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The Development of a School Board Policies Manual for the Snyder Public School District

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES MANUAL
FOR THE SNYDER PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty
University of Nebraska
at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Gale F. Johnston

March 1977

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FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist in Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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Date 3-10-77

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the recent trends in school administration has been an increase in the number of school board policies. These policies must be well organized in order for the school personnel to function properly.

Every school employee should know exactly what is expected of him within the organization. This role can be clearly understood if the policies of the board are published in a manual or pamphlet and distributed to all interested persons.

These policies should be written in language that is easily understood and classified as to the area of the educational program to which they apply. Policies must conform to state and federal laws and should be arrived at by a democratic process within the Board of Education. Due to the need for alteration, deletions, and additions, board policies should be reviewed each year.

The organization and distribution of a policy manual should promote harmony among the school personnel by alerting them to their rights and responsibilities.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project was to develop a policy manual for the Snyder Public School District.

Importance of the Problem

Due to the mobility of our society, written board policy is a must. There is a continual turnover in the members of the board, the administration, teachers, staff, students, and the people in the community. This turnover makes a permanent written record of board policy evident. A written policy manual is helpful to new board members and new employees when they embark upon their jobs in unfamiliar surroundings. Written policies should help eliminate arbitrary board decisions. An organized policies manual should help eliminate contradictory actions by the board.

Definition of Terms

Policies. Policies are guidelines adopted by the board to chart the course of action. They tell what is to be done and may include why and how much. They should be broad enough to admit discretionary action by the administration in solving problems, yet specific enough to give clear guidance.

Delimitations

The policies in this manual are limited to the Snyder Public School System and are subject to change at any

time. Action by the federal, or state government or by the Snyder Board of Education may result in a change in policy.

Procedure

The following steps were taken in the organization and writing of the policies manual.

1. Review the minutes of the board meetings for the last ten years and extract any motions that constitute board policy.

2. Examine the policy manuals of other districts and note policies for recommendation to our own school board for approval.

3. Check on school laws in order not to recommend for passage or retain any school board policies that are illegal.

4. Categorize all possible policies on controversial matters in order to obtain board approval of the best policy pertaining to these matters.

5. Codify all policies under a number system.

6. Present the manual to the school board for their approval for acceptance as policy for the school district.

Format

The first chapter introduces the topic and states the problem. The second chapter contains the related literature. The need for written policies and guidelines to follow in writing school board policies are two of the areas

of major concern. The third chapter displays the recommended policies as presented for board approval. The fourth and final chapter contains a summary and some recommendations concerning the use of the policies manual.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A school's resources are, in great part, human resources; its processes are the activities of people, and its products or outcomes are developments or changes in human behavior--intellectual, emotional, and physical.¹ These resources need to be controlled so as to produce the best results for all concerned. The community, parents, staff, teachers administrators, the student body, and the board of education should know what is expected of them. The roles of all the members of the school community as well as their rights and responsibilities should be compiled in a policies manual.

Oliver Gibson in his book entitled The School Personnel Administrator says, "The essential function of policy, whether it has to do with the immediate means or the ultimate end is to serve as a guide to action."² With this guide compiled in a policies manual there will be consistency as people move about in the system.

¹Oliver R. Gibson, The School Personnel Administrator (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 29-30.

²Ibid., p. 75.

In a list of forty-eight topics from which a new board member should read in order to prepare for his new endeavor Philip G. Jones lists a written school district policies manual as the most important in an article entitled, "How Your District Can Create Its Own Training Kit for New School Board Members."³

Policy making is a never-ending job, for there is no end to the problems, issues, needs, and opportunities that come before a board and require policy determination. There should be a carefully followed pattern for developing board policies so as to adopt policies that are consistent with each other and the goals of the district. The importance of this consistency is pointed out in an article by Luvern Cunningham in which he states, "Policies which are developed haphazardly may create a jungle for new board members or a new district superintendent."⁴ Mr. Cunningham who is currently Dean at the College of Education at Ohio State University and Executive Director, San Francisco Public Schools Commission was superintendent of schools in Snyder from 1949-1952.

³Philip G. Jones, "How Your District Can Create Its Own Training Kit for New School Board Members," The American School Board Journal, April, 1973, pp. 27-29.

⁴Luvern L. Cunningham, "Decision-Making Behavior of School Boards," American School Board Journal, February, 1966, pp. 13-16.

Because he feels that an up-to-date policies manual is so important, William E. Dickinson is appalled with boards that fail to revise their policy manuals. He furnishes the following list of excuses for not getting the district's policy manual up to date:

1. It's the start of a new school year; we are much too busy.
2. It's the end of a school year; we are much too busy.
3. It's the middle of the school year; we are much too busy.
4. We're too busy.
5. It's under study.
6. We're in the middle of a crisis. All hell has broken loose.
7. There isn't any crisis, so what's the rush?⁵

In a democratic society, the public school belongs to the people. They are its stockholders, and the enterprise, for which they are responsible and in which they have invested their money. Schools should not proceed in a direction contrary to their wishes.

