



POLICY MANUAL OF THE LNSU BOARD

January 26, 2009

Table of Contents

Forward

Section 1.0 – School Board Organization and Meetings

- 1.1 Board meetings (policy)
- 1.2 Regular Board Meetings
- 1.3 Parliamentary Procedures
- 1.4 Voting
- 1.5 Officers and Committees
- 1.6 Board Relations with Staff
- 1.7 Public Participation at Board meetings
- 1.8 Board Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation
- 1.9 Board Member Conflict of Interest
- 1.10 Decisions in the Absence of Board Policy
- 1.11 Superintendent Employment and Duties

Section 2.0 – Operation and Organization

- 2.1 Operating Procedures
- 2.2 Grants, State, and Federal Programs

Section 3.0 – Policy Development

- 3.1 Policy Development and Adoption

Section 4.0 – Instruction

- 4.1 Curriculum Development and Coordination

Section 5.0 – Students

- 5.1 Educational Support System

Section 6.0 – Professional Development

- 6.1 Professional Development for Teachers

Section 7.0 – Finances

- 7.1 Annual Budget
- 7.2 Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability
- 7.3 Investment

Forward

The Lamoille North Supervisory Union was approved by the State Board of Education to provide support for the school districts of the towns of Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson, Waterville, and Lamoille Union District 18. The school directors from these districts are responsible under the laws of the State of Vermont to establish and oversee the policies that provide for the operation and support of the supervisory union.

The obligation of the LNSU board of directors (hereinafter, "LNSU board") is to ascertain, interpret, and agree upon the needs of the school communities, working together for the common good for public education. These policies are established to meet the common good and must be reviewed and altered as required. These policies must accurately reflect the current duties and responsibilities for supervisory unions in Vermont.

Section 1.1: Board Meetings (policy)

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 262 (b)
16 V.S.A. § 263
16 V.S.A. § 264 (a)
1 V.S.A. § 310-312 et seq.

The LNSU board shall meet annually, not later than 30 days after Town Meeting Day.

The LNSU board may meet as often as deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Supervisory Union.

At any meeting of the LNSU board, a majority of the school districts comprising the LNSU shall be represented and a majority of members of the LNSU board shall be present in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A legal vote taken at such meeting shall be binding upon each school district in the supervisory union, provided the vote pertains to a matter over which the LNSU board has jurisdiction.

All members of the school boards of the school districts comprising the LNSU may attend and participate in any LNSU board meeting.

Executive sessions of the board will convene only after full compliance with the provisions of Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Unless specifically determined by the board, minutes of executive sessions will not be kept.

Section 1.2: Regular Board Meetings

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 262 (b)

Annually, the LNSU board will adopt a meeting schedule. The meeting schedule will be published and made available to the news media by the Superintendent. Special and emergency meetings will be called by the chair on his or her own initiative or by the chair when requested by a majority of the board. Special and emergency meetings will be held only after compliance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. An agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the Superintendent after consultation with the board chair.

Section 1.3: Parliamentary Procedures

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b)
1 V.S.A § 310-312 et seq.

The LNSU board will conduct all of its meetings in a similar manner to the district boards within the supervisory union, adhering to Roberts' Rules of Order as expressed in 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b).

Section 1.4: Voting

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 266

Each school board is entitled to three votes.

A school board having more than three members shall elect from such board three members to act for it in meetings of the LNSU board.

Consistent with Vermont state statutes, designated members must be present in person or by electronic means to cast votes in the transaction of business.

Elections and transaction of all business at LNSU board meetings shall be determined by majority vote of school board members present or represented and entitled to vote.

The school board of any district which employs no teacher shall only have one vote in meetings of the LNSU board.

Section 1.5: Officers and Committees

Date Warned:	5/29/2008
Date Adopted:	11/24/08
Date Reviewed:	
Legal Reference:	16 V.S.A. § 261 (a) (Duties of Supervisory Union Board) 16 V.S.A. § 262 (a) (Meetings; Elections of Officers) 16 V.S.A. § 263 (Quorum) 16 V.S.A. § 264 (b) (Majority Vote of School Directors) 16 V.S.A. § 321 (Treasury; Uses) 16 V.S.A. § 322 (Treasurer; Salary; Expenses; Duties)

Officers

- A. The LNSU board shall elect the offices of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Clerk from within its membership.
- B. The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings, shall preside at board meetings, shall perform all duties imposed by statute, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by action of the board. S/he shall decide questions of order at board meetings. S/he shall appoint or provide for the election of all committees of the board unless otherwise directed by the board. S/he shall call special meetings of the board. S/he may sign official district documents that require the Chairperson's signatures.
- C. The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.
- D. The Clerk shall be responsible for signing orders. In his/her absence, the Chairperson shall sign orders.
- E. The board may elect a Secretary or hire a professional to record the proceedings of the board, assist the Superintendent in maintaining the board's records, and serve other functions prescribed by law or by the board.
- F. The Treasurer shall be elected by the board to be responsible for expending funds at the direction of the Clerk, as authorized by the board, and will not be a member of the board.

