



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Bylaws and Policies

Facilitator's Guide

Objectives	Estimated Time
Welcome and Introductions	10 minutes
Understanding of how bylaws guide school councils by making work more efficient, consistent, open and fair to all stakeholders	50 minutes
Understanding how policy development can improve student achievement	30 minutes
Awareness of the school council policy resources and tools	30 minutes
Understanding how to address school council policy challenges	25 minutes
Understanding the statutorily required policy areas and best practices related to policy work	15 minutes
Closing, Reflection and Evaluations	20 minutes

***Remind participants prior to the training session to bring a copy of their school council bylaws and policies**

Materials Needed

- booklet for each participant
- resource booklet for each participant
- chart paper
- markers
- easel (optional)
- highlighters (optional)
- Post-It notes (optional)
- name tags
- computer for PowerPoint presentation
- Internet connectivity, if available
- extra copies of KDE sample bylaws and policies, if needed

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome each participant. If working with school council members from multiple school councils, ensure that schools are sitting together. Review the materials that are provided as well as highlighters and Post-It notes (if providing). Have each participant introduce themselves and the role that they have on the school council (i.e., administrator, teacher or parent). Thank each participant for their service, especially parents. Encourage each to participate fully and to ask questions. Create a “parking lot” for questions. Review the booklets provided to each participant: the SBDM Bylaws and Policy Manual and the Resource Booklet. Call attention to the session objectives.

Session Overview and Student Achievement

Ask participants to describe the main purpose of any school council. Read the student achievement paragraph, emphasizing the main focus of the school council being student achievement.

Bylaws and Policies

Ask participants to explain in their own words the difference between the *bylaws* and the *policies*. Chart any ideas and post in the training room. Review the chart on page 3 of the participants’ booklet. Discuss that *bylaws* are the operating guides for the school council. They cover how the school council conducts its business. The school council *policies* are the guidelines that direct the school staff as to the teaching and learning in the school. Both of these areas are important, as they both should focus on improving student achievement.

Bylaws

Read through the paragraph and the chart. Elaborate as needed.

Have participants open their school council bylaws. If participants do not have copies, refer them to the KDE SBDM Bylaws and Policy Manual, where samples can be found. Remind them that these are samples and not exemplars. Do the first example together, charting out ideas. Have participants work at tables/groups. Share out ideas.

Sample Situations
<p>Example Situation: The council is going to develop criteria for selecting a principal and asks all the audience members to leave the meeting.</p> <p><i>The open meetings law requires every regular meeting and every special meeting to be open to the public. The only exceptions are for the discussion of individuals for appointment of personnel, discussion of litigation or potential litigation, and the discussion of the school emergency plan. This may or may not be in a council's bylaws. If it isn't in the bylaws, the council should at least say it will follow the open meetings law, and a summary of that law should be distributed to each council member.</i></p>
<p>Situation 1: The principal is asking the council when elections need to be completed. Last year they were held in the fall but in the past they have been held in the spring.</p> <p><i>Whether elections are held in the fall or spring is determined by the council and should be included in the bylaws. The council can set a deadline to have council members elected for the upcoming year. This is the only area of elections that the council can determine as the parents and teachers are responsible for conducting their own elections respectively.</i></p>
<p>Situation 2: A teacher has contacted the council and would like to speak at the next meeting regarding the council's curriculum policy.</p> <p><i>Your bylaws should set up how guests are to speak and give input. This can include a time line for speakers and how they will be recognized.</i></p>
<p>Situation 3: The council has been discussing an agenda item for an extended length of time and cannot reach consensus for a decision. What does it do?</p> <p><i>Bylaws should outline what to do in this situation. Some council bylaws state that if consensus can not be reached after 3 attempts, then the issue is tabled until the next meeting to allow for council members to research the topic further.</i></p>
<p>Situation 4: The council has proposed a new staff time policy to be enacted for the upcoming school year and the chairperson is asking how many reads will be required before the policy can be adopted.</p> <p><i>The development of policies, including the required number of reads and committees involved, should be included in the council bylaws.</i></p>

What else is in your bylaws?

Read the paragraph. Have participants use their school council bylaws and determine if they contain answers to the issues. This activity can be completed as a group. Share out any ideas. Have participants answer the reflections.