This is as it should be, for educational policy is public policy, and in a democracy only the people can make public policy. Moreover, educational policy is the most important kind of public policy, because it affects every person, every interest, every institution. In the final analysis, it plays a major role in determining what kind of

⁵William E. Dickinson, "The Process of Developing Written School Board Policies," Nebraska School Boards Association Journal, January, 1976, pp. 5-10.

adults our children will become, what kind of nation we shall fashion.

Acceptance of this democratic principle has certain important implications for professional educators.

In the first place, it implies frank recognition of the fact that educational programs can never advance very far beyond prevailing public sentiment, that educational change and progress are largely dependent upon public understanding and support.

Second, it indicates that school-public relations must be a two-way process, a process involving listening--listening to the community--as well as talking--talking to the community about the school.

Third, honest acknowledgment of this democratic principle means that the public has a right to concern itself with the very heart of the school program, the curriculum itself. That is, the public cannot be ignored when it comes to decisions on major curricular goals and objectives. It is no longer enough to ask their opinions on building programs, bond issues, budgets, buses, and other fringe areas of the educational program.

Finally, acceptance of this principle guarantees an important place to parent and lay advisory groups established by school officials and boards of education as well as to independent citizens' committees on education whose

purposes are unmistakably devoted to better schools.⁶

School board actions and statements have large influence on public understanding and support of schools. The reason for that influence is clear. Boards are the official link between citizens and schools and are recognized as such. Voters elect board members to establish local school policies which they believe are beneficial to pupils, the community, and the nation. Election to board membership indicates that citizens believe members are capable of performing that function well. That expression of public confidence gives board members a large capacity for educational leadership; voters look to board members for educational advice. Effective board leadership helps people understand schools and tends to unite citizens in support of education; ineffective leadership may result in public apathy, misunderstanding, or dissension which damage schools.

Everything a board does and everything members say influence public understanding and support. So does what is done or said. Policies which result in good schools help build confidence; those resulting in poor schools destroy it.⁷

⁶Doyle M. Bortner, "Educational Policy is Public Policy," The American School Board Journal, February, 1966, p. 62.

⁷Gordon McCloskey, Education and Public Understanding (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 358-359.

The Joint Committee of the National School Boards Association and National Education Association stated in 1960.

Written school board policies, conveniently organized, are extremely valuable to the board of education, the school staff, pupils, parents, and other patrons of the school. They help in these five important ways:

They bring clarity to school operation. Carefully considered, well-written policies enunciate to all persons and groups concerned how the board functions and how it intends the schools should be operated. They facilitate accuracy in translating any aspect of policy to any person concerned. They clarify the relationships of board, superintendent, and staff.

They bring understanding. They help the citizen, the school board members, and the staff member to understand his role in relationship to the school program. They make it clear to the public how citizens can work with their schools. They speed the orientation of new board members and staff members.

They bring good will. Written policies give visible assurance to both the public and the staff that citizens and employees are the valued partners of the school board. They give assurance of fair treatment to all segments of the community and to all the groups which have contacts with the school. They improve staff morale by assuring consistency of policy and just treatment.

They provide direction. Written policies give direction by providing rules for present action and a basis for future planning. They give continuity and provide clear points of reference for the board whenever it considers possible changes in policy. They ease the evaluation and re-evaluation of the school operation.

They provide for control and efficiency. Written policies facilitate control by establishing guidelines and by fixing responsibility. They promote efficiency by spelling out duties and by clarifying working relationships. They help to avoid friction and frustration by clearly distinguishing the roles of the

school board and the administration of the school.⁸

Written policies--kept up-to-date and responsive to the needs of students, the community, the state, and the nation--provide tangible evidence that school boards can indeed govern. They demonstrate that the board is running a businesslike operation. They serve to inform everyone about the board's intent, goals, and aspirations. Ambiguity, confusion, and trouble result when policies are not in writing. They give credence to board actions and establish a much-needed legal mandate for staff decisions and actions. In addition, written policies have the virtue of being impersonal. They make whimsical administration difficult. They serve to foster stability and continuity. Board and staff members may come and go, but the policy manual (kept updated) will endure and help assure smooth transitions when organizational or staff changes occur. They also contribute to the board's efficiency. Routine decisions can be incorporated into written policies, and thus free up board meeting time for more important matters. And they serve to clarify board superintendent functions. When the board establishes policy guidelines, the superintendent can get on with his or her daily work. But most importantly of all, they give the public a means to evaluate

⁸How to Develop Board Policies, Joint Committee on Written School Board Policies of the National School Boards Association and the National Education Association, 1960, pp. 1-2.

board performance. Publicly pronounced policy statements prove that the board is willing to be held accountable for the way it exercises its governance responsibilities.⁹

It is to these ends that a policies manual should lead. And it is to these ends that this manual is being written.

⁹Dickenson, op. cit., p. 6.

Chapter 3

DISPLAY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

Policies Directly Affecting the Board of Education

Powers, number and election of board members. The Board of Education shall possess the usual powers of public corporations. It shall consist of six members, to be nominated and elected by the qualified voters of the district, who shall be elected at the general election according to law.

Organization. The Board of Education shall elect from its members annually a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer who shall serve for one year.

Compensation. Members of the Board of Education shall be compensated as its members see fit. They will receive expense money for attending meetings of the Board of Education. The board may authorize the entire membership or part of it to attend state or regional meetings of the Board of Education organizations or other professional educational conferences or to visit other schools to examine their plants or programs with actual expense incurred to be paid from school funds.

