



ARKANSASSM
VIRTUAL ACADEMY

Board Policy Manual May 2007



Arkansas Virtual Academy public school option for the 21st Century!

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3.5 Formulation of Board Policy

3.5.1 Purpose

The policies of the Board are developed, and are meant to be interpreted in terms of existing federal and state laws, and regulations of the Arkansas State Board of Education.

3.5.2 Process

Proposals for new policies, or changes in existing policies, may be submitted by any Board member, or Head of School.

Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the board when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the Board if other than the date of adoption. The date will ensure the affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

3.5.2.1 Ad Hoc Advisory Committees

When a policy is needed to set new and important directions for the Arkansas Virtual Academy, or when a proposed policy would substantially alter a major program or mode of operation, an ad hoc advisory committee may be named to examine policy needs in depth and make recommendations to the Board. Such recommendations are limited to the policy and not to the specific administrative procedure. Such committees may be appointed by the Board and may be composed of person's representative of the administrative staff, instructional and non-instructional staffs, parents, students, and/or general community as appropriate to the policy area under consideration. Such committees, if developed, will be given guidelines as to how and when they will make their reports.

To permit time for study of all new policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented at three (3) separate meetings as agenda items to the Board in the following sequence:

1. Information: Distribution with agenda. Serves as a first reading and opens the record until the next meeting of the Board to receive comments.
2. Proposals: Second reading of proposed policy or policies; Report from Head of School on any comments for change; report from any Board or advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Board discussion and directions for any redrafting.
3. Action Items: discussion, final reading, adoption/rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the above sequence, unless focus of the policy is changed.

The Board may dispense with the above sequence of three readings as necessary.

Adopted: May 22, 2007
Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

3.6 Policy Dissemination

The Head of School is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Board. The Head of School may delegate this responsibility to other administrative personnel within the school's main offices.

Accessibility is to extend to all employees of the Arkansas Virtual Academy, to members of the Board, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons involved in the Arkansas Virtual Academy. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

The Board's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be open for inspection at the Arkansas Virtual Academy and on the Arkansas Virtual Academy's web site.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

Recruitment and Appointment of the Head of School/Director

The appointment of the Head of School is a function of the Administrative Services portion of the Service Agreement between the Board and current administrative services vendor.

The recruitment and selection process of the Head of School will be a cooperative effort between the Administrative Services Vendor and the Board. ARVA Board members are to be actively involved in the selection of administrative personnel for the school.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

3.8 Administration in the Absence of Policy

The Head of School has responsibility for carrying out, through supplemental regulations and directives, the policies and regulations established by the Board. The policies developed by the Board, and the regulations and directives developed to implement policy, are designed to achieve an effective and efficient school system. These detailed arrangements constitute the regulations governing the Arkansas Virtual Academy. All Board employees, school employees and students are expected to abide by them.

The Board will approve regulations when such approval is required by law or otherwise advisable. The Head of School shall issue additional regulations, rules, and procedures provided they are in harmony with Board policies.

In the absence of Board policy relating to a specific situation, the Head of School will use his/her best judgment in arriving at a decision. The decision will be made on what is sensed the policy would be if it existed, based upon the spirit and tenor of other existing policy and historical procedure.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to recommend to the Board whether or not a policy should be written to cover similar incidents.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

3.9 Policy Review and Maintenance

In an effort to keep its written policies up-to-date so that they may be used consistently as a basis for Board action and administrative decision, the Board will review its policies on a continuing basis. The Head of School is directed to keep all policies up to date and call to the Board's attention all policies that are out-of-date or appear to need revision for other reasons.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.0 Board Ethical Guidelines

4.0.1 Purpose

To ensure that Board members, the Head of School, and school employees comply with all federal, state and local code of ethics for governing and operating a public school.

4.0.2 Ethical Guidance

All Board members and school employees shall be familiar with and comply with the Arkansas Department of Education's:

- Rules and Regulations Governing Ethical Guidelines and Prohibitions for Educational Administrators, employees, Board Members and Other Parties (see attachment directly following this policy)

4.0.3 Statement of Financial Interest

In accordance with A.C.A. § 6-24-101 and Act 1381 of 2005 persons required to file a Statement of Financial Interest by January 31 of each year. Persons required include but are not limited to:

- All public and charter school superintendents
- Any public appointee to any state board or commission (who possesses regulatory authority or is authorized to received or disburse state or federal funds)

The Head of School will provide Board members with the required documents no later than December 1st in order for members to file their Statement of Financial Interest in a timely manner.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.1 Public Participation in Board Meetings

The Board desires parents and students of the Arkansas Virtual Academy, as well as, the community at large to attend board meetings. Public attendance to board meetings allows the community to become better acquainted with the school and provides the Board the opportunity to hear the expectations the public has of its schools.

Patrons must realize that a Board meeting is a meeting held in public view, but it is not a public meeting. To permit community members to be heard, and at the same time conduct business properly and efficiently, the following procedures will be utilized:

1. Two (2) weeks or ten (10) working days before the scheduled board meeting a request to present must be presented to the Head of School providing the topic to be addressed and information on any group he/she represents. The amount of time allotted for the presentation will be determined by the Board Chair.
2. A "Request to Speak" will be available at each board meeting for individuals who want to address a topic on the published agenda for the current Board meeting. Individuals will be allowed three (3) minutes to make their remarks. Extensions of time will be at the sole discretion of the Board Chair. The Board will not generally respond to remarks made in this manner during the meeting, but may issue a written response after the meeting.
3. Speakers may offer objective criticisms of school operations and programs, but the Board will not hear complaints about school personnel or other persons at a public session. Complaints involving school personnel or other persons are provided for by other channels.

