. Specific regulations, procedures, and practices also help guide and govern actions and decisions. They must be consistent with policies, but serve a different purpose.

Exceptional Circumstances

The board cannot foresee every situation that may arise, and circumstances will occur when these policies provide inadequate guidance. In such circumstances, the superintendent should use his or her best judgment, and communicate with the board about the situation as soon as is convenient.

Validity of Policies

Each policy and its provision should be interpreted so that it is valid under applicable law. If a court determines that a provision of a policy is invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions of that policy.

Adopted on: _____
Revised on: _____
Reviewed on: _____

1002
Creation and Amendment of Board of Education Policies

Creation of Board Policies

Each of these policies shall become the official policy of the school district when the board has approved it by majority vote of the members present at any lawfully convened meeting of the board.

Amendment of Board Policies

The board may revise policies at a regular or special meeting if the proposed revision, addition, or amendment has been distributed to the board members in writing prior to the meeting at which it is to be adopted.

In an emergency, the board may declare an emergency and revise policies without having distributed copies of the proposed revisions to board members prior to the meeting.

Each policy shall bear the date when it was adopted, revised or reviewed.

The superintendent shall distribute copies of these policies to all members of the board, maintain a master copy in the central office, and see to it that the policies are maintained on the school district's web site.

Annual Review

The board shall review all policies at least once every three years. Nebraska statutes require an annual review of specific policies, and such policies shall be so identified. The board may update or add policies as needed. The board shall determine the number of copies of policies to be made and their distribution. The superintendent shall maintain an up-to-date master copy of the policies in the main administrative office. Unless otherwise directed by the board, the master copy shall be considered the official district policy manual.

Adopted on: _____
Revised on: _____
Reviewed on: _____

1003
Mission Statement

Most school districts have adopted their own school mission statements. We have not drafted a mission statement, because this is a highly individualized process. We do, however, want to offer specific guidelines for adopting a mission statement**.**

A mission statement should be a brief paragraph that is free of education jargon and "terms of art." Mission statements that articulate an idealized vision for what the school will accomplish can lead to litigation, and we recommend against using them. The following mission statement from a California school district illustrates this danger:

> **The mission of the School District, simply stated, is to meet the needs of all students.**
>
> Specifically, the District must:
>
> Recognize children's differences, their potential and infinite value; offer appropriate educational opportunities for all students; provide students an opportunity to develop character and integrity and achieve excellence; provide a safe, supportive, trusting environment of mutual support and respect and promote self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others which will carry over into appropriate social skills, values and morals.

This mission statement articulates lofty ideals, but it also creates potential legal problems for the district. Unhappy parents could claim that the district failed to comply with its mission statement because it failed to meet the needs of their children. This is a particularly troublesome issue in the field of special education litigation.

We think the two mission statements below are much better examples of workable school mission statements:

> This school district is a student-focused community that develops responsible, life-long learners through a progressive, quality education.
>
> This school district, in cooperation with family and community, will provide a flexible and varied educational program

committed to excellence. Students will be empowered to become productive and contributing members of a global community.

We will be pleased to review your school's mission statement, if you would like us to examine it for possible legal difficulties.

1004
Distribution of Policies

The superintendent shall see to the posting of a current copy of these policies on the district's web site and to the maintenance of a master copy of the policy manual in the main administrative office. Other copies will be made available as needed throughout the district.

The board and the district's officers and employees shall make other information about the school district and its schools, programs, policies and procedures available to all interested persons, as appropriate.

Adopted on: _____
Revised on: _____
Reviewed on: _____