



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
ACTION SHEET**

DATE: December 13, 2023
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: Policy Workplan

Recommendations

- 1. The Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) approve the addition of Policy 2.15 – Trustee Criminal Record Check to its workplan with the intention of adding Trustee Orientation to the purpose of the Policy.***

- 2. The Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) approve the addition of a general Policy review to its Workplan with the intention of rationalizing and aligning the Board's Policy Manual.***

Background

The Policy Committee's Workplan is set yearly by the Board. Throughout the year the Board may add additional work to the plan. Recently, staff have, on their own initiative, brought minor policy amendments to the Board outside of the Policy Committee or Board direction. This motion is intended to seek Board approval for additional work.

Discussion

Policy 2.15 – Trustee Criminal Record Check

The first recommended motion is associated with adding Trustee Orientation to the above policy. While criminal record checks are obviously a different topic than orientation, the idea is that the Policy addresses what happens at the beginning of a term. Therefore, criminal record check and orientation are both focused on the same timeline. Connecting them provides staff and trustees only one policy to understand what to expect at the beginning of the term.

With respect to the substantive issue, trustee orientation is important and setting out the responsibilities of staff and trustees will ensure a consistent and predicable beginning of term.

Policy Review

The second recommended motion is not intended to change the substance of any of the policies of the Board. However, as the Policy book currently stands they are a number of issues that warrant consideration for improvement.

1. Remove repetition – It is clear that the Board has done excellent policy work in recent years. However, as new policies come online some of the older policies did not get updated and/or deleted. While not necessarily in conflict there is repetition that may cause confusion. As an example almost the entirety of Policy 3.3 – Programs and Services is (or should be) represented in Policy 1.3- Continuous Improvement of Instruction or the Role of the Superintendent. Similarly, Policy 1.1, 2.2 and 2.11 likely could be combined. Further, 3.1., 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6 are either found in other policies or alternatively could be incorporated in the Role of the Superintendent Policy.
2. Finish the job of 2012 – It is clear that reading the District’s Administrative Procedures that the work done in 2012 to reduce the Policy book to assist the Board in focusing on its core role as a using policy to govern the system needs a review. For instance, a variety of APs continue to provide policy statements. There are examples of where this alignment likely needs to be reversed. For instance, the Board should likely consider a Policy associated with the payment of fees. Note that the substance of a policy would not differ from the examples provided by AP 235, 305 and 320 but rather set out general expectation with respect to its authority and restrictions contained in the *School Act*.
3. Provide clarity of authority – Currently, the Board has a delegation of authority policy. However, such a delegation and its limitation are fundamental to the understanding of Board governance. The review would likely recommend as noted in the first point to highlight this delegation as a fundamental policy of the Board. Similarly, like the draft transportation policy additional clarity on the delegation of authority would be valuable for both the Board and staff.
4. Align policies and APs – Finally, while the Superintendent has the authority to issue Administrative Procedures and such an authority is not recommended to change it is desirable to align our APs with corresponding policies both from an authority perspective as well as from an ease of search perspective. For instance, if our School Naming Policy has an associated AP they should be connected on our website. This will likely involve the creation of new policies. For instance, as noted in point two there are three APs associated with fees. These would be aligned with a fees policy. Similarly, there are three student conduct expectation policies (APs 301, 311 and 312) that a blanket policy may provide additional clarity.

It should be acknowledged that such work is significant. If the Board approves the following process would be followed:

1. The Policy framework would be presented for consideration and support. For instance, how many sections of Policy? Currently there are 4: Foundation and Direction, Governance and Management, Operational Expectations and By-Laws. There are 5 areas of Administrative Procedure: General Administration, Instructional Programs, Student, Personnel and Employee Relations, and Business Affairs. The areas would be aligned. Further, the policies to be merged, created and/or deleted would be presented.
2. If approved, policies for each section would be brought to the Board (and public consultation) in batches for consideration.
3. Staff would ensure that APs to address required areas would be created and aligned with the new Policy Manual.