Committees

- A. An Executive Committee shall be formed to serve in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent and to take action in situations in which the convening of the entire LNSU board would be impractical. The Executive Committee shall also be convened to develop preliminary budgets, to draft suggested policies, and to prepare other materials and proposals for consideration by the full board. Any two board members, the chairperson of the LNSU board, or the Superintendent may convene the Executive Committee.
- B. Executive Committee Responsibilities
 - 1. Evaluation and review of Superintendent of Schools and recommendations for employment; assistance with Superintendent's contract.

2. The Superintendent of Schools will prepare and present to the Executive Committee evaluations on all Supervisory Union employees prior to April 15 of each calendar year.
3. Draft goals and objectives of the district to be approved by the full board.
4. The Executive Committee shall be composed of one member from each board and the Chairperson of the LNSU board.
5. The Superintendent shall serve as a member *ex officio* of the Executive Committee, and shall serve as executive officer of the committee with responsibility for recording its activities.
6. The Executive Committee shall employ an individual to take and distribute minutes of all meetings and to serve as secretary as deemed by the committee.
7. Minutes of the Executive Committee shall be distributed to the full LNSU board membership on a timely basis.
8. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of representatives of a majority of the districts.
9. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the LNSU board.
10. The Chairperson may not vote unless also serving as a local board's representative to the Executive Committee.
11. In the event that the Executive Committee takes an action, its decisions shall be subject to review by action at the next meeting of the full LNSU board.
12. No action shall be taken by the Executive Committee unless a majority of the member districts eligible to vote do so in support of the action.
13. Other committees may be established as the Chairperson or board deem necessary.

Section 1.6: Board Relations with Staff

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 1/26/09
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference:

Policy

It is the policy of the LNSU board to encourage school Board member interactions with LNSU personnel while respecting appropriate reporting relationships.

Section 1.7: Public Participation at Board Meetings

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 1 V.S.A. § 310
1 V.S.A. § 312
16 V.S.A. § 554 (b)

Meetings of the LNSU board are open to the public and will be conducted in accordance with the Vermont open meeting law. In a similar manner to the requirements that govern the district boards of the supervisory union, LNSU board meetings will allow for public participation as outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b).

Section 1.8: Board Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 261a

The LNSU board may set goals within the scope outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 261a.

Section 1.9: Board Member Conflict of Interest

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 262 (d)
16 V.S.A. § 567
16 V.S.A. § 558
16 V.S.A. § 559
16 V.S.A. § 563 (20)

- A. In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the LNSU board and its members will adhere to the following recommended standards:
1. Board members will be familiar with the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) or similar Code of Ethics, and will observe their provisions.
 2. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define School Board powers and govern Board member compensation and public bidding processes.
 3. A Board member will not take any action which is intended to give the impression that he or she would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
 4. A Board member will do nothing intended to give the false impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the Board or the school administration.
 5. A Board member will not use his or her position on the Board in any manner intended to unfairly promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends, or supporters.
 6. A Board member will not accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the board.
 7. A Board member will do nothing intended to leave the impression that his or her position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.
- B. Avoiding Conflicts. When a Board member becomes aware of involvement in a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for the inclusion in the Board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.
- C. Complaints of Conflict of Interest. When a conflict of interest claim against a Board member is brought to the Board in writing and is signed by another Board member or a member of the public, and the Board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following Board procedures will be followed.
1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining Board members, or upon order of the chair, the Board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the Board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.

2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining Board members will determine by majority vote to take one of the following actions:
 - i. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed.
 - ii. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute.
 - iii. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and, in addition to disqualifying him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision, the Board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.

Section 1.10: Decisions in the Absence of Board Policy

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 242 (1) and (5)

The policies of the LNSU board are to be interpreted consistently with Vermont law and the regulations of the Vermont State Board of Education. These policies should also be interpreted consistently with those educational objectives, procedures, and practices which are generally accepted in the public education field.

When a situation arises that is not covered by LNSU board policy and requires immediate attention, the Superintendent will act to resolve the situation. S/he must inform the LNSU board immediately that such action has been necessary. The Superintendent's decision may be reviewed at the next regular meeting of the LNSU board and a policy may be established per policy adoption procedures.

