

KANAWHA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

Board Effectiveness

Series: A03

Reference: W. Va. Code §18-5-14

Issued: 07.21.1994

Revised: 05.20.04

Revision Number: 1

3.01 Philosophy. The Board acknowledges the importance of the establishment of formal links between it and local school improvement councils, faculty senates, and the community at large. In order to be effective the Board must receive meaningful information, comments and suggestions regarding its policies and governance.

3.02 Direct Links Between the Board and Local School Improvement Councils. To enable the Board to receive information, comments, and suggestions directly from local school improvement councils regarding broad guidelines for oversight procedures, standards of accountability, and planning for future needs, the following direct links are established between the Board and its local school improvement councils.

3.02.1 Annual Meeting With Local School Improvement Councils. The Board shall conduct no less than six meetings at a dates, times, and places fixed at its first meeting in July of each year. At least a quorum of the full membership of each local improvement council shall be required to attend one of such meetings; provided that if a quorum of the local school improvement council is unavailable, the meeting may take place so long as the school principal and the chairperson of the local school improvement council are present.

3.02.2 Annual Meeting Agenda. At least 30 days before a local school improvement council's annual meeting with the Board, the Board shall develop and submit to the local school improvement council an agenda for the meeting. The agenda shall identify the items which the council chairperson or designee is to address at the meeting. The items shall include, but need not be limited to, items designated by the Board from the report submitted to the State Board under Section 3.02.5 of this policy, as well as one or more of the following issues: school performance, curriculum, status of the school in meeting the unified school improvement plan, and status of the school in meeting the county plan.

3.02.3 Requests for Information. Throughout the year, the Board may make written requests for information from local school improvement councils or hold community forums to receive input from the affected community as the Board considers necessary.

3.02.4 Additional Meetings. In its discretion, the Board may hold additional meetings with any local school improvement council. In particular, the Board

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may schedule additional meetings with the local school improvement council for any low performing school.

3.02.5 Annual Report. At the conclusion of each school year, the Superintendent shall prepare, for adoption by the Board, a report concerning the meeting or meetings held with the local school improvement councils during the school year. In drafting the report, the Superintendent shall consult with the councils and may request their assistance. Upon approval by the Board, and no later than September 1 of each year, the report, including any amendments made by the Board, shall be delivered by the Superintendent to the State Board of Education.

3.02.6 Other linkages with Local School Improvement Councils.

3.02.6.1 Surveys of Local School Improvement Councils. Surveys are a formal means to obtain information or to evaluate board programs or proposed board programs, or to survey or study issues. Prior to a survey being sent to a Local School Improvement Council the Board specify the format of the survey, the questions to be responded to and such other information as the Board may deem appropriate.

3.02.6.2 Board Meetings Involving Local School Improvement Councils. In addition to the required annual meeting, a portion or portions of regular meetings (or special meetings) may be devoted to hearing from local school improvement councils, or particular local school improvement councils, or representatives of local school improvement councils. For purposes of effective meeting management, the Board may itemize what it expects from the local school improvement council or its representatives.

3.02.6.3 Forums Involving Local School Improvement Councils. Forums differ from town meetings (described below) only in that they are convened by a board to address a specific topic. Those attending forums are “invited” by the board — usually district constituencies, including local school improvement councils, faculty senates and the community at large (or sub-groups of the community at large). The board may convene forums in regard to an issue, or to receive comments or information. Meeting structure is more formal in forums than in town meetings.

3.02.6.4 Linkages with Local School Improvement Councils Based on Board Designation. The Board may appoint of a member of the Board (or

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members of the Board) and/or superintendent to provide or receive certain communications from local school improvement councils. This is not intended to prevent to public from communicating with other board members on matters of concern.

3.02.6.5 “Town Meetings’ Involving Local School Improvement Councils.” Town meetings may be defined as informal meetings (usually having no particularly identified agenda focus) which are held for the primary purpose of securing information from one or more constituencies, especially the community at large or from formal structures, including local school improvement councils and faculty. They are highly participatory, but also require good meeting management.

3.02.7 **Direct Links Between the Board and Faculty Senates.** To enable the Board to receive information, comments, and suggestions directly from faculty senates regarding broad guidelines for oversight procedures, standards of accountability, and planning for future needs, the following direct links are established between the Board and its faculty senates.

3.02.7.1 Surveys of Faculty Senates. Surveys are a formal means to obtain information or to evaluate board programs or proposed board programs, or to survey or study issues.

3.02.7.2 Delegations at Board Meetings. Faculty Senate representatives may elect to speak as delegations at any regular board meeting or any special board meeting at which the topic of the delegate’s presentation is on the board’s agenda for discussion at that meeting.

3.02.7.3 Forums Involving Faculty Senates. The Board may convene forums of faculty senates in regard to an issue, or to receive comments or information. Meeting structure is more formal in forums than in town meetings.

3.02.7.4 Forum Participation. In planning forums, as described herein, the Board may consider inviting representatives of faculty senates as part of the constituency groups participating in the forum. (See suggestions elsewhere in document.)

