

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting**  
**September 26, 2016**  
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Board Policies, at least as implemented in Ohio, are the school district equivalent of what the Ohio Revised Code is to the executive branch – a written expression of the rules and procedures that govern the school district. For the policies to be effective, they need to be maintained and updated from time to time. A year or so ago, the district made the decision to convert our policy manual from one primarily authored by the Ohio Schools Boards Association to one primarily authored by NEOLA, an organization who provides educational consulting and whose policy manual has received widespread acceptance and market share in Ohio.

The conversion is a pretty big job. The current policy manual weighs in at 950 pages with the NEOLA policy equivalents coming in at almost 1500 pages. For the last 9 months, the policy committee consisting of myself, Board Vice President Sam Shim and Assistant Superintendent Randy Banks have met numerous times to go over each policy in detail. In addition, our CFO, members of the administration and the leadership of both employee associations have gone over these policies and suggested changes. It is important to note that our goal was to simply accomplish the conversion and not to make changes in policy unless the current policy, for whatever reason, didn't match what we were actually doing in the district. We shall have ample opportunity to change those policies where a majority of this board deems the change to be beneficial.

To the extent possible, we took an algorithmic approach which went something like this:

If the NEOLA policy matched a current policy in topic and the current policy was consistent with current practice, we accepted the NEOLA policy, although in most cases, we adapted a minimalist approach to allow the administration as much flexibility as possible.

If the NEOLA policy matched a current policy in topic but the current policy more closely correlated with current practice, we changed the NEOLA policy to match the current policy. Those changes are highlighted in blue text in your policy manual.

If the NEOLA policy was on a topic not covered by existing policy and we thought there might be some interest in exploring a genuine policy choice, we referred it to the entire board. We will be discussing some of those topics tonight.

Finally, if the NEOLA policy was on a topic not covered by existing policy, but Sam, Randy and I did not consider the new policy to be particularly controversial or, as was the case often, the new policy was simply a regurgitation of state law, we simply adapted the new policy as there was no point in discussion.

All of these policies, the ones that are discussed and the ones that are not, are presented to the Board and the public as first readings. We anticipate that there will be many changes to these policies prior to the second reading. Indeed, Sam and I have identified almost 100 changes to the policies in front of you, not counting the ones we will be discussing.

Here is our process moving forward.

The policy committee will take the input gathered tonight and modify the policies to be consistent with the sentiments of a majority of the board in each instance.

For those policies not discussed tonight, the committee requests that Board members wanting to propose changes to policies after the first reading send a note to the Board President and the Treasurer for inclusion on a subsequent agenda or, if the change is not substantive, send a note to the assistant Superintendent so the policy can be edited.

In addition, the Board and the Policy Committee welcome public input on all Board Policies at any time. The policies will be available on the district's web site following tonight's first reading. Members of the public can contact any Board member or Randy Banks should they have questions or concerns about a Board Policy.

We can safely anticipate 2 more "first reading" nights like tonight as we hope to chunk out policies to you in more manageable bites. Sometime in the first quarter of 2017, we will present the accumulated policies, some of which would have had more than this first reading, for a final reading and adaption en-masse and sometime in the second quarter of 2017, you can anticipate one more policy night as our committee goes through all of the policies, and there are dozens of them, that have changed since we started our process.

There is one more comment that needs to be made by way of an analogy. Back at the dawn of the computer age, large corporations would take operating system source code from vendors and employ people like me to change it to make it do what they wanted it to do. Over time, this became an unmanageable maintenance nightmare as the underlying operating system code changed and the modifications had to be applied again and again. Most companies no longer permit such modifications. So it is with Board Policies. We anticipate NEOLA will send changes to policies that we have modified. Those policies will then have to be compared with our changes and our changes reapplied if applicable. That's why you won't see non-substantive changes to punctuation, wording or grammar. It's my hope that we can automate the change process to keep our policies up to date but needless to say, the fewer the number of trivial changes, the less work for future policy editors.