This is a good place for a break.

Policy Basics

Review the introductory portion of policy basics and the bullets. Elaborate, as needed.

Policy Development Tool

Introduce the Policy Development Tool. Read through the paragraph and the questions and elaborate as needed. Share any additional insights. Have participants who have their bylaws check and see what additional information they contain that might need to be included as criteria. Note that the sample bylaws contain a provision that a policy needs two readings.

Policy Organization Review

Have participants locate their policies. If participants are without policies, allow them to use the sample policies included in the SBDM Bylaws and Policy Manual. Remind participants that these are samples or starting points and not exemplar policies.

Working as tables/groups, review the policies. Have participants determine the Next Steps, the Priorities and the Biggest Concern. If appropriate, have a share-out session. However, keep the conversations general, and don't engage in *finger-pointing*. Have participants complete the reflection.

Avoiding Policy Pitfalls

Read through the pitfalls. Elaborate as needed. Have each table/group discuss each policy scenario or excerpt. Identify into which of the pitfalls the scenario or excerpt falls into. Have participants write their thoughts in the space provided.

As a large group have participants discuss the following questions:

- What are some of the reasons people experienced these pitfalls?
- What patterns do you see?
- What can a council member do to ensure that pitfalls do not occur?
- What are some additional pitfalls to watch for? Chart out any ideas.

Discuss reasons for each participant's response. Have participants answer the reflection.

Scavenger Hunt to Review Policies

Have each table/group read each issue in the first column. As a table/group, have them decide in which policy area the issue would be addressed. Do one as an example. Have them look through their policies to see if they have a policy that addresses the issue. If participants do not have their policies, they may use the *SBDM Bylaws and Policy Manual*. Have groups decide if it is a good idea to have something in the policy that addresses that issue. If time is short, assign issues by table/group and share out as a whole.

Issue	Which policy area would you look?	Should your policy address this issue?
<p>EXAMPLE: A new teacher wants to know what content her students are supposed to master.</p>	<p>Policy: Determination of Curriculum <i>In most cases, content won't be explicitly described in the curriculum policy, but the policy will provide direction for the teacher.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
<p>Teachers are frustrated because of the “Good News” announcements made during third period.</p>	<p>Policy: Schedule of the Day and Week policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
<p>A team of teachers would like to move classrooms to be together for ease of regrouping students to address identified needs.</p>	<p>Policy: School Space policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
<p>A team of teachers has begun implementing weekly assessments and review days. They would like extra classroom help on Fridays from the specials/elective teachers for teaching small groups and live scoring of constructed response questions.).</p>	<p>Policy: Assignment of Instructional and Non-Instructional Staff Time policy or Schedule of the Day and Week policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
<p>The principal is going to use an interview committee composed of two teachers who will be teammates of the future hire and one parent (plus the principal</p>	<p>Policy: Consultation policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
<p>The chair of the parent involvement committee isn't conducting regularly scheduled meetings, and when meetings are held, they aren't advertised and minutes aren't taken.</p>	<p>Policy: Committee policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.

Issue	Which policy area would you look?	Should your policy address this issue?
Teachers would like to ensure that content reading strategies are taught across the curriculum.	Policy: Instructional policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
Because of a scheduling issue, band and chorus students are not able to take the honors math class.	Policy: Schedule of the Day and Week policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.
The only time a group of first grade students can be pulled for speech/language time is during their scheduled physical education time.	Policy: Schedule of the Day or Week policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effectively addressed this issue through policy. • We need to revise our policy so that it does address this issue. • This issue does not need to be addressed in policy.

Additional Policies to Consider

Have each table/group discuss the additional policies that are not required by statute. From each of these areas, have tables/groups review their own policies and place a check mark if the school council already has that policy. At the end, rank by priority the areas in which the council does not have a policy.

What if our school council policies are not being implemented?

Quickly review the paragraph. Advise participants to bring concerns to their principal first, prior to bringing them up at a school council meeting, and allow the principal time to address the issue. Have participants complete the reflection.

Appendix

Share the contents of the appendix with the participants and answer any questions brought up. Elaborate as needed. Thank them for their participation and their service to school councils. Provide them with your contact information if they have further questions. Ensure that all participants complete the evaluation and give each an EILA certificate.