Section 1.11: Superintendent Employment and Duties

Date Warned: 11/10/2008
Date Adopted: 1/26/09
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: **16 V.S.A. § 241** (Appointment)
16 V.S.A. § 242 (Duties of Superintendents)
16 V.S.A. § 243 (Principals Appointment; Renewal; Dismissal)
16 V.S.A. § 244 (Duties of Principals)
16 V.S.A. § 261a (10) (Duties of Supervisory Union Board)
Policy Cross Reference: 1.5 Officers and Committees

- A. The Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board has the authority to employ the Superintendent of Schools as outlined according to Vermont Statutes.
 - 1. The Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board shall establish a process for the search, interview and subsequent appointment of the Superintendent.
- B. The Superintendent shall carry out the duties for each School District in the Lamoille North Supervisory Union as outlined according to Vermont Statutes.
- C. The Superintendent shall serve the Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board in fulfillment of the duties outlined according to Vermont Statutes.

Section 2.1: Operating Procedures

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 11/24/08
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: **16 V.S.A. § 261a (10)** (Duties of Supervisory Union Board)
16 V.S.A. § 263 (Quorum)

Agendas. An agenda for regular LNSU board meetings shall be prepared by the office of the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Supervisory Union Chairperson. A copy of the agenda shall be mailed or emailed to each school board member no later than five (5) business days prior to a regular LNSU board meeting.

Expenses. A legal vote taken at an LNSU board meeting shall be binding upon each school district in the Supervisory Union. Each school district shall pay a proportional share of the expenses of the Supervisory Union based on the number of students enrolled in their schools on October 1st of the year preceding a proposed budget.

Audit. The LNSU board shall comply with local audit requirements as outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 261a (10). Additionally, an independent auditor shall be employed to annually review all the books of the district.

The above shall be operative unless otherwise directed by the Commissioner of Education.

Section 2.2: Grants, State, and Federal Programs

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 261a (4)
16 V.S.A. § 261a (9)

The LNSU board shall annually vote to authorize the Supervisory Union to accept grants and to act for them with respect to any other state and federal programs that require such authorization, and to act as the representative of the individual school districts in administering these federal and state programs, except the Supervisory Union shall not incur any financial obligation without the express approval of the school directors of the individual school districts that are affected by the obligation.

The LNSU board shall annually designate the Superintendent of Schools as their authorized representative in all state and federal programs requiring such authorization. The Superintendent is responsible for delegating the correlated work to the appropriate central office administrator.

1. The administrator so designated shall be responsible to the board for:
 - a. Preparing plans, making applications and amendments, and filing reports.
 - b. Administering and supervising the programs as required in state and federal regulations.
 - c. Employing the personnel required to carry out the project if so mandated within the requirements of an individual grant.
 - d. The administrator so designated will review with the board or the Executive Committee plans for programs, employment, parent involvement, and program evaluation.

Section 3.1: Policy Development and Adoption

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. ch. 7
16 V.S.A. § 563 (1)

The LNSU board is responsible for maintaining, amending, and developing policies which are general applications of the Supervisory Union duties under the provisions of 16 V.S.A. chapter 7.

LNSU board policies shall be adopted at regular or special LNSU board meetings, and may be amended after at least a ten (10) day warning by vote of the board. Adopted policies shall be codified and made available to the public.

Section 4.1: Curriculum Development and Coordination

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 261a (1) (2)

The Lamoille North Supervisory Union shall establish and maintain a process for curriculum coordination among the sending and receiving schools. The intent of the curriculum coordination process shall be to:

1. Ensure that all students are taught and evaluated utilizing a curriculum that is fully aligned with the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities and the Vermont Grade Expectations, both from classroom to classroom at the same grade level and from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades; and
2. Ensure individual schools' compliance with all additional current State Board of Education requirements pertaining to public school curricula.

The Superintendent, in conjunction with School administrators, shall be responsible for developing and implementing the LNSU curriculum coordination process. The Superintendent shall prepare and present for initial LNSU board approval a written summary of the LNSU curriculum coordination process. The Superintendent shall report annually to the Supervisory Union Board on the status of curriculum coordination within the LNSU and on related student achievement outcomes as measured by state-mandated and local assessments.

Overall, it shall be the Superintendent's responsibility to monitor the status of curriculum and instruction throughout the Supervisory Union with the goal of continuous improvement and full compliance with all pertinent State rules and regulations. Each local school district board and administration shall be responsible for the development and implementation of curricula specific to local needs and resources. The Superintendent, in conjunction with School administrators, shall advise and assist each school in evaluating, developing, and implementing local curricula. The Superintendent, in collaboration with local school administrators, shall report to local school boards on the status of curriculum, instruction and assessment at their individual schools as requested by each local board.

