

Introduction to District Policy Resource Manuals – Policy, Procedures and Forms

OverviewThe district's policy resource manuals contain the policies of the Kansas City, Missouri Board of Education and administrative forms and procedures intended to implement the policies. It is the hope of the Board of Education that as a collection of policies, forms and procedures, the manuals will provide for greater harmony and efficiency in all areas of school operations. The Board policies are clearly separate from administrative procedures and forms. This delineation enables the Board to devote more time to its primary duty – the development of long-range policies and planning for the future of the school district – and allows the district's administration to perform its duty of implementing policies.

About Board PoliciesGenerally, the role of a Board of Education is to set policy and the role of the administration is to execute it. The basic definitions of policies, procedures, forms and regulations, as set forth by the National School Boards Association, are as follows:

Policies are principles adopted by the Board to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted and may include also why and how much. They are broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the administration in meeting a number of day-to-day problems; however, they need to be narrow enough to give the administration clear guidance.

Procedures and Forms are the detailed directions developed by the administration to put a policy into practice. They tell how, by whom, where, and when tasks are to be accomplished. Detailed procedures and forms are more appropriately kept in administrative manuals for ease of access by principals and other school administrators.

Regulations are similar to procedures in that they are designed to provide direction for implementing policy. However, regulations are procedures that are carried out by the Board rather

than the administration and are therefore housed in the policy manual. They are normally few in number and usually appear in Section B, School Board Governance and Operations.

The definitions listed above are serviceable most of the time. They reflect sound theory of governance and administration. But the real world does not always conform. For example: Often the state and federal governments confuse the distinction and require Boards of Education to make detailed regulations; and, many regulations are established by law or by the Missouri State Board of Education/Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Additionally, the public may demand that the Board itself, not the administration, establish the specific regulations in certain sensitive areas.

Thus, the separation of policies and administrative resources in the manuals follows several rules of thumb in addition to "basic theory":

1. Edicts of the federal and/or state government are often detailed regulations necessitating adoption by the Board.
2. The entire statement is presented as policy when the Board has written regulations in particularly sensitive areas and has incorporated them into policy.
3. Statements concerning operations of the Board where the Board has adopted rules and regulations concerning its own procedures (such as how it conducts meetings) appear as policy.

As long as the administration operates within the guidelines of a general policy adopted by the Board, it may change administrative regulations without prior approval of the Board--unless the Board has specifically asked that a particular regulation be given prior Board approval. However, only the Board may adopt new policies or revise old ones.

Order of Precedence Board of Education policies, procedures, forms and regulations must be read and interpreted in the light of the Federal and Missouri Statutes and Missouri State Board of Education/Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations.

Wherever inconsistencies of interpretation arise, the federal and state laws and regulations shall prevail.

How To Use the Resource ManualsThe district operates according to policies established by the Board of Education. The Board, which represents the local community, develops the policies after careful deliberation, and the school administration implements them through specific forms and procedures. The Board then appraises the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary.

How the Manuals Are OrganizedThe manuals are organized according to the Missouri School Boards' Association's (MSBA) modification of the National School Boards Association's (NSBA) coding system. The system provides an efficient means of coding, filing and finding policies, regulations, forms and procedures.

Ten major classifications, each bearing an alphabetical code, are utilized in the MSBA Classification System.

The 10 major classifications include:

- A -- Foundations and Basic Commitments
- B -- School Board Governance and Operations
- C -- General School Administration
- D -- Fiscal Management
- E -- Support Services
- F -- Facilities Development
- G -- Personnel
- I -- Instructional Program
- J -- Students
- K -- School-Community Relations

Since Missouri is a non-bargaining state, there is no section H, which NSBA reserves for policies that have undergone collective bargaining negotiations. However, some of the policy material considered regularly in

discussions between the KCMSD and individual employee groups is included under Section G, Personnel. Other related employee material remains in employee group handbooks.

Subclassifications under each heading are based on logical sequence and alphabetical subcoding. For example, policy JG is used for a general policy statement regarding student discipline. Policy JGA relates to the more specific topic of corporal punishment. Policy JGA, therefore, is a subcode of JG, and JG is the "superior" code of JGA.

Understanding the Signs and Symbols Various signs and symbols are used in connection with the policy classification system. They are for use in locating and/or in examining policies and resources. Included in the signs and symbols are the following:

-R Regulation This symbol following a file code indicates that the statement is a major regulation to support Board policy. Usually these are limited to those areas of Board operations which the Board itself must administer..

-AP Administrative Procedure This symbol following a code identifies material of a procedural nature. This type of information is necessary for administrative implementation of a policy, such as guidelines, steps, etc. AP's do not necessitate Board action.

-AF Administrative Forms This symbol following a file code indicates that the statement is an administrative exhibit or reference document, such as a calendar, application form, etc., rather than a policy. AF's do not necessitate Board action.

Dates The original and revised dates of adoption/approval should appear immediately following the text of each policy/regulation. In other instances an approximate date or re-approval date is used.

Cross Refs Certain policies relate to others. Cross references are provided at the end of many policies to help the reader find related information.

Legal Refs Pertinent legal references are given to tell the reader where he or she may find certain federal and/or state statutes, court cases, or other legal guidance that relate to a policy.