

Establish Policy: Model Policy on Wellness & Comprehensive Health

October 26, 2023

Sandra Cameron, VSBA
Associate Executive
Director



Jess DeCarolis, VT AOE
Division Director, Student
Pathways Division



Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you should be able to:

- 1) Describe the purpose and importance of district policy
- 2) Outline the process for adopting policy
- 3) Explain the difference between policy and procedures
- 4) Identify roles & responsibilities regarding policy
- 5) Highlight key components of Act 66 (2021) related to the model policy on Wellness and Comprehensive Health
- 6) Discuss the composition and requirements of the Local Wellness Policy (LWP) Team
- 7) State the AOE's expectations for timeline and develop a local timeline for adoption and implementation of this required model policy

What is Policy?

- Board policy:
 - describes **what** should be done
 - should be a fairly **broad statement of intent**
- Implementation should be left to those responsible for carrying out the board's intent: the superintendent & school administration

Why is Policy a Priority?

- Allows the board to articulate the district's vision and goals
- Describes the board's expectations
- Supports fairness and educational equity
- Provides direction to the board and administrators
- Clarifies responsibility of the board as compared to the administration
- Provides stability for the district as staff changes
- Is an essential component of a risk management program:
 - compliance w/ federal and state requirements
 - guidance when controversy arises

When is Policy Needed?

- Required Policies
- Recommended policies
- Policies to consider

<https://www.vtvsba.org/copy-of-model-policy-manual>

Required Policies: What?

- A state or federal law or regulation states, or a regulatory agency advises, that a school district must have a policy governing its activities in a certain area.
- Examples:
 - Firearms Policy
 - Class Size Policy
 - Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements Policy
 - Title 1: Parent & Family Engagement

NOTE: Legislatively required policies issued by the Agency of Education:

- **C9: Wellness and Comprehensive Health**
- **B8: Electronic Communications between Employees**
- **C10: Prevention of Harassment, Hazing & Bullying of Students**

Recommended Policies: When?

VSBA recommends policies when they:

- will lend **predictability and consistency** to a board operational practice; or
- will enable the board to **give direction to administrators** in areas where the law may be unclear, or where operational parameters should be established.

Policies to be Considered

VSBA provides a model policy for consideration when **school board direction** in a certain area is expected by the community or is desired by boards or school district administrators.

- Only 7 in this category; 5 “under review”
- VSBA working to reduce these
- Examples:
 - Board Member Education
 - Student Medication

Note: School Districts may have policies in addition to the VSBA’s required, recommended, or to be considered model policies

Policy Roles and Responsibilities

16 V.S.A. Section 563(1):

“The school board shall determine the educational policies of the school district . . .

16 V.S.A. Section 242(1):

“The superintendent shall... [c]arry out the policies adopted by the school boards relating to the educational or business affairs of the school district or supervisory union and **develop procedures** to do so.

<https://www.vtvsba.org/ewtk-policy-roles>

What are Procedures?

- Procedures:
 - implement board policies
 - provide tools such as process and forms
- The administration develops procedures
 - See VSBIT website for some model procedures:
<https://www.vsbit.org/model-procedures>
- Not every policy requires a procedure
- The board does not adopt procedures* but it may approve or disapprove procedures proposed for the conduct and management of public schools in the district

Legal Requirements for Adopting Policy

16 VSA Section 563(1) says that policies shall:

- be **adopted at a regular or special board meeting**
- be adopted after 10 days notice to the public, stating the **substance of the proposed policy**
 - ***Unless*** your board has a policy-on-policy adoption that outlines a different process
- and shall be:
 - of general application to the district,
 - in writing,
 - codified, and
 - available to the public

Amending, Replacing, Rescinding Policy

- VSBA model policies are vetted by VSBIT, including legal counsel
- VSBA recommends that boards adopt required policies as written seek legal counsel when considering an amendment

Amending an existing policy

- follow the same procedures for policy adoption (10-day warning, public discussion)

Replacing policy

- warn a new policy
- motion should address adopting a new policy, replacing policy xxx

Rescinding policy (not replacing):

- no statutory guidance
- best practice = use the same warning procedures for policy adoption under 16 VSA Section 563(1)

Example: Policy on Nutrition and Wellness is being replaced with Policy on Wellness and Comprehensive Health.

Process for Developing Policy

1. Create a policy committee of the SU/SD board.
2. Ask administrative team to research legal requirements, analyze different approaches and draft language, *in consultation with:*
3. Determine whether administration's proposal aligns with the required policy/purpose and will accomplish the board's goals.
4. Seek legal review of any language added beyond the model policy or any areas of concern.
5. Present model language to board for possible adoption.
6. Proceed with public meeting warning, public comment.

Superintendent or designee develops and implements procedures in support of the policy.

Elements of Updated LWP

- Basic Requirements for the Local Wellness Policy
- Evaluation
- Nutrition Services*
- Evaluation of Nutrition Services
- Competitive Foods and Beverages*
- Nutrition Promotion*
- Physical Education*
- Physical Activity*
- **Comprehensive Health Education***
- Other School-Based Activities to Promote Wellness
- **Other Existing School Policies Related to Wellness**

LWP Development for Implementation in FY25



POLICY POWERMATCH!

Yellow paper (6) = Policy Process Steps
(numbered)

Red/Orange paper (7) = Excerpted components
from the Basic Requirements section of the model
LWP (lettered)

Table teams will “match” excerpted components of
LWP as they might align with process steps (“best
practice”) when developing policy.

Roadmap of Web Resources

1. [Memo: Release of Vermont Local Wellness Policy Guide](#)
2. **Policy Documents**
 - [Local Wellness Policy Guide](#)
 - [Vermont Agency of Education Model Local Wellness Policy](#)
1. **Implementation/Support Documents**
 - [Local Wellness Policy Development and Implementation A Focus on Assets Mapping](#)
 - [Healthy and Safe Schools: Strategies and Resources Documents](#)
 - More to come!
1. [Local Wellness Policy Feedback Form](#)
2. **Technical Assistance/Professional Development**

Thank You

If questions arise after the session please contact:



Sandra Cameron
Associate Executive Director
scameron@vtsba.org



Jess DeCarolis
Division Director, Student
Pathways Division
jess.decarolis@vermont.gov



Ian Burfoot-Rochford,
Content Specialist, Student
Pathways Division
ian.burfoot-rochford@vermont.gov