

3. Individual Board Member Reflection

This individual reflection tool aims to help board members conduct a self-assessment of their policy literacy and understanding of their local educational agency’s (LEA) current policy development practices. Prompts are meant to highlight areas of strength and areas for growth and are aligned with the CSBA Policy Framework and other CSBA resources. This tool should be used before the board completes the CSBA Board Policy Process Evaluation and can be reused annually or as needed to help board members reflect and refine their skills and knowledge.

MY POLICY PRACTICES

- 1) I feel _____ in my understanding of the policy development and review process (i.e. when policies are needed, how my LEA reviews policy updates).
 - Not confident at all
 - Minimally confident
 - Fairly confident
 - Very confident

- 2) I would describe my current policymaking skill level as _____.
 - Novice
 - Learning
 - Capable
 - Confident
 - Expert

- 3) My experience with policy as a board member has been _____.

4) I feel _____ to improve my policy literacy.

- Unmotivated
- Neither motivated nor unmotivated
- Slightly motivated
- Highly motivated

5) I experience the following barriers to developing my policy literacy (check all that apply):

- I'm not sure where I should access quality training
- I don't have the time due to my career or home responsibilities
- I don't have the financial resources to pursue the training available to me
- Improving my policy literacy is not an expectation of me as a board member
- Other: _____

6) I engage with policy review, development, and adoption _____ .

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Other: _____

7) When I have questions about my LEA's policy, I _____ (check all that apply):

- Ask my board colleagues
- Ask my superintendent or other LEA administrators and staff
- Ask the superintendent's executive assistant
- Ask board members outside my LEA
- Read the LEA's policy myself
- Access CSBA sample policies
- Review neighboring LEA policies
- Engage students and families
- Read state or federal education law (Ed Code) and regulations
- Other: _____

8) How familiar are you with your LEA's board bylaws related to policy review and adoption practices?

- Not at all familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Very familiar

9) I have enhanced my policy literacy through the following trainings (note the organization and location of the training):

10) I am familiar with and comfortable engaging in policy conversations regarding (check all that apply):

Philosophy, Goals, Objectives and Comprehensive Plans (0000s)

Community Relations (1000s)

Administration (2000s)

Business and Non-Instructional Services (3000s)

Personnel (4000s)

Students (5000s)

Instruction (6000s)

Facilities (7000s)

Board Bylaws (9000s)

11) I would like to improve my policy literacy in (check all that apply):

Philosophy, Goals, Objectives and Comprehensive Plans (0000s)

Community Relations (1000s)

Administration (2000s)

Business and Non-Instructional Services (3000s)

Personnel (4000s)

Students (5000s)

Instruction (6000s)

Facilities (7000s)

Board Bylaws (9000s)

12) When considering adopting a new policy, I can engage diverse members from my community by:

13) Strengths in my current policy practices I'd like to ensure continue include:

14) There are many important considerations when developing or reviewing local policies. In discussions with your board colleagues, it can be helpful to learn about what areas you each give the most weight. When developing or reviewing my LEA's policies, the items I tend to prioritize are (pick 3):

Community engagement

Staff input

Review alignment of resources necessary for policy implementation

Evaluation of LEA data

Legal compliance

Alignment with LEA strategic priorities goals (mission, vision, LCAPs, etc)

Potential unintended impacts

Other: _____

15) There are many ways to support fair and equitable policies in LEAs districts. To help guide our discussion, please select the three practices you believe are most important.

Looking at disaggregated student or family data

Including diverse students, staff, and community members on the policy subcommittee

Collaborating with community partners who are knowledgeable about serving diverse students and families

Holding listening sessions, town halls, or other community engagement to collect feedback on equity impacts of current policies and practices

Other: _____

MY LEA'S POLICY PRACTICES

16) Does your LEA have a policy subcommittee?

Yes

No

17) Some of the strengths of my LEA's policy preparation and practices are:

18) What local qualitative or quantitative data might we use to consider whether our policy practices are helping our LEA create strong conditions for teaching and learning?

19) Approximately when was your LEA's last comprehensive review of its policy manual?

In the past 3 years

4–5 years ago

6–10 years ago

More than 10 years ago

Not sure

20) Some current LEA practices and policies that I would like to have a future board discussion on include:

COMPANION TOOLS

In addition to Individual Board Member Reflection, members can access the following documents:

Cover Letter — The cover letter provides a brief overview of the toolkit and suggestions for the review process.

Policy Framework 101 — The 101 document serves as a simplified version of the more comprehensive framework document, quickly orienting members to the tools and how to use them.

Policy Framework — The Policy Framework equips board members with the tools to create effective policies, fostering shared understanding and informed decision-making, while enhancing the local educational agency's (LEA) ability to adopt and maintain strong policy practices.

Board Policy Process Evaluation This evaluation is used to guide the process of weighing and scoring the current practices that the board is engaging in when revising and adopting policies. The rubric helps boards understand where they can aspire to improve.

Policy Principles Quick Reference Guide — The quick reference guide helps board members understand how to engage in high-quality policy review and discussion at the dais.

Additional CSBA Policy Resources *(Available by GAMUT subscription only)*

GAMUT Policy — The most comprehensive set of sample school policies in California.

CSBA's Mandated and Conditionally Mandated Policy Language — A chart summarizing state and federal laws that mandate districts and COEs to adopt policies and regulations on specified topics, and the CSBA policy or regulation that addresses each mandate.

Policy Development Workshop — Develop a robust, up-to-date policy manual that addresses key issues and complies with state and federal mandates through a 2-3 day workshop facilitated by a CSBA consultant.

Policy Manual Reviews — A review of a board's policies resulting in a report identifying individual policies that need to be updated or added to the manual.