Committees. The Board of Education shall appoint standing committees, and the president, upon authorization of the Board, may appoint special committees to perform some particular duty or responsibility. A special committee will cease functioning when its duty has been performed. The superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Time of meetings. Regular meeting of the Board of Education shall be held on the first Monday of each month at a pre-arranged time in the school. If a holiday should fall upon the first Monday of the month, the second Monday shall be the day of the regular monthly meeting. Special meetings may be called by the president or by two Board members, with notice given to all members.

Order of business at regular meetings. Unless altered by the Board itself, the order of business at the regular meeting shall be as follows:

1. Reading and approval of minutes
2. Claims and accounts
3. Treasurer's report
4. Communications
5. Reports and recommendations of the superintendent
6. Unfinished business
7. Reports of special committees
8. Adjournment

Order of business at special meeting. Unless altered by the Board, the order of business at special meetings shall be as follows:

1. Statement of purpose of meeting
2. Consideration of items for which meeting has been called

Meetings public. All regular and special meetings of the Board shall be open to residents of the district.

Executive sessions. The Board of Education shall go into an executive session only upon a motion duly made, seconded and passed by a majority of the governing body in an open and public session. Such motion, second, and roll call shall be duly recorded in the minutes of such meeting and shall show the vote by name of each member together with the time of convening and adjourning the open and public session and the time of commencement and conclusion of the executive portion thereof. It shall be necessary to record roll call votes, if any, taken in executive session. Any formal official action on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be taken only by roll call vote of the governing body in open session and the record shall show how each member voted.

Minutes. The secretary shall be responsible for taking and keeping all official minutes.

Duties. The Board of Education is a legislative or policy-making body. It shall determine policies and programs which are for the purpose of providing the best educational program possible for the pupils of the district. The Board of Education shall carry out the duties imposed on it or authorized by law.

Official action. Official actions may be taken only at a regular or special meeting of the Board of Education. In cases of emergency the superintendent or president may poll members individually on action to be taken, but such actions shall be ratified in official manner at the next meeting of the Board. A Board member or group of Board members as individuals should not give a decision on matters affecting the school to residents of the district, patrons of the school, teachers, employees, pupils or persons having business with the school when not in regular or special meeting of the Board, unless authorized by the Board to do so.

Handling of complaints. In general practice, whenever a teacher or other school employee, resident of the district, school patron, pupil or person having business with the school, makes some request to a Board member as an individual for some action or a change in some action on the part of school officials or the Board, the member shall be willing to listen to such requests but should not commit himself or herself to a course of action until the matter

is presented in a Board meeting; the Board member should urge the person also to discuss the matter with the superintendent of schools. Neither the Board as a whole, nor any individual member, shall entertain or consider communications, requests or complaints from teachers, parents or patrons, until they have first been referred to the superintendent of schools. Only in these cases where a satisfactory adjustment cannot be made by the superintendent, shall communications, requests, or complaints be referred to the Board. After hearing evidence submitted by the superintendent, in such event, the Board shall, if it deems advisable, grant a hearing to the parties interested. Such hearing shall be held during an executive session of the Board and could be asked to be put in writing.

Board of Education meetings public. All meetings of the District Number 39 Board of Education shall be deemed public meetings and after advance publicized notice shall be held in a public building and shall be open to attendance by the public.

1. All public meetings shall be preceded by some advance publicized notice specifying the time and place of each such meeting to be convened in order that the citizens of the state can exercise their privilege of attending.

2. All action taken by the Board of Education shall be at a public meeting except in the cases of preliminary

interview or recruitment of new personnel.

3. All Board of Education meeting shall take place in the school building of District Number 39 unless publicized notice shall designate another specified place.

4. Advance publicized notice of public meetings shall contain the time and place of the meeting and either an enumeration of the agenda or a statement that such an agenda kept continually current shall be available for public inspection at the superintendent's office of the school.

5. The minutes of the governmental body, kept by the secretary or other designee of such body, shall record the manner and advance time by which such advance publicized notice was given, a statement of how the availability of an agenda of then known subjects was communicated, the time and specific names of each member of the board present or absent at each convened meeting.

Special education. The Board of Education of District Number 39, pursuant to L.B. 403, shall make available to all students of District Number 39 Special Education for any handicapping condition. All students shall be screened for any handicapping conditions and with parental permission shall be placed in the appropriate programs of special education.

Policies Affecting Pupils

Schools open to local residents. The Snyder Public Schools are maintained for all children (K-12) who reside within the district.

Tuition. Tuition students may be accepted from districts outside District 39. The final approval for accepting non-resident tuition students shall be made by the Board of Education. The rate for tuition shall be set by the Board of Education.

School entrance age. A child who has reached the age of five years or will reach the age of five years by October 15 of the current year, but who is not six years of age or would not be six years of age by October 15 of the current year is eligible to enter the kindergarten at the opening of the school term.

Children who will reach the age of five years between October 16 and December 31 of the current year will be admitted to the kindergarten if they qualify in terms of test scores recommended by the State Department of Public Instruction by means of a test given by an authorized test expert.

The cost of administering such a test shall be paid by the parents of the child or children being tested.