3.02.8 **Direct Links Between the Board and the Community at Large.** The following steps may be taken to develop direct links between the Board and

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the community at large, allow for community involvement at regular board meetings, and regularly communicate with the public regarding important issues.

3.02.8.1.1 Surveys of the Community at Large. Surveys are a formal means to obtain information or to evaluate board programs or proposed board programs, or to survey or study issues. Surveys need not be made of the entire community, but can be made of designated subgroups of the community at large.

3.02.8.1.2 Board Meetings Involving the Community at Large. A portion or portions of regular meetings (or special meetings) may be devoted to hearing from the community at large or sub-groups of the community. For purposes of effective meeting management, the board should itemize what it expects from the community at large or sub-groups.

3.02.8.1.3 Techniques to Enhance Effective Meeting Management to Maximize Community Involvement. Community involvement at regular board meetings means that regular board meetings are conducted in a manner which maximizes involvement of the community at large, but in a manner consistent with laws regarding “open meetings.” In order that meetings are meaningful and productive, effective meeting management is highly prized and valued. Additionally, board meetings should be characterized by attention to the value of public involvement, particularly in regard to receipt of information, comments or suggestions regarding the school system. To accommodate the desires of this policy and also to maximize utilization of time as a resource, the board will, to the degree possible, use consent agendas or similar tools of effective meeting management. While the board may value delegations and formalized presentations, the board also values singular contributions which may be made by citizens, school employees, students and others during its regular meetings. The board, however, realizes that while community involvement is prized, it may lose effectiveness if not characterized and received within a spirit of effective meeting management. Accordingly, the board will periodically evaluate community involvement to ascertain its effectiveness, especially in regard to board agenda structure and format.

3.02.8.1.4 Forums Involving the Community at Large. The board may convene forums, involving the community at large, in regard to an issue, or to

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receive comments or information. Meeting structure is more formal in forums than in town meetings.

3.02.8.1.5 Linkages with the Community at Large Based on Designation. The Board may appoint a member of the board (or members of the board) and/or superintendent to provide or receive certain communications from the community at large or sub-groups of the community. This is not intended to prevent to public from communicating with other board members on matters of concern.

3.02.8.1.6 Town Meetings Involving the Community at Large. The Board may convene town meetings for the primary purpose of securing information from one or more constituencies, especially the community at large or from formal structures, including local school improvement councils and faculty. They are highly participatory, but also require good meeting management.

3.02.8.1.7 Regularly Communicating With the Public Regarding Important Issues. To regularly communicate with the public regarding important issues means that the board should communicate to the public in regard to issues of decisive importance to the board, the school system and/or certain constituents, especially to meet the requirements of this policy.

3.02.8.1.8 Web-based Communications. Another effective means of communicating with the public is through Web-based communications, including the school district's Web site or other Internet-based sites. These two-way communications can include surveys of the public, responses to 'questions' or 'issues' posed by the county board, inventories or assessments of county board programs and the like.

3.02.9 Written notice of such meetings shall include copies of existing policies and procedures regarding: broad guidelines for oversight procedures; standards of accountability and planning for future needs; and, further development of linkages between the Board, local school improvement councils, faculty senates and the community at large. Written notice of such meetings shall also contain a form to be completed on behalf of the full membership of each local school improvement council that provides information comments and suggestions on the Board's policies and governance. Written notice of such meetings will be provided so as to allow local school improvement councils an opportunity to meet at least once prior to its meeting with the Board.

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3.03 Personnel Policy Review. The Superintendent shall periodically provide a report to the Board that identifies all personnel policies. The report shall identify any policy deficiencies that result in a lack of effectiveness.

3.04 Broad Guidelines for the School District. The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide broad guidelines for the school district, including the establishment of specific oversight procedures, development and implementation of standards of accountability, and development of long-range plans to meet future needs.

3.04.1 Long-Range Plans. The Board shall schedule at least one special meeting on an annual basis that is dedicated to long range planning. Such long range planning shall include plans to meet future needs relative to school board effectiveness.

3.04.2 Record; Annual Review. The procedures required by the previous sections of this policy are all intended to meet these ends. A record shall be kept of all suggestions made under the previous sections by local school improvement councils, faculty senates, and the community at large regarding broad guidelines for oversight procedures, standards of accountability, and planning for future needs. At least annually, the record shall be considered by the Board to identify suggestions worthy of further consideration.

3.04.3 Existing Policies. Additionally, the Board confirms that any of its existing policies and resolutions regarding the school district's vision, mission, planning procedures, and goals shall, until withdrawn or amended, be interpreted and applied as specific oversight procedures, standards of accountability, and long-range plans to meet future needs.

3.05 Use of Data In Decision Making. The Superintendent shall provide reports that include school-based accreditation and performance data and other relevant data to the Board on a timely basis. Whenever the Board is engaged in decision making that involves meeting the education goals of the State and such other goals as the Board may establish, the Superintendent shall reference the aforesaid data in any recommendations made to the Board.

3.06 Policy Review. The Board shall at least annually, before August 1, review the provisions of this policy and make such amendments as the Board finds necessary to effectuate the requirements of West Virginia Code § 18-5-14.