Section 5.1: Educational Support System

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: Act 230 of the 1990
Vermont Legislature;
Act 157 of the 1996
Vermont Legislature;
Act 117 of the 2000
Vermont Legislature;
16 V.S.A. §§2901, 2902,
2904 (General policy, ESS
and EST);
16 V.S.A. §§ 2961 et seq.
(Special education funding);
Vt. State Board of Education
Manual of Rules & Practices,
§§2120.8.1.3.1, 2194

It is the policy of the LNSU to coordinate a continuum of educational services through a comprehensive Educational Support System to increase the ability of the school to meet the needs of all students in the general education environment.

The procedures necessary to carry out this policy will comply with the requirements of 16 V.S.A. §261 (6), §§ 2901, 2902 and 2904, and Rules 2194 and 2120.8.1.3.1 of the Vermont State Board of Education, and IDEA 2004 Section 504.

Section 6.1: Professional Development for Teachers

Date Warned: 5/29/2008
Date Adopted: 10/8/2008
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. § 261a (5)

In accordance with 16 V.S.A. §261a, the LNSU board shall provide for the establishment of a written policy on professional development of teachers employed in the supervisory union and periodically review that policy.

LNSU policy on Professional Development

It is the policy of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union to support the important connection between educators' professional development and improved student achievement, and to assure that professional and para-professional staff members acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills needed to contribute effectively to the achievement of goals and strategies articulated within school action plans.

Principles to Guide Professional Development

Professional development programs sponsored by the district will be directly linked to student performance goals identified within annual action plans.

The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school administrators, will oversee a professional development system that is characterized by the following:

1. its primary focus is on improved student learning and achievement
2. it is based on current, documented research findings
3. it provides structure and substance that allow continuity
4. it focuses on content and curricular needs as well as teaching methodology
5. it includes the needs of all who contribute to the education system
6. it is developed and directed by professional educators

Implementation

The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school administrators, will base annual and multi-year professional development programs on an analysis of student performance data, best-practices research, state and local standards compliance and the district action plan priorities.

The Superintendent will report at least annually to the school board on the district's professional development program, with an emphasis on its relationship to student achievement goals.

Section 7.1: Annual Budget

Date Warned: 11/24/08
Date Adopted: 11/24/08
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: **1 V.S.A. § 311-312** (Open Meeting Law)
16 V.S.A. § 563 (Powers of School Boards)

It is the responsibility of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board to assure it has an approved annual budget.

The LNSU Board shall adopt an annual budget that reflects the needs and goals of the Supervisory Union and its member school districts.

Proposed annual LNSU budgets shall be deliberated at regular or special meetings called for that purpose. These meetings shall be conducted in accordance with open meeting laws.

Section 7.2: FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Date Warned: 10/8/08
Date Adopted: 1/26/09
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: **16 V.S.A. §261-267** (Supervisory Unions)
16 V.S.A. §301-303 (Union Expenses)16
V.S.A. §321-325 Treasury
16 V.S.A. §563 (Powers of School Boards)
16 V.S.A. §559 (Public bidding)
24 V.S.A. §832 (Bonding requirements)
16 V.S.A. §1756 (Indemnity and insurance)
GASB Statement 34 (Financial Statements)

It is the policy of the Board to manage its financial affairs in a fair and open manner using acceptable financial practices and providing appropriate accountability. A modified accrual system of accounting for the proper control and reporting of school district finances and for stating the financial condition of each of the School District members shall be established by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent or designee is responsible to carry out the policies by the school board relating to the business affairs of the supervisory union and member school districts. Responsibility includes the development, implementation, dissemination and application of uniform accounting and fiscal practices. These areas of authorization include, but are not limited to:

- Banking
- Fund Transfer
- Electronic Fund Transfer
- Tax Deposits
- Account Reconciliation
- Internal Accounting
- Government Agency Authorization

Section 7.3: Investment Policy

Date Warned: 11/24/08
Date Adopted: 11/24/08
Date Reviewed:
Legal Reference: **16 V.S.A. § 1756** (Protection of School Officials & Staff)

It is the policy of the Board to invest public funds in a manner which is consistent with all state statutes and which will meet the following objectives:

- Investments will be undertaken in a manner that ensures preservation of principal
- Investments will be diversified to avoid incurring unreasonable risks associated with specific securities or financial institutions
- The investment portfolio shall employ strategies to achieve the highest rate of return possible while at the same time staying within the constraints of the previous objectives.

All participants in the investment process shall seek to act responsibly as custodians of the public trust and shall avoid any transactions that may impair public confidence.