Classification of high school students. Classification of

high school students shall be based according to the number of semester hours of credit earned (Freshman--under 40; Sophomores--40 to 89; Juniors--90 to 139; Seniors--140 or more).

Graduation requirements. To be eligible for graduation from Snyder High School, a student must have earned 180 semester hours of credit and have participated in the following program:

English

English 9 9 hours

English 10 9 hours

English 11 9 hours

Science

Biology--Health or Biology 9 hours

Mathematics

General Math or Algebra 9 hours

Consumer Math or Geometry 9 hours

Social Science

Geography 9 9 hours

American History 11 9 hours

Government 12 9 hours

Driver's Education 9 or 10 9 hours

Physical Education

Vocal Music 16 hours

Electives 74 hours

Eligibility for graduation is based upon the completion of the required courses at the required time and at least three and one-half years of attendance in high school. Exception to the requirements may be made by the Board of Education.

Grading policy. The following grading schedule shall be used to convert numerical averages to letter grades:

93 - 100	A
86 - 92	B
77 - 85	C
70 - 76	D
Below 70	F

Policy for honor roll. In order to make the honor roll a student must meet the following qualifications:

Carrying five academic classes	4	A
	1	B
Carrying six academic classes	4	A
	2	B
Carrying seven academic classes	4	A
	3	B

Honorable Mention--at least one grade of A and no grade below a B.

Special recognition shall be given for all grades of A. Recognition for these achievements will be given at the Honor's Banquet at the end of each school year.

Health. All students are required to undergo a health examination by the county nurse. Irregularities shall be reported to parents and school authorities. Current health records shall be maintained on each student.

In cases of illness, teachers may send students to the office. If it seems necessary for the student to be sent home, the parents are to be notified by the office or teacher.

Students entering school in the district for the first time may be required to show proof that they have been immunized for all diseases required by law. If such immunizations have not been taken, the district may require them unless such immunizations are against the religion or ethnical beliefs of those individuals involved.

All participants in interschool athletics are to have a physical examination.

Pupil orientation. It shall be the duty of the administration to effectively orientate the students with the policies, rules, and regulations which concern them. This can be accomplished by publishing a handbook, by assembly meetings, and other means.

Student driving. Students may, of necessity, be required to drive to school if they are legally of age and competency. Those students who do drive shall park their cars in the morning and leave them parked until the conclusion of the

school day.

Student class load. Students from grades seven through twelve shall be required to carry enough classes each semester to insure that they avail themselves of as thorough an education as possible. Generally this class load shall consist of classes each period with one or two study halls each day.

Attendance. Promotion from one grade to another may be jeopardized by excessive absence. Nebraska school law requires that a student must attend school 160 days when the school is open for a nine-month term.

1. Excused absence--An excused absence is an absence which is noted by and approved of in writing by a parent or guardian upon approval of the superintendent. Work missed is to be made up through standards set up by faculty members.

2. Unexcused absence--Any absence which does not meet the above requirements will be deemed unexcused. The student will be given a zero for class work missed in each class. Excessive unexcused absence will demand further disciplinary action.

3. Student's working--Students may, of necessity, be required to miss school for work if the work is necessary to the livelihood of the student and his family. The superintendent will determine excused absences for work. Working

must not be allowed to endanger the education of any students.

Honors. The pupil attaining the highest grade average in his four years of high school work shall be designated Valedictorian and shall receive recognition as such. Second highest shall be designated Salutatorian and shall receive recognition as such.

Married students. Any student, male or female, who is married shall be allowed to continue his class work, but it is the feeling of the Board that marriage should be discouraged until graduation is completed. Any student, married or single, who is found to be pregnant, shall be advised to discontinue her education until the end of the pregnancy. The family doctor is to be consulted and his recommendation as to whether the student should continue in school shall be followed.

Student discipline. Students shall be expected to act at all times in a manner which encourages the best learning situation. This includes all aspects of school including the school day, school sponsored activities and at any time in the school building or upon school grounds.

Suspension of students. In an extreme disciplinary situation, a pupil may be suspended by the superintendent on the basis of evidence that strongly indicates that the pupil

committed one or more of the following offenses against school discipline or moral codes of personal conduct while attending school or participating in or attending an activity sponsored by the school:

1. Use of intoxicating liquor, drugs or smoking
2. Gambling
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct involving visiting school teams or delegations, his or her own school teams and representatives or officials of such contests
4. Fighting
5. Lewdness
6. Destruction of school property
7. Gross disrespect for teachers, school officials or other school employees
8. Continuing behavior that seriously interferes with class work or the activities of the school
9. Inciting riots, boycotts, sit-ins or other demonstrations that disrupt the normal functions of the school
10. The wearing of any item of clothing or lack of clothing which disrupts the normal function of the school

In such cases the parents or guardians shall be notified in writing of this action and of their right to appeal this action to the Board of Education.

Expulsion of students. This is permanent, involuntary

absence from school which requires action of the Board to start and to end. When other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct, and the teacher, the superintendent and the Board see fit, a student may be expelled for an indefinite period of time. At that time the parents or guardians shall be notified in writing of the action and of their right to appeal the action to the Board. Expulsion for one violation may not last longer than the close of the school semester in which the violation occurred.

