



Policy Development Workshop for Dixie ESD

What is a Policy Development Workshop?

There are more 650 sample policies, regulations, bylaws, and exhibits in the CSBA sample manual. Most school districts have 500-600 of these in their own manual. CSBA regularly updates these documents to stay current with the changes in the law and best practices in education. Over the course of typical year CSBA revises approximately 100-125 sample policies, which means a school district that does not stay current with their updates can quickly slip out of compliance with the law and increase their exposure to liability.

The CSBA Policy Development Workshop (PDW) provides a fast and economical means to update an entire district policy manual. During the PDW a CSBA policy consultant will come to your district to facilitate the creation of a “new” policy manual for your district. The workshop takes 2-3 days and at the end of the process you will have a fully updated and revised policy manual that reflects your local practices and brings the district into compliance with the law.

What Happens in the PDW?

During the PDW a CSBA policy consultant will bring a copy of the CSBA “core” manual containing samples of all of our policies, regulations, and exhibits. This core manual will become the working draft of your new policy manual. Over the course of the 2-3 days, your team will sit down, and compare your existing policies, side-by-side, with the CSBA core materials. You will make edits, revisions, additions, and deletions to the CSBA core so that it reflects your local practices. The consultant facilitates the process by helping your team navigate the CSBA materials, answering questions, and making sure the draft manual reflects appropriate policies for your district. Once a working draft is developed, CSBA staff will review your edits, format and re-type the materials to create a clean draft for Board review and adoption.

What Do You Need to do to Prepare for the PDW?

The workshop takes place at a district facility. You will need to provide a space for the work to be done, a team of individuals who will be working on the manual, a complete copy of your existing policy manual, and Wi-Fi access for the consultant. The make-up of the “team” varies with each district. Some districts have the superintendent take on the entire manual, whereas others gather 10 or 12 people to work on the manual. The team should consist of individuals who are familiar with the topic areas and who have the ability to make decisions regarding

those areas. The specific areas covered by the manual are: Philosophy-Goals-Objectives-Comprehensive Plans (0000s); Community Relations (1000s); Administration (2000s); Business and Non-instructional Operations (3000s); Personnel (4000s); Students (5000s); Instruction (6000s); Facilities (7000s); and Bylaws of the Board (9000s). Accordingly, a typical team might include the superintendent or representatives from his/her office, someone from business and finance (e.g. the CBO or CFO), someone familiar with educational programs and student services, someone familiar with district facilities, and someone familiar with HR practices.

Do Board Members Participate in the Workshop?

Board members are always welcome to participate in the workshop. However, because this is a working session, we do not recommend holding the workshop as an open meeting. This means you should be careful to make sure there is not a quorum of board members present at one time unless you choose to hold the workshop as a properly noticed special meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Brown Act. It is important for the board members to remember their role and to rely on the expertise of district staff in revising the sample policies. Board members typically focus on the board bylaws and understanding the process so that they have confidence in the work that has been done when it comes time for adoption.

How Do You Keep Your Policies Current?

The PDW also serves as a valuable training tool in the sense that everyone involved in the workshop will essentially receive an intense study session on your district's policies, but it still takes work to keep your policies current. Once you have an updated manual it is much easier to stay current with the ever-changing legal requirements for your district.

CSBA's Manual Maintenance (MM) service is designed to help districts keep their policy manual up to date with the assistance of CSBA staff. When you subscribe to MM, CSBA hosts your district's policy manual on our GAMUT website. We provide a public link that you can embed in your district website so that people can link directly to your adopted policies. District staff will be given a password to let them access the district's adopted policies, the CSBA sample policies, and the adopted policies of other districts subscribing to MM throughout the state.

Posting your manual online with GAMUT provides easy access to your policies (for both staff and the community) and makes it easy for CSBA staff to help manage your updates for you. As a MM subscriber, we will email policy updates directly to your district contact person. The update packets are issued five times a year and contain sample policy language that may be modified to reflect local goals, philosophy and practices. Once your Board adopts a revised policy, all you need to do is email our staff to let us know about any changes that your district made to our sample language and when the adoption took place.