The Chairman has authority to terminate the remarks of any individual who does not adhere to the above rules. Requests may be directed to the Board but no action will be taken on any item not on the published agenda.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.2 Equal Opportunity Employment/Non-Discrimination

The Board hereby agrees to comply with Title IV and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulations of the Department of Education. No qualified person shall be denied employment, reemployment, or advancement, nor shall be evaluated on basis of sex, marital status, religion, race, color, creed, national origin, age or handicapping condition.

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.3 Board Powers and Responsibilities

Arkansas Code § 6-13-620 provides for the powers and duties of Arkansas School Boards. The Arkansas Virtual Academy Board shall exercise and perform the following duties:

- A) Provide for the care and custody of school facilities, grounds and other school property and ensure that is maintained in a state of good repair;
- B) Employ teachers and other employees necessary for the proper conduct of the school upon the recommendation of the Head of School;
 - a. There shall be three copies of each contract:
 - i. One copy retained by the board
 - ii. One copy given to the employee
 - iii. One copy filed with the county clerk
- C) Adopt salary schedules for all school personnel;
- D) Ensure that the courses of study for all grades, as prescribed by the Arkansas State Board of Education or by law, except those in which waivers were obtained through the chartering process, are taught by the Arkansas Virtual Academy;
- E) Prepare and publish the district's budget for the ensuing year, in accordance with § 6-13-622 (publication of the budget in some newspaper published in the county in which the district lies);
- F) Provide, by the exercise of its legal powers, the funds necessary to adequately finance the operation of the school;
- G) Do all other things necessary and lawful for the conduct of efficient free public schools;
- H) Publish on the school's website minutes of regular and special meetings, budget for the ensuing year, financial breakdown of monthly expenses, salary schedule for all employees, yearly audit, and annual statistical report;

- I) Establish general policies for the school in consultation with the school administration in keeping with the requirements of the law and the State Board of Education;

Legal Reference: Ark. Code. Ann. Section 6-13-620

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.4 **Board Authority and Responsibility**

The Arkansas Virtual Academy has the power to take official action only when it meets in open session as a board and as a committee of the whole. The Board shall not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of any individual board member or ARVA employee, except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instructions by the Board.

Legal Reference: AR Code Ann. Section 6-13-619

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.5 Board Member Training

4.5.1 Purpose

The Arkansas Virtual Academy will adhere to laws regarding school board member training.

4.5.2 New Board Member Requirements

All new members of the Arkansas Virtual Academy Board shall receive a minimum of six (6) hours of training and instruction in the school laws and the laws governing the powers, duties, and responsibilities of school boards.

Instruction can be provided by an institute of higher learning, the Department of Education, or by the Arkansas School Boards association.

4.5.3 Board Member Requirements

Board members who have served for twelve (12) or more consecutive months shall obtain no less than six (6) hours of training and instruction by December 31 of each calendar year.

Training shall include topics relevant to school laws, school operations, and the powers, duties, and responsibilities of school board members.

4.5.3.1 Carryover

Training hours exceed the required six hours with a calendar year can be carried forward from year to year.

4.4.3.2 Training Provider

Instruction can be provided by an institute of higher learning, the Department of Education, or by the Arkansas School Boards association.

Legal Reference: AR Code Ann. Section 6-13-629

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.6 **Notification of Board Meetings**

4.6.1 Purpose

The Board will comply with Ark. Code § 25-19-106 in regards to providing notification of regular and special board meetings.

4.6.2 Notification to Board Members

Written notice of each regular meeting, with an attached agenda, shall be delivered to each Board member at least three (3) days prior to each meeting

Except in the case of emergency meetings. Written notice will be provided to Board members within twenty-four (24) hours prior to the start time for the Board meeting.

4.6.3 Notification to News Media

The time and place of each regular meeting shall be furnished to anyone who requests the information. (Ark. Code § 25-19-106(b)(1))

Adopted: May 22, 2007

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)

4.7 Fund Balance

4.7.1 Purpose

The Board of Directors recognizes the significance of maintaining an appropriate level of fund balance as one component of sound financial management. An adequate fund balance level is an essential element in both short-term and long-term financial planning and serves to mitigate the impact of future risk and sustain operations during economic downturns.

4.7.2 Establishment of Fund Balance

The Head of School through the direction of the Board of Directors shall build a Fund Balance within the general fund to a level that is equal to three percent (3%) or greater, of the total annual operating fund not to include funds from federal sources or private grants.

4.7.3 Utilization of Fund Balance

The Head of School in conjunction with supporting documentation will bring a recommendation, and if applicable, a "request of Disbursement of Fund Balance Funds" to the Board of Directors as an action item on the board agenda.

The Board, by an extraordinary majority, (majority plus one) will approve or deny disbursement of funds from the fund balance.

Adopted: September 19, 2008

Amended: (date of board meeting when amended)