Care of textbooks and school equipment. A great deal of time and money is spent each year for textbooks and other supplies as well as for cleaning and repair of the school building and equipment. Normal wear and tear is expected but intentional abuse by students is uncalled for. If this becomes a problem, students shall be asked to pay the cost of their damage. Lost and damaged textbooks and school issued supplies shall be the responsibility of the student. At the end of the school year students shall be expected to pay the replacement or repair price on such items.

Pupil retention. When it is determined that a pupil is consistently achieving below his grade level, it shall be the prerogative of the administration and staff to determine whether or not to retain a child. The administration is to be consulted on all matters pertaining to retention with the final decision resting with the superintendent. Conferences

for the purpose of consultation with parents will be held no later than April 1 of the school year.

Student progress reports. It is extremely important that parents be kept closely aware of their children's progress in school. At any time during the grading period that a student is doing extremely poor or failing work, a deficiency report should be mailed to the parents. If no deficiency reports go out, the student shouldn't be failed. On the other hand, if a student is doing extremely outstanding work, a report of this information should also be sent to parents. Be sure we encourage good work as much as we discourage poor work.

Control of student activity funds. The superintendent or school employee designated by him shall have custody of all funds for classes, organizations and activities. This person shall keep records of individual accounts under separate headings. All funds shall be deposited in one general account in the bank. A complete record of all receipts and expenditures shall be maintained at all times. The records of these accounts and funds shall be audited once a year by a person selected by the Board.

Student access to files. Any pupil, his parents, guardian, teacher, counselors or administrators shall have access to the school's files or records maintained concerning the

pupil. No other person shall have access thereto nor shall the contents be divulged in any manner to any unauthorized person. The files shall separate academic and disciplinary materials and all disciplinary material shall be removed upon graduation or after three years of continuous absence.

Policies Affecting Employed Personnel
(Certified and Non-Certified)

Health certificates. All employees of the Board shall furnish the Board with a health certificate, whenever it is in the opinion of the Board that such certificate is deemed necessary. Certificates shall be signed by a recognized physician showing freedom from defects which would impair the performance of duties.

Political activity. No partisan political activity or agitation shall be permitted on the part of any school employee at any time during the regular school hours.

Retirement. Those employees reaching the age of sixty-five during school's fiscal year shall not be re-employed the next year unless the Board gives approval.

Policies Relating to the
Superintendent

Superintendent. The Board of Education shall employ a superintendent of schools who shall serve as head of the school system. The superintendent in carrying out his

duties, shall be directly responsible to the Board. He shall attend all Board meetings as a discussing member, except when his re-election is being considered. His main function is to provide educational leadership and to carry out the policies of the school.

Certification. The superintendent shall hold a valid Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory certificate. He shall be appointed by the Board for a term not to exceed three years. If at any time, in the opinion of the Board, his services are unsatisfactory, he shall be notified in writing and given an opportunity to correct conditions.

Duty. He shall develop administrative principles and procedures for the management of the school and keep the Board duly informed as changes are made.

School employees. The superintendent shall make recommendations for appointment, promotion, demotion, and discharge of all school employees. No vacancy will be filled without his recommendation. He shall assign all instructional and non-instructional personnel. He may suspend employees for cause. Such suspension shall be immediately reported to the Board. No employee shall be recommended for discharge until the superintendent is convinced that the efficiency of said employee cannot be improved. Employees may be discharged for: inefficiency, immorality, insubordination, for

violation of Board regulation, and for cause shown.

Reports. The superintendent shall be responsible for all reports that are required by the State, County Superintendent and Federal agencies and it shall be his responsibility to determine just what reports are due, and when.

Supervision. He shall develop and supervise an ever improving program of continuous curriculum development for all levels of instruction, and shall recommend to the Board, for approval, important changes in the course of study and textbooks to be used in the school.

Maintenance. The superintendent shall have charge of the operation and the maintenance of the buildings and keep the equipment in operating condition.

Budget. He shall prepare a budget annually for the consideration of the Board. Members of the Board will then make suggestions and recommendations and adopt a budget. He shall administer the budget as enacted by the Board, acting at all times in accordance with legal requirements and adopted policies of the Board. He shall recommend to the Board transfers from one budget to another as conditions require. Each teacher shall be responsible for turning in a budget proposal for his area at the end of the school year for the following year. This proposal requires final board approval and shall be strictly adhered to during the

school year.

Purchasing agent. He shall be the purchasing agent of the Board and shall have authority to purchase supplies and equipment under the regulations of the Board as adopted in the budget. Expenditures for items not included in the budget, or items costing over \$300.00, are to be made only as a result of favorable Board action. No purchase or agreement to purchase shall be made by any teacher, custodian or other school employees without receiving written consent of the superintendent.

Communication. The superintendent shall transmit all communications from the Board or its committees to members of the instructional, administrative, supervisory and custodial staff and students and he shall transmit all communications from them to the Board.

Decisions in which no policies are provided. In the interest of efficient administration, he shall have the power to decide all matters of detail, purely ministerial and administrative, which may arise, concerning which no specific provision is made in these rules and regulations. All important decisions of the superintendent as herein authorized must be reported by him to the Board not later than the first regular meeting of the Board, following such decisions.

New policies. The superintendent shall propose new policies to the Board for adoption as necessity for such arises.

