

**BOARD POLICY MANUAL
OF
CITY OF GADSDEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
ALABAMA**

This manual contains the policies of the School Board; the major administrative regulations intended to implement policy; and certain reference or “exhibit” documents that relate to policies and/or regulations.

Policy development in a modern, progressive school system is a dynamic, ongoing process. New problems, issues, and needs give rise to the continuing need to develop new policies or to revise existing ones.

How to Use This Manual

The City of Gadsden Board of Education operates according to policies established by the Board. The Board, which represents both the state and local community, develops the policies after careful deliberation, and the school administration implements them through specific rules and regulations. The Board then appraises the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary.

In the interest of harmony, efficiency, uniformity of interpretation, coordination of effort, and in fairness to all concerned, the Board makes this manual available to all who are affected by its policies.

How the Manual Is Organized

The manual is organized according to the classification system developed jointly by the Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Association of School Boards within the Alabama Model Policy Manual guidelines. The system provides an efficient means for coding, filing, and finding Board policies, administrative rules, and other documents.

There are 13 major classifications each bearing an alphabetical code:

- A - SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**
- B - SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS**
- C - GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**
- D - FISCAL MANAGEMENT**
- E - BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**
- F - FACILITY EXPANSION PROGRAM**
- G - PERSONNEL**
- H - NEGOTIATIONS**
- I - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**
- J - STUDENTS**
- K - GENERAL PUBLIC RELATIONS**
- L - ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS (except education agencies)**
- M - RELATIONS WITH OTHER EDUCATION AGENCIES**
- INDEX**

Sub-classification under each major heading is based on logical sequence and alphabetical sub-coding. For an example of the sub-coding system, examine the bordered pages immediately following the tab for Section A—SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION.

The bordered pages which follow the tab for each major section present the classification system, section by section, and serve as the table of contents for each section or “chapter” of this manual.

How to Find a Policy

There are two ways to find a policy (or regulation) in the manual:

1. Consider where the policy would be filed among the 13 major classifications. Turn to the table of contents for that section and glance down the listing until you find the term that closely fits the topic you are seeking. Use the code letters given for the term to locate the sheet which will appear in alphabetical order by code within the particular section. All pages of the manual are coded in the upper right-hand corner.
2. Turn to the code finder at the end of the manual. The code finder is an alphabetic index of all terms used in the classification system. It also includes other terms commonly used in education. Look up your topic as in any index, find the code, and use the code to locate the sheet in the manual.

What if you can't find the term you are seeking? The code finder lists more than 1,400 terms, but no index of useful size could include every possibility. If the term you are seeking is not included, look up a synonym or a more general or specific term appropriate to the topic.

What if you can find the term and code, but there is no policy? This probably means that the school system has no written policy or important regulation in the particular area. All terms used in the classification system appear in the sectional tables of contents and code finder to accommodate the coding, insertion, and other possibility. A brief statement related to the policy you are seeking may be incorporated in a "superior" policy which covers the area generally. This "superior" policy will be coded under a more general term. To find it, read up the classification system. For example, a policy statement which related to all meetings of the Board might be filed under "Meetings" (BC) rather than "Regular Meetings" (BCAB).

Using the Signs and Symbols

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

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| SN: Scope Note: | These notes appear following certain entries in the sectional tables of contents to clarify or limit the use of the term. |
| Cf: Confer. | Certain policies related to other policies. When a policy bears two or more codes in the upper right-hand corner with the second code (and perhaps others) appearing in parentheses and preceded by the symbol Cf., check statements under such codes for <u>related</u> statements. |
| -R | This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is an administrative regulation, not a Board policy. |
| E | Exhibit. This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is a reference document, such as a calendar, salary schedule, etc., rather than a policy. |
| * | An asterisk following a code indicates that the EPZ/NSBA classification system has been expanded to include a distinctively local policy and term. |
| Dates: | When possible the original date of adoption/issuance appears immediately following each policy/regulation. In |

other instances, an approximate date, or re-approval date, is used. The date in the lower right-hand corner is the date that the printed statement was released for insertion in the manual.

Reference: Pertinent legal references are given to tell the reader where in state law he may find specific statues that relate to a policy. Court cases are also cited when applicable to certain policies.

Additional cross references are offered in notes throughout the manual to help the reader find all of the related information he seeks.

About School Board Policies

Generally, the role of a School Board is to set policy and the role of the administration is to execute it. Here is the basic distinction as set forth by the National School Boards Association and adopted by the RTC.

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 after day problems; they need to be narrow enough to give the administration clear guidance.

Rules are the detailed directions developed by the administration to put policy into practice. They tell how, by whom, where, and when things are to be done.

These repetitions are serviceable most of the time. They reflect sound theory of governance and administration. But the real world of School Boards does not always conform. For example:

Often the state and federal governments confuse the distinction and require Boards of Education to make detailed rules; and many regulations are established by law or by the State Department of Education.

A School Board also signs many contracts which incorporate rules and regulations.

Additionally, the public may demand that the Board, itself, not the administrator, establish the specific rules and procedures in certain sensitive areas.

Thus, the separation of policies and administrative regulations in this policy manual follows several rules of thumb in addition to “basic theory”:

1. All edicts of the state (even though regulations) are considered mandated board policy;
2. All agreements signed through contract (even though regulations) are considered mandated Board policy;
3. Where the Board has written regulations in particularly sensitive areas, and has incorporated them into policy, the entire statement is presented as policy;
4. Where the Board has adopted rules and regulations concerning its own procedures (as how it conducts meetings), these statements concerning operations of the Board appear as policy statements.

As long as the administration operates within the guidelines of a general policy adopted by the Board of Education, 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 can adopt new policies or revise old policies.

Is The Manual Complete?

No. The manual contains all of the current written policies of the Board to date either as written or with proposed revisions. But continually, the need for putting additional policies in writing, for adopting new ones, and revising old ones becomes apparent.

No matter how well conceived and well developed, a policy manual can never be 100 percent up-to-date. Policy development regulations and reference documents will be developed, coded according to the classification system, and issued for insertion in the manual.

It is the hope of the City of Gadsden Board of Education that this collection of policies and regulations will make greater harmony and efficiency possible in all areas of school operations. This will enable the Board to devote more time to its primary duty—the development of long-range policies and planning for the future of the school system.