Other. In lieu of a principal, guidance counselor and athletic director the superintendent shall also have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Discipline
2. Curriculum
3. Supervision
4. Building inventory
5. Student records
6. Grade reports
7. Attendance
8. School announcements
9. School reports
10. Educational leadership
11. Class scheduling
12. Teacher evaluation
13. Athletic coordinator
14. Activity director
15. Testing
16. Guidance information

Athletic Director. All scheduling of athletic contests and officials shall be done through the Athletic Director. All athletic practice schedules are also subject to approval of the Athletic Director. At no time, however, are practices

to be held on Sundays or holidays. The Athletic Director shall be responsible for seeing to it that all forms and reports required by the Nebraska State Activity Association are completed.

The Athletic Director is responsible for the general maintenance of the athletic program. Each head coach shall be responsible for the completion of details necessary to the holding of an athletic contest.

Policies Related to Teachers

Election and re-election of teachers. All personnel employed by the school shall be recommended by the administration and approved by the Board. Teachers will be required to furnish credentials and hold an approved certificate. All personnel shall be given a signed contract when officially hired. All instructional personnel shall be available to attend pre-school workshops as required by the administration, during the week prior to the beginning of the fall school term. Original contracts of employment shall require the sanction of a majority of the members of the Board. Thereafter the original contract shall be deemed renewed and shall remain in full force and effect until a majority of the members of the Board vote, on or before the last day in March, to terminate the contract at the close of the contract period, or until said

contract is superseded by a new contract. Personnel whose contracts are automatically renewed according to aforesaid provisions shall file written notice with the Board within a set number of days thereafter of their acceptance of said contract. Failure to file such notice shall be regarded as conclusion evidence of his nonacceptance of the contract. On or before January 15, the superintendent shall confer with any teacher that is to be placed upon probation and also by this time advise any teacher whose work is not satisfactory and whose contract may not be renewed. During the final week of January, all teachers shall file with the superintendent a statement concerning re-election and suggesting any desired changes in their status of work. Any other problem relating to their position should be noted. No teacher will be released from their contract after June 1 until a suitable replacement has been found by the Board.

Sick leave. Five days per year leave of absence with pay shall be allowed each teacher for illness. This shall be accumulative to a maximum of twenty-five teaching days. The Board shall in each instance require such reasonable evidence as it may desire confirming the necessity for such leave of absence.

Personal leave. Periods of leave for personal business shall be handled on an individual basis by the superintendent as the situation arises.

Professional leave. One day may be granted for attendance at approved professional meetings and classroom visitation upon recommendation of the superintendent. Reimbursement for mileage and expense shall be allowed only for trips required by the school.

Maternity leave. The Board of Education shall handle each individual maternity case as it arises, seeing to it that the well-being of the mother, child and students are kept first in mind.

Other leaves of absence. Teachers granted other leaves of absence not covered by the Board policies shall lose pay for those days absent.

Substitute teachers. The superintendent shall select substitute teachers. Substitute teachers shall be paid \$20.00 per day.

Payment of salary. Salary payments are to be made on a twelve-month basis, payable on the tenth of each month.

Terms of employment. Each teacher shall be available for meetings and other preparatory work at least one week before classes begin, and should remain on the job in the spring until they have completed all required work. Holidays shall be determined by the administration, subject to approval by the Board.

Teachers shall be hired on a 190-day contract of which 180 days should be teaching days and 10 days should be work days.

Line of authority. Teachers shall be directly responsible to the superintendent. They shall promptly and consistently carry out the instructions of the superintendent.

Responsibility and authority. The conduct and management of the school is the responsibility of all personnel. An effective plant cannot be maintained without the cooperation of everyone. Each teacher is expected to manage his or her own discipline problems insofar as possible. However, discipline problems of a serious nature are to be referred to the superintendent's office for solution. The superintendent shall be consulted before corporal punishment may be used. Only the superintendent may suspend students from school in extreme disciplinary cases. A student may be permanently suspended from a class without administrative approval.

Relations with custodians. All orders from teachers to custodians shall be made through the administration, except in the event of an emergency.

Relations with students, patrons and other teachers.

Teachers shall not at any time engage in the conversation of controversial school issues in the presence of students,

patrons or parents. Criticisms of other school personnel or problems concerning the general nature of the school shall not be discussed with anyone other than the proper authorities. Criticisms or complaints regarding school policy should be taken to the administration or Board.

School hours of teachers. Teachers shall report to school at 8:00 a.m. and be at their first period teaching assignment by the time students begin arriving. They should remain in the building until students have left. Teachers should be available from 8:00 a.m. until school begins and after school to help students with their problems and encourage the students to avail themselves of this time. If it is necessary to leave the building for any reason, it shall be the teacher's responsibility to notify the superintendent.

Dismissal of pupils. Teachers shall not dismiss their pupils earlier than the regularly scheduled time without permission of the superintendent.

Responsibility for equipment. Teachers shall be responsible for the proper care of all textbooks, books, apparatus, supplies and furniture (owned by the school) under their department or teaching area.

Professional growth. Teachers shall observe all school regulations, seek professional growth, and participate in

curriculum study.

Extra expenses. Although it is not the desire of the Board to have teachers spending their own money for instruction or other purposes concerning the school, no one shall be reimbursed for money spent unless it is first approved by the superintendent. Any purchase made by a teacher and charged to the school must be accompanied by a bill. There must be strict adherence to this rule.

Official records and reports. All teachers shall furnish the superintendent promptly with any information relating to their professional training, experience, activities, or work which is required for reports to county and state officials or for official school records. Dates of personal nature shall be treated confidentially by school officials.

Insurance. The cost of a single policy shall be paid each month by the district to Blue Cross-Blue Shield for each teacher desiring it. This may be applied to single coverage or family coverage, whichever the teacher desires. If the family coverage is selected, the difference between single coverage and the cost of the family coverage shall be deducted from the teacher's wages. A husband and wife teacher combination may apply each single coverage to one family policy with the difference deducted from either the husband's or wife's salary.

Credit for previous experience and education. New teachers in the system with teaching experience in other schools shall be allowed credit according to their experience and education, at the discretion of the Board of Education.

College hours toward the salary schedule. The administration must approve all hours applicable toward advancement on the schedule. They must be approved prior to the enrollment date. An official up-to-date transcript must be on file in the office of the superintendent to receive action on the schedule. Only hours in the teaching field shall count toward the schedule.

Extra duties. Extra duty such as noon duty, or supervision of special school events, shall be expected of all employees on the schedule. This duty shall be assigned by the administration as it has in the past.

Raises on the salary schedule. Raises on the schedule shall not be automatic. The Board may retain an instructor at a specific level if the administration has notified this individual of the unsatisfactory progress in work by the fifteenth of January. Conferences with individual teachers should be held immediately after an awareness of any situation that may affect the teacher's future in the school system becomes obvious.

Returned contracts. Contracts shall be returned within a specified number of days, as set by the Board of Education, after they are received by the teacher. Contracts not returned, or returned unsigned will constitute authorization for the Board to seek a replacement.

Release from contracts. No teacher shall be released from a contract after June 1 until a suitable replacement has been found by the superintendent. As a matter of professional courtesy, any teacher seeking another position after signing his contract with District 39 shall inform the superintendent of this action.

Teaching load. Each teacher shall be assigned an equitable teaching load per day which may or may not include supervising study halls as part of this load. Scheduling will be done so that each teacher will be allowed at least one free period per day.

Placement of teachers on the salary schedule. The Board of Education shall reserve the right to place teachers on any step on the salary schedule in order to allow them leverage with which to hire the best possible faculty.

Teacher absence. If a teacher must be absent due to illness, it shall be his duty to inform the superintendent as soon as possible so that a substitute may be hired or other arrangements may be made. If an absence is planned in advance, the

superintendent shall be given at least two days notice.

Teacher's access to personal files. Any teacher, administrator or full-time employee of District 39 shall, upon his request, have access to his personal file maintained by the district and shall have the right to attach a written response to any item in such file, and he may in writing authorize any other person to have access to such file. Such access and right to attach a written response shall not be granted with respect to any letters of recommendation solicited by the employer which appear in the file. No other person except school officials shall be granted access to such file nor shall the contents thereof be divulged in any manner to any unauthorized person.

Elementary planning periods. Each teacher in the elementary (K-6) grades shall be allowed as many planning periods per week as possible up to a maximum of five per week. Every effort shall be made in scheduling each year to provide for these planning periods.

Grievance procedure. The following definitions, purposes, and procedures shall pertain to grievances.

I. Definition of terms

- A. Grievance--claim based upon an event or condition which affects the welfare and/or terms and conditions of employment of a teacher or group of

teachers, and/or the interpretation, meaning, or application of any of the policies, rules, regulations, or terms of this agreement.

- B. Aggrieved person--teacher or teachers making the claim.
- C. Party in interest--teacher or teachers making the claim, and any person who might be required to take action, or against whom action might be taken, in order to resolve the claim.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions to the problems which may from time to time arise affecting teachers. Both parties agree that those proceedings shall be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure.

III. Procedures

A. Level 1 (informal)

1. If a teacher feels that he has a grievance, he should first discuss the matter with his department chairman, principal, supervisor or superintendent to whom he is directly responsible in an effort to resolve the problem.
2. The aggrieved person may have a local PR & R representative assist him in efforts to resolve the problem informally with the

principal or superintendent.

B. Level 2 (formal)

Step One

1. If an aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of his problem, or if no decision has been rendered after five school days through the informal procedure, he may submit his claim as a formal grievance, in writing, to his superintendent and retain a carbon copy of the said grievance for himself.
2. The superintendent shall, within three school days, render his decision and the stated reasons therefor in writing to the aggrieved person, with a copy to the PR & R representative for the Association's files and a copy shall be given to the president of the Board of Education.

Step Two

If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of his grievance at step one, or if no decision has been rendered within three school days after the presentation of the grievance in writings, he may file a written grievance with the Association's PR & R committee within three school days after the decision at step one, or six school days after the grievance was presented, whichever

is sooner.

Step Three

1. Within five school days after filing with the PR & R committee the aggrieved person, in conjunction with the PR & R committee may file a written appeal for a hearing with the superintendent of schools.
2. The superintendent of schools, or his authorized representative shall set for the administration at step three of the grievance procedure. Within ten school days after receipt of the written appeal for a hearing by the superintendent, the superintendent shall meet with the aggrieved person and with representatives of the PR & R committee for the purpose of resolving the grievance. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the superintendent and made available to the parties involved upon written request. The superintendent, within three school days of the hearing, shall render his decision and reasons therefor, in writing, to the aggrieved person, with a copy to the PR & R Committee.

Step Four

1. If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of his grievance at step three,

or if no decision has been rendered within three school days after he has first met with the superintendent, he may file the grievance again with the Association's PR & R committee within three school days after a decision by the superintendent, or five school days after he has first met with the superintendent, whichever is sooner.

2. Within three school days after receiving such further appeal, the PR & R committee, through its chairman, shall refer the grievance to the Board of Education.
3. Within twenty-five school days after receiving the written appeal, the Board of Education, or a committee therefrom, shall meet with the aggrieved person and with the representatives of the PR & R committee for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The decision of the Board of Education shall be rendered, in writing, within five school days.

IV. Miscellaneous

A. Group grievance

If, in the judgment of the Association, a grievance affects a group or class of teachers, the Association may submit such grievance in writing to the superintendent directly and the processing of such grievance shall be commenced at level two.

B. Forms

Forms for filing grievances, serving notices, taking appeals, making reports and recommendations, and other necessary documents shall be prepared jointly by the superintendent and the Association and given appropriate distribution so as to facilitate operation of the grievance procedure.

C. Grievance file

All documents, communications and records dealing with the processing of a grievance shall be filed in a separate grievance file in the superintendent's office and shall not be kept in the personnel file of any of the participants.

Salary base. Certified personnel shall be paid on a salary schedule with increments of 4 percent per year for experience and 4 percent for each nine hours of college credit beyond the Bachelor's degree. The Board and selected members of the Snyder Education Association shall negotiate to determine the base salary.

Extra duty salary schedule. Assigned extra duties will be paid on the extra duty pay schedule as a percentage of the base pay schedule as follows:

Head football	6%
Assistant football	4%
Head basketball	6%

Assistant basketball	4%
Volleyball	6%
Junior high basketball	4%
Head track	6%
Girls' track	6%
Music	15%
Plays and musicals	3% each
Accompanist for music	6%
Pep club	4%
Class sponsors 9, 10, & 12	1% each
Junior class sponsor	4%
Annual sponsor	4%

Extra classes. Each staff member who is responsible for an additional class beyond five classes shall be paid an additional sum of \$400.00 per class for each class beyond five per year.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

It was the purpose of the study to develop a School Board Policies Manual for the Snyder, Nebraska, Public School System which would clarify the roles and relationships of the school board, administrators, teachers, non-certified personnel, and students. In the study, the need and importance of having written school board policies was shown. The implications for forming written policies were also shown.

The need for an up-to-date, codified manual of board policies is apparent when no one knows what the district's policies are. This situation exists when some policies are buried in the minutes, some appear in student and staff handouts, some appear in master contracts, some in administrative memos, and some appear in outdated policy manuals that no one uses anymore.

The dangers of this situation are obvious and ever present. It invites misunderstanding, confusion, and controversy. These dangers are eliminated when school districts take the steps necessary to obtain a manageable policy manual.

This task involves the following:

1. Searching all important school documents for information relative to policy procedure.
2. Identifying both explicit and implied policies.
3. Analyzing all statements as to their appropriateness for display in the new manual as policies of the board.
4. Editing of all statements in order to meet the requirements of acceptable English usage, eliminate duplication, and eliminate contradictory policies.
5. Checking all policies for compliance with state and federal laws, state department regulations, and court rulings.
6. Identifying vital areas that are not presently covered by written policies, and prepare written recommendations for new policies and/or revisions in existing policies.
7. Typing, proofreading, duplicating, and distributing the new policy manual.

The actual steps taken and the procedure used in the development of the School Board Policies Manual for the Snyder Public Schools were recorded. The procedure began with the agreement by the board to cooperate in the developing of written policy statements. The next step was the determination of items to be included and what persons should be involved in the development of the policies.

Several policies manuals of other districts were viewed as well as the minutes of the board meetings for the last ten years. Policies were taken from other districts as well as from the minutes and included in the policies manual. The procedure concluded with the actual policy manual as presented for adoption by the Snyder Board of Education.

At the suggestion of the superintendent all school board members as well as the school attorney agreed to make a complete study of the policies adopted, and revise if necessary any policies at regular board meetings. The policy manual as presented for adoption is included in chapter 3.

Recommendations

Two recommendations are paramount in the development of this policies manual. One is to keep it current and the other is to make it public. The first is accomplished by keeping up to date on the latest laws and trends in education and by revising the manual as needed with additions, deletions, or changes deemed necessary within the educational system. A policy review committee on the board to constantly review policies and possible changes is recommended. It would be their task to review the manual on a regular basis.

The latter is accomplished by making the manual open to those concerned so that they may know what basis the

board is operating on in matters that concern them. Sections of the manual that deal directly with certain groups should be copied and distributed to them if possible. It is not the purpose of the manual to be kept secret but rather to be made public to all concerned so as to facilitate the learning process and enhance the relationships of all persons involved in the education of the students by exposing each to his or her rights and